

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Sometimes, people like to imagine something as if it were real. By reading, people usually imagine the story to catch the message. Reading literary works, for instance, gives them some advantages. It can make their brain try to imagine the setting, character and situation that happened of the story then memorize it. Besides, reading literary works not only can make them know about things that happened but also can make them know about life that they have never known before.

In literature, the author tells his story through the form of writing. In the relation of statement above, Kelley Griffith, Jr. mentions that literature is an expression of individuals who write it (1990:44). There are three genres in literary works: prose (short story and novel), poetry and drama or play. Reading novel needs concentration to understand and feels the feeling that is created by the author. Furthermore, the reader imagines the story as if they experience it. Its statement supported by Kennedy in *An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama* that:

“Novel is a book length story in prose, whose author tries to create the sense that, while we read, we experience actual life. This sense of actuality, which is also found in artful short stories, may be the quality that sets the novel apart from other long prose narratives” (1979:231).

In novel, the readers can find some issues that occur in their life such as crime, racism, materialism, sexism, feminism, and so on. So far, when you read

novel that tell about black people's life, you always find that the story tells about racial discrimination. Black people are always considered as wild and like to do violence. As people know, that Africa-American Literature always talks about racial discrimination. The writer is interested to analyze different issue, that is, crime as the topic of analysis.

The writer reads some novels and is interested in black people's story. The writer chooses *Richard Wright's Native Son* as the source of data. Richard Wright is a new African-American writer after Harlem Renaissance.

“Post World War I, Harlem was an undisputed centre of a complex cultural movement out of which appeared a development of black intellectuals, writers, musicians, actors, and visual artist. Variously, it was Renaissance or Negro Renaissance. It was also an artistic development together with social-politic expression black pride”.
(<http://www.bookrages.com/researches/harlemrenaissance> accessed on April 8, 2009)

It means that the literary achievement of African-Americans is one of the most striking literary developments of the post-Civil War era. Furthermore, Wright wants more from African-American writers than Langston Hughes suggested in his essay, "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain." For Hughes and other Harlem Renaissance writers, the expectation was to write unfettered about black life. Certainly for his time, this suggestion was innovative. However, Wright sees another purpose for the writer: to work to change unjust social, political and economic areas in American society.
(http://www.suite101.com/researches/harlem_renaissance-sipe-02/ accessed on April 8, 2009)

Bigger is a young black man who wants to be able to do all the things white people do but he does not have such chance. His ignorance and poverty make him ashamed and he feels afraid especially of humiliation, but he does not want to show his shame or fear. He is especially angry at the white, not only because they are caused of the oppressive conditions to his life but also because they scare and embarrass him. However, he is also often angry at his fellow blacks because they do not want to try to improve their life. After killing Mary, for whose family he works as a chauffeur, he thinks that he has the power to take revenge toward the white and to make them take him seriously. And after meeting Boris Max, his lawyer, Bigger finds, for the first time in his life, that he can release his feelings by talking about them, as well as by acting them out violently. The environment around Bigger Thomas does not give the opportunity to get better life and it makes him feel hopeless. Therefore, that hopelessness can turn him into anger and he will do everything without thinking over. It made the writer interested to analyze *Crime* conducted by Bigger Thomas.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The writer finds some problems that occur and are interesting to analyze. The problems are as follows:

1. What are the kinds of Bigger Thomas' crime in Richard Wright's *Native Son*?
2. What are the reasons of Bigger Thomas' crime in Richard Wright's *Native Son*?

3. What are the effects of Bigger Thomas' crime in Richard Wright's *Native Son*?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This analysis purposes to solve the problems that have been formulated before. The purposes are as follows:

1. To explain kinds of Bigger Thomas' crime in Richard Wright's *Native Son*.
2. To explain the reasons of Bigger Thomas' crime in Richard Wright's *Native Son*.
3. To explain the effects of Bigger Thomas' crime in Richard Wright's *Native Son*.

1.4 Limitation of the Study

Richard Wright's *Native Son* illustrates the life of black people that happened after the great depression in the United States. Many characters and problems are presented in *Native Son*. In order to avoid the discussion broader; the writer limits the discussion. The writer only focuses on one character that is Bigger Thomas. In this case, the writer focuses on the kinds of Bigger Thomas' crime and the reason of Bigger Thomas' crime in Richard Wright's *Native Son*. Moreover, she also finds the effect of Bigger Thomas' crime toward himself and his surroundings, the black society and the white one.

1.5 Significance of the Study

In reading Richard Wright's *Native Son*, the writer is able to understand about hard life suffered by black people. They also have some feeling toward the white because of their treatment. Then, the writer also learns more about the character of Thomas Bigger through his feeling toward the white and his behaviors.

The writer expects that this analysis is able to improve the reader's point of view about the life of the black. This study is significant because it can be used as a great reference for other researches to study the black people's life because of the background that influence the behavior of the black described in Richard Wright's *Native Son*.

