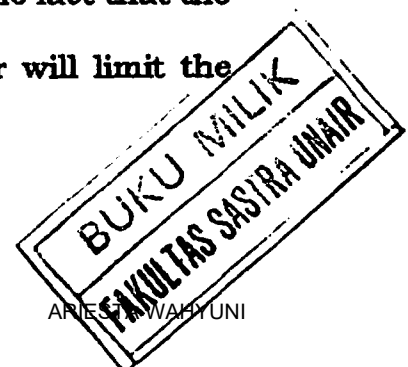


CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RELATED STUDIES

In this study the writer attempts to analyze the great influence of Carrie's social environment upon her intense desire in reaching out material success. The writer intends to apply the intrinsic approach in analyzing the subject. The writer, in this regard, is going to explore and interpret the literary work through the literary work itself.

However, to obtain a better explanation about Carrie's psychological condition as she is influenced by the environment to long for material success, the writer is about to employ the psychological background as well. Related to the subject chosen, the psychological background is supported by the theory discussing social learning proposed by Julian Rotter. It is primarily concerned with a belief that behavior is a function of both the person and the environment. Besides, the writer also finds it necessary to use sociological background to have a more plain description about the style of living of the society in metropolises. Due to the fact that the thesis is meant as a study on literature, the writer will limit the



usage of the theory to keep the analysis on the right track so that it will not turn out into a conclusion of another subject of study.

A. Intrinsic Approach

In carrying out the analysis, the writer intends to focus on the novel of Theodore Dreiser itself. Accordingly, the appropriate approach to analyze the subject is intrinsic approach. Wellek and Warren in *Theory of Literature* state that the natural and sensible starting point for work in literary scholarship is the interpretation and analysis of the works of literature themselves (139). It means that to attain the meaning of a literary work, the observation mainly concentrate on the intrinsic elements of literary work such as plot, setting, character, and so on. The comprehension, thus, is based on the work itself disregarding any extrinsic aspect of the story.

A.1. Character

Character in literature generally, and in fiction specifically, is an extended verbal representation of a human being, the inner self that determines thought, speech, and behavior. Through dialogue, action, and commentary, the author capture some of the interactions of character and circumstance (Roberts, 1989:143).

There are several ways applied by the author to enable the readers to obtain the details for valid conclusions. The readers may discover the personality of the character through the description of the character's appearance or clothes, the character's speech, the opinions of other character towards the character, and so on.

Roberts states in his book *Literature, An Introduction to Reading and Writing* that in studying a literary character, it is expected to determine the character's major trait or traits. A trait is a typical or habitual mode of behavior (144).

From the study of a character's traits, the understanding of the character can be thus developed. Sometimes, a particular trait may be considered as the primary character of a person. In this regard, the character may be found high self-interest or material obsessed, as seen in *Carrie Meeber*, the main character in Theodore Dreiser's novel.

Roberts confirms too that at the time the character is being observed, it is essential to not only regard physical description but also to be sure to relate the physical to mental or psychological. It can be figured out from the character's reaction, think, and manner towards various situations and events.

In the analysis of the character, the writer focus on the attitude of the character for the character's attitude in this story is

representative enough to find out the importance of what is going on. How the character acts or reacts is one of the chief ways in which the writer is able to distinguish the personality of the character.

A.2. Setting

Setting covers the places in which characters are presented; the social context of characters, such as their families, friends, and class; the customs, beliefs, and rules of behavior of their society, the scenes that are the background or the situation for the events of the novel; and the total atmosphere, mood or feel that is created by these (Gill, 1985:106).

It is prominent to pay a particular attention to setting in analyzing the story, for the contribution it gives to build up the story. The mood and the emotions of the characters can be revealed through the setting. Further, setting has a relationship with the events of the story.

There are two types of settings: natural and manufactured. In Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*, the natural setting gives a considerable contribution to the story. Here, the nature is considered as a force that shapes action of Carrie. Nature, in short, is one of the major forces governing the circumstances of characters who experience life and try to resolve their conflicts (Roberts, 1989:230).

Due to the fact that the setting in Theodore Dreiser's novel yields an immense impact upon the personalities, actions, and way of thinking of Carrie Meeber, in this study the writer then intends to explore the setting.

A.3. Plot

In a story, the characters must go through a series of actions or incidents, which in total make up the story. The interrelationship of incidents and characters within a total design is the plot of the story (Roberts, 1989:57). Plot is a carefully thought out plan in which all the events, all the actions and reactions of the characters altogether contribute towards movement of the story.

In a plot, there are always sequential events that consist of the beginning, the middle, and the end of the story. The beginning of the story means the opening portion that sets the scene to introduce the main character. In addition, it may notify the readers as well about what happens before the story opens or provides any other background information needed in order to comprehend and care about the events that follow.

Afterward, some conflicts appear in the middle of the story. The suspense, which extracts the attention to the story, will rise, and, consequently, it is bringing about the wondering over how the story will all turn out. The movement of tension up to the highest

degree is called the climax of the story. It is then followed by the denouement as the ending of the story.

In spite of the fact that the study concentrates chiefly on the main character and the setting of the story, the writer finds it necessary to notice the plot of the story, particularly the main character's conflicts for it aids the writer in comprehending the character's problems. Through the careful observation towards the plot, the writer distinguishes that the conflicts occurring on Carrie are essentially those against herself and against her environment.

B. Psychological Background

By 'psychology of literature', we may mean the psychological study of the writer, as type and as individual, or the study of creative process, or the study of psychological types and laws present within works of literature, or finally, the effects of literature upon as readers (audience psychology) (Wellek and Warren, 1978:81).

In this study, the third definition is the one taken into account. Further, Wellek and Warren states that there remains the question of 'psychology' in the works themselves. Characters in plays and novel are judged by us to be psychologically true. Situations are praised and plots accepted because of this same quality (91).

When analyzing the story the writer applies psychological background as well due to its eminent contribution towards the study to equip it with a better explanation. Related to the intended subject, the writer, accordingly, uses the *Theory of Social Learning* proposed by Julian Rotter.

Rotter's Social Learning Theory is concerned primarily with the choices that individuals make when confronted with a number of possible alternative ways of behavior. Rotter stresses learned behavior, giving relatively little attention to the unlearned, biological determinants of action focussed upon by Freud. Because learning (the strengthening and weakening of expectancies, or beliefs about reinforcement) is so central to Rotter's theory, the psychological situation also becomes of paramount importance, inasmuch as expectancies are elicited in particular situational contexts. However, Rotter also assumes that on the basis of a variety of learning experiences, general belief systems develop that influence behavior in any specific situation. These general beliefs, such as the conviction that one has control over one's fate, are similar to what are typically meant by traits, or personality characteristics. Rotter's social learning theory, therefore, emphasizes the general (trait) and the specific (situational) determinants of action, with both being the product of learning experiences. Hence, in a manner similar to Lewin, Rotter contends that "the unit of investigation for

the study of personality is the interaction of the individual and his meaningful environment" (Weiner, 1992:85).

C. Sociological Background

Literature is a social institution, using as its medium language, a social creation. Such traditional literary devices as symbolism and norms which could have arisen dealing in society. But, furthermore, literature 'represents' life', and 'life' is in large measure, a social reality, even though the natural world and the inner or subjective world of individual have also been objects of literary 'imitation' (Wellek and Warren, 1978:94).

In order to equip the study with a better explanation, the writer also employs the sociological background when analyzing the story due to its prominent contribution. The writer intends to apply the perspective from sociology discussing about 'Life Style and Urban Environment' with regard to the intended subject.

Life style is based on role emphasis. City dwellers potentially play an appreciable variety of roles as they participate in a number of intersecting groups throughout the day. They might be father, subway rider, store clerk, friend, good samaritan, and many, many more in the course of a single day. Each one of these positions normally contains expectations of a pattern of behavior: the role.

Two elements at the minimum are included in life style. One is a set of behaviors which must be performed to satisfy a role. This element will usually include interaction with other people. Depending on the role, these people must be appropriately present or absent for proper performance of the role.

The second element is the sphere of life which is emphasized. Social scientists generally cite at least five spheres as central elements of any society: political control, economic supply, propagation, socialization of the young, and explanation of the supernatural (Michelson, 1976:62-63). Regarding to the content of the analysis, the writer will restrain the using of the spheres above only on the economic supply in order to attain a proper explanation.

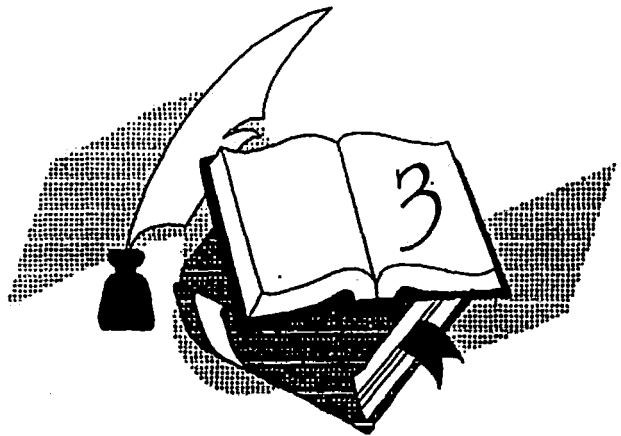
D. Related Studies

Frederick J. Balling says that *Sister Carrie* was in fact a book so far ahead of its time that it is as alive and valid today as when it was written. Beyond that, it allows the present-day reader to enter into the consciousness of an era that is no more. Dreiser's talent lies in his ability to present life as he saw it, raw and ungrammatical, unpolished and tragic (12).

In "*Sister Carrie: Theodore Dreiser's Sociological Tragedy*", it is said that the city becomes the world, the world defines the personalities of the characters, which is a reversal of our usual assump-

tion that the world is made up of individuals. This analysis readily explains why so many critics, at a loss for words, simply identify Dreiser's strength with its ability to tell the truth -to see things as they really are (Sloane, 1992:78).

It is also stated that the world is a progression from a low level of material deprivation to higher levels of less material deprivation, but '*Sister Carrie*' is still a novel about failure. The characters will ever fail to reach the full potential for which they yearn. As such, all of their efforts, as Dreiser impresses on us again and again in the plotting, style, metaphors, and characters, can end only in a tragic failure through blind aspiration. The chief characters are overcome by fatalistic social forces embodied within themselves and the aspirations, and so Dreiser forged the tragedy of *Sister Carrie* (Sloane, 1992:178).



CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS