

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Literature is an imaginative writing that can be used to reflect many aspects of life, thought, feeling, behavior, and attitude of human being because it has a very close relationship with human beings and their problems. "Literature has its different forms, but it cannot usefully be divided into writings that are easy to understand and those that are hard." (Beardsley, 1956: xxii). The basic aim of literature is to give pleasure or enjoyment. By reading literature, someone can change the way he thinks about the world.

A novel, as one of literary works, is a part of fiction that tells about life story starting from the beginning until the ending of the character's life. "A novel is a living thing, all one and continuous, like any other organism, and in proportion as it lives will it be found, I think, that in each of parts there is something of the other parts." (James in Kettle, 1951:1). A Novel has beautiful values and gives some fun for every one who reads it. *The Pearl* is cast in the form of a novella that is a prose narrative longer than a short story and shorter than a novel. This novel is based on the authentic experience of John Steinbeck when he was visiting La Paz.

The novella that the researcher analyse is the third edition of *The Pearl*, which was written by John Steinbeck after the era of the World War II, 1945. The Viking Press, Inc. published it in November 1947. This novella is based on Steinbeck's experience. "The post-war year has seen the continuance of uncertainty and tension, at home and abroad, stimulating an intensified search for deeper values and basic ideals for the guidance of American life" (Crawford, 1953:268-269). The book received initial positive response from publications such as *The New York Times* and *Library Journal*. In 1962, Steinbeck won the Noble Prize for literature for his "realistic and imaginative writing, combining as it does sympathetic humor and keen social perception." (Flood, 2013).

*The Pearl* tells about a story that happened in a Mexican coastal village called La Paz on the Baja peninsula where the pearl industry was of great importance. However, by the end of World War II, Baja California's pearl oysters had all disappeared, and La Paz's pearl industry, the economic engine of the peninsula for nearly four centuries, was dead. Like the Pericú themselves with their burnt little pearls strung together with berries and shells, a world is gone. Steinbeck called it in his novella *The Pearl*, "the Pearl of the World." However, most oysters, cracked open, were empty, nothing but quivering grey tongue. As time went by, the pearls, when the divers found them, were increasingly unremarkable specimens, tiny things to be strung on a simple necklace or glued to the end of a hatpin. By

1940, when Steinbeck and Ricketts came through on their collecting expedition, almost all that was left were stories. An unknown disease had decimated the sparse remaining beds, and though the large companies based in La Paz attempted to limit pearl fishing, individuals — often women in nothing but a loincloth and a helmet with an air tube — continued to work isolated stretches of coast. (<http://www.bajainsider.com/article/history-pearling-la-paz>)

Jackson Benson, who teaches American Literature at San Diego State University, in his book, writes that Steinbeck created the story of *The Pearl* to address the themes of "human greed, materialism, and the inherent worth of a thing." (Benson, 1990:143). This opinion motivates the researcher to find the conflicts that occur between the characters that shows the existence of human greed, materialism and the inherent worth of a thing. The conflict itself means that there is a gap between the characters or between the groups of characters that needs to be resolved. "When a conflict was resolved and the reader discovered which force or character succeeds, it created a sense of closure" (Abbott, 2008:55). Conflicts may resolve at any point in a story, particularly where more than one conflict exists, but stories do not always resolve every conflict. Therefore, the researcher wants to find what Kino's ideology is in the novel during the conflicts in a novel.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problems**

The purpose of this study is to analyse the conflicts shown by the main character of *The Pearl* story, Kino. The central questions formulated are:

1. What are the external conflicts of Kino as the main character in *The Pearl*?
2. What Kino's ideology is symbolized during the conflict?

## **1.3 The Objectives of the Study**

The purpose of the study is:

1. To identify the external conflicts of Kino as the main character in *The Pearl*.
2. To identify Kino's ideology as represented in the conflicts in *The Pearl*.

## **1.4 The Scope and the Limitation of the Study**

This research focuses on the analysis of conflicts that occur between Kino and other characters in the novel. Even though the novel has been put into movies, the researcher limits her study on the novel itself. The novel is the third edition entitled *The Pearl* that was published in November 1945 by The Viking Press, Inc. publisher in New York. In this research, the scopes of this study is the external conflicts of Kino as the main character of this novel and his ideology that is represented from the conflict in *The Pearl*. The study covers a

brief review of social conditions in La Paz around the corresponding years.

### 1.5 The Significance of the Study

The researcher expects that this study will be beneficial for the readers and the other researchers to understand deeply about the conflicts as the early information.

### 1.6 Definition of Key Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation of this research, the researcher describes the meanings of certain terms used in this study as follows:

- **Character** is the representation of a person in literature. A one-dimensional character is called a flat character, while one who is realistically complex is called a round character. (*Reading Literature and Writing Argument, 2008*)
- **Conflict** is the opposition that creates tension in literature. The opposing forces may be external when a character conflicts with other people, and may be internal when a character faces conflicts with within him or herself. (*Reading Literature and Writing Argument, 2008*)
- **External Conflict** is the struggle between a literary or dramatic character and an outside force such as nature and another

character, which drives the dramatic action of the plot.

*(dictionary.reference.com/browse/external-conflict)*

- **The Pearl** is the third edition of John Steinbeck's novel that was published in November 1947 by Viking Press, Inc..
- **Ideology** usually designates a way of thinking which is systematically mistaken, a false consciousness. (*Hawkes*, 1996:4)