CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

I have chosen a novel to analyse in my thesis because it is a popular reading text. A novel also gives more detailed descriptions of the events as well as the characters. Therefore, I can understand the story easily when I read a novel. Harry Shaw states in *Dictionary of Literary Terms* that a novel is 'a lengthy fictitious prose narrative portraying characters and presenting an organized series of events and settings.' (Shaw, 1972: 257).

As stated in the Preface, I would like to analyse Rahna Reiko Rizzuto's novel, *Why She Left Us*. Rahna Reiko Rizzuto is a Japanese-American novelist. In her writing she mostly talks about the lives of the Japanese during and after World War II. I am interested in reading *Why She Left Us* and feel encouraged to analyse it because it is based on her family's experiences in the internment camps in Santa Anita racetrack during World War II. I feel curious to know what has happened during the time, and obviously Rizzuto has presented vivid descriptions of the dark time in the lives of the Japanese-Americans in her novel. This is the reason why the novel is worth reading and studying.

There are no literary works without characters. Characters are created by an author from the real characteristics of human beings. In *How to Analyze Fiction,* Kenney William states that 'A character is obviously relevant to us and to our experience if he is like ourselves or like others whom we know. … A character is relevant if there are a lot of people like him in the real world.' (William,1966:27). Having read the novel, I am of the opinion that the major characters of the novel play an important role in this novel. They relate to one another and determine the flow of the events of the story. Furthermore, they are all described as depressed people. Rizzuto creates them so realistically that they are worth analysing.

An author usually uses characterization techniques to give a clear picture of his characters, which helps the readers understand more about the characters in a story. Characterization is more important than any other literary aspects as Harry Shaw states in *Dictionary of Literary Terms* that : 'Without characterization, no thesis, no plot, and no setting can develop genuine interest for a reader or cause him to care what happens, or does not happen, to whom, and why.' (Shaw,1972:71). In describing his characters, an author uses characterization techniques such as personal description, character as seen by another, speech, past life, conversation of others, reactions, direct comment, thoughts, and mannerism. However, he does not always use all these devices to present his characters but he will choose the most suitable ones in his writing. In the discussion, I will focus on the characterization techniques used by the author as well as the descriptions of the characteristics of the major characters in the novel.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Stating the problems in my thesis, I come to the questions:

1. What are the characteristics of the major characters in *Why She Left Us* ?

2. What characterization techniques does the author use to describe the major characters of the novel?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is:

1. To show the characteristics of the major characters in *Why She Left Us.*

2. To show the characterization techniques which are used by the author to describe the major characters in the novel.

METHOD OF RESEARCH

In writing my thesis, I use the library research. I start by reading *Why She Left Us* written by Rahna Reiko Rizzuto, and then I choose the literary aspect I am going to analyse in my thesis. After that, in order to support my analysis I look for more information about the novel, the literary aspect, and the author's biography in some reference books and the Internet.

ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The thesis is divided into three Chapters preceded by the Preface, the Table of Contents, and the Abstract. Chapter One is the Introduction, in which I put forward 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. In Chapter Two, I discuss the Characterization of the Major Characters in Rahna Reiko Rizzuto's *Why She Left Us*. I write down the Conclusion in Chapter Three. This thesis ends with the Bibliography and the Appendices, which consist of the Synopsis of *Why She Left Us* and the Biography of Rahna Reiko Rizzuto.