

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher attempts to present an introduction description of the topic of this research. This chapter contains a description of the Background of the Study, Research Question, Research Objective, Uses of the Study, and Scope of the Study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Literary works are places to express ideas and thoughts with experiences. Afrianto (2018) implies Literature manifests the sense of the content and message that can be shared in texts. The literature presents the inner experience experienced by the author to the connoisseurs of literary works (society). Jannah (2017) argues that literature is a form of human expression that involves thoughts and feelings. Literature also does not forget to use every means to entertain people so that they understand its meaning because it is a work of emotions and imagination (Hermawati & Fithratullah, 2022). Literature is not only a reflection of society but also an expression of an idea about the world or an idea about sociological reality that is timeless. According to Laurenson & Swingewood (1972), literature is penetrating the surface of social life, showing how men and women experience society as feeling. Therefore, a literary work generally contains the problems that surround human life.

Literature exists because of the basic human background and the urge to express their existence. Sangidu (2004) states that human and humanitarian problems and their concern for the world of reliability have lasted throughout the ages. Furthermore, Semi (1989) mentions literature is an imitation or integration of reality with the author's imagination or the result of the author's imagination departing from reality. It can be described that sociological mimesis seeks to understand literary works such as novels based on characterizations, social life, activities, social status, character behavior, and events that occur in them. Mentari & Samanik (2022) state from a literary work we can gain broad knowledge about what happened at that time such as the social conditions faced by the author in a novel or literary work. Literary works, including novels, often allude to people's relationship with all their problems. This relationship can be in the form of people with people, people with their creators, to the relationship between people and nature or the environment in which they live. Valuable elements in the novel regarding the relationship between people and their environment include sociocultural factors, the use of natural resources, the value of care and conservation environment, etc.

Social life is the relationship of human interaction with one another in an environment or society in general. Hossain and Ali (2014) state that human life is mostly group life. Social life discusses people's lives, history, behavior, functional organization, social activities, and others. Social life is a life in which there is a social and community component. Life is called social life when there is interaction between individuals and communication that develops into mutual

needs. In terms of what happens in the field social life is closely related to how the form of life runs. In general there are two social lives, a rural social life, and an urban social life.

Marriage life is one's mobility and changes one's social status with one's marriage to form a new family. Marriage is a relationship between a man and a woman. According to Putri & Lestari (2015) once married, women and men have new roles arising from their relationship. The description of marriage today can be seen from a couple choosing their partner from family background, education, and position. Marriage life in literary works is also a reflection of social phenomena that occur in society. Laurenson & Swingewood (1972) states that literature is understood as a direct reflection of various aspects such as social structure, family relations, class conflict, divorce, and population. Sufa (2018) states that literary works or other novels should have a recognizable relationship with life, but this relationship varies widely. Novel is the most popular form of literary work in the world. Amelia & Gulö (2022) assert that novel can be show a realistic described of reality. The novel is the most popular form of literary work in the world. Amelia & Gulö (2022) assert that novels can show a realistic description of reality. This literary form is the most widely circulated, because of its broad communication power to society. The above issues also appear in literary works because literature is a reflection of human life or people's attitudes. Those issues are also found in the novel *Serena* by Ron Rash.

This study uses the *Serena* novel written by Ron Rash, a novelist, poet, and story writer from America. This novel was published in 2008 by HarperCollins Publisher. The set in 1929s in North Carolina where in that year the great depression is in full swing and Americans everywhere find jobless and poverty. *Serena* novel tells the story of a woman named Serena. Serena is the wife of a North Carolina lumber businessman named George Pemberton. They met in Boston, married, and moved to North Carolina. People in North Carolina Mountain are loggers. Their social activities include hunting and logging. Serena is very different from what the locals (poor but resilient mountain folk) are used to. She hunts and rides like a man, knows how to cut trees as much as a logger, and is a highly skilled businesswoman. Serena continues to impress the men at the camp with her knowledge of the logging business, her acumen with a rifle, and even her ability to train an eagle to kill a rattlesnake. Serena had everything she wanted, except she couldn't have children. When she was pregnant, there was an incident that made her lose her child. Until Rachel Harmon got what Serena wanted, and it was Pemberton's child. Making Serena worried about stealing her husband's attention and affection. Out of jealousy, she did everything possible to prevent her husband from paying attention to her child. Starting from preventing her husband from giving money to the child to trying to kill the child by ordering one of her husband's employees.

Ron Rash was born in Chester, South Carolina. He is an American writer of novels, poetry, and short stories. He has been awarded a number of awards for his work. Rash draws on a deep sense of place in the Appalachian region that emerges

in his work. He evokes the beauty and brutality of the land and the relentless tension between past and present. Ron Rash of Western Carolina University is known as a leading practitioner of what critics call "Appalachian noir". His stories and novels are usually set in North Carolina's Appalachian Mountains, but there is little that is strange and simple about them. According to some readings, 1929 was the time when the North Carolina stock market in the United States crashed in an event known as Black Tuesday. This set off a chain of events that led to the Great Depression, a 10-year economic crisis that affected every industrialized nation in the world.

Based on the background above, the study chooses *Serena* novel as believed that it reflects social activities and marriage life. The story seems to have a connection with Ron Rash's life and the social condition of North Carolina in 1929. Thus, the researcher uses a sociological approach to identify social activities and marriage life in the novel. In addition, the researcher uses sociological approach, and Laurensen and Swingewood theory.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background above, the researcher formulates a problem as follows:

How are social activities and marriage life in North Carolina society described in *Serena* Novel by Ron Rash?

1.3 Research Objective

Based on the research question above, the researcher aims to explain social activities and marriage life in *Serena* novel.

This study aims to further analysis of social activities and marriage life in North Carolina society as described in *Serena* novel by Ron Rash

1.4 Uses of Study

This study will be helpful for individuals and future analysts. This study mentions two uses, practical and theoretical.

1.4.1 Practical Use

The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of social activities and marriage life described in literary works. In this work, the researcher will discuss how social activities and marriage life in literary works can relate to life.

1.4.2 Theoretical Use

As the research utilized primarily the sociological approach, the research will be supportive for other researchers to see more profound into the theories to conduct a more profound examination of social activities and marriage life.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the social activities and marriage life of the characters in the Serena novel. The researcher wants to analyze the Serena novel by using a sociological approach, and Laurenson and Swingewood's theory that relates to social activities and marriage life.