CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

History "tells us about the people, places and events of the past, arranged in chronological order. It tells us about our ancestors - their lifestyles, occupations, customs and traditions, religious beliefs, social and political systems and cultural patterns. It also tells us about their problems, aspirations as well as their achievements" ("What is the meaning of history?"). Thus, it is important for one to learn things about one's ancestor in order to know about one's identity. Identity is "people's concepts of who they are, of what sort of people they are, and how they relate to others" (Fearon).

Donald Duk, a novel written by Frank Chin, deals with a twelve-year old protagonist who does not know about his Chinese ancestors so that he considers himself American. The author Frank Chin is a popular 20th century Chinese-American novelist who "deal[s] with the stereotypes of Asian American and traditional Chinese folklore" ("Frank Chin"). He "has played an important role in the development of Asian American literature" ("Chin, Frank-Introduction"). He

had received "a number of awards and fellowships throughout his career" ("Chin, Frank-Introduction").

In *Donald Duk*, Chin creates "a deeply thoughtful and complex protagonist of Donald Duk" (Shirley). The protagonist, Donald Duk firstly prefers being an American than Chinese. Later, when he finds the truth about Chinese people, he considers himself part of Chinese. Thus, in my thesis, I have chosen to discuss the portrayal of the leading character in the novel. Character is defined as "an imagined person who inhabits a story" (Kennedy 45). "In almost any literary work, several characters receive the main focus. Accordingly, they are considered the leading characters or protagonists" (Irmscher 24). So in this thesis, I will analyze the characteristics of the protagonist in *Donald Duk* and the purpose of the author in creating such a character.

Statement of the Problem

The problems I am going to analyze are:

1. How is the protagonist in the novel portrayed?

2. What is the purpose of the author in creating such a character?

Purpose of the Study

This study is done:

1. To show how the protagonist is portrayed in the novel.

2. To know the purpose of the author in creating such a character in the novel.

Method of Research

In order to help me analyze the novel, I use library research by first reading Chin's *Donald Duk* as the primary text. I also read and compile some texts that are taken from books and the Internet. The information and the knowledge that have been gathered are then used to support my analysis. Finally, I draw a conclusion from the research I have conducted.

Organization of the Thesis

I will divide my thesis into three chapters, preceded by the Acknowledgements, the Table of Contents and the Abstract. Chapter one 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. Chapter Two is the Analysis of Portrayal of the Protagonist in Frank Chin's *Donald Duk*. The last chapter is the Conclusion. The thesis ends with the Bibliography and the Appendices, which contain the Synopsis of the Novel and the Biography of the Author.