

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Literature is usually defined as expression of human being in writing form. Klarer (1) says that the most cases, literature is referred to as the entirety of written expression, with the restriction that not every written document can be categorized as literature in the more exact sense of the world. Literary text are assumed to be ideological in the sense that they cannot give us a knowledge of the social formation, but they do give us something of equal importance in analyzing culture, an imaginary representation of real relations (Eagleton and Milne 329).

Expanding the statement above, one work of literature cannot always be said to have merely pure imagination of the author who create the work, but it sometimes contains something beyond imagination, in this case, fact or reality that really happens in life. Put simply, what is contained in one literary work does not always come from the world of the author's imagination, but also from real life in which the author lives in. It can be in the form of experiences that the author experience and also phenomena that happens in the author's life. Aristotle said that human is a zoom politician that is a social creature who likes living collectively or at least searches for a friend to live together rather than to live alone (Shadily 56).

This thing is the basic foundation to build society which cannot be separated from it. It also creates certain characteristics of society. “Most generally, social life is structured along the dimensions of time and space (Norton and Esposito 365). A description of certain society can be seen in literary work. So, one can make a study of society through a novel. Laurence Perrine states that novel represents the imitation of society’s daily life and manners in a natural way and offers an imagination of real life (76).

One may say that the author cannot be free from the influence of the society where he or she lives. When he or she produces his/her works, usually, the society gives inspirations to the author toward his/her work. Consequently, a literary work which reflects a certain society’s condition is interesting to be studied. It will give readers more knowledge about the society. Moreover, the life itself contains anything such as rumors, issues, and problems which are always clinging in social life. Likewise a society in real life, society in a literary work also has several kinds of obstacles which become the interesting part of a work itself. De Bonald has declared that literature is an expression of society (Wellek and Warren 90).

One of novel that is worth reading and analyzing from some aspects entitles *House Made of Down*. *House Made of Down* was written by N. Scott Momaday who is the dean of Native American writers. The first work by a Native American to win the Pulitzer Prize for fiction (1969), Momaday’s debut performance is now viewed as an American classic; many critics consider it still the finest Native American novel. The genre of this novel is anthropology culture

fiction, that have characteristic historical descriptive. It means that the background of the story in *House Made of Down* is inspired by the accident in the past.

Thus, *House Made of Down* tells about the story from his father, the stories of the people among whom he grow up, the sacred landscape of southwest, and his own observations of the conflict between two cultures in which he move. Yet, the most important thing is that *House Made of Down* is able to present a change in social life as device to reflect it into sociology approach. A discipline of science which concerns on human societies as the agent of change and the maker of culture as the heritage of human's mind, sight, and creation. "Literature occurs only in social context, as part of culture, in a milieu (Wellek and Warren 101).

If we look back into history of Indian American people, Indian American people have once inhabited American land for centuries, living in a group call tribe in many areas from Southeast to Northeast. As the indigenou people of America, Indians American is characterized by the existence of more than a hundred tribes with their own language, custom, culture, and oral literature. Arlene Hirscheelder notices that for at least, 30,000 years, long before the first arrivals of Europeans in 1500, ancient Native peoples have populated the North America landscape with a diversity of thriving societies.

In addition, Indian people live in harmony with their surrounding nature. They always keep the nature preserved because, in their think, their live depends on the nature. Religion is the center of existence for those ancient people, who has constructed their ceremonies and rituals as their main practices in worshipping. Angie Debo remark: The power of nature, the personal quest of the soul, the act

of the daily life, the solidarity of the tribe-all are religious, and are sustained by dance and ritual (Anggie Depo 4). Then, the coming of the White people from Europe in 1500s to America bring a new era, especially for Indian American people. The encounter between the White and the Indian people are unavoidable. Here, the European people phase in a modern life to the Indian American. Regular contacts between them begin in the early of 1500s and continue for a century (Hirscheelder 30).

The introduction to modern life begins when the Bureau Indian Affairs (BIA) introduce assimilation program to the Indian American people in the last nineteenth century, one of which is education. Carole A. Barrett (73) notes that the BIA is created by the U.S. government in 1824 as a means to control the Indian American people, and one of the duties of BIA is to support the assimilation program toward the young Indian American people through education. The second assimilation program is introduced in 1952 when BIA establishes a national program of relocation assistance towards the Indian American people in reservation. Kitano (152) explains that the program encourage the employment of Indians outside the reservation. This led the Indians American youth to move to the city to get a job and result in the rise of the number of the Indians in urban areas.

Frederick E. Hoxie (294) notes that many Indian migrate to cities, enroll to education, and get jobs. This program, however, also bring in another concern, the issues of stereotype. Some young American Indians are eager to go to city to look for a job after the BIA introduced the relocation program. Unfortunately,

they found many difficulties to get a job in the city or got pay low since they were considered savage and lacking in skills by the white people. As noted by Kitano, the Indian American meets many problems in urban life since they found themselves stigmatized by the white people (Kitano 153).

The notable difference between the world of the Whites and that the Indians apparently raise problems to the Indian people, such as identity confusion, social change and conflict of cultural values. Such problems are experienced not only by the American Indian who 'fail' the assimilation program, but also faced by those who succeed outside the reservation areas when they returned home. They find themselves different or no longer adhere to their tradition and beliefs, as they have lived another culture and social, i.e. that of the Whites.

Because the situational background above, therefore, the aim of this thesis is trying to probe the cultural conflict of the American Indian people through the work of N. Scott Momaday's *House Made of Dawn*. In this novel, Momaday explores the problem of cultural conflict of Indian American young man generation. As a young man, Abel join a World War 11 under the US government in which it take a time for him to leave his community in the American Indian land. After finishing his duty as US Army, he go back to his land, Indian American Community. Here, Momaday uses Abel's returning home as a turning point of his story.

At home, Abel finds many differences in the world of his tribe community, such as tradition, ceremony, and culture before and after his leaving for the war.

One day, he met a medicine woman whom he thought having strange accessories and attitude:

Abel was frightened by the old woman Nicholas tea-Whau. She was a Bahkyush woman and a witch. She once screamed at Abel a terrible curse and he had run away as fast as he could. Then he had tried to get the snake-killer dog to come with him because he was afraid. The dog wouldn't come for fear of something. He felt a strong sense of fear in the land always remembered this "particular sound of anguish." (Momaday 11-12).

In another occasion, he wonders at a traditional ceremony: He had seen a strange thing. It was awful, holy sight, full of magic meaning (Momaday 14). Seeing the phenomena, Abel confuses seeing his own community. Although he is an Indian American descendant, he has almost never seen the traditional way of life because he leaves the Indian American land when he is child. However, Abel meets many difficulties in understanding the way of life of his people.

Based on the historical background above, this thesis will prove whether there is cultural conflict between Indian and the White people by conducting a research using N. Scott Momaday's *House Made of Down* as the material object. Abel in this story portrays the cultural conflicts, such as the question of identity and the changing of attitude experienced by the Indian American people.

However, the cultural conflict that faced by Abel in Momaday's *House Made of Down* looks interesting enough to discuss. By giving the historical background state above, the writer is really interested on the novel and intends to analyze more deeply the cultural conflict represented by the character of Abel in Momaday's *House Made of Down* that portray the problem of Indian American Society.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The writer wants to know the cultural conflict happen in the novel. So that the researcher tries to formulate the problem as follows:

- 1.2.1 What are factors that cause the cultural conflict on Abel in Momaday's *House Made of Down*?
- 1.2.2 What is the effect of cultural conflict on Abel in Momaday's *House Made of Down*?

1.3 Objective of the Study

In accordance with the statement of the problems above, the objectives of the study are:

- 1.3.1 To know the factors that cause the cultural conflict on Abel in Momaday's *House Made of Down*
- 1.3.2 To know the effect of cultural conflict on Abel in Momaday's *House Made of Down*.

1.4 Significance of the Study

By conducting this study, the writer hopes that this study can give a contribution and will enrich the knowledge to other people especially students who are interested in American literature. The writer also expects this study can be a simple example in doing literary study through sociology's point of view. By studying a novel from sociology's point of view, the writer hopes it can give a

precious contribution about other society life and appreciate everything in this world.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

In order to the make thesis research focus, the writer gives the scope and limitation for the discussion. The scope of this study is about cultural conflict on Abel in Momaday's *House Made of Down*, the question of identity and the changing of attitude experienced by the Indian American people. Besides that, the writer also limits the discussion to what are factors that cause the cultural conflict and also the effect of the cultural conflict.

1.6 Research Method

In this study the researcher will use the qualitative descriptive as method of the study. The writer will discuss what writer wants to do. It has been divided into four main sub chapters. They are research design, source of the data, procedure of data collection, and procedure of data analysis.

1.6.1 Research Design

This research uses a library research based. It also uses Cultural Studies approach and Sociology theory to deal with the data. It is because the writer uses theory of Conflict in culture especially conflict through the main character, Abel as the Indian American young man generation that confused with his tribe community, such as tradition, ceremony, White people and

culture before and after his leaving for the war. Besides, it also uses the historical approach, popular literature approach to investigate the relationship with his society and N. Scott Momaday's works.

1.6.2 Source of Data

The source of the data in this research is from the text of the novel with the title *House Made of Down* written by N. Scott Momaday, and also it uses various data from books, internet, journals, and by reading the novel itself to comprehend the writer's understanding on conducting this study.

1.6.3 Procedure of the Data Collection

There are some steps which must be done by the writer to collect the data. The writer collects the data through library technique to make description of the data collection process is clear. First, reading and understanding the story of *House Made of Down* and also to know the content in the novel. Second, collecting the data based on the problem of the study. The writer only focuses on the cultural conflict as the social phenomenon that happen in this novel.

1.6.4 Procedure of the Data Analysis

After collecting the data, the writer represents analysis of the data. It is divided into some steps. First, the writer classify some phrases, sentences, paragraph and dialogue which show some conflicts through the main character, Abel as the Indian American young man generation that confused with his tribe community, such as tradition, ceremony, White people and

culture. Then, the writer will connect the theory with the data. The last, the writer tries to interpret and make thesis statement from the analysis of the data.

1.7 Key Terms

- 1.7.1 Indian People : Indian people are indigenous people of America, who had lived for centuries and long before the coming of European people to America in 1500s, that are characterized by the existence of more than a hundred tribes with their own language, custom, culture, and oral literature (Hirscheelder 18).
- 1.7.2 Conflict : A state of discomfort or stress caused by an individual's experiencing two or more desires or needs that are incompatible (Encyclopedia Americana).
- 1.7.3 Cultural Conflict: Cultural conflicts involve the intensity of emotions of surrounding cultural expressions and enactments as well as their meaning often shift (Marc Howard Ross 19).
- 1.7.4 Social Change : *The New Encyclopedia Britannica* defines a social change is a general characteristic of human societies: custom, and norm change, inventions are made and applied, environmental changes lead to adaptations, conflicts in redistribution of power (Norton and Esposito 105).