

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

I have decided to analyse a novel because it builds the readers' imagination more than the other genres do and it gives more detailed and complete information, which makes it easier for the readers to enjoy and understand the story. According to Harry Shaw in Dictionary of Literary Terms, a novel is ' a long fictitious prose narrative portraying characters and presenting an organized series of events and settings. Every novel is an account of life; every novel involves conflict, characters, action, setting, plot, and theme'. (1972 : 257).

I choose Julie Otsuka's work, When the Emperor Was Divine, because this novel has won one of the Sixth Annual Asian American Literary Awards. Otsuka explores the inner lives of a Japanese-American family's experience in an internment camp during World War II. Otsuka could describe the story very well because she had a lot of knowledge about interment camps by researching historical resources on the internment camps and consulted her own family as well as drawing from their experiences.

I use formalism to analyse this novel. I think that theme is the most prominent element in this novel because it is the core of the story. It is the

basic element that the author has before he starts to write this novel. According to William Kenney, theme is ‘the meaning the story releases; it may be the meaning the story discovers. By theme we mean the necessary implications of the whole story, not a separable part of a story’. (1996 : 91).

To support my analysis, I choose to analyse some characters to help me to reveal the theme. William Kenney states in his book ‘ As a major element in fiction, character is obviously of major importance for theme’ (1966 : 94). According to Murphy, there are several ways to present characters, namely personal description, character as seen by another, speech, past life, conversation of others, reactions, direct comments, thoughts, and mannerism. (1972 : 161-173).

Statement of the Problems

Having read When the Emperor Was Divine, I propose to state the problems as follows:

1. What is the theme of the novel?
2. How do the characters help to reveal the theme of the novel?

Purpose of the Study

The analysis is done for the purposes as follows:

1. To show the theme of the novel.
2. To show how the characters help to reveal the theme of the novel.

Method of Research

I will use formalism in my thesis. The method that I use is library research and I also look for some references in the Internet to support my study. Having finished reading Otsuka's When the Emperor Was Divine, I decide which aspect to be analysed. Finally, I draw a conclusion of what I have analysed.

Organization of the Thesis

I divide my thesis into three chapters. It begins with the Preface and the Abstract. The first chapter is the Introduction, which consists of the Background of the Study, the Statement of the Problem, the Purpose of the Study, the Method of Research and the Organization of the Thesis. The second chapter is the analysis of theme of Julie Otsuka's When the Emperor Was Divine through the characters of the novel. The third chapter is the Conclusion. I end my thesis with the Bibliography and Appendices, which consist of a synopsis of When the Emperor Was Divine and the biography of Julie Otsuka.

