

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I.1. Background of the Study

People are free to have their own reasons why they study literature, but the writer believes that they all agree or at least most of them agree that literature have a load of precious values about life. Graham Little in his book *Approach to Literature* stated that,

"This is because the literature of a people is the principal element of its culture. It contains the record of the peoples' values, their thoughts, their problems and conflicts---in short, their whole way of life." (p.1)

The writer thinks it is true what is stated by Graham Green, because when we read a literary work, especially the prose, there are found many similarities if we compare it with the real life, whether it is the characters, the events, or may be the setting, or may be other elements.

From what we have discussed above that literary works carry many similarities comparing to the real life. If it is true, the writer may assume that it is not wrong to expect that any one who study literature will automatically study life. But, from what the writer has observed, the reality is the ones who study literature don't really have many differences to the ones who don't study literature. It seems that literature does not change any of what they see toward life. From this reality, the writer is not sure any more

that literature can help us studying life, even though in literature we can find the imitation of the real life.

But, it is still the freedom of the people to study literature, and to have their own reasons why they study it. May be for some of them, literature is an object of a scientific study, because they think anything can be scientified. They try to find out, why it is interesting, why it is so shocking, why it is so touching, or other whies. Or, maybe they study literature because the society assume that the ones who study literature will be regarded as the ones who have intellectual mind.

John Steinbeck is one of the American writers who ever won the Nobel Prize for literature, the highest a writer can receive. John Steinbeck who was born in Salinas, California, on February 27, 1902, is the type of author who likes to know his material first hand he is not content to narrate a story which has no basis in fact. To get the material of his novel he is willing to stay in the place (where the setting takes place) with the people (the characters) and also try to integrate himself through the real life of the real characters. (Roberts, 1966: 5-8)

John Steinbeck is known as an author who is much affected and colored by his surrounding. The place where he lives, around Salinas, California, seems to give him an everlasting inspirations for his stories. The area does not only provide him with a setting for much of his best works,

but it also gives him a deep respect for nature, for simple living, and for natural people. (Carlsen, 1979: 582)

Of Mice and Men is one of John Steinbeck's novels which is concerned with the exploitation of migrant workers. This novel, in its play version won the Drama Critics' Circle Award. The title *Of Mice and Men* comes from the Robert Burns' poem "To a Mouse," whose theme is that the best-made plans of mice and men often go awry. The novel describes how the dreams of two migrants workers, George and Lennie, for a house and a little plot of ground is destroyed. The social structure can be blamed, in part, for the tragedy, for it should not be as difficult as it is for the workers to raise the money they need. But the tragedy is even more directly brought on by the strong but mindless Lennie, who unintentionally kills the things he loves. The relationship between Lennie, the animal side of human nature, and George, the mental side, is forcefully portrayed in this novel, which the Nobel Prize Committee called a "masterpiece." (Carlsen, 1979: 584)

In this thesis, even though the novel *Of Mice and Men* talk much about the working class people, it is not going to discuss about them in specific way. The characters of this novel are not just the representation of class-worker people, but they represent more, that is the oppressed people, regarding that people who suffer in this novel are not only the class-workers. The relationship among the characters in

this novel is really an interesting thing to be discussed, and the aspects of the human relationship are the prominent ones.

Solidarity is one among human relationship aspects that is seen in this novel. When we read this novel, it is obvious, in the relationship of the two main characters, Lennie and George, there is a strong solidarity in their friendship. And if we study further through the relationship of character(s) to character(s), we will find more about solidarity. From these phenomena the writer thinks it is reasonable to regard solidarity as one of this novel's ideas, and to discuss it in this thesis.

I.2. Statement of the Problem

Even though *Of Mice and Men* is a short novel, or may be a very short one, it doesn't mean that it doesn't contain precious things to be discussed. Actually, when we read the whole chapter, we will find this novel carries many values concerning the human relationship.

Solidarity, as an aspect of human relationship, is one of this story ideas that can be seen clearly in this novel. The characters, the interactions of the characters and the events are the prominent elements that may support the analysis in exposing the idea of Solidarity in this novel. For these reasons, there are problems to be analyzed further:

1. How do the characters together with the plot exposing the idea of solidarity in this story?
2. What kind of solidarity is in this story?

I.3. Objective of the Study

Derive from the assumption that literature contains the record of the people' values, moreover their whole way of life, and since solidarity is one of the people' values, this study tries to analyze solidarity as one of the story,s ideas.

Solidarity, in this novel, is described as a complicated matter. Solidarity is not really a simple matter when it has to face with many interests of the people in society. Each of the character in this story has their own weakness, problems and desires, and when they have to meet each other there are conflicts of interest occur among them.

To expose solidarity as the idea of this story, the writer tries to find what elements of the story that may help the writer to get what is really meant with solidarity, specifically in this novel. After reading the whole chapter, the writer find two intrinsic elements which are so prominent that also have a great contribution to expose solidarity. They are the characters and the plot. From these two intrinsic elements, this study then tries to get the meaning of solidarity specifically in this novel.

I.4. Significance of the Study

By analyzing *Of Mice and Men* as one of many literary works, hopefully we can get something valuable to enlarge our understanding about literary work. *Of Mice and Men* is a story that carries many aspects of human relationship. The interactions of the people in this story are depicted vividly.

Since literary works are believed to convey many valuable things about humanity aspects of the people, the writer still hope that this study may give some contributions to understand life better.

I.5. Scope and Limitation

In order to keep the study stay in the expected field, a limitation of the analysis is required. The study would be concentrated only on the aspects related to the main study.

As stated in the objective of the study, the aim of this study is to find the idea of solidarity of the story, and to support the analysis there are elements to be involved. In order to keep the study stay in the expected field and to support the analysis, there are two intrinsic elements to be analyzed. They are the characters and the plot. The writer intentionally concentrates and limitates the study only on these two intrinsic elements in order to keep the understanding about the idea of solidarity of this

story uninfluenced by other ideas of solidarity outside the story.

I.6. Theoretical Background

The interpretation of the readers of a literary work are not the same for one to others. May be it is good to read what the critics' say about a work of literature, or to read the biography of the writer, but is it really a must to have them to help us interpreting a work of literature? and is it unworthy to have our own interpretation of a work of literature?

"A writer probably intended his work to have a certain emotional effect, but there is no way in which he can ensure that it actually has that effect. In these sense, then, liberty of interpreting is our prerogative as readers. It means freedom of judgment of personal decision whether or not the writer has actually performed what he seemed to promised." (W.W. Robson, 1982: 39)

For what is stated by Robson, there is no guarantee that a work of literature can has the effect as the author meant to be when it is read by the reader, no matter how succeed he actually has performed his skill, nobody can force his ideas towards the readers of a work of literature.

Reading the biography of the author, or the critics' opinions of the work we read, may be helpful when we want to interpret a work as what is most of the readers interpret. But, the writer think that it is not a sin and it is still worthy for a reader to interpret a work by his own under-

standing, since there might be other interpretations about a literary work, and if there is other interpretations, it means something new, something different.

For this reasons, the writer uses the Objective Theory to support he analysis, a theory which is based only on the intrinsic elements of a work of art. This theory tries to put aside the external points of reference that may influence the readers in understanding a work of art.

I.7. Method of the Study

This thesis, just like any other thesis that try to analyze a work of literature, is based on the Library Research. Besides the work itself, there are some books included to support the analysis, especially the books which carry the theories that may support the notions of the writer about the object of the study.

Since the analysis is based on the Objective Theory, the writer thinks it is proper to use Descriptive-Interpretative Method to uncover the object of the study. Interpretation is the basis of this method. The writer tries to interpret the object and then describe it in his analysis.

I.8. Definition of Key Terms

In order to help the readers of this thesis the writer regards, it is necessary to provide the definition of some key terms.

Idea : Something imagined in the mind; a central meaning or purpose.

Solidarity : Unity resulting from common interests or feelings.

I.9. Organization of the Paper

This thesis will be divided into four chapter. The First Chapter is the Introduction. It contains sub chapters that are: Background of the study, the reasons of the thesis is written; Statement of the problem; Objective of the study, and its Significance; the Scope and Limitation of the analysis; the Background of the theories that are going to be used and the method of the study. It also contains some key terms which may help the reader to understand the study clearer.

The Second Chapter is the Theoretical Framework. This chapter will describe the theories and approach which is used for the analysis.

The Third Chapter contains the analysis of the study. There will be two sub chapters, the first is the analysis of the elements of the story that may support the second sub chapter. The second chapter itself is the analysis of the idea of the story, in this case is solidarity as the idea of the story.

The Fourth Chapter is the conclusion. It contains the results of what have been discussed in the third chapter.