

**RACIAL PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION BY WHITE SOUTHERNERS
TOWARD THE BLACK IN ALABAMA DURING 1930S AS REFLECTED IN
HARPER LEE'S *TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD***

A THESIS

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ABSTRAK

Skripsi ini merupakan analisis tentang beragam diskriminasi yang terdapat di Amerika Serikat khususnya di negara bagian selatan Amerika, Alabama. Diangkat dari sebuah novel klasik berjudul *To Kill a Mockingbird* oleh Harper Lee yang berlatar pada tahun 1930-an di Alabama, penulis menggambarkan persamaan diskriminasi yang terjadi di Alabama pada tahun 1930-an dengan diskriminasi yang terdapat dalam novel tersebut.

Untuk menganalisis permasalahan yang dikemukakan dalam skripsi ini, penulis menggunakan pendekatan mimetik yang dikemukakan oleh M.H. Abrams yang kemudian dikembangkan dengan mengaplikasikan teori sosiologi dengan menggunakan perspektif pertama untuk menghubungkan fakta-fakta yang terdapat di dalam sejarah dengan kejadian yang terdapat di dalam novel. Dalam pengumpulan data penulis menggunakan metode kepustakaan, sedangkan penyajian data menggunakan metode deskriptif.

Dari hasil analisis dapat disimpulkan bahwa berbagai diskriminasi yang terjadi di Alabama pada tahun 1930-an mencuatkan beberapa asumsi dan perilaku yang salah antara warga kulit putih terhadap warga kulit hitam. Asumsi dan perilaku yang salah menimbulkan adanya larangan pernikahan beda ras yang mengakibatkan terjadinya pemisahan tempat tinggal antara warga yang melakukan pernikahan beda ras dengan warga yang tidak melakukan pernikahan beda ras. Tidak adanya persamaan perlakuan antara warga kulit putih dan warga kulit hitam yang berujung pada kematian seorang warga kulit hitam dengan sangat mengenaskan. Munculnya perbedaan kelas sosial yang menempatkan warga kulit hitam menjadi warga kelas bawah dalam strata kelas sosial di Alabama pada tahun 1930-an setelah warga kulit putih miskin. Adapun perbedaan kelas sosial tersebut menimbulkan terjadinya pemisahan fasilitas umum antara warga kulit putih dan kulit hitam, diantaranya pemisahan tempat peribadatan (gereja) dan fasilitas pendidikan. Pemisahan fasilitas pendidikan menimbulkan tidak adanya keseimbangan pendidikan antara warga kulit putih dan kulit hitam sehingga menyebabkan sebagian besar warga kulit hitam menjadi buta huruf.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Background of the Research

Racism is a global issue and become an interesting topic to be discussed. It has existed for thousands of years and has been transmitted from generation to generation. Racism is the belief that a particular race is superior or inferior to another, that a person's social and moral traits are predetermined by his or her inborn biological characteristics. It is supported by Gale in his book *Encyclopedia of Race and Racism*:

“Racism is the theory that people of one race are superior to another. It asserts that human beings are divided into races which are distinguished by their physical characteristics, their cultural patterns and their modes of behavior” (2008: 3).

It describes that racism is the belief that characteristics can be attributed to people simply on the basis of their race and that some racial groups are superior to others.

To uncover the roots of racism against black in America, the idea that slavery was the causal factor. Slavery in the United States was started in the beginning of the sixteenth century. In the southern of United States, with only a few early and insignificant exceptions, all slaves were black, and almost all black were slaves. This is supported by Degler, “all men of black or brown skin in the South were presumed to be slaves” (*Out of Our Past*, 1985:186). The main reasons for the growth of slavery were economic. It is also supporting by Gale in his article *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*:

Slaves were used as a cheap labor force and as a profitable trade good. In the United States the profits acquired through slavery were an important factor in the growth of the shipping industry and a source of surplus wealth for early industrialism. Slaves worked in households, in mines, and on sugar and cotton plantations in the southern states of America, north of America, in Brazil, and in the Caribbean (2008 as cited on Encyclopedia.com).

Quotation above means that slavery is established to gain the economics of United States which use slave labor on their plantations.

In the early twentieth century, slavery was steadily ended marked by the Emancipation Proclamation issued by President Abraham Lincoln. Freedom for all slaves happened in 1865 when civil war ended. Although the government has formally abolished the slavery but black people do not get their freedom easily, they have to face the racial problem.

Racial problem happens because some people claim that the differences of physical characteristics like skin color is a basis to identify who superior and inferior. White race still thinks that black people is inferiority race since a long time ago when they became a slave for white people. Slaves is placed the label of inferiority on black skin on American culture. As supported by Degler, "number of Negroes determined the inferior status imposed upon the black" (1985: 35). It is clearly means that black people are reduced to the position of inferiority and it result the practice of racial prejudice and discrimination.

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee is a novel that depicts racial problems in Alabama, such as: prejudice and discrimination. Since the 1960s, as the discussion

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

To Kill a Mockingbird, tenaciously explores the moral nature of human beings, especially the struggle in every human soul between racial prejudice and discrimination. The novel is very effective in not only revealing prejudice, but in examining the nature of discrimination, how it works, and its consequences. Even though racial prejudice is just opinion or attitude against other race but it is quite possible that kind of opinion will lead to the actions or known as racial discrimination. There are many racial prejudice and discrimination in Alabama during 1930s as reflected in Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Based on the result of analysis of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, the writer can conclude that there are many racial prejudice that experienced by the black race in Alabama during 1930s. For example is anti-miscegenation. White race disagrees about miscegenation idea because it will disrupt the purity and superiority of white race. As a reward, white race that have interracial marriage will be alienated or isolated from their race.

Not only racial prejudice, black race in Alabama also has to face racial discrimination. There is a lynching that begun in Tom Robinson's trial, and when Tom is placed in the local jail, a mob gathers lynch him. His death is very tragic since he is shot 17 times. Another racial discrimination occurs in the existence of some classes in Maycomb County, the place of black race have to occupy the lowest class in society since they are just considered as inferior by white race.

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