

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The present writer has chosen to analyse the work of Booth Tarkington, an American novelist, who won Pulitzer Prize for The Magnificent Ambersons (1918) and Alice Adams (1921). Newton Booth Tarkington is a prominent American novelist, playwright and short story writer during the early twentieth century.

For the reason above, the present writer chooses to analyse the portrayal of the major characters in Booth Tarkington's The Magnificent Ambersons because portrayal is one of the most important elements in this novel. It is 'Dramatic representation (*Portrayal*), which comes from Latin words meaning, "to draw forth," "to depict" that refers to the portrait (characterization) of individuals presented in literary selections...' (Shaw, 1972:295).

The present writer prefers discussing a novel rather to a play or a poem. She is of the opinion that a novel contains more details than a play or a poem. As J. A. Cuddon mentions, 'novel is a type of genre which contains a

lot of descriptions, it is a format story or prose narrative containing characters, action, and incident and perhaps a pet'. (Cuddon, 1979:430-431).

The present writer is interested in reading The Magnificent Ambersons because the story tells about the characters' lives based on the condition of the people and the event, which happened at that time. Besides, from this novel she learns about important historical event in the United States of America (the Industrial Revolution), which influences the life of the people at that time. By analysing the contrasting of the major character portrayal in pre Industrial Revolution era with the Industrial Revolution era, the present writer wants to show how the major characters' portrayal is affected by the society in the Industrial Revolution era by using historical background as the supporting element. This historical background is suitable to use because The Magnificent Ambersons is a novel, which is set at the beginning of American Industrial revolution. This novel sets the history of the Industrial Revolution that clearly influences the life of the people at that time.

The Industrial Revolution can be defined as the application of power-machinery to manufacturing and it brings the development in the industrial and technological sectors. This is an important historical event and begins in Great Britain during the 1700's. It spreads to other parts of Europe and to North America in the early 1800's. By the middle 1800's, industrialization had become widespread in Western Europe and northern United States. (<http://mars.acnet.wnec.edu/~grempel/courses/wc2/lectures/industrialrev.html>). At that time there are a lot of inventors who create new inventions, which brings the development of the industrial and technological sectors. One of the

characteristics of the Industrial Revolution is the development of the inventions.

The World Book Encyclopedia explains that the first industrial revolution outside Europe, which occurs in Britain, is the United States of America. By the late 1800's the United States of America becomes the largest and most competitive industrial nation in the world.

The present writer sees that George and Eugene, who are the major characters of this novel, represent the society. They both live in the same era, but their reaction toward the industrialization is different. They are portrayed in contrast. Eugene can adapt to the situation. As a result, Eugene can broaden his business and he is getting rich then. While George's family do not take this opportunity to develop their business and it causes a negative effect to their social status that is falling from the upper class to the working class.

The Industrial Revolution does not always have a good effect but it also has a bad effect. It can make the life of the people better, but it can also make it worse. It depends on how people adapt themselves to the situation.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In order to analyse the novel; the present writer states the problem as follows:

1. How does the author portray the contrast of the major characters in The Magnificent Ambersons?

2. How does the Industrial Revolution's influence give a contrasting result to the major characters?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purposes of this writing are:

1. To show how the author portrays the contrast of the major characters life in The Magnificent Ambersons.
2. To show the Industrial Revolution's influence give a contrasting result to the major characters.

METHODS OF RESEARCH

The present writer uses the library research. She begins by reading Booth Tarkington's The Magnificent Ambersons and several books to support the topic. She continues to analyse the primary text by using some references and materials from the Internet, which can help her in writing this thesis.

ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The present writer divides her work into three chapters. In Chapter One, the present writer presents the Introduction, which contains the Background of the Study, the Statement of the Problem, the Purpose of the Study and the Method of Research. In Chapter Two, the present writer analyzes the portrayal of the major characters in the Industrial Revolution era in Booth Tarkington's The Magnificent Ambersons. In Chapter Three the

present writer writes a conclusion of her analysis. The thesis ends with the Appendices, which consists of Synopsis of the novel and the Bibliography.

