

## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Good literature should give valuable perceptions for the readers. It must be useful for them.

Furthermore, according to Alfred Edward Housman :

"Good literature continually read for pleasing must, let us hope, do some good to the readers : must quicken his perception though dull, and sharpen his discrimination though blunt, and mellow the rawness of his personal opinions" (In Bartlett, 1980 : 692)

From this definition, actually, we can say that literature should give something useful to the readers. If we read a certain literary work continuously, we can get an enjoyable experience and we will be able to get something from it.

Through literature, our perception about life can be better. We know exactly that we get a precious lesson from it, new experience and new perception about life; however, we have to learn more about what we have got from that perception. Besides, through literature, we can make a difference between one thing to another, between right and wrong, also between good person and bad one although that difference we make does not have an obvious



limitation. We do not know deeply about those things; why it is bad, why it is good, etc. Literature can also make its readers more mature because they can get new things and new experience that they have never gotten. Their opinion about a certain thing is broader than before. Their concept about life increase and they have better personality.

Novel is one form of imaginative literature which becomes the favorite of both writers and readers. Broadly defined, a novel is a book length story in prose, whose author tries to create the sense that while we read, we experience actual or real life. A novel can entertain us richly, and yet the finest novels do more than help us pass the time. According to Lionel Trilling :

"The greatness and value of the novel has resided in its involving the reader himself in the moral life, inviting him to put his own motives under examinations suggesting that reality is not as his conventional education has led him to see it"  
 (In Kennedy, 1983 : 187)

So, by reading a novel, we can involve ourselves in a life that we have never been through. We can be a person who has his own motives or his own judgement to the characters in the novel and it will give us a lesson that actually, life is very complicated even we have to learn that from our environment not only from conventional

education, such as school. By reading a novel, we can get a moral lesson directly that we cannot get in our daily life.

Pearl Sydenstricker Buck is one of the American novelist. She has got a Pulitzer Prize for her novel The Good Earth in 1932. In 1938, she also received a Nobel Prize in literature for her novel The Fighting Angel and The Exile.

The Rainbow is her last novel. It concerns with the world of theater. In this novel, she takes her readers into that fascinating world, a world as shifting and glimmering as a rainbow. The story of this novel is also interesting. It talks about a fifty-year-old man named Henry Potter who is rich but cannot enjoy his life. He is sick of what he has had and wanted to find something new in order to make his life more interesting and more passionate. He tried to change his way of life from business to theater.

In this thesis, the writer wants to focus her attention in describing the theme of the novel The Rainbow. As the writer has mentioned above, the novel The Rainbow talked about a different world -the world of theater- which is regarded as a strange world by some of us as readers and we almost not know it. Besides, The

Rainbow not only talked about Henry Potter and his conflicts, but also about his relationship with the other characters who are involved in that Broadway play production. The subject matter of the novel, The Rainbow is so different and the writer of this thesis rarely finds the subject matter as Henry Potter experienced. Because of that reason, she wants to understand further about the content of the novel The Rainbow since it is interesting to be dealt with. Furthermore, in order to make this understanding more deeply, the writer will try to express what message or central idea behind the subject matter of the novel The Rainbow.

In this novel, Pearl S. Buck tried to portray the adventure of Henry Potter to overcome his inner conflicts. In that adventure, Henry Potter made a relationship with people who have a different status and way of life. In short, Henry Potter's conflicts are interesting to be dealt with. In the theater, Henry Potter met new things and new persons which were very different with his own world. As a reader, the writer of thesis seems to be able to find something useful in that adventure. For this reason, she will try to reveal what message the author wants to express to her readers by presenting the figure of Henry Potter.

Henry Potter is the main character in this novel. He was caught up in the conflicts which happened among three persons : Elena, the amoral star of the play; Aubrey Dane, the enthusiastic young director; and Stella, Aubrey's wise and gifted wife. His life really changed and sometimes his beliefs clashed with his new world. The foundations of Henry's life were crumbling, unless he could hold tight and remember to the woman he loved, that is his own wife, Ethel.

Henry Potter becomes a central character in this novel. He plays a very important part in building and determining the story of this novel. It focused on his problems and the way he solved those problems.

The problems faced by Henry Potter are rooted in his inner conflicts. We have recognized those inner conflicts in the beginning of this novel. As a main character which becomes a central character in this novel, Henry Potter's inner conflicts have influenced the story of this novel. Besides that, Henry Potter has built the story of this novel through his inner conflicts. Because of his inner conflicts, Henry Potter decided to back a play which he has never done before. Then, gradually, Henry Potter involved in social conflicts with the director. Therefore, the writer will try to describe the theme of

this novel especially through Henry Potter's conflicts.

### 1.2 Statement of the Problems

There are two problems that appear to understand the theme of this novel :

1. What conflicts are experienced by Henry Potter and what are the causes of those conflicts?
2. How does the theme of this novel develop through Henry Potter's conflicts?

### 1.3 Objective of the Study

Objective of this study is to describe the theme of this novel so that the readers can understand the story of this novel and get the message expressed by the author.

In order to know and understand the message or the idea in the novel, The Rainbow, the writer will make a theme analysis through the character of Henry Potter and his conflicts, so that it will lead her to understand the message and the theme of this novel.

### 1.4 Significance of the Study

This thesis is hoped to give understanding about the study of literature. By emphasizing the analysis on the

character of Henry Potter and his conflicts in describing the theme of the novel, hopefully, this thesis can help the readers to understand about human life and its problems.

Since in our academic circle, there has not yet been a student who deals with the work of Pearl S. Buck, so the result of this study is expected to be useful for further studies on Pearl S. Buck's works.

#### 1.5 Scope and Limitation

In order to make the analysis clearer, more specific and more directed, the writer of this thesis focuses on the theme analysis. Nevertheless, to make easier for the writer to make an analysis of theme, she will emphasize the analysis on the character of Henry Potter which will lead her to understand his conflicts and his relationship with the other characters. From the analysis, the writer will finally know the significant meaning of the theme of this novel.

#### 1.6 Theoretical Background

In analysing the novel, The Rainbow, the writer uses the formalistic approach. She uses this approach since in the analysis she focuses on the form and the content of

this novel. So, she will see this novel from its existence as a work of art.

Regarding the approach that is used in this analysis the theory which will be appropriate in the analysis is structural theory. The writer will use this theory since through this theory, she will be able to analyze the elements of the novel, those are the elements which support her to understand the theme of the novel The Rainbow.

However, in order to be able to make out the theme of this novel, she will also use psychological theory as the supporting theory. She will use this theory so that she can look deeply at and understand Henry Potter's inner conflicts.

### 1.7 Method of the Study

This thesis is a library research. The writer collects the data and information to support the analysis from dictionaries, encyclopaedies, or other printed materials dealing with Pearl S. Buck's works especially The Rainbow. The main source of this study is, of course, the novel itself, The Rainbow. Some relevant theoretical books are used to support the understanding about literary theories which are used as the basis in analysing the novel. There are still more references used in this thesis



and those can be found in the bibliography.

The method used in the analysis is the content-analysis method. The content-analysis method is a method which emphasizes on the subject matter of a work of literature. In order to do that, the writer of this thesis will focus on the text itself. In other words, in order to describe the theme of the novel, the writer will focus the analysis on the intrinsic elements of the novel, particularly plot, setting, and character. Those three elements, of course, are the elements supporting the content of the novel, and it will lead her to see the meaning of the novel, The Rainbow.

#### 1.8 Definition of Key Terms

- Character** : Character (in literature) is a person represented in a story, novel, play, etc. (Shaw, 1972 : 71)
- Conflict** : A clash of actions, ideas, desires, or wills (Perrine, 1970 : 59).
- Theme** : The central and dominating idea in a literary work; or the message or moral implicit in any work of art (Shaw, 1972 : 378)
- Rainbow** : Lexically, rainbow is arch containing

the colours of the spectrum, formed in the sky when the sun shines through rain (Cowie (ed.); 1989 : 1034). It is so beautiful.

According to the novel, The Rainbow, rainbow refers to the theater world which is a world of shifting and glimmering as a rainbow. Rainbow is pots of gold beyond the horizon - that is all any play can be (184). Rainbow in this novel, symbolizes the play where people are dreaming themselves into creatures they were not and could never be (69).

### 1.9 Organization of the Paper

The writer of this thesis organizes this thesis into four chapters. The first chapter is the introduction. In this chapter, she explains the background why she chooses Pearl S. Buck's The Rainbow as the novel which is going to be analyzed, and why she is interested in analysing the theme of the novel through Henry Potter and his conflicts. Besides, she also states her objective of the study and her purpose in writing this thesis.

In chapter two, the writer will elaborate the approach and the theory used in this thesis which are suitable for the analysis.

The third chapter is the analyses. This chapter consists of two parts : the analysis on the structure and the analysis on the content. The first part will talk about the elements of the novel, The Rainbow which is related to each other and support the theme of the novel, that is plot, setting, and characters. While in the second part, the writer will sum-up the analysis in the preceding part. This part will be the part of summing-up in which the writer will make clearly and briefly the analyses in the first part, especially Henry Potter's conflicts, and then she will analyse the theme of the novel, The Rainbow by giving explanations about the meaning of that theme.

To end up the discussion, the writer will make a conclusion about what she has explained in the previous chapter. Besides, she will also reveal the essence of her analyses which is done in the preceding chapter. The writer puts the conclusion in the last chapter.

## CHAPTER II

# THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK