

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I.1. Background of the study

Literature, according to De Bonald, is an expression of society. It may reflect the situation of the real life in the author's environment, for instance about custom, belief, law, morals and so on: Literature of people is the principle element of its culture. It contains the record of the people values, their thoughts, their problems and conflicts. In short, their whole way of life (Encyclopedia Americana : 1985).

Novel is among the forms of imaginative literature in our language, though it is a relative newcomer than other major literary forms like drama, lyric, ballad and epic. As Clara Reeve said that novel is a picture of real life and manners, and of the time in which it was written. Then Nathaniel Hawthorne in his preface to The House of The Seven Gables (1851), restricted the novel "not merely to the possible, but to the probable and ordinary course of man's experience". Therefore, to achieve the actual sense, novelist have employed many devices, like Hawthorne in his introduction to The Scarlet letter, give a minute account of his finding certain documents, that he claims as the basic of his novel, tied

with a faded red ribbon and gathering dust in a custom-house (Kennedy, 1983 :183).

Nathaniel Hawthorne was an American novelist, short story writer as well as essayist. Richard H.F. stated that Hawthorne was a great writer in absolute terms, and many men have written about him (1971 : 75). While Hawthorne's son, Julian Hawthorne said, " My father was two men, one symphatetic and intuition, the other critical and logical; together they formed a combination which could not be thrown off its feet." Hawthorne was unique in the literary New England of his day - a grimly honest storyteller fascinated by the perversity in human affairs central to his hereditary Calvinism. Everything about old Puritan world was so central to Hawthorne's interior life that the mildest eccentricities of behavior he observed in Salem still showed the grip of the past (Alfred, 1992 :54). The Historian, Susman, stated that Hawthorne's deep interest in the Puritan past no mere antiquarian concern. His fiction turned on historical situations, frequently centering on problems that haunted many of the original Puritans.

The Scarlet Letter is the masterpiece of Hawthorne. This novel, in sense, one of historical novels that takes the background of the puritan life, in New England. We can find some historical characters prominent in the

early annals of Boston like Governor Bellingham, The Reverend John Wilson, Mistress Hibbin and Master Brackett, the jailer (Stewart and Bethurum, 1954 : 56). According to Stewart and Bethurum that is more truly than any other book in American literature, The Scarlet Letter embodies Puritan ideals and the Puritan way of life. It is, therefore, an important historical document. Through his novel, the author portrays the life situation of his environment. The story is based on an entry in Hawthorne's notebooks, "The life of a woman who by an old colony law was condemned to wear the letter A sewed on her garment, in token of her having committed adultery" (The Encyclopedia Americana, 1976 :887). It is clearly, this work was inspired by the reality of Puritan life and reflects as well as the society life on that time, however it is an imaginative work.

Hawthorne had a concise style that is effectively used, often through symbolism and allegory, to interweave the emotions of his characters with impact of their surroundings (Encyclopedia Americana, 1976:885). In his use of symbols in The Scarlet Letter, Hawthorne has made one of his most distinctive and significant contributions to the growth of American fiction. This work usually regarded as the first symbolic novel to be written in the United State (Robert, 1960 :56). On The Scarlet Letter,

we can find Puritanism sense described by the character, plot, setting, and the theme.

In this study the writer wants to focus, to analyze Puritanism through the elements of the novel on Hawthorne's The Scarlert Letter. The reason in choosing this topic is that she wants to understand more clearly the Puritanism described by Hawthorne in this novel through the elements of the novel. In the writer's mind, it is very interesting to study about Puritanism illustrated by the author in this novel. By this way we can understand Puritanism in New England through this novel.

I.2. Statement Of The Problem

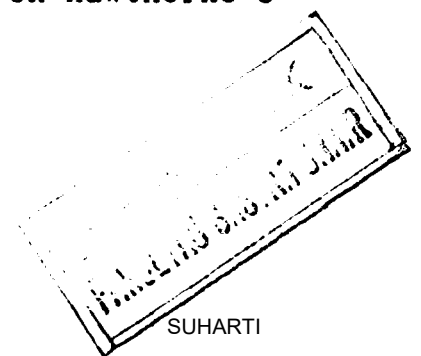
From the background of the study, we come to the problem of this study, it is :

- How does the author depict the Puritanism in The Scarlet Letter?

I.3. Objective Of The Study

Based on the problem of the research, then the objectives of this study are :

- to know and to find out Puritanism on Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter



- to observe the elements of fiction that reflect Puritanism

I.4. Significance Of The Study

The significance expected from this study are :

- to get the experience in literary research
- to add understanding on Puritanism in New England reflected by The Scarlet Letter
- to give more information and understanding to the readers about Puritanism in Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter
- as the basic for further literary research dealing with Hawthorne's work

I.5. Scope And Limitation Of The Problem

The problem of this thesis is limited in Puritanism reflected by the plot, the character, the setting, and the theme of the novel. It means that the analysis will be concerned into the events, the characterizations, the place and the time, and also the basic idea of the novel reflecting Puritanism.

I.6. Theoretical Background

This study is going to discuss about Puritanism on The Scarlet Letter. The understanding of Puritanism was a

reform movement within English Protestantism that emerged in the 16th century. The movement proposed to purify the church of England and to invigorate the daily practice of religion. While Puritanism in England was brought by the Puritans of England that moved to America (Encyclopedia Americana, 1976 : 28-30). To understand about Puritanism more clearly, it will be explained in chapter II.

The analysis concerns the elements of the novel stressing in the plot, characters, setting and the theme. In this case, the writer attempts to dig up as much as possible about Puritanism on those elements. It means that she uses Literary Approach by focusing in the plot, the characters, the setting and the theme of the novel. This Approach belongs to the Intrinsic Approach. Besides, she also must understand clearly about the historical background of Puritanism in New England in order she can describe Puritanism in this novel.

I.7. Methodology Of The Study

In doing the research, the writer writes purely on library research involving many sources about Puritanism history in America. And she refers to some references that have something to do with what she is going to examine. She collects data and informations to support the analysis from the reference books, dictionaries,

- Doctrine of The fall of man : every living person was guilty of sin because of Adam's disobedience in the Garden of Eden.
- Election : is one of the Puritanism doctrine to elect the good people to do the duty in the government.
- Election Sermon : was preached on the inauguration day of the newly elected Governor, a customarily observance coinciding also with the opening session of legislature.
- Predestination : the exercise of divine sovereignty by which the order of the world and particularly the salvation of men is determined.
- Puritanism : a religious revival in the sixteenth and seventeenth century in England and America.
- Saint : has generally been restricted by ecclesiastical usage to those persons whose lives were remarkable for personal virtue and eminent service to religion.
- Salvation : is a theological term signifying a state of healing and fulfillment.
- Scaffold : is the place to punish someone commit-

ting something shameful in the Puritanism context.

- Sin : a violation of the laws or will of the deity or other higher powers, natural or supernatural, to whom or to which man is ultimately responsible for his conduct.
- Scarlet Letter : the symbol of punishment adultery sin by writing the letter A, standing for adultery, which has to be worn in the dress on adulterer for the rest of life.
- Theocracy : a government directed by religious leaders, presumably deriving their authority to govern from God.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK