

## CHAPTER II

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Some of the light that literature can shed upon its environing society and underlying culture can extend our knowledge and appreciation of literature itself, by relating the literary work of art and its external context. In analysing internal and external context of literature, the writer of this thesis has used some theories and approaches, as the foundations for analysing the subject matter.

#### 2.1 Theories

The theories that will be used in this thesis are objective theory which concerns with the internal analysis, and mimetic theory which relates to the cultural analysis.

##### 2.1.1 Objective Theory

By using the objective theory, the writer will analyze the novel through its internal structures without concerning the external aspect or circumstances. As Abrams said in his book, 'the objective orientation' is:



the work of art in isolation from all these external points of reference, analyzes it as a self-sufficient entity constituted by its parts in their internal relations, and sets out to judge it solely by criteria intrinsic to its own mode of being (1979:26).

The point of this theory is only on the work of art without relating to the other dimension, for example like the author, the readers, the social background, etc. And for analysing it, the writer will use structuralism approach in which concern with the elements of fiction.

### 2.1.2 Mimetic Theory

The mimetic theory is stated by Abrams in The Mirror and The Lamp:

The mimetic concept- the explanation of art as essentially an imitation of aspects of the universe-...

...the mimetic concept- the reference of a work to the subject matter which it imitates... (1979:8, 10)

The 'nature' that is imitated, is the aspects of the universe. A literature as a work of art is viewed as imitation, the materials of the real world of which the work may be thought to take its subject. In other words, literature is the reflection, representation, or copy of the real life. Since a literary work offers human

problems and human action that is taken from the reality. Abrams gives a further explanation about it as:

Their character as an imitation of human actions is what defines the arts in general, and the kind of action imitated serves as one important differentia of an artistic species (1979:10).

In relation to reality alone, culture constitutes a real life itself. Culture is a social reality and exist among the society, and in literary work always describe a certain society with its culture. Thus, the mimetic theory can be applied into this thesis since the cultural life in The Good Earth is the representation of real life of the Chinese.

## 2.2 Approaches

The two theories above are not enough yet, for analysing the subject matter. The writer needs some approaches to clarify the analyzes, in this case, first structuralism approach in relating with the internal analyzes, and cultural approach which relates to the mimetic theory.

### 2.2.1 Structural Approach

Structural approach limits the study only on the work as an autonomy, in this case the internal elements

of the work. Structuralism stated in Structuralism and Semiotic as:

...a way of thinking of a world in which it relates the description of structure and perception. It is essentially the structure of wholeness, which is constructed by the relationship of the elements. The elements in the wholeness do not have their own meaning, but the meaning lies on the relationship of the elements (Hawkes, 1978).

In the Theory of Literature (1978) by Rene Wellek and Austin Warren said that literary works intrinsically consisted of elements: plot, setting, characterization, theme, style, point of view. The thesis limits the discussion on plot, characterization, and setting. Those explanations about them will presented on chapter IV.

### 2.2.2 Cultural Approach

The writer also uses the cultural approach in this thesis. Grebstein supports the idea about the cultural approach, that a literary work can not be comprehend entirely when separated from its environment, civilization or culture in which it exists. He emphasizes further that a literary work has to be studied in a broad context and not merely as a literary work in itself (1978:5). Therefore, a literary work can

not be viewed only from the intrinsic aspect of the novel. In addition to this, Daiches explains it in Critical Approaches To Literature:

...the whole pattern of a people's culture, and that in discussing literary criticism one must take into account the cultural situation in which it operates (1981:389).

From the two explanation about literary criticism and culture in context, a cultural approach can be said as an approach to see or analyse a literary work from its cultural context. This theory can be applied in the discussion of the cultural phenomenon in literary work. The cultural phenomenon is reflected from the interaction between the characters or in other words, the way they behave and also their life's values.

The word 'culture' according to Taylor in the book entitled Society and Culture :

culture ... is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. This definition includes such non-material products of group life as folkways, mores, and laws, which emerge from social interaction and serve normative function (Merrill, 1969:81).

In addition to the previous quotation, White defines culture as an organization of phenomena-acts (pattern of

behaviour); objects (tools, things, made with tools); ideas (beliefs, knowledge) and sentiments (attitudes, values) that is dependent upon the use of symbols (Merrill, 1969:81).

From the definitions of culture above, we know basically that culture consists of material and non-material. Koentjaraningrat in a book entitled Pengantar Ilmu Antropologi (1980) stated that culture consist of three subsystem, such as:

1. Culture as an organization of ideas, thought, values, norms, regulation, etc.
2. Culture as an organization of activities and pattern of behaviour in society.
3. Culture as artifacts of the product of men.

The first is called cultural system. Ideas, thoughts, values, norms, regulation are abstract, they can't be touched and located on the nature of men's thought. Whereas, the second is called social system, which concerns with the patterned human activities; the human interacts to each other which are based on certain laws. And the third is a physical form of culture which constitutes the things, as the product of men.

Similar to this opinion is the remark by Nostrand who quotes Professor Parson's statement in his article Literature in Describing of a Literate Culture, in a

book entitled The Sociology of Art and Literature by Milton C. Albrecht, that culture is a system and each system is analyzed into a set of subsystems. The first is the cultural-system focusing on "patterns" of meaning, e.g, of values, of norms, of organized knowledge and beliefs,.... The second is the social-system which focuses on the conditions involved in the interaction of actual human individuals who constitute concrete collectivities with determinate membership.

To discuss about cultural aspects in literary work, however the writer emphasizes only on the non-material culture, such as social-system focus and cultural-system focus. The social system-focus deals with organization of activities and pattern of behaviour of the characters in the novel in which how they behave reflects their culture. And the cultural system-focus is dealing with the organization of ideas, thought, values, etc relating to the values that the characters professed.

