

## CHAPTER II

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this analysis, the writer makes an effort to explain a phenomenon of cross-cultural interaction especially the adjustment within. In order to get integrated and systematic analysis, the writer establishes theory and approach of literary work that will enable her to comprehend and clarify interpretation and appraisal of the work.

Since a novel more or less is a realistic description of events or experiences that pass through the author's mind, in another way as the imitation of real life - the mirror of reality, the writer will employ *Mimetic Theory* as the appropriate theory in doing the analysis.

To support the analysis, the writer will discuss the *intrinsic aspects* of the novel. *The setting, character and plot* of the novel are considered significant in understanding and uncovering the development of the story. *Cross-cultural psychological approach* is also employed for it gives a great deal contribution in revealing the process of adjustment done by Elizabeth and Gerald MacLeod. Besides, *cultural approach* will also help in identifying their cultural background.

#### A. Mimetic Theory

Men live in the realm of reality. A literary work is a reflection of reality that has passed through the thought of an author. Thus, Mimetic

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theory that states a literary work is a reflection of real life considered appropriate to be applied. Moreover, it will enlarge our understanding about the reality of life since, indeed, men could not be separated from real life.

M.H. Abrams in The Mirror and the Lamp states

The work is taken to have a subject that, directly or deviously, is derived from existing things - to be about, or signify, or reflect something. It whether held to consist of people, actions, ideas and feelings, material things and events, or super sensible essences. The term called univers (6).

In the process of making a story, an author usually get or take the idea from the real life. He exhibits the universe he has seen, faced or experienced into the form of words. Here we can see there is a tight relation between work of an author with the universe.

Abrams affirms that in the Mimetic orientation, we see the explanation of art as essentially imitation aspects of the universe. It is expressed also in the Poetics that a work of art is constructed according to the prior models in the nature thing (8-9).

Pearl S. Buck, the author of Letter from Peking finds such an interesting fact of universe to be taken up. She who experienced accurately culture of east and west, find out the interaction between the two cultures is a complicated natural event. At that time, eastern are

considered lower than western. Little and improper appreciation is given to it. There are also a lot of contrast between them. It can be value, cultural system, norms, etc. Indeed, in accordance with global communication and society, the interaction between and among cultures is unavoidable. Thus why, Pearl S. Buck attempts to make readers realise about such condition. She accurately depicts the interaction of east and west in Letter from Peking. Here she focuses on the adjustment of people from different cultures. The main characters, Elizabeth with her American culture and Gerald MacLeod with his half Chinese blood have a permanent and highly interaction since they are united in a marriage. The adjustment done by both of them is the central idea of the story which Pearl Buck wants readers to pay attention.

## **B. 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 literature themselves (139). Consequently, the writer will employ intrinsic approach. The analysis of setting, character and plot is to be sure will be a great contribution to have a better and deeper interpretation.

## **B.1. Setting**

Setting can make a contribution to the novel because it gives valuable information to the readers. It makes the readers familiar with the reality in which the characters live. From it, readers are informed about circumstances that often influence the characters' development, to the good or to the bad (Bakker: 10).

Setting refers to the natural and artificial scenery or environment in which characters in literature live and more, together with the things they use (Roberts: 229). It 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 behaviour 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 it is created by these (Gill:106).

There are two types of setting: physical environment and emotional environment or atmosphere (Little: 96). Physical environment deals with the story-taking time and place, while emotional environment or atmosphere is the mood of the story.

By analysing the setting of the story, the writer will get better comprehension. The setting influences the main characters very much. It shapes Elizabeth's and Gerald's personalities, actions and the way of thinking. The different story-taking place: American and China, will be clearly revealed that it shapes and influences Eliz and Gerald in different way.

## **B.2. Characterisation**

Edgar V. Roberts and Henry E. Jacobs in their Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing, revealed that 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 behaviour. Through dialogue, action, and commentary, author capture some of the interactions of characters and circumstances (143). Therefore, a character is a reasonable facsimile of a human being, with all the good and bad traits of being human (56).

Furthermore, in Mastering English Literature, Richard Gill stated that characters in novels have been specially created by author. In doing so, he select some aspects of ordinary people, develop some of those aspects whilst playing down others, and put them together as they please. The result is not an ordinary person but a fictional character who only exists in the words of novel (90). The qualities of this fictional character can something be found in the physical appearance, the character's actions and activities, what the character himself says and thinks, the other characters say or think about him, and the author says about him (Roberts: 147-8).

Consequently, the characters of Eliz and Gerald as Pearl S. Buck presented in Letter from Peking is a picture of ordinary people. Clearly, it is a portrait of ordinary people in everyday life. They meet each other and since they come from different cultures, they undergo an adjustment.

Meanwhile, it is significant to understand characters' traits. A trait is a typical or habitual mode of behaviour (Roberts: 144). In doing so, the development of characters throughout the story will be concealed.

### **B.3. Plot**

Plot is the sequence of incidents or events of which a story is composed (Perrine:43). We understand that there is interrelationship between incidents and character, within a total design of the story. In another word, characters must go through a series of actions and incidents, which in total make up the story (Roberts: 57).

According to Sylvan Barnet, Morton Berman and William Burto in An Introduction to Literature: Fiction, Poetry, Drama; plot has structure of exposition (setting forth of the beginning), conflict (a complication that moves to a climax), and denouement (the outcome of the conflict or the resolution) (13).

Consequently, analysing plot is significant in accordance to get deeper comprehending about the movement of the story. Indeed, we will be able to understand how the characters develop and grow in the whole story. Thus, the writer attempts to be able to reveal the adjustment process of Eliz and Gerald: the starting point, the clash and the cause, finally the result.

### **C. Cross-cultural Psychological Approach**

According to Rene Wellek, the relation between literature and psychology is separated into : the psychological study of the writer (as type and as individual), the study of the creative process, the study of the psychological types and of literature upon its readers (audience psychology) (81). In other words we can use psychology to interpret and evaluate literary works. Therefore, the writer employ psychology for elaborating the appreciation of the story.

Psychology is defined as the systematic study of behavior and mental life. To say so, it is the study of mind and behavior (Roediger: 6). Thus, the applying of cross-cultural psychological approach is significant in uncovering the mind and behavior of Eliz and Gerald in developing their adjustment. Related to this analysis, the writer considers the relevant study in Cross-cultural Psychology that is appropriate is cross-cultural interaction.

## **C.1. Cross-cultural Interaction**

### **C.1.1. Meeting Others**

In meeting people with different cultural background, meaning that a person meets a stranger. Simmel (1950) described that a stranger is a person simultaneously 'within' and 'without'. Although physically present and sharing the same environment, the newcomer is not acquainted with the others present and does not know how they are likely to respond, either verbally or non-verbally (Smith and Bond: 164).

Furthermore, Herman and Schield (1961) proposed that the immediate psychological result of being in a new situation is lack of security. Ignorance of the potentialities inherent in the situation, of the means to reach a goal, and of the probable outcomes of an intended action leads to insecurity. Accordingly, Berger confirmed that concern for gathering useful information about the other is heightened because one knows so little about him or her (164-5).

### **C.1.2. Communicating Across Cultural Lines**

Briefly, according to Watzlawick, the act of communication involves transmitting messages to another person who translates those messages by giving them meaning. These messages may be sent by conscious intent or not, and include information about both



the content of the message and the relationship among those communicating (172).

The consequence of transmitting messages may not be what one or both of the of the people involved, anticipated. At this point one or both people to the communication become 'mindful' of their communication and must decide how to respond. They may withdraw from the interaction, adopt a new routine, or process the impasse by explicitly confronting the difficulty. These forms of response themselves meet with responses from other, and together they constitute an ongoing negotiation of the relationship. Effective communication, then, means that the outcome of the process continues to meet the needs and wishes of the people involved.

Often, people face communication breakdown in communicating across cultural lines. People living across cultural lines constantly find surprises and the human response to surprise is to search for explanations. Furthermore, Berger (1987) argued that the discovery of an explanation for the unusual behaviour of the other will reduce our uncertainty and make the other's behaviour more predictable. The intercultural problem, of course, is that the person explaining the other's behaviour has his own cultural guidelines for interpreting the surprising behaviour. Thus, until people from different cultures become more knowledgeable about

the other's cultural code, the cycle of misattributions will continue (176-8).

### **C.1.3. The Consequences of Cross-cultural Contact**

Separation from previous support networks, climate differences, increased health problems, changes in material and technical resources, lack of information about daily routines and so forth all exist on the migrant. These problems serve to distract the new arrival from the culture-learning task, and deplete the energy and motivation necessary to master the communication process. Thus, they may lead people involved into cultural shock (192).

One possibility as a response to an integrative social context is a set of open attitudes (McCrae and Costa, 1985; Sampson and Smith, 1957) that enable a person to mediate -- 'select, combine and synthesize the appropriate features of different social systems (Bochner: 29).

Adler stated that in the encounter with another culture, the individual gains new experiential knowledge by gaining new perspectives and outlooks on the nature of culture. Throughout the transitional experience the individual is presented with differences and complexity. When differences cannot be ignored, they become distorted. This distortion gives rise to emotions that each person must come to understand experientially. In so doing, learning, self-awareness, and personal growth take place.

Moreover, Fontaine (1990) analysed that in intercultural marriages, partners must be cognizant of their partner's cultural heritage, and they must accord that heritage legitimacy in their dealings with one another (Smith and Bond: 202-3).

#### **D. Cultural Approach**

The initial identification of cultural involved in cross cultural interaction is essential. We then use this set of assumptions about the other to guide our behavior towards them and to structure our interpretation of their behaviour towards us. As Berger (1987) proposed:

To interact in a relatively smooth, co-ordinated, and understandable manner, one must be able both to predict how one's interaction partner is likely to behave, and, based on these predictions, to select from one's own repertoire those responses that will optimize outcomes in the encounter (164).

Accordingly, sharing the other's culture is extremely helpful because people from different cultures possess different role expectations, situational understandings, implicit theory of personality, and event sequences.

In doing the analysis, the writer employs this approach in order to support in comprehending Gerald and Elizabeth's cultural background. Finally this comprehension will play a great role in interpreting their adjustment.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **ANALYSIS**