

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Literature is work which expresses thought, feeling and attitude toward life through a written language. The idea or thought as the expression of the author's mind becomes objects of creativity. Literature exists and develops along with human being who support it. Jones (1968:7) in his book *Outline of Literature* says as follows :

Literature is simply another way people can experience the world around them through their imagination. Literature in its broader sense, include all written material, such as history book, philosophical works, novels, poem and plays.

Literature is the expression of life, it is always related with culture and society that consist of value, thought, problem and conflicts. Therefore, many writers of literature express their feeling and describe the world around them by meant of literature. Literature like all of arts, provide people pleasure and satisfaction. Hudson (1965:5) in *An Introduction to the Study of Literature* says in the following :

Literature is vital record of what men have seen in life, what they thought and felt about those aspect of it which have the most immediate and enduring interest for all of us. It is thus fundamentally an expression of life through the medium of language. "

A literary works create an imaginary world which expresses real world. The relationship between literary works and reality offers transformation from a real problem into subject matter in literary work. The subject matter which restricted only to the place where it is written.

One of the most popular form of literary work is novel. Novel gives some pleasure us through its story. Kennedy (1983:180) in his book *Introduction to fiction* states that “ Novel is book length story in prose, whose author tries to create that, while we read, we experience actual life”. The writer chooses the novel entitled *The Scarlet Letter* as the object of the study. *The Scarlet letter* was written in Puritan Period. Nathaniel Hawthorne is known as one of the greatest American novelists.

*The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne expresses the aspect of relationship, religion community, discipline and punishment in the puritan community of 17<sup>th</sup> century of Boston. Relationship between men and women are very constrained and this is what made adultery sinful in the eyes of everyone in community.

By reading novel one may acquire a great deal of knowledge and experience. Because novel is one sourced information about our society. Novel can be said as the process of creativity that combines the reality and imaginary world of the author, it means that when author writes a story he can inserts characters, place, time and problem he experiences in real life to his imaginary world. Similarly, Symons (1917) in *The Harvard Classics of Fiction* says as follows :

All Hawthorne's works is one form or another of “ handling sin”. He had puritanism of it in the blood, and the power to use it artificially in the brain. With tolstoi, he is the only novelist of the soul, and he is haunted what is obscure, dangerous, and confines of good and evil ; by what it is abnormal, indeed, if were to except human nature as a thing set within responsible limits, and conscious of social relation.

Before deciding to analyze Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, the writer has already read two of his short stories in which puritanism is very dominant. The short stories are "Young Goodman Brown" and "Birthmark". This fact leads the writer to look for another Hawthorne's work to see whether puritanism also presents. This makes the writer take a look at *The Scarlet Letter* and decide the novel the object of the study.

The puritanism is shown up in some of Hawthorne's works. The sense of puritanism seems greater in *The Scarlet Letter* than other work. It shows up on Hester's sin, shame and guilt are clearly heightened by the fact that she lives in strict puritanical society which is unable and unwilling to forgive her sin because sexual indulgences outside of married was considered a religious transgression.

Reading Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, we are brought to certain point where puritanism reveals. That is, actually, what the writer experiences when he reads *The Scarlet Letter* as the object of the study. Moreover, since it has been the writer's interest to study social phenomena, he chooses puritanism as the subject matter of the research study.

## **1.2 Reason for Choosing the Problem**

Novel has relation with life and its activities that deal with any kind of truth, it concerns with separation, distinction, and importance of all individuals and their experiences that represent the life problem. Considering the fact, the writer feels that it is important to study literature especially novel. The reason to analyze novel is due to the fact that novel is the most popular form of literature.

The story in a novel describes actual problems that almost occurs in daily life in our society, so that description narrated in novel is very interesting to read as well as to analyze. Consequently the writer is interested in performing a study on a novel entitled *The Scarlet Letter* written by Nathaniel Hawthorne. The analysis on the novel is done in order to understand about puritanism that is revealed on the novel through the various characters and to know the background of various characters.

### 1.3 Statement of the Problem

The Problems of the study are formulated to answer the following questions :

1. What are the background of various characters' behavior in *The Scarlet Letter* through the characters?
2. How is puritanism revealed through the various characters in *The Scarlet Letter* ?

### 1.4 The Aim of the Study.

The aims of the study are as follows :

1. To find out the background of characters' behavior in *The Scarlet Letter*.
2. To find out the puritanism revealed through the characters in *The Scarlet Letter*.

### **1.5 Limitation of the Problem.**

*The Scarlet Letter* has many interesting aspects to analyze. However the present study is only limited to the discussion to find out the background of various characters in *The Scarlet Letter* through the interaction of the characters and to find out the way the puritanism reveals through various characters with the support of social psychological theories related to the problem.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

In relation to what has been discussed, this study is firstly meant to give understanding about puritanism. By knowing how puritanism reveals through the characters and the background of the characters, one is expected to give wise judgement toward others in a society.

In addition, it also can be the reference for the further research on puritanism in any novel especially in *The Scarlet Letter*. Also, this can be the reference for other reasercher for analyzing puritanism in Nathaniel Hawthorn's *The Scarlet Letter*.