

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Literature can be defined as a product that humans and their culture produce, and it also reflects their life aspects. It can be seen that human life has several aspects as social, political, and cultural aspects in literature. Pickering, James H & Jeffrey D (1981, 01:307) claims that literature is a unique form of human activity, expression of human activity, and experience of human activity. Literature also can function as the reflection of human beings, such as experience, ideas, and passions. Literature can help us to know what other people think based on the idea. In the end, the result of human beings in literature is called literary works. Drama, novels, and poetry can be classified as literary works. Nurgiantoro divided elements of the novel into two: intrinsic and extrinsic elements (1995: 23). Intrinsic elements are the first point that comes inside of the work consisting of the theme, plot, style, characterizations, setting, and point of view. Another element that is included in literary works is extrinsic elements. Extrinsic elements are the second point that comes from the outside of the work, for example, the biography of the author, psychological states, author's circumstances, and way of nation. One of the essential intrinsic elements of this story is the setting. The setting is divided into three aspects: the setting of time, the setting of place, and also social setting. The example of time setting includes the time of life, period, and others. Meanwhile, the urban and rural settings can be grouped as place settings.

Urban, or also refers to the city, is the universal setting that is used in many American contemporary novels. Therefore, Richard Lehan stated that the urban

setting identifies the city as the central setting of a text (1998:73). The urban setting is also portrayed in many American kinds of literature because the urban setting is a part of American literature work elements. Moreover, identifying urban settings in urban literature can help the reader know all the elements contained in a literary work, and in American literature, many use urban concepts as the main setting, and that includes all aspects of the setting such as the setting of the place, time and social condition.

The topic of the urban city as the setting of a story in literature is really interesting since it connects to the urban experience. Moreover, it becomes a universal setting, especially in modern literature. In identifying a work as urban literature, the scholars prefer to choose the focus on one of two elements of literature. As McKeown states in his research, some scholars consider the city as the setting of a text essential to identify a work as urban literature. However, some consider the central of identification is on the character (McKeown, 2004:1). Thus, it can be concluded that a work or a text is urban literature when it includes a city as the setting of its story. Furthermore, Imogen Simons (2016) has researched urban settings that focus on the representation of cities in three different works, New York, San Fransisco, and Chicago. According to his research, the representation of these cities as the setting of the works captured the development of American cities became the center of capitalism into fiction. Thus, the use of cities as the setting of literary works can represent how the world changes. Therefore in this research, the author focuses on analyzing the urban setting in *The Great Gatsby* novel by F. Scott Fitzgerald.

Applying the urban setting in a novel comes with different challenges for the author in determining whether to present the actual place or location or to make

another from their imagination or creative minds. Thus, those stories that contain the place or location in their stories that focus on the cities are called urban fiction.

In this research, the author will focus the analysis on the novel entitled *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald. This novel was originally published in 1925. This novel has the place settings in New York City and Long Island, this novel also came with the depiction of the "Jazz Era," which is described as the impact of World War I. For the time setting, this novel has described the condition of that city around the 1920s, which at that time also contains depictions of illegal businesses such as the sale of alcohol and organized crime. The novel is narrated by Nick Carraway as the main character in the story. The story begins with the description of Nick who comes from a wealthy family who moves to East Egg. Then the story leads the reader to the description of Gatsby from the point of view of Nick. Gatsby is described as a very rich man and also has a very luxurious house in that city. He always holds a big party every weekend and invites the whole city to attend the party. But as long as the story tells, it mentions that no one will ever know that Gatsby is the one who made this party. The author found that the reason why Gatsby always hides from the crowd is because he tries to hide his dark past and what he did to get all of his success and become rich until the end of this novel. In the end, this is also the reason why Gatsby was killed.

The Great Gatsby novel uses several cities as the setting, such as New York and Long Island. As stated by Richard McNamara, the use of cities in literary works such as novels demonstrates how literature and urban/cities have already connected since the earliest times (2014: 2). The use of the city as the setting of a story in literature plays a key role in exploring the relationship between both urban or cities environment and social behavior. Moreover, McNamara also added that the

authors of literary works figured out how to provide the reader's attention with a detailed understanding of urban life and setting (2014: 5). Thus, *The Great Gatsby* novel shows how each different urban setting presented different kinds of social and human behavior.

F. Scott Fitzgerald, with the full name Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald, was an American short story writer and novelist. Fitzgerald was born in St. Paul, Minnesota, and moved to New York. Fitzgerald continued his studies at Princeton University, then dropped out and joined to United States Army during World War I. While joining the United States Army he married Zelda Sayre and published his first work entitled *This Side of Paradise* (1920), this novel described the impact of World War I on American young generations from lives and moral view. Fitzgerald published several novels and short stories in his life, but the most popular novel known as Fitzgerald's works is *The Great Gatsby* (1925) which is his third novel. Fitzgerald has a unique way of writing a story or a novel, he uses his life experience as the idea in his works. He often uses diction and simile techniques to tell the readers the meaning of his works.

This research is important to analyze because settings as part of intrinsic elements have an essential role in exploring the theme of a story. By presenting the setting, especially the urban setting, it can explain the atmosphere, characters, and the situation of the story in a novel. The characters' personalities, behaviors, and approaches to thinking are all influenced by the settings (Murphy, 1972: 141).

Several reasons make the author interested in choosing this novel. First, this novel describes what happened to America after World War I, from an economic and social perspective. This novel is also essential reading in literature courses because it is one of the most popular American novels that have been adapted into a film,

making *The Great Gatsby* novel one of the world's most well-known literary works. Second, this novel also has a unique time and place setting, the time setting that ranges from the 1920s is very proper to describe the period after World War I and the conditions that occurred in that year. The setting of the place of *The Great Gatsby* novel, which was an urban area, was a representation of two places, New York and Long Island. Third, the urban or city setting in the novel also shows different kinds of social behavior presented by different settings that make the story even more interesting. Thus, the urban setting of the novel shows how urban life is connected to human behavior.

Thus, the author of this research will focus on analyzing the urban setting based on *The Great Gatsby* novel by F. Scott Fitzgerald by using the formalist approach which explores the setting of time, place, and society of this novel. the author hopes after writing this research, he will enrich more knowledge regarding intrinsic elements of literary works especially the setting of *The Great Gatsby* novel. Therefore, the author decided on the title of this research as The Description of Urban Setting in *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald.

1.2 Identification of Problem

The main problem found in *The Great Gatsby* novel is how the author of the novel presents urban as the setting of the story, as well as how the setting can represent the theme of the novel. The urban setting presented in this novel is divided into three aspects; those are setting of the place, time, and social. According to the novel, the author finds several places that indicate the setting of place based on the characters' life story such as New York and Long Island which consist of two different areas, East Egg and West Egg. The author would like to use the novel by F.

Scott Fitzgerald in analyzing the urban setting portrayed by using a formalist approach. Thus, the author will focus on analyzing the representation of urban setting used in the novel.

1.3 Review of Previous Studies

This sub-chapter consists of reviews regarding urban settings in American literature. Therefore, the reviews will be divided into three points of explanation. The first one is a review of the topic (urban setting) in F. Scott Fitzgerald's work *The Great Gatsby*. The second one is a review of the main topic itself in American literature. Finally, the last one is a review of the theory or approach used in the research. Thus, this review is organized both thematically by reviewing the topic or the issue of the research and methodologically by reviewing the methods or approaches used in the research.

The city is the universal setting that is used in many contemporary novels. Urban settings are also used in several novels, one of which is also used in F. Scott Fitzgerald's entitled *The Great Gatsby*. The setting of the place is based on the characters' life stories such as New York and Long Island consist of two different areas, East Egg and West Egg. Some researchers have analyzed *The Great Gatsby* novel, there are also many theories and approaches used by researchers in discussing the novel. For example, Bohlin (2019) analyzes the novel with a focus on social conditions that occur in modern cities as described in the novel *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald. This research provides a deeper explanation of the social conditions that exist in urban areas. This research assisted me in analyzing the social setting, which is one of the most important aspects of the setting in the novel.

Simon's bachelor thesis also explores how nineteenth-century American

literature represents the city and city life. In the thesis, Simons analyzes the representation of the city in three different works by different authors. The research shows that the three cities presented in three different works are portrayed in a similar light as locations that were accepted for their modernism and as centers of opportunity for several Americans. In addition, this research shows that the topic of an American city and a modern city is a popular topic, especially in late nineteenth-century American literature since it portrayed an urban experience that was unfamiliar to the people in America (2016:10).

Therefore, this research simply shows how the portrayal of urban and city in a literary work was greatly useful in illustrating the urban experience and making it recognizable to the readers.

On the other hand, another research explains urban life and their perspective on it. In his thesis (2004), Daniel Paul McKeown, B.A. explains that there are two types of perspectives on urban life. First, how the explanation of the city is an important part that can be used as a tool to identify a text as urban literature. Second, it explains that the character is an important part and can be used as a tool in identifying a text as urban literature. He also emphasized that urban literature without a city cannot be called an urban. Urban can be summed up as a person or group of people who live in a city.

For the Formalist theory, the author used to read a book by Todd F. Davis and Kenneth Womack entitled *Formalist Criticism and reader-response Theory* (2002). This book consists of two main chapters and also several sub-chapters, however, the author would like to review one of the sub-chapters of chapter two which discusses *The Great Gatsby* novel. The title of the sub-chapter is traveling through the Valley of Ashes: Symbolic Unity in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*.

1.4 Research Questions

In analyzing *The Great Gatsby* novel in this research, the author makes some research questions to limit the analysis, as follows:

1. What kinds of urban settings are portrayed in *The Great Gatsby* novel?
2. How does the urban setting represent the theme of the story?

1.5 Scope of the Research

This research will focus on the urban setting in one of F. Scott Fitzgerald's novels *The Great Gatsby*. This research will analyze the urban setting that happens in the story based on the narrator's perspective as the third person point of view. Thus, the author limits this research to two discussions. First, the author will describe the types of urban settings such as time, place, and social settings found in the novel *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald. Second, the author will explain how urban settings reveal the theme of the story.

1.6 Objectives of the Research

The purpose of this research is to reveal all of the urban settings contained in the novel. Furthermore, the author will explore how the urban setting presents and conveys the theme of the story by applying a formalist approach.

