

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

II.1. Related Theories

The complexity of element in literary work has resulted such a number of theories and approaches to analyze literary work. Danziger, Johnson and Abrams separated those theories into 4 points:

1. The theory of imitation (a mimetic theory) which treats literature in its relation to real life (describe literature in relation with something outside itself). And it has been the mimetic theory of Plato and Aristotle.
2. The theory of effect or pragmatic is defining literature in relation to its public.
3. The theory of expression that looks at literature in relation with its creator, the author.
4. The theory of structure (Danziger and Johnson) or objective theory (Abrams) which regards the work of art in its relation to its form (in their internal relations).

Besides there are numbers of approaches dealing with internal and external aspects.

Regarding that explanation above, in this chapter then is made separately for it contains the reasons of my using the theory in this thesis. In describing it, I have chosen *The Expressive Theory* and *The Mimetic Theory*. And I also use *The Sociological Approach* in analyzing the work.

II.1.1. The Expressive Theory

In his preface to The Lyrical Ballads of 1800, Wordsworth announced that "poetry" is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings. He added that Poetry is the overflow, utterance, or projection of the thought and feelings of the poet; or else (in the chief variant formulation) poetry is defined in the terms of the imaginative process which modifies and synthesizes the images, thoughts, and feelings of the poet (The Mirror and the Lamp, 1976 p.21-22).

Thus the definition of expressive theory by Wordsworth gives an obvious picture that in expressing what is inside the author's mind, including his feeling, his idea, his wish, his will, his dream, etc., the author needs a way in revealing it. The way in which he can thoroughly present some message or at least some fact that concerns much with the social life and its problems.

The writer should describe the event in such a way that those who read his work will have a clear understanding and interpretation of what is actually meant by the writer and therefore may learn a lesson from what they read about reality life. A good clear description will help us knowing what is inside the author's mind, so that the readers are able to understand the essence of the story. As stated by Abrams:

The work ceases then to be regarded as primarily a reflection of nature actual or improved; the mirror held up to nature becomes transparent and yields the reader insights into the mind and heart of the poet himself. The exploitation of literature as an index to personality first manifests itself in the early nineteenth century; it is the inevitable consequence of the expressive point of view (The Mirror and the Lamp, p.23)

As Keats affirmed in the same book p.26 that "I never wrote one single line of

Poetry with the least shadow of the public thought," and so did Hobson. She knew that her writing would be unpalatable reading for the general public, still she worked almost exclusively on that book. Before starting work on the book, she introduced her idea to the publishers with this remarks: "I've got an idea for a book that the magazines will never look at, the movies won't touch, and the public won't buy But I have to do it" (copied from Current Biography 1947, p. 313). For this reason I do choose *The Expressive Theory* as one supporting approach in analyzing *Gentleman's Agreement*.

I should also state that to understand a story, besides knowing the sequence of events presented, the reader also needs to have a better knowledge about the writer; either the history of him, the background of his life, and his time being, or his family, etc. In getting a clear description all about these, the readers may turn back to the way the author writes the story, so that the reader can understand the essence of the story and the exact message that he wants to say through his story. Finally, a quotation from Abrams might clarify it:

A work of art is essentially the internal made external, resulting from a creative process operating under the impulse of feeling, and embodying the combined product of the poet's perceptions, thoughts and feelings (The Mirror and the Lamps, p. 22)

II.1.2. The Mimetic Theory

Based on the statement in the background of the study that literature represents life, a social reality, whereabouts the author himself is a member of a society, Laura Z. Hobson surely was not imitating the real life to her story

only, but also brings us, the readers, a reflection as well, so that we can see the life she has undergone. From this fact, we should look to the mimetic theory to take a better understanding about the novel. As Abrams' explanation about the mimetic theory in his book referring about:

The historical genesis of art is traced to the natural human instinct for imitating, and to the natural tendency to find pleasure in seeing imitation (p.10).

Mimetic orientation is the explanation of art as essentially an imitation of aspects of the universe (p.8).

Similar to Abrams, William Grace, referring to the mimetic theory, both of them say that human beings have a tendency to imitate life. Emphasizing Abrams' opinion, I also quote from Grace's:

There is a natural instinct of men to imitate thing concerning life (Response to Literature, 1965 p.8).

II.1.3. Theory of Domination

As America's citizen, Jews stand in a minority group. Their existence caused some difficulties faced. The thing can be understood since in sociological approach there is a theory of domination referring the related issues of prejudice and discrimination in the novel. The theory is mentioned that when dominance is achieved, at least for a period of time, the dominant group's treatment of the subordinates and their norms regulating intergroup interaction define social distance among (William D. Cranos, 1969 p.269). From this point, then it is a fact that the Jews as an object of minority became a victim by the majority group.

From the book entitled The Jews: Story of a People, 1992, says that the eternal accusation that the Jews had killed Christ of God was no longer tenable except among children and the most ignorant, and no longer a weapon acceptable to civil governments. Yet, the base for anti-Semitism was there. It says that the cheap and stupid forgery entitled The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion, tells about the secret minutes of a Jewish group who planned to overthrow the Christian countries and establish a Jewish dictatorship over the world. Eventhough it is touching only a tiny minority of American people, but still it continues. The Jews have discovered that the Gentile facilities were closed to them.

For the Jews, America is *di goldeneh medina* (the golden land). During the two thousand years they had spent in the Diaspora of the Italy, Germany, Poland and Russia, the Jews had refused to adapt. But in America they adapted almost immediately. They worked all day and sat up nights, in adapting to a different life. Years passed since the Jews came to America, their life was getting better. And because of so great the Jews pressure on the medical schools, a limitation of Jewish applicants to colleges came into being. Henceforth the anti-Semitism began in the United States.

II.2. Related Studies

Studying on prejudice and discrimination toward American Jewish in our English Department has not been studied before. Concerning the related issues, the thesis may regard as the first study with the main source at the novel *Gentleman's Agreement* by Laura Z Hobson. In that case some further

analysis upon prejudice and discrimination from another point of view or another literary works still need to be further studied as such a sequel action for this study mentioned.

CHAPTER III

THE RELATED ASPECTS OF THE NOVEL *GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT*