CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of The Analysis

Literature is a written and oral work and exists in a society as communicative practice, dealing with a social life. It expresses and communicates thought, feelings, and attitudes toward life. Through literature we can get along with a lot of people to know other different point of views, ideas, thought, minds, and way life.

A novel is a literary work which can give pleasure and satisfaction it can arouse conflicts, moods and also interrelationship among people. On this occasion, I would like to analyze a novel which was written by a famous American author, Theodore Dreiser. He wrote many good novels but I choose Jennie Gerhardt as the subject of the analysis.

Theodore Dreiser is a famous American novelist and short story writer. He is recognized as a genuine American literary pioneer in naturalistic writing. In most of this novels and short stories, he drew up his acute awareness of the growing America of his time. His novels and shot short stories provide a carefully detailed, often documented picture of his own American society, as he saw it. It is as if he felt the pressure, the responsibility to expose a new and rather monstrous America which found its gigantic sprawling expression around 1900 and thereafter.
This America was industrialized, urban society which had developed as rapidly as the huge fortunes (in oil, meat, packing, steal railroad, speculation, etc) which supported it. Unfortunately, such rapid transformation of country was bound to carry with it the extremes of poverty, and Dreiser was not the stranger to the slums of the cities he knew, especially New York and Chicago.

Jennie Gerhardt tells about a young woman who is eager to climb herself to a high level of society by depending herself on the wealthy man. She is eventually trapped in her own environment and unable to fight against her fate. From her girlhood she daydreams the worldly pleasures and in a literal sense, she never succeeds in tasting them completely. It seems as if fate is very dominant in “arranging “her series of life. She is weak and helpless creature. She is like a pawn in a chess game. She has an effort, but it is always in vain. This Kind of story is very interesting to be read and analyzed. Therefore, I try to analyze it in this thesis.

I am interested in analyzing this novel since it talks about “the real life” although it is written by the author imaginatively. The novel is full of the interaction between the characters as if they were in a real life. This is the most interesting element for me to analyze.

Besides that, I feel sympathetic arts the main character of the novel, Jennie Gerhardt. She actually tries hard to improve her life condition but fate has said differently. These are, I believe, the reason why I choose this novel as the subject matter of the analysis.
1.2 The Problems Of The Analysis

In This thesis, I am going to analyze the naturalistic elements which are found in the novel. The problem which may be found in the analysis is whether this novel contains some elements of naturalism. If I cannot prove or find the evidence that this novel has the naturalistic elements, I will, of course, fail. However, I have an assumption that I can prove it.

This hypothesis raises some questions:
- Does the novel have the elements of naturalism?
- Can the novel be said as the naturalistic novel?

1.3 The Objectives of the Analysis

The objective of the analysis is a statement about the activities which are going to analyze or do based on the problems of the study. In this case, I have some objectives of the analysis as follows:
- To find out whether this novel contains the elements of naturalism
- To prove that this novel is a naturalistic one.

1.4 The Scope of The Analysis

In doing the analysis, I need to restrict the subjects which are going to analyze, so that it will come to the conclusions. In this case, I will focus my analysis of
finding some characteristics in the novel so that I will come to a conclusion. My attention will be focused in the novel so that I will come to a conclusion. My attention will be focused on the text of the novel since most of the quotations are derived from it.

1.5 The Method of The Analysis

Wellek and Warren in their book, Theory of Literature (1997; 63) point out that there are two kinds of approaches in analyzing literary works. They are the intrinsic approaches and the extrinsic approach. The intrinsic approach deals with the analysis of the literary work itself. It means that I collect the data from the work we are analyzing. People usually call this approach, the formal or textual approach.

The extrinsic approach deals with the references from the outside the text being discussed, such as biography, history, sociology, psychology, etc. on this decision, I mostly quote the data from the novel, Jennie Gerhardt, although I also refer to some references in order to support the analysis.

In order to prove that there some naturalistic elements in the novel, I use the intrinsic approach which means that I merely analyze the text of the novel. Some critics also call this approach, the textual approach. In this case, I only examine carefully the content of the novel, without paying much any attention its background or its author’s biography.

The aim of this approach or method is to establish as accurately as possible what the author actually wrote or intended to be the final version. By using this method I
will need to consult many books, analysis. In this case, I mean that the use of other materials or references in the bibliography section will be consulted. I will, of course, need them to support the analysis.

1.6 Review of The Related Literature

  This book is very useful in understanding what happened in the American society at that time.

  This book gives me a lot of information about Theodore Dreiser and the American literature by the end of the nineteen century.

  This book is very valuable in giving the information about some major term in literature, such as romanticism, realism, naturalism, and surrealism.

  This book provides the responding to the texts of the literary woks. In this case, I get some information about how to respond the text of the novel.

  This book provides various ways to analyze the aspects of the literary works, especially the discussion on the aspects which are found in the prose writing.

This book is very important for me to understand in order to know the life background of the author of the novel. It will help me understand a little bit the naturalism in the American literature.


This book can help me understand the way how to analyze the novel. It talks a lot about the theory of approaches in analyzing the literary work.