

# CHAPTER I

## I N T R O D U C T I O N

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Literature is one subject matter that is very important because through this, the students can learn about other cultures. Students can improve their vocabulary and also learn the human ways of life and value. This is confirmed by P. Gurey (1970:173) saying that good literature does not give only factual knowledge, but also deeper and more valuable ideas, thoughts and moral teaching in the society.

Matthew Arnold and Little (1966:1) say that men always find literature essential because the literature of a people is the principal element of its culture. It contains the record of the peoples' values, their thoughts, their problems and conflicts, in short, their whole way of life.

Basing on the statement above, the writer chooses literature as a subject matter for her since by studying literature, the writer would learn about ways

of life such as, the struggle of life, dreams, feelings or emotions in addition to improving her vocabularies and grammar and utilization in language. The language is nature. From the language that is used in the context, it can be found the human's issues which often happen in ordinary life. Besides the language, the writer can learn about the culture sense and the reflection of the real world into the literary art work.

Literary forms consist of novel, short story, drama or play and poetry. In this study, the writer is more interested in novel because the content of the novel is longer than the others such as short story, drama or play and poetry. Besides that, according to the writer, most novels tell about human life with their problematic of life and how they associate with other men in society and how the society affects their way of thinking. That is the reason why the writer chooses a novel not the other forms.

Simon and Schuster (1966:105) say, "The length of the novel is particularly suited to deal with the effect on character of the passage of time. It expands in space

as well as in time; therefore, novel is decidedly not meant to be read at a single sitting."

Kennedy (1983:180) also adds that, "Novel is a book length story in prose, whose author tries to create the sense that, while we read, we experience actual life."

Besides novel is a longer story. According to Mc. Cormick (1987:16), "By reading a novel, the readers can see a lot of social reality of the time when the story is written."

A few students at Widya Mandala University know well about Pearl S. Buck. In this study, the writer wants to show Pearl S. Buck and her works. In Pearl S. Buck's biography (1975:6) it is written that "As an American novelist, Pearl S. Buck was born in West Virginia in June 26, 1892. She spent most of her life in China, for she had been taken to live in China by her missionary parents, Absalom and Caroline Sydenstricker, since she was a few months old. This condition influenced her ideas about the country as she said in her biography that China is a real home, but her mother country is a dream land".

Naturally, Pearl S. Buck was interested to become a writer, as Cevalasco (1967:444) mentions, "In her childhood, Pearl S. Buck was determined to become a writer, and the roofs of her literary career were encouraged by her mother and father. Since she was ten, She had written her first story, "The Shanghai Mercury." Her inspiration was wholly Chinese; for in her youth she knew far more about China than she knew about the country of her birth. The sights, the smells, the joys, and the sorrows of the Chinese people, their customs, their traditions-all give reality to Pearl S. Buck's fiction."

Cevalasco (1967:440) adds that Pearl S. Buck had written over seventy books, more than 200 articles, and numerous short stories.

Pearl S. Buck, unlike many other Chinese writers, got an appreciation of her work. Cevalasco (1967:437) states that Pearl S. Buck was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature on December 11, 1983. The Nobel Committee gave the Prize "for rich and trully epic descriptions of Chinese peasant life, and masterpieces of biography."

The other reason that makes the writer choose Pearl S. Buck's work, is that the language which is used is simple and easy to understand. So, it is hoped the readers can understand the story.

"East Wind: West Wind" one of Pearl S. Buck's work is chosen by the writer whereas the story tells about a Chinese woman named Kwei Lan. She lived in old Chinese tradition in which everything arranged by her ancestors and her parents. The traditional Chinese culture was implanted deeply in Kwei Lan, in which in culture confirmed about how a wife has to learn how to communicate and behave to parents-in-law and husband, to arrange her family well and to do other duties as a wife. On the other hand, her husband lived and had a school in West a long time ago. He refused whatever Kwei Lan's mother thought about Kwei Lan far before Kwei Lan became his wife. He wanted the same position between a husband and wife. It meant that man and woman had to have the same level. In other words, Kwei Lan husband's wanted Kwei Lan to behave as a modern wife.

The writer is interested in East Wind: West Wind because this novel talks about two cultures. There are Eastern culture and Western culture.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Related to the background of the study, the writer intends to formulate the statement of the problem as follow: "What cultural contrasts are found in Pearl S. Buck's East Wind; West Wind ?"

## 1.3 Objective of the Study

Based on the statement of the problem above, the writer intends to find out cultural contrasts found in Pearl S. Buck's East Wind: West Wind.

## 1.4 Significance of the Study

This analysis is aimed at giving some contribution to the students of English Department at Widya Mandala Catholic University such as learning about other cultures, improving their vocabulary, and also learning the human ways of life and values.

The writer also hopefully encourages other students to write thesis on literature. In other words the writer hopes that literature will become more interesting to the students.

### 1.5 Scope and Limitation

In this thesis the writer focuses on the cultural contrast in East Wind: West Wind by Pearl S. Buck.

This thesis limits itself to the analysis of the main characters, Kwei Lan and her husband. Both characters are more dominant than the others in showing cultural contrast.

### 1.6 Definition of Key Terms

Before coming to further discussion, it is necessary to clarify some terms applied in this thesis.

#### Novel

Novel is the longest form of prose fiction, in which we may find most extraordinarily wide range of writing (Little, 1966:68).

### Character

Character is a person (or personified or anthropomorphized animal, object or deity) who acts, appears or is referred to in a work (Carl E. Bain, et. al, 1977:5000).

Character is a person who is involved in the story (Hawthorne, 1985:47).

### Setting

Setting is the time and the place in which an action happens (Knickerbocker, 1960:437)

### Conflict

A conflict is a clash of actions, ideas, desires, or wills. It may be man-against-man, man-against-environment, and man-against-himself. (Perrine, 1966:59)

### Culture

Culture is common way of life. (Dawson, 1991:11)

### Contrast

A person or thing exhibiting difference upon comparison with another.



### 1.7 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I deals with the background of the study, statement of the problem, the objective of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, definition of key terms, and organization of the thesis. Chapter II presents the review of the related literature. Chapter III deals with methodology of the study. Chapter IV is the analysis of the novel. Finally, the conclusion and suggestion of the study will be discussed in chapter V.