

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The present writer decides to choose a novel for her thesis because it provides complete and detailed information in describing characters, setting and plot. As it is stated in Shaw's Dictionary of Literary Terms, novel is '...a lengthy fictitious prose narrative portraying characters and presenting an organized series of events and settings.' (Shaw, 1972:257)

In this thesis the present writer would like to analyse Diana Abu-Jaber's work. Diana Abu-Jaber, one of the famous Arab-American woman writers in the twentieth-century, is consciously concerned '... about deepening already debilitating stereotypes about Arabs in America (<http://www.aaiusa.org/definition.htm>). She wants to show that most Western people's prejudice about Arabs who deal with radical movement or terrorism is not true. In her novels, she presents the portrayal of Arab' lives through their culture, family affection or love. Furthermore, she tries to counter attack the stereotypes of Arabs by portraying Arabs immigrants's life in America. Even though they lived

thousands miles away from their countries but they retain their own culture and tradition, so that the readers can enlighten their knowledge about the beauty of Arabs through its culture and tradition.

Crescent has been chosen by the present writer because it portrays an Arab-American woman who tries to deal with her problem. Diana Abu-Jaber describes vividly the protagonist, Sirine, a woman of half Iraqi and half American who becomes aware of her own cultural identity. She lives in America but she feels comfortable to live in the Middle Eastern community in Los Angeles. Her way of living is orientated to the Middle Easterners, which affects the protagonist in finding comfort in her life. This issue makes the present writer interested in analysing the story written by Diana Abu-Jaber.

The present writer would like to analyse this novel through formalism. She would like to analyse the theme through the portrayal of a woman protagonist, as she is in agreement with Kenney's statement in How to Analyze Fiction which says that '...character is obviously of major importance for theme.' (Kenney, 1966: 94-95).

In analysing this novel, the present writer focuses on the character's actions and speech, because they play prominent roles in revealing the theme. 'In portrayal of a character's behavior, the writer presents the actions and speech of the character, allowing the reader to draw his or her own conclusion from what the character says or does.' (<http://www.myschoolonline.com>)

The present writer would like to analyse the theme of the novel since she finds that the theme is an important factor in fiction. Through the theme, the readers are able to analyse and understand the story they have read. The theme also makes the readers get

the main idea of the novel. It is mainly for this reason that theme is ‘...its controlling idea or its central insight. It is the unifying generalization about life stated or implied by the story.’ (Perrine, 1974: 102)

Therefore, the present writer wants to show that the theme of this novel deals with how the surroundings may shape someone’s comfort.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In analysing the theme through the woman protagonist in Diana Abu-Jaber’s novel, the present writer would like to state the problems as follows:

1. What is the theme of Diana Abu-Jaber’s Crescent?
2. How does the protagonist reveal the theme?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1. To show the theme of Diana Abu-Jaber’s Crescent.
2. To analyse how the protagonist reveals the theme.

METHOD OF RESEARCH

In writing her thesis the present writer uses library research as the method of research. Firstly, she reads her primary text: Diana Abu-Jaber’s Crescent. Secondly, she collects data to get additional information about her topic from the internet. Thirdly, she finds some theories to support her analysis. Then, she reveals the theme through the protagonist’s actions and speeches, which lead to the conclusion from the research she has made.

ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

This thesis is presented in three chapters. Chapter One is the Introduction, which contains the Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Methods of Research and Organization of the Thesis. It is followed by Chapter Two, in which she presents her analysis of the theme through the protagonist in Diana Abu-Jaber's Crescent. Chapter Three contains the Conclusion of what the present writer has analysed in the previous chapter. The thesis ends with the Bibliography and the Appendices, which contains the synopsis of Crescent and the Biography of Diana Abu-Jaber.