

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, the writer will presents the previous studies and the theory of New Historicism by Stephen Greenblatt.

1.1 Previous Studies

In fact, some researchers show their interests in discussing the America's segregation phenomenon, racism and discrimination. The first study which discussed is The Representation of Racial Discrimination in *The Help* Novel by Kathryn Stockett (2011). The study was conducted by Maya Danastri Suastifa from State Islamic University of Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. In this study, she revealed the representation of racial discrimination in Kathryn Stockett's *The Help*. Her study examines the characteristics of two main characters named Aibileen and Minny by using the theory of representation of Stuart Hall to explain the racial discrimination. The racial discrimination is represented in the novel, which is related to the history of America.

The second study which discussed Racism and Racial Prejudice in Harper Lee's *Go Set A Watchman* by Muhammad Haricahyo (2017). The study was conducted by University of 17th August 1945 Surabaya's student. In this study, he revealed racial prejudice over Negroes and social prejudice over white trash in Harper Lee's *Go Set A Watchman*. In conducting the research, applies theory of New Historicism from Stephen Greenblatt. The researcher uses both intrinsic and extrinsic elements. The researcher focuses on character's idea as the intrinsic element and real politic and social situation at the time the novel was written in the USA as the extrinsic element. In the study, he finds that there are old Finches (Atticus, Alexandra, Jack) that are rich and conservative and young Finch (Jean Louise) that is liberal. Beside blacks there is also class from white considered slur and despicable due to their poor and low educated called white trash. Old Finch considers black as poor, dirty, shiftless, and low educated and do not deserve equality and full civil rights whereas young Finch defends blacks because they are human and deserve to get equality and full civil rights.

The distinction of this study from the aforementioned ones is that the first study focus on the representation of racial discrimination and racism, meanwhile the second study focuses on the racism and racial Prejudices over Negroes and social prejudice over white trash, whereas this study focuses on America's

segregation which occurred in *The Help* and its reflection to the social condition and its situation of Southern America in 1960s. In this project, the writer conduct this study to analyze how literary works act as a historical documentation reflecting the condition and situation when the literary work is created, and how the characters personality and experiences during segregation are depicted in the novel, and also how the novel *The Help* reflects segregation affects and impacts their social condition and situation which occurred in 1960s in Southern America.

1.2 New Historicism

In Lois Tyson's critical theory states that (2006: 292) "Literary texts are cultural artifacts that can tell us something about the interplay of discourses, the web of social meanings, operating in the time and place in which the text was written". It means that the literary text and the historical situation from which it emerged are equally important because text (the literary work) shapes and are shaped by their historical contexts.

Since events in the novel have some relation with the situation in real life at that time, the writer tends to use new historicism as theory. New Historicism is a methodology of literary criticism that emphasizes the historicity of a text by relating it to the configurations of power, society, or ideology in a given.

New Historicism aims to understand intellectual history through literature, and literature through its cultural context, which follows the 1950s field of history of ideas and refers to itself as a form of "Cultural Poetics". It was once developed within the 1980s, primarily through the work of the critic and Harvard English Professor Stephen Greenblatt, and gained widespread influence in the 1990s (Mikies, 2007: 206). Stephen Greenblatt has some arguments in analyzing text based on the new historicism theory. First, he argues that literature is informed by its historical context, rather than the other way around. And second, he said that the analysis of each and every text is influenced by the time period in which that text is read and analyzed.

1.3 U.S. Declaration of Independence

In mid-June, 1776, a five-man committee including Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Roger Sherman, Benjamin Franklin, and Robert R. Livingston draft a formal statement justifying the break with British Kingdom. Later, the document would become known as the Declaration of Independence. The Congress

formally adopted the Declaration of Independence who was written largely by Jefferson in Philadelphia on July 4th, 1776, a date now celebrated as the birth of American independence. The Declaration of Independence was divided into five sections: introduction, preamble, body (divided into two sections), and conclusion. In general terms, the introduction is stated about the pursuit of independence from Britain is important for the colonies. While the body of the document outlined a list of grievances against the British crown, the preamble including the well known passage “We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life; liberty and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

However, the word equal means nothing to the African-American people. Years after Independence Day, they were forced to be enslaved and work in plantation. During being the slave, African-American people were treated inhuman, harsh, and tortured. This condition lasted almost one century until American Civil War in the nineteenth century. The Civil War was a battle over the status of slavery in America. It was a fight over two states in America: North and South. North tended to abolish slavery and manifest U.S. Constitution stating all humans are equal known as Union whereas South wanted to preserve slavery due to economic reason known as Confederacy. The South worried if African-American people get their freedom and their full citizenship, they will not work in the white American people’s fields and plantations. But in the end, Union won the war and slavery had been abolished in America.

Nevertheless, the fact is after the abolishment of slavery, and racial discrimination and segregation, African-American have to struggle facing oppression from the white American people. America violating the law in the U.S. Declaration of Independence and it made the African-American’s lives become more difficult. Moreover, the Federal Government legalized implementation of Jim Crow Laws which decreased the rights of the African-American people and increased the superiority complex of the white American people. The struggle of African-American people to achieve equality over century is a very long ride. Eventually, in the 1900’s African-American made civil rights movement through NAACP (National Association for the Advancement for Colored People), which pushed for political equality and social injustice to improve African-American’s live.

1.4 Segregation

Segregation is the process of isolation of a race, class, color or ethnic group by enforced or voluntary residence in a restricted area, by barriers to social intercourse, by separating academic facilities, or by other discriminatory means. Segregation, Board of Education, sit-ins, marches, and many other expressions were new to the writer and the readers but all connected with the name, the only known to the writer and the readers, that of Martin Luther King Jr. Thus the decision, to compose this project concerning The Civil Rights Movement entered in both the writer's and the reader's heads. Reviewing the history of the United States has resulted in the recognition that the Civil Rights Movement had not been restricted to some ten of fifteen years. The national efforts made by the African American people and their supporters in the 1950 and 1960 to eliminate segregation and gain equal rights. The first monumental episode in the movement, a boycott of the town buses in Montgomery, Alabama, was touched off by the refusal of one black woman, Rosa Parks, to give up her seat on a bus to a white person. (Carson, Clayborne: 1999)

A number of sit-ins, and similar demonstrations followed. A high peak of the Civil Rights was a rally of hundreds of thousands in Washington, D.C., in 1963, at which a frontrunner of the movement named Martin Luther King Jr., gave his very first engaging "I have a dream" speech in front of the American citizens. The Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 authorized federal actions against segregation in public accommodations, public facilities, and employment. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was passed after massive demonstrations in Selma, Alabama, which drew some violent responses. The Fair Housing Act, prohibiting discrimination by race in housing, was passed in 1968. After such legislative victories, the civil rights movement shifted emphasis toward education and changing the attitudes of white people. Some civil rights supporters turned toward militant movement and several riots erupted within the late 1960s over racial questions. The Bakke decision of 1978 guardedly supported affirmative. (Carson, Clayborne: 1999)