

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

In reality, literature is tied to situation and condition in the society. It is implied in the statement proposed by Wellek and Warren (1989) in their book entitled *Teori Kesusastraan* as follows:

“Literature is a social institution, using as its medium language, a social creation. (...) But, furthermore, literature ‘represents’ ‘life’; and ‘life’ is, in large measure, a social reality, even though the natural world and the inner of subjective world of the individual have also been objects of literary ‘imitation’. The poet himself is a member of society, possessed of a specific social status: he receives some degree of social recognition and reward: he addresses audience, however hypothetical. Indeed, literature has usually arisen in close connection with particular social institution (...). Literature has also social function, or “use”, which cannot be purely individual.” (1989: 94)

Based on the statement above, Wellek and Warren elaborate on their reasons of why literature and society are tied with each other. First, literature is a social institution that uses human-made media, which what we called as language. It is a logic consequence because literature needs language to be able to be well-transferred to society. Second, literature represents life, in a wide term it is known as a social reality. Even though it is merely an author’s creation, the life in literature could be said as an imitation, arranged based on reality. Third, author is a part of social system. By implication the author is tied in a particular social status and connected with the readers who acknowledge and appreciate the author’s

existence through his works. Fourth, literature has connection to certain institutions. Some people often use poetry in their rituals, certain customs or in mere traditional games. Fifth, literature has its social function.

The relationship between literature and society is supported by Jabrohim in his article entitled “Sosiologi Sastra: Beberapa konsep Pengantar” in *Metodologi Penelitian Sastra* (2003). Literature is not an autonomous thing; instead it is something that is tied to the condition and situation in which the work is created. All poets, authors or artists generally are living in certain time and space. Time and space have genuine form in a society or in a social condition in which at the same time loads a lot of living problems. There are many elements interacting in a society, tussling one to another (Jabrohim, 2003).

Literature has many functions. Damono says that literature serves the picture of life, and the life alone is a social fact (2002). It can explain why author uses literature to pour out all of his living problems in society. Through literature, readers may find and figure out one or more problems occurred in society. In other words, literature has function as reflection of reality.

Sardjono (in Ratna, 2005) explains that literature is a translation of human’s journey when human is encountered with events occurred in life. Thus, literature is viewed as a statement of attitude, feeling or thought owned by authors about matters happened in their society. An author

should be able to choose a matter that is interesting and nudges them personally as the issue of their work. In viewing a same issue, two or more different authors may have different reaction and perception. In this case, literature is turning into something subjective, personal and irreplaceable. briefly, literature may function as a reaction or perception toward one particular thing in reality.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that there is a connection between literature and society. As the effect of this connection, literature can be examined through the perspective of sociology of literature. Damono (in Ratna, 2005) states that literature can be viewed from the perspective of literature by examining the social aspects in the literature. The social aspects include society's problem toward its environment, the structure of society, institution, and social process. Damono explains further that if literature is connected to social structure, family relationship, class conflict, and so on, thus sociology of literature can be used as research perspective. Ratna (2005) says that in the scope of sociology, literature is understandable by discussing the social aspects in the literature and the connection between literature and society.

Based on a thorough observation, it can be said that narrative text and historic text have something in common. Both are constructed in past time, and it will be very obvious if the sentences in the text are in English. Almost all of the sentences use what so-called 'past tense' in English grammar. That pattern is used to show the reader that one thing or event

has happened or existed in the past. This similarity shows that even though narrative text (fiction) and historic text (fact) are different in terms of characteristic, but they both are similar in terms of structure. As logic consequence of this similarity, there is a possibility to misread the text because it is hard to identify which one is a fiction and which one is a fact.

Apart from the similarity they have, literature and history have a completely different function, but complement each other. This idea has been proposed by Jauss (1982) in his work entitled *Toward an Aesthetic of Perception*. Jauss says that the history of literature (a series of literature phenomenon) has a role as a method of literature reception, and put literature and history as two entities that complete one to another. Hutcheon (in Ratna, 2005) states that history is only able to tell us about the past; meanwhile, literature is able to talk about the past and also about the future because literature is created based on contemplation that makes it be more thoughtful compared to history that tells us about past without any contemplation.

The difference above is narrowed down into two kinds of literary work related to history; namely historical literature and historical novel. Both are different according to the concept of relationship occurred in between, in accordance with the period of time. Historical literature (or historical text or genealogical text) is a literary work that contains historical elements, such as chronicle and tale. Historical literature is closely related to traditional society (Ratna, 2005). Historical literature

also has dual functions, namely as social reflection as well as social document.

On the contrary, historical novel is a tradition genre of modern literature that came in to being in Europe in the 19th century. This genre tells about certain historical figures (character) or events. A historical novel tends to be fictive. The historical figures and events are used merely as historical fact that becomes the basic issue of the story, while the way the elements arranged in a story are all imaginative. Historical novel, compared to historical literature, is less functioned as social documentation, but it is more prominent in the aesthetic function as fiction writing, without omitting the historical function at all. Historical novel is not merely giving an understanding to history, but also giving a dialectic between past time and the contemporary of literary society in general (Ratna, 2005).

Lukacs earns a notion that the characteristics of historical novel besides what have been mentioned above are psychological elements and attitude so that the characters and events in the story can represent certain time period (Ratna, 2005). Ratna further emphasizes that historical novel has some significant characteristic as a genre. The first characteristic is that historical novel has always dual functions, aesthetic function and social documentation. The second characteristic is that history in this kind of novel is functioned as the supporting background only, not as the main issue as it is on historical writing. The third characteristic is that historical

novel tends to be sociological instead of historical, and the last characteristic is that historical novel gives the readers another perspective. It is not like historical fact that considered to be having a reliable truth. In other words, historical novel invites the readers to see one event differently from what historical text has proposed.

The literary work that is going to be analyzed in this research is a novel entitled *The Ghost* written by Danielle Steel (1997). This novel is available in two different forms: printed and audio. Conventionally, the novel *The Ghost* is published by Delacorte Press and can be bought online at www.amazon.com. This novel has been translated to several languages, and the Indonesian version entitled *Belunggu Masa Lalu*. Readers can also download the audible version of this novel in www.audible.com.

The Ghost is categorized as historical novel because it meets the characteristics mentioned by Ratna earlier. This novel contains two important events in the history of American civilization in the 18th century. The first one is about the huge number of immigrants moving to America in the 18th century. And the second one is about the American Indian war.

Historically, America is “a nation of immigrants”. It is said as the nation of immigrants due to America was built and dwelled by immigrants from all over the world (Brinkley et al., 1991). These immigrants were mostly from European Countries. They came to America for many reasons

and purposes. They left their homeland to get better economic condition; in addition they also wanted to get freedom in choosing their religion and their willingness to free themselves from political oppression, or any other reasons that were aimed for a better life.

Moreover in the 1680s, a huge number of immigrants arrived in America. Thousands of people ran away from Germany to avoid war. Many people came from Ireland to avoid government's despotism. There were also Scottish who came to America basically due to the worsened of economic condition in their country. Also the forced migration of Africans made the enslaved blacks nearly equaled whites in numbers. This condition caused the entire Atlantic seashore to be dwelled by a lot of native people and immigrants in the 1700s (Mann, 1990).

In his book entitled *Letters From an American Farmer*, De Crevecoeur (1990) describes America as "The New Land" that provided a lot of opportunities and unlimited freedom to all of the immigrants who came from Europe. He says that the American society was not divided into particular classes and groups. It was the society that came from many nations and countries in which the success was gained through hardworking, diligence and honesty. His description of America triggered the imagination of European readers about America as "The New Land".

Through the information they got from many similar books to *Letters From an American Farmer* about "The New Land", the immigrants from Europe and Africa came to America were hoping that

they would get a better life in America. That hope was poured in to one philosophy called American Dream, such as cited as follows:

The distance between the reality of life and the hope for a better one is also the basis of American Dream. The promise of America for the million of Immigrants, and still is, not that things are better there, but that they could be. (Brinkley et al., 1991)

The American Dream, also known as The Dream of Success, had given a big influence to Americans' lifestyle. The American Dream was an idea of a better life pursued by Americans through greatly overflow resources of America, the equality of right and chances, and hardworking. But unfortunately, the way people achieved the American Dream had changed as the time went on. They finally used all manners, positive or negative, in getting a better life (read: American Dream). (Commager, 1971)

The topic of this research as discussed above is the concept of American Dream and how the author's perception of American Dream in the 18th century as suggested in the novel.

1.2. Scope of the Research

A limitation to the research is important in doing research to avoid the excessive analysis on information and data that were not relevant to the main topic of the research (Semi, 1993). The limitation of the research is also done to get straight to the topic in order to get answer to the questions proposed in this study.

Thus, in doing this research, the researcher limited the investigation in the social aspects in the novel. American Dream is an abstract concept embedded in mind but can only be traced by means of observing tangible phenomena. The phenomena are presented in form of utterance and action performed by a character. Therefore, this research is investigating social factors in the novel that are in relation with American Dream.

The research is exploring intrinsic and extrinsic elements of literature in investigating the social factor in the novel. The intrinsic elements discussed in this research are setting, characterization and plot, and the extrinsic elements discussed in this novel are author's biography and social condition in America in 18th century.

1.3. Research Questions

The research is geared toward answering the following questions:

- a. What is American Dream as revealed by the character in the story?
- b. How does Sarah Ferguson achieve her American dream?
- c. What is the author's perception on American Dream in 18th century as suggested in the novel?

1.4. Purposes of Research

Based on the research questions, the purposes of this research are as follows:

1. To reveal American Dream performed by the character in the story.
2. To show the way in which Sarah Ferguson achieves her American Dream.
3. To show the author's perception about American Dream in the 18th century as suggested in the novel.

1.5. Significances of the Research

Many research have been conducted for a long time to examine the concept of American Dream. All of them started from assumption that American Dream does really exist and American had tried so hard to achieve it. Even so, study of American Dream will not cease until people consider American Dream as something that is no longer exist. So, this research is valuable as reference to the study of American Dream in the future.

Theoretically, the significances of this research are to enrich and expand the study to contemporary literature. Besides, the result of this research may help the readers in expanding their knowledge about analyzing literature using sociology of literature. Meanwhile, the practical significance of this research is that the result of this research is useful as a reference for next similar research.

Furthermore, the result of this research can be valuable for those Americans in determining the purpose of their life. The way Sarah Ferguson got success in achieving American Dream shown in this research will be effective to be a good role-model for Americans.

1.6. Research Methodology

This research uses qualitative method in collecting the data. Basically, this method requires the writer to collect the information about the object being researched; through books or others visual aids in library or reading room (Semi, 1993). According to this method, data in this research are collected from various letterpresses, especially books and literature related to the problem being discussed. The primary data of this research will be the novel *The Ghost* written by Danielle Steel and the secondary data will be obtained from the reading related to the issue of American Dream in the novel. This secondary data is going to be used to support the interpretation of the primary data.

1.7. Clarification of Terms

- a) Sociology of literature: According to Damono (2002) sociology of literature is an approach to literature by considering the social aspects in literature.
- b) American Dream: American dream was first expressed by James Truslow Adams (1931), an American writer and historian, as cited from his book *The Epic of America*, American Dream is a dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement.

1.8. Organization of the Paper

The organization of this paper is as follows:

Chapter 1 : Introduction

Consists of eight sub chapters, namely Background, Scope of the Research, Research Questions, Purposes of Research, Significances of the Research, Research Methodology, Clarification of Terms and Organization of the Paper

Chapter 2 : Review of Related Literature

Consists of four sub chapters, namely Previous Research, Theoretical Framework, American Dream, and Historical Facts Related to the Novel *The Ghost*

Chapter 3 : Research Methodology

Consists of four sub chapters, namely Methodology, Data Collection, Data Analysis and Data Presentation

Chapter 4 : Discussion

Consists of three sub chapters, namely American Dream in the Novel *The Ghost*, Sarah Ferguson in Achieving Her American Dream and Author's Perception on American Dream in the 18th Century

Chapter 5 : Closing

Consists of two sub chapters, namely Conclusion and Suggestion

Appendices, and

References