

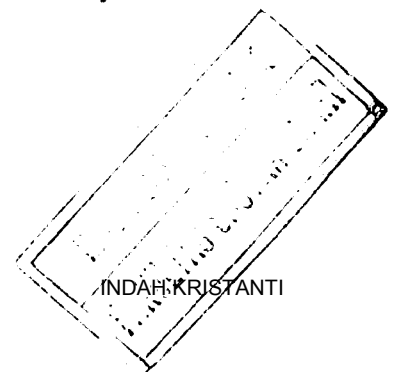
## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of the Study

The issue of racism, especially in the racial relations between two races, has been widely known by people throughout the world. Nowadays this issue can be seen in the real life. According to Martin N. Marger in the book entitled *Race and Ethnic Relations: America and Global Perspectives*, 'racism is the belief that human are subdivided into distinct hereditary groups that are innately different in their social behavior and mental capacities and that can therefore be ranked as superior or inferior's' (27). In his book, Marger also adds that, 'the belief in innate differences among groups is used to justify the unequal distribution of a society's reward' (29). Therefore, the function of racist ideology is 'to encourage an ethnic identity in which one group can have a domination in the society especially in economy, politics, and other key power institutions. So this group can receive the greatest share of the society's wealth' (29).

Concerning with its function above, racism is designed to justify and rationalize racial and ethnic inequality. Consequently, it can lead the members of a society to make a differentiation not only based on the physical appearance but also on the social behavior, personality, and intelligence. The explanation above shows that there is some differences among groups and these differences are particularly based on their physical appearance. As a consequence, these



differences lead to the emergence of superior and inferior people. So, the existence of superior and inferior people are based on their physical traits and related to the culture, personality, and intelligence that they have. The superiority of some groups and inferiority of others is then used to legitimate the unequal distribution of the society's resources, especially in the form of power.

Regarding with the explanation above, it can be said that racism brings inequalities for some races. As a result, superior and inferior people are arising. In this sense the whites as the superior ones, whereas the minority groups- such as the blacks- are the inferior one. As the superior people, the whites have a power to control the blacks. However, to enforce its power, the whites employ certain ways such as in the form of prejudice. According to Thomas F. Pettigrew in the book entitled *Prejudice*, prejudice can be thought of as negative attitudes against certain ethnic groups and their members (2). So, it refers to share negative beliefs and feelings to the members of particular groups, such as the blacks.

Prejudice against particular groups arises because of the scapegoat. In the book entitled *Sociology* by Ian Robertson, scapegoating refers to 'placing the blame for one's troubles on some relatively powerless individual or groups' (295). Scapegoating occurs when the members of one group feel threatened but are unable to react against the source of the threat. Instead, this group releases their frustrations on some minority group so they can gain sense that they are superior to minority group. Competition is another reason for prejudice. Sheila Babbie in her book entitled *Understanding Sociology: A Context for Action* stated that competition arises when people feel that they may suffer from some loss because

of the rights of a minority group. These people become prejudiced against that group, trying to limit its rights and eliminate the competition (219). Prejudice also always involves the use of stereotype- 'beliefs about the characteristics of a group' (218). Stereotype uses by the dominant groups to maintain their power toward the minority groups. In this sense, the negative images of minority group held by the dominant group to keep the minority groups in a subordinate position.

People have known the problem in prejudice. It seems that it is not easy to ignore this problem since there are literary works that also try to portray it. Harper Lee's novel entitled *To Kill a Mockingbird* is one of them. This novel makes the reader aware about the prejudice of the whites toward the blacks. This novel was written in the 1950s during the beginning of Civil Rights Era and published in 1960. *To Kill a Mockingbird* is the story of Jean Louise, known as Scout, and the experiences of her family and her hometown of Maycomb, Alabama. The setting of this novel is in 1930s when the whites still oppressed the blacks. Looking into the setting of the novel, which is in a little town named Maycomb, shows that most of the white people are still held prejudice and discrimination against black people. White people treated the blacks unequally. In this way, the whites have a power to take control over the blacks and the blacks never win when they are against the whites. Those situations make the blacks become the victim of the whites' prejudice and become the oppressed people.

The novel is narrated from Scout's point of view. Through the eyes of Scout, it can be found out how the prejudice of the whites toward the blacks is portrayed during that time. In the first part of the novel, Atticus Finch, tries to

give Jem and Scout Finch the moral lesson. The moral lesson in which Atticus has taught to his children are to express kindness and respect to others in a world where people of different races, status, and cultures exist. In the second part of the novel, the reader will get a clear picture about the whites prejudice toward the blacks. Furthermore, this part emphasizes that black people are misjudged and receive unfair treatment from the whites. However, judgment unfortunately comes to Tom Robinson- a black man. He is standing trial for raping a white girl and the events of the trial itself will reveal the whites' prejudice toward the blacks. In addition, the trial is based on the Scottsboro case. The Scottsboro case was a legal case involving two white girls who are accused nine black boys- aged twelve to nineteen- from Scottsboro, Alabama, of raping in March 1931 (Patrick, 97). However, the trial itself show that the blacks are accused for the crime that they did not committed and pronounced guilty. Those events show how often the blacks receive unfair treatment from the whites.

From those explanations it can be said that the issue racial relations with other races, especially in the form of prejudice, is an interesting topic to be discussed. This problem may bring the readers' awareness to open up their mind in response about the impact of the whites prejudice toward the blacks. Moreover, it can makes the reader to understand about the meaning of life and how to respect and live with other people, no matter what their races are, as the same human beings. Furthermore, through the novel the reader will get a great deal of moral insight in how treating people equally and kindly regardless of who they are or where they are from.

## **B. Statement of the Problems**

Based on the background of the study above, the writer tries to analyze the depictions of the prejudice of the whites toward the blacks in Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Thus, the problems are formulated as follows:

1. How is the prejudice of the whites toward the blacks portrayed throughout the novel?
2. How does such prejudice of the whites emerge if it is seen from the perspective of Postcolonial theory?

## **C. Objective of the Study**

To provide a satisfactory result of the problems above, the objectives of the study are:

1. To convey the prejudice of the whites toward the blacks as portrayed in the novel.
2. To explain the reasons about the emergence of whites' prejudice through the Postcolonial perspective.

## **D. Significance of the Study**

This study is significant in elaborating how far the novel portrays the racial relations between two races. This study is aimed to describe the prejudice of the whites and why such prejudice can emerge through Postcolonial perspective. It is also an attempt to broaden the readers' knowledge about the real condition of black people at that time.

Since this study is considered as the final project for undergraduate in English Department, hopefully it will give some contributions to other students. Moreover, the writer hopes that this study may bring the readers to learn more about the blacks existence. The readers will open up their mind in response to the impact of prejudice toward the blacks.

#### **E. Scope and Limitation**

To avoid the unnecessary and misleading focus of writing, the writer tries to limit this study by merely analyzing the prejudice toward the blacks and why such prejudice emerges seen from Postcolonial theory. In analyzing this novel, it needs to comprehend the study from two elements, such as the characters and setting. These elements give major contribution on the analysis since this study is related to literary work. Moreover, those elements are very helpful in revealing the main problem especially dealing with the whites prejudice toward the blacks.

#### **F. Theoretical Background**

There are racial problems occur in the novel which show that this novel portrays the prejudice of the whites toward the blacks. Black characters in the story had the experience to be victims of the whites. Black people could not feel the equal rights as American citizens just because of the color of their skin. Before this study discusses the reason why this could happen, it is better to consider what Postcolonial critics say concerning this issue.

Peter Barry in his book entitled *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* gives some descriptions of Postcolonial criticism. The most appropriate Postcolonial theory to support this analysis is Edward Said's perspective about a European cultural tradition called 'Orientalism.' Based on his explanation, Edward Said specifically exposes the Eurocentric universalism, which takes for granted both the superiority of what European or Western is, and the inferiority of what is not. Said identifies a European cultural tradition of 'Orientalism', which is a particular and long-standing way of identifying the east as 'Other' and inferior to the West (qtd. in Barry 192). The purpose of 'Orientalism' is to produce a positive national self-definition for Western nations by contrast with Eastern nations upon which the West projects all the negative characteristics it does not want to believe exist among its own people (Tyson 367).

#### **G. Method of the Study**

To make a proper analysis, collecting and gaining a valid data from various sources are important. The library research is a reliable method to gain a valid data. Since the novel is closely related to the prejudice of the whites toward the blacks, many sources are needed to search the fact. Moreover, library research is accurate enough to gain some information dealing with the literary theories or criticisms and approaches. After collecting the data, it needs to apply the close reading method and make the classification of the data. Meanwhile, the

information concerning the recent data about Harper Lee and her work are supplied from some sites in the Internet.

After all the qualitative data are collected, the descriptive analysis will be applied to find the answer of the proposed problems. The technique used to analyze the data is by using descriptive analysis, in which after reading the novel, describing the problems with the data related to the analysis, then accumulating the sources that support the analysis. Afterwards, those that have been discussed will be applied to analyze the main problem through the characters, the dialogues, the events and actions in the story.

#### **H. Definition of Key Terms**

- **Prejudice:** is 'an expectation you share about a group of people that forms the basis for your expectations about individual members of that group. Typically, these expectations are negative' (Babbie 218).
- **Segregation:** the separation or isolation of a race, class, or other group by enforced or voluntary residence in a restricted area, by barriers to social intercourse, by separate educational facilities, or by other discriminatory means (1125).
- **The Other:** refer to the colonized others who are marginalized by imperial discourse, identified by their difference from the center (qtd. in Aschroft 170)



## CHAPTER II

# LITERATURE REVIEW