

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **A. Background of the Study**

Being rich and powerful are the dream of most people. Yet, as human nature, they also have natural characteristics of never being satisfied with what they have got, and the eagerness of being satisfied always becomes the shadow, which always follows the human history. This feeling of unsatisfaction will motivate the people to become selfish in order to become richer and more powerful than before or than others. It is what is called then as greediness – greedy for wealth and power.

The fulfillment of material needs is the strongest impulse to reach and sometimes leads to ‘no matter what it takes’ in order to get what they want. Greediness will shape the quality of man to be selfish and cruel, because not only will he try hard to get what he wants but also he will fight with all of his might even by using a bad or tricky way. They will grasp others’ rights forcedly to win their obsession of something.

In some condition richness is also built by the power that one has by manipulating the authority that has been given to him. He

uses his power of authority to pile up his luxuries for the status he wants to maintain. It is not so different also with the fact that sometimes wealth brings the power. The wealthier people and the more powerful are mostly they are in the position as rulers of the lower class. The power will increase as the wealth rises.

Talking about human characteristics and the reality that happens in life are interesting topic in literary works. Many authors are inspired with these and start to write about the story of human action and interaction. Some of the works are written based on their own experiences while some are merely imaginations. The later belongs to fictional stories. Nathaniel Hawthorne among others belongs to the type that wrote the novel based on his own experience.

Nathaniel Hawthorne is one of the greatest American writers. He was born in Salem, Massachusetts, an old whaling port where his family had lived for generations. His great grand father, presided over the witch trials, and was notorious for his severity and prejudice against the accused. The area where he lived at that time was the area of the New Englanders, who claimed themselves as the Puritans. There are many happenings there that were connected with the witch-hunt as well as the Puritan culture. Living there had made him understand the condition of his place –

he was the witness of many happenings that occurred during the Puritan time. His works are inspired by the reality of his family's background and his entire life, which he spent in New England. The setting of *The House of the Seven Gables* is New England from which the people and the customs are reflecting the Puritan life.

*The House of the Seven Gables* is one of his novels that is inspired by his own experience of life. The author's knowledge of New England has given an important contribution to the story. The reader of the story will find a vivid description of life in New England with all its stark realities of pride, greed, generosity, love and hatred. This novel talks about a Puritan family and its generations, which takes place in New England in the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

The people there are considered as religious or good people because their deeds based on the instruction in the holly Bible. This Puritans of New England is ironically used as the background of the novel to show that most of the people at that time are very enthusiast to search for wealth. Colonel Pyncheon – one of the main characters in this novel – who is rich and powerful, is also a Puritan that has been introduced or well known in this religious community.

Besides the characteristics of the Puritans, the event of witch-hunting in 1692 becomes Nathaniel Hawthorne's source of inspiration dealing with the problem of greediness. Here, the

author uses the greediness of man as the main idea since greediness has been the root of the problem of life in the history of man.

Human greediness has taken the biggest part of the story in this novel. Greediness has the capability of blinding one's heart and will force him to slander, kill and unconsciously even break the family ties. These facts have led into chaotic situations. It is a kind of situation when every thing is disorganized. It starts with the sudden death of Colonel Pyncheon and follows by the breaking of the Pyncheon family ties because of the quarell among the members of the Pyncheon family to get as much wealth as they can from the Colonel's possessions.

In the twentieth century, the greediness becomes more and more obvious. Facing a modern age as a competitive world many people do not hesitate to do many negative things in order to satisfy all their needs

The matter of greediness is the most interesting part in *The House of Seven Gables*. The author uses the Pyncheons and their mansion as a monument of human wickedness caused by the greediness that dwells in one's heart and mind. The monument here is to remind the next generation about the chaotic situation that is made by the greediness.

## **B. Statement of the Problems**

The problems to be analyzed are formulated as the followings:

- a. What is the greediness in the story?
- b. How is greediness explained from the viewpoints of the intrinsic, psychological and sociological?

## **C. Objective of the Study**

This study is designed to reveal and analyze as the above questions, as answered in the following point:

1. To describe the factors from the society and the family background those influence the greediness of the Pyncheon.
2. To describe greediness from the viewpoints of intrinsic, psychological and sociological approach.

## **D. Significance of the Study**

*The House of the Seven Gables* represents the general human condition that is never satisfied with everything they already have. They will try many ways either legally or illegally to satisfy their desire. The writer is interested to see the problems of greediness and how people reduce greediness.

Further, the writer hopes this analysis will make the readers aware that greediness can be the downfall of human beings. And by reading this analysis of the world of literature the writer also hopes that this analysis will enrich the knowledge of the readers in literature.

#### **E. Scope and Limitation**

The writer will only limit her study on the analysis of the influences, conflicts, and the impact due to greediness. The analysis starts from analyzing the intrinsic element. The setting, characters and plot. The setting is used because it plays an important role in emphasizing the condition of the society at that time. The setting here can be a social background which emphasizes on the social context of the characters such as their family, their condition of the society, or even the religious hold by the environment, including the mood and the atmosphere of every action. Based on the setting the writer will seek the influential factors of greediness. The characters are used to give a brief description of the novel's characterization; thus the reader will understand what the thesis writer tries to observe. The plot, which is described by a flashback technique, is used to show the conflicts of the story related to the problem of greediness.

## **F. Theoretical Background**

In composing the analysis, the writer starts from the intrinsic elements that is the setting of the novel, which emphasizes on the atmosphere and symbolization of event or things due to greediness, the characters of Colonel Pyncheon, Gervayse Pyncheon and Judge Jeffrey Pyncheon. Therefore, the intrinsic approach is applied to the analysis.

To support the analysis, concerning to the topic of the analysis, the writer uses the psychological background of the characters that regards to the psychological background of the characters and the sociological background to help in analyzing especially the influence of the surrounding society.

## **G. Method of the Study**

In working on the thesis, the thesis writer reads many books, articles, encyclopedia, and other printed materials related to the works of Nathaniel Hawthorne, particularly *The House of the Seven Gables*. The writer also tries to find information from any particular books dealing with the literary theories and approaches that will be used in the analysis. The novel is the main sources of the analysis whereas other sources are used to support the study.

Regarding the subject of the study, descriptive analysis is used to convey the problems of the work through dialogues, events and actions of the story to the analysis of the thesis. Descriptions of the problems are clarified by the information found in the library.

#### **H. Definitions of Key Terms**

**Greediness:** the obsession of someone in wealth and power that forces him to act legally or illegally to seize the obsession.

**Chaotic situations:** a kind of disorganized situation happens in the family which is caused by greediness, such as some of the members of the family are obsessed to add their wealth that make them slandering, and killing the others.

**Witch-hunt:** an operation to vanish all the witches, based on the Bible "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" (Exodus 22:18). This operation takes place in the Massachusetts' colonial in 1692.

**Document:** the document that states the Colonel Pyncheon's ownership of a large and wide land – forest. It is



**important since it can be the source of the  
incalculable wealth to the Pyncheon.**

## **CHAPTER II**

# **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RELATED STUDIES**