

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND OF STUDY

In my thesis, I choose to analyse a novel entitled Digging to America written by Anne Tyler. I am interested in analyzing the novel Digging To America because this novel is a semi-autobiographical novel, which means a “novel based on the life of the author and becomes fiction that mirrors events in his or her life” (“Autobiographical Novel”). Anne Tyler is an American woman who is married to a man from Iran, Taghi Modaressi, who works as a psychologist. Anne Tyler lives in Baltimore, Maryland, where most of her novels are set, especially in Digging to America. “Obviously, she knows a great deal about the Iranian and American families. Undoubtedly, there are strong autobiographical threads hidden within the fabric of these characters fictional lives. Perhaps this is Anne Tyler unconsciously trying to write herself into a less solitary future” (Case).

Tyler always writes about multi-cultural issues in her books. Most of Tyler’s books tell about finding one’s identity as a foreigner, and what makes someone as outsider in a foreign country. Tyler’s novel Digging to America deals with human experiences, relationships between husbands and wives, and between

parents and their children. Tyler's books have been awarded several times, as stated by Leon that, "Dinner at Homesick (1982) won the PEN/Faulkner Award for fiction and was nominated for a National Book Critics Circle Award and 1983 Pulitzer Prize, her eleventh novel Breathing Lessons (1988) was awarded the Pulitzer Prize" (Leon 54).

In Digging to America, the most interesting elements to analyze are social and inner conflicts experienced by the protagonist, namely Maryam Yazdan. Both social and inner conflicts are closely related to the protagonist's condition of being a foreigner in America. Therefore, I feel challenged to analyze the social and inner conflicts of the protagonist in this novel. According to Harry Shaw in Dictionary of Literary Terms, conflicts are

important element of plot; they are material from which a plot is constructed. there are three kinds of conflict; physical conflict, social conflict and internal conflict. Physical conflict is a struggle between man and physical world. It represents man versus forces of nature, the difficulties and danger. Then, the second is social conflict which means a struggle between man and man. The third is internal conflict or physical, means that a struggle between desires within a person. (Shaw 91-92)

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In order to analyze the novel, I would like to answer the following questions:

1. What social conflicts are faced by the protagonist?
2. What inner conflicts are faced by the protagonist?

3. What are the resolutions of both social and inner conflicts?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Based on the statement of the problem, the purposes of the study are:

1. To find what social conflicts experienced by the protagonist.
2. To find what inner conflicts experienced by the protagonist.
3. To show the resolutions of both social and inner conflicts.

METHOD OF RESEARCH

In doing the analysis, I use library research. First, I read Anne Tyler's novel entitled Digging to America as a primary text. After that, I search the references from the library and electronic website, which can support my analysis and furthermore help me in writing my thesis. Finally, I draw some conclusion from my analysis.

ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

The thesis is organized into three chapters, which is preceded by the Acknowledgements, Table of Contents and Abstract. In the first chapter, I present 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 consists of the Analysis of Social and Inner Conflicts of the Protagonist in Anne Tyler's Digging to America. Chapter Three is the Conclusion. The thesis ends with Bibliography and the Appendices, which include the synopsis of Digging to America and Biography of Anne Tyler.