

CHAPTER I

I N T R O D U C T I O N

I.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

It is known that literature of a people is the principal element of its culture. Graham Little said that "literature contains the record of the people's values, their thoughts, their problems and conflict - in short, their whole of life. Whether transmitted through the spoken or the written word, literature may fairly be regarded as the chief art of mankind. Through this art, each generation tries to pass on to the next the best which has been thought and said" (1966 : 01).

It is true if it is said that good literature adds our understanding of life in the world around us. As William J Long wrote,

"Literature is the expression of life in words aspirations ; it is the history, and the only history, of the human soul. It preserves the ideals of the people; and ideals -- love, faith, duty, freedom, friendship, reverence -- are the part of human life most worthy of preservation .
(1964:08)

In this case, we will come to the subject matter of literature as wide as human experience itself. We can see that reading literary works can be used as a means of having experience. It is quite true if said that "through reading, we can experience centuries, places and lives other than our own. Further if the author is a good writer, he can sometimes make us experience more vividly events that we have experienced personally". (Sundell, 1974:225)

One of the literary works is prose fiction. The novel is the longest form of prose fiction, in which we may find the most ordinarily wide range of writing. A novel creates a whole imagined world through description and dialogue, and may thus explore basic human issues in depth.

Graham Little presented a clearer description :

" A novel will display realism of background and atmosphere. It will present us with a clear picture of its times, and lead us to feel that we know its setting as if we lived in it ourselves. The social, as well as the physical setting, is part of this background. ... realism of presentation of setting is still vital to the success of the work (1968:102).



It also shows that novel can be used as a vehicle for the expression of moral and social ideas. That's why the writer chooses novel in her thesis writing.

The Victorian age was one of the periods of English literature. The interest lays chiefly in portraying the people and events of the bustling current scene. Some writers used the novel to protest against the abuses in social and economic life that had resulted from a century of too rapid growth (Long, 1964:524).

J Long stated that the Victorian Age was tempered with the moral concern and social criticism characteristic of the age of Queen Victoria. Themes were not only emotional, but moral and social. Perhaps it was in this period that the novel had its wide social influence. The 'giants' of the Victorian period include Charles Dickens, W.M. Thackeray, George Elliot and Anthony Trollope. All of these writers present pictures of society painted on wide canvasses. All of their novels show a moral concern and a desire to assess values and criticise society (1964 : 524).

One of the Victorian novelists is Charlotte Bronte, who was born on April 21, 1816. She wrote four novels - Jane Eyre (1847), Shirley (1848), Villette (1853), and The Professors (1857).

In this thesis the writer chooses Charlotte Bronte because her style is the autobiographical method of

narration whereby the main character tells his or her own story. She also uses the devices of the stream of moralism to represent a stabilising factor of her heroines. Strong passion, stern morals, hard life - these are the real stuff of the novels. The happy endings are there, but these are not just the wish-fulfilment that some critics have considered them to be (Pollard, 1968:03).

Like her other novels, Jane Eyre which will be discussed in this thesis also shows the characteristic of her work ; that is an exploration of how a woman comes to maturity. It is about the adventures of the central character which end with a marriage. The story really examines that period of life in which its heroine (and in secondary place its hero also) makes the most influential decisions of her life ; the period which arouses the most extreme emotions of which her nature is capable, and brings out and tests the strength of the moral principle which rule her (Craik, 1968:71).

Jane Eyre records a life of a woman who has moral strength resulting from a severe background. Being an orphan, Jane has never experienced happiness and she has never received warm and sincere affection from her parents or other relatives. As a child who has faced cruelties and hardships in her life, Jane Eyre becomes a bold woman. She always tries to do the right things in facing reality.

Even, when she falls in love with a married gentleman, she is not swept away by her emotions and is still aware of her social status as a governess. On the other hand, she realizes that it is disgraceful to be the mistress of a married man who has an insane wife.

They have to be separated because of their different social positions and the fact that he has already had a wife. However, at the end of the novel, they are eventually married after he had nothing and crippled after the death of his mad wife.

In this case, the writer sees that the hero, Jane Eyre, is still over shadowed by her frightness of being fall in poverty again. The writer finds that Jane is facing the conflict through her whole life ; firstly when she is undertreatment of her aunt, then after getting a better position as a governess, she falls in love with a married gentleman whose wife is insane. Jane comes to the dilemma : she has to preserve her self-esteem and reputation in society - she determines to break off the love relationship for the sake of her status as a governess - although her heart is broken, or she will loose her self-esteem and social status - belongs a mistress and unrespectable woman - for the sake of love. These are the facts that the writer wants to discuss in this thesis.

Jane Eyre conveys the development of human's character which is influenced by their social backgrounds. Through this novel the writer realizes that life has its own ideal values which will limit, guide and give the right direction for our better life. Charlotte Bronte provided the real description about human life, human character and behaviour, and also the problem of life itself. Jane Eyre is the representative of a kind of a woman that really exists in society life. Because, we have capacity to be a woman who has the freedom to choose between love and her self-esteem and reputation in society. Of course, sometimes this phenomena will cause a conflict within the human mind. On one side she wants to get the happiness on her love, but, in other side she has to face the reality that as a member of society she has to preserve her self-esteem and reputation in society. If there is a contradiction between love and social status, certainly, there will be an internal conflict that is, the conflict of desire within a person. This is what the writer thought to be the main discussion of this thesis.

I.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

From this background of the study, the writer would like to state the problems which she will concentrate on,

to make the analysis easier to understand. They are :

- How does Jane's social background and position influence her character development ?
- How does Jane's attitude in facing her dilemma in order to be succeeded in her life ?
- What teaching can we get from the analysis of the novel ?

I.3. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objective of the study is :

1. To reveal the attitude of Jane influenced by her social background and position.
2. To find out how far the development of man's character depends on their position and status in society in the novel entitled Jane Eyre.
3. To know in detail about the social condition and social life of English society through the main character of the novel.

I.4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The final result of this study is expected :

1. To give a deeper insight about human problems and human characters.
2. To provide better understanding about the ideal values of our life such as the moral and

social responsibility.

3. To broaden our awareness towards the complexities in our social life.
4. To enlarge and develop our viewpoint about the reality behind our life activities.
5. To contribute the understanding of literature, particularly on Charlotte Bronte's works.
6. To assist and support the further analysis on Charlotte Bronte's works.

I.5. SCOPE AND LIMITATION

In writing about limitation of this study, the writer of this thesis hopes that she will be able to clarify her topic specifically. However, she wants to limit herself only on the analysis of Jane's dilemma, love and social status. In the novel, Jane Eyre, the author emphasizes that social status and the position of people in society play an important role in the development of one's character.

I.6. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

As the basic means of analysing the novel, the writer of this thesis uses the literary approach which considers every work of art as a unity.

Dealing with the objective of the study in analysing

Jane Eyre, the writer of the thesis also uses Rene Wellek and Austin Warren's Theory Of Literature . This book concerns with the intrinsic and extrinsic approaches to the study of literature.

Wellek and Warren stated that the natural and sensible starting-point for work in literary scholarship is the interpretation and analysis of the works of literature themselves (1956:139). It means that the writer of this thesis wants to make the intrinsic analysis based on the intrinsic elements of the novel itself. In this case, the writer will only limit the discussion on character and setting which are representative enough to achieve the understanding of the main topic of the study.

While the extrinsic approach is used to interpret literature in the light of its social context and its antecedents (Wellek and Warren, 1956:73). To make a deeper analysis, the writer considers that the use of sociological theory is really needed.

I.7. METHOD OF THE STUDY .

The study is a library research. The writer collects the data and information supporting the analysis from the reference books, dictionaries, encyclopedies, or other printed materials dealing with Charlotte Bronte's works, especially Jane Eyre and its criticism.

The writer also tries to find out some information from other books dealing with the theory and approach used in analysis.

This thesis limits the analysis on the elements of the novel, particularly on character and setting. Those two fiction elements will be analyzed descriptively. So the method of the analysis is Descriptive Analysis. The result of the analysis is the description based on the data which basically concerning with the events, actions, and dialogues from the novel. Further, the quotations of the data are provided to confirm and support the analysis.

I.8. ORGANIZATION OF THE PAPER

To organize the thesis sistematically, the writer divides it into five parts. Each part named as chapter. First part or chapter I introduces us to know the background and the problem, methodology and also theoretical background which finally used in this thesis. It is also completed by the definition of key terms which guides to the understanding of the title of the thesis.

The second part (chapter II) presents the further explanation of theoretical framework as her basic to analyze the problem.

Chapter III presents the biographical sketch of the

author.

The analysis of novel becomes the part of chapter IV , and chapter V, will guide to the conclusion of this thesis writing.

I.9. THE DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Dealing with the title of this thesis, we have to know the meaning or the concept definition of the subject matter itself. It is Jane's dilemma, love and social status in Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre.

- Dilemma

The meaning of dilemma is situation in which one has to choose between two things, two courses of action, etc, both unfavourable or undesirable. (Hornby, 1974 : 241).

In the fictional works, dilemma refers to a situation requiring a choice between two equally undesirable alternatives. Every character in literature who faces a conflict of some sort also faces a dilemma, although his choices may not restricted to only two. (Shaw,1972:103)

- Love

The definition of love according to A.S. Hornby is (1) kind feeling; fondness; affectionate and tender devotion (2) warm, kind feeling between two persons; sexual

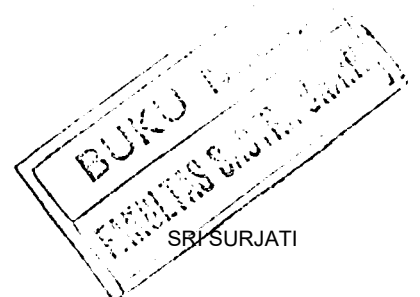
passion or desire; this as a literary subject : a love story. (Hornby, 1974 : 506).

In the novel, Jane Eyre, love refers to a warmth of a love relationship, and happiness. Being a small girl, Jane Eyre is not as childlike as other children of her age. She lives in poverty and unhappy condition. Since she has never experienced any affection from other people, she always longs for warmth relationship and protection from somebody she loves. Her love for Rochester is a part of her long struggle for self realization. In this story, the writer of the thesis finds that Jane's love is never based on property and position.

- Social Status

Social status or status is the condition of a person by which the nature of his legal personality and his legal capacities are determined, and therefore the nature of the legal relations to the state or to the other persons into which he may enter, including as commonly used, a person's condition arising out of age (as infancy or wardship), sex (as marriage), mental incapacity, crime, alienage or public station. (Webster, 1934 : 1246).

The term status belongs to the sociological one , so that the writer of the thesis also depicts the definition or the meaning from expert's opinion. Joseph



Curran Jr described the status as the rank or level of an individual or group relative to the position of other individuals, or group in society (1977:16). Joseph added that an achieved status is one that is reached by choice or effort (1977:47). In fact, both definitions have their close relationship to the discussion that is going to be presented by the thesis writer, because the topic concerns with ~~the~~ the social status of Jane Eyre in her society.