

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Novel is a form of literature that is widely used by writers to express their feelings and thoughts. I decide to discuss novel as I find that novel is the most interesting genre compared to the two others; drama and poetry. According to Harry Shaw in his book, Dictionary of Literary Terms, a novel is "... a lengthy fictitious prose narrative portraying characters and presenting an organized series of events and setting ... every novel is an account of life, every novel involves character, action, setting , plot, and theme" (Shaw, 1972 : 257). In a novel, a writer can give a more detailed description of the events, characters, plot, setting, and also other elements of the novel than in other genres. Most of the time, novel is an easier genre to be understood and absorbed compared to drama and poetry in its language and story. I personally find that novel is much easier and much more enjoyable to read when compared to drama and poetry. Those are some reasons why I decide to discuss novel.

I would like to discuss Walter Dean Myers' Fallen Angels. Myers is an African-American writer who has won many awards in the literary world; he is the first winner of the Michael L. Printz Award, a National Book Award finalist

and Boston Globe-Horn Book Honor Book. Fallen Angels itself is the award-winning novel of American Library Association Best Book for Young Adults and Correct Scott King Award. Fallen Angels is about a group of young men experiencing the Vietnam War. Richie Perry, the protagonist and narrator of the novel, joins the army to escape from his problems, his alcoholic mother, and even his future. This novel is mostly filled with conflicts.

The reason why I choose Fallen Angels for my analysis is mainly because there is praise for it. "...In conclusion it was an excellent and one of the best. I would recommend this book to anyone who enjoys very realistic war novels. This book has an excellent plot, but it also has a fair amount of realistic and descriptive gore. This book too has a good amount of cussing". 'All in this entire book is one that should not be passed over because of its historical relevance and brilliant writing by Walter Dean Myers'. 'Overall it is a great book. It is not just another war story. It has a message and a lot of meaning too.' (Taken from www.amazon.com/gp-products/customersreview/html.) In addition, I choose this novel because the story has a realistic view about the Vietnam War.

I would like to discuss the theme as theme is one of the most prominent elements in the novel. "Theme is the central idea and dominating idea in a literary work and the message or moral implicit in any work of art" (Shaw, 1972: 378). For my analysis, I try to reveal the theme through conflicts, because the conflicts in this novel give a lot of contribution in revealing the theme.

Conflict is a very important element in any novel. In Dictionary of Literary Terms, Harry Shaw states that conflict is "the opposition of persons or forces upon which the action depends in drama and fiction..." (Shaw, 1972: 91)

Furthermore, Shaw identifies three types of conflicts: social conflict, internal or psychological conflict and physical conflict. The first one, physical conflict, is a conflict of man versus forces of nature. The second one is social conflict; a struggle between man and man or it can also be a struggle between man and society. The last one, the internal or psychological conflict, is a struggle between desires within man himself (Shaw 1972: 92).

In this thesis, I discuss the theme through inner and social conflicts as I find that these two conflicts seem to be presented very strongly in this novel, which helps to reveal the theme.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

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

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1. To show the theme of the novel.
2. To show that the conflicts help to reveal the theme.

METHOD OF RESEARCH

In analyzing my thesis, I use the formalist approach which requires a thorough analysis of the novel. In addition, I employ the library research. First, I read Fallen Angels as the primary text, and then I read several reference books that are relevant and support this research. Finally, I explore some internet sites to

get some relevant information for my thesis. Last but not least, I analyze the theme of the novel which is revealed through conflicts.

ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The thesis starts with the Abstract, which contains a brief explanation of the thesis in Indonesian. In Chapter One, I present the Introduction, which consists of the Background of the study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, Method of Research and Organization of the Thesis. In Chapter two, I present the theme analysis through conflicts. I conclude my analysis in Chapter Three. The thesis ends with the Bibliography and the Appendices, which consist of the Biography of Walter Dean Myers and the Summary of Fallen Angels.