



DISCRIMINATION ENDURED BY ATTICUS IN

HARPER LEE'S *TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRDS*

A FINAL PROJECT

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement
For S-1 Degree in American Cultural Studies
In English Department, Faculty of Humanities
Diponegoro University

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SEMARANG

2017

PRONOUNCEMENT

The writer states truthfully that this project is compiled by himself without taking the results from other research in any university, in S-1, S-2, and S-3 degree and in diploma. In addition, the writer ascertains that he does not take the material from other publications or someone's work except for the references mentioned.

Semarang, 20 July 2017

Aditya BayuRamadhan

**DISCRIBE THE DIFFERENT DISCRIMINATION WHO SUFERRED BY ATTICUS
ON THE NOVEL *TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD***

WRITTEN BY HARPER LEE

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MOTTO AND DEDICATION

You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view... Until you climb inside of his skin and walk around in it.

(Harper Lee)

I hate the ending myself, but it started with an alright scene.

(My Chemical Romance)

This project is dedicated to my beloved big family

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Praise to Allah SWT, who has given strength and guidance, so this project on “Discrimination Endured by Atticus in Harper Lee’s *To Kill A Mockingbird*” came to a completion. On this occasion, the writer would like to thank all those people who have supported to the completion of this final project.

The deepest gratitude and appreciation are extended to the writer’s advisor Ariya Jati, S.S, M.A., who had given continuous guidance, helpful correction, moral support, advice and suggestion, without so that this project comes into completion. The writer all thank to the following persons:

1. Dr. Redyanto M. Noor, M.Hum as the Dean of Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University.
2. Dr. Agus Subiyanto, M.A as the Head of the English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University who also gave his support to the writer to finish this final project.
3. Arido Laksono, S.S, M.Hum the writer’s Academic Supervisor who has given his time and guidance.
4. All lecturers of Faculty of Humanities, especially those in English Department.
5. All of the academic staffs at Faculty of Humanities

6. His parents, Mr. Koni Tri SuprihyatinWidodoand Mrs. Maryatiand his brother and sisterKrisnaBayuWidodoPutro and Devi AyuWulandari,who have give their support.
7. All his friends in English Department, Diponegoro University, especially class of 2010 in particular, Reza,Danang,Memorial, Ravi, Gunawan, Anjar, Firman, Robin, Ipan, Boni, Damar, Riko, Galang.
8. All the Stay Young Crew, Hery, Handy, Ridho, Arief, Bagas, Adis, Wahyu, Delvan, Kimbo, Andre, Irwan.
9. Markas family, Andy, Faisal, Nanang,Ikhsan, Umam, Harkit, Risky, Piul, Rois, Suryo.
10. Moreover, the rest of the writer's friends in class of 2010, fellow students from some classes of English Department, other faculties, playgroups and all related people that make the writer succeed in finishing this final project;

The writer realizes that this final project is still far from being perfect. He would be glad to receive any constructive criticisms and suggestions to help him make a better writing in the future. Still, he hopes that this final project would be useful for the readers and human life.

Semarang, 20 July 2017

Aditya BayuRamadhan

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ABSTRACT

This final project entitles “Discrimination Endured by Atticus in Harper Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird*”. The aim of this final project is to describe the conflict in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. This final project adopts Marxism in work of literature. The theory is used to figure out the social and ideological situation in the novel. The method used in this study is textual analysis. To get the data, the writer reads books and takes some notes that are related to the topic, through the library research. The conclusion of this final project shows that a determined person will always defend anyone who is right no matter what other people say.

1. INTRODUCTION

Racism becomes an issue in the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The novel tells of the repression which white people experience. The repression occurs on one white man named Atticus, who defends a black man named Tom Robinson who is accused of raping white girls. The writer is interested in reading this novel because the novel is quite different from any other novels with its story. Atticus, who is a white man, is brave enough to defend Tom Robinson, who is a black man.

The writer attempts to describe the discrimination using a library research. In his library research, the writer collected some information from two researches, namely "Racial Prejudice in Lee's *To Kill A Mockingbird*" by Siti Faizah (2012) and "Affection and Prejudice in *To Kill a Mockingbird* Novel by Harper Lee (1960): A Psychoanalytic Approach" by Bekti Winarni (2013). Faizah discusses how Scout is characterized as the main character; what the aspects of racism in the novel are; and how the aspects influence the characters in the novel. Winarni discusses about Atticus Finch, a nice and good person who is trapped in the case of a black man named Tom Robinson. He prefers to keep silent because he wants to know the truth of the problem. Atticus as a lawyer who does not let his client be punished before the truth is revealed in court. The discussion of Faizah and Winarni has a little relevance to that of the writer. The relevance is shown in the discrimination of the white people toward the black people in Maycomb.

In his description of the discrimination, the writer adopts the concept of Marxism in a work of literature. The concept is postulated by Rene Wellek and Austin Warren. Based on the postulate, Marxism can be usable in the study of a work of literature when it describes a social and ideological situation (Wellek and Warren, 1956: 104). The writer sees a social situation in the novel, and the writer intends to describe the discrimination which Atticus endures in Lee's *To Kill A Mockingbird*.

To describe the discrimination, the writer uses a textual analysis. The textual analysis requires the process of collecting the data (Mckee, 2002:1). The analysis presents the discrimination which Atticus endures. The analysis also presents the places where he experiences discrimination which is done by the white people. The writer describes the discrimination through the textual analysis. The analysis shows that Atticus succeeds in practising tolerance for all people regardless of ethnic group and social status. Although at the beginning many people can not accept the decision of Atticus, he stands with his attitude. Even, he also educates his children about the attitude.

2. SUMMARY

In 1930s, American society has a social problem, namely racism. White people assumed themselves as excellent people in society. Practising the assumption, those white people did repression to black people. Yet, the assumption would not hold out for good, since some white people also experienced repression. *To Kill a Mockingbird* takes place in Alabama during the Depression, and is narrated by the

main character, a little girl named Jean Louise "Scout" Finch. Her father, Atticus Finch, is a lawyer with high moral standards. Scout, her brother Jem, and their friend Dill are intrigued by the local rumors about a man named Boo Radley, who lives in their neighborhood but never leaves his house. Legend has it that he once stabbed his father in the leg with a pair of scissors, and he is made out to be a kind of monster.

In this case, the story of the defense of a black man slave named Tom Robinson performed by Atticus. The writer sees that slavery in the United States at the time became a system where black people are just minorities who are used as slaves. Different attitudes were shown by Atticus and his two children named Jem and Scout in treating Calpurnia, a black woman, who worked as a maid in their house. Atticus treated her like his own family; likewise, Calpurnia did not hesitate to reprimand Scout and Jem if they made mistakes. When Atticus was assigned to be the lawyer for Tom Robinson who was accused of immoral acts against a white girl, he volunteered to defend him and nearly sacrificed his life in order to prove that his client was completely innocent. Because of his attitude, Atticus and his two children were discriminated and intimidated by the people around them. Maycomb citizens opposed Atticus. They consider he was a "Nigger lover" because he would defend Tom, a black man who could not have protection by the white men. They assumed that Tom was like black men in general, who was rugged, uneducated, and scum of society. At the school Jem and Scout were also ridiculed by his friends because they had a father who loved nigger. When they complained about this to Atticus, he lifted

his children's heart and said that while executing the right thing. He believed that Tom Robinson was not guilty, and all the people in the world who were black man or white man, had to have a good treatment, especially when he was in courthouse. He asked his children not to be angry when they were ridiculed because he was doing a good thing.

When the day of court session has come, Jem and Scout come to the courthouse in a quiet manner, they wanted to watch how their father defended Tom at the courthouse as a lawyer. At the moment Scout was shocked for what she watched about the fact that apparently adulthood was not only about black and white, good and bad. For the first time Scout learned many cases about life outside his world. Scout realized that there is the fact another named compromise, at least the little girl realized that prejudice was already embedded long enough to everyone. This prejudice could make the people blinded until nearly they could not see where the true and mistake were.

3. THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The writer uses a library research to gather data. Library research involves the step – by – step process to gather information in order to write a paper, create a presentation, or complete project. The data includes references from final academic papers, books and the internet. The books consists of the novel and the literary theories. The internet sources consists of digitised items for the books. The data can be categorised into

primary and secondary data, primary data based on a concept of Marxist literary theory in Wellek and Warren's *Theory of Literature*. And textual analysis is useful for researchers working in cultural studies, media studies, in mass communication, and perhaps even in sociology and philosophy. The writer uses a textual analysis method to gather data.

Textual analysis is a way for researchers to gather information about how other human beings make sense of the world. It is a methodology - a data-gathering process - for those researchers who want to understand the ways in which members of various cultures and subcultures make sense of who they are, and of how they fit into the world in which they live. The research is based on the main and the supporting data. (Mckee, 2002:1)

The main data is obtained from books, articles, journals, etc related to the object of the research. The object is Harper Lee's *To kill a mockingbird*. The supporting data are any information related to the analysis of the object which are taken from the library or internet.

3.2 RESEARCH OF APPROACH

The textual analysis method is based on a concept of Marxist literary theory in Wellek and Warren's *Theory of Literature*. The writer uses the theory of character, setting, and conflict in this study to analyze the intrinsic elements. The writer uses Marxist Criticism to help explain the issues in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. "Marxist criticism is its best when it exposes the implied, or latent, social implications of a writer's work Wellek and Warren.

Criticism is a technique of interpretation parallel to those founded upon the insights of Freud, or of Nietzsche, or of Pareto, or to the Scheler-

Mannheim "sociology of knowledge". The "sociology of knowledge," as illustrated in the writings of Max Scheler, Max Weber, and Karl Mannheim, has been worked out in detail and has some definite advantages over its rivals. Furthermore, criticism not only draws attention to the presuppositions and implications of a given ideological position, but it also stresses the hidden assumptions and biases of the investigator himself. (Welleck and Warren, 1948:87).

The writer sees that the position is also self-critical and self-conscious, even to the extreme of morbidity. The writer also beholds that the position is also less prone than either Marxism or psychoanalysis to isolate one single factor as the sole determinant of change. Marxist Criticism is a suitable approach to be used in this project. Using this approach the writer will analyze the research problems in the *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

4. ANALYSIS

Atticus Finch, a local lawyer in Maycomb County. Atticus is single parent who has two children named Scout and Jem. The three of them plus Calpurnia, an African American named Calpurnia, live in an old settlement on the outskirts of Alabama, the United States. Atticus family life is typical American family in the recession of America in the 1930's, the time known as the *great depression*. Describe the situation that completely enough at the Maycomb County. A settlement where Atticus family is living. Atticus is a wise father who very loved his children. As a lawyer, he never discriminates a case he will defend, even though Atticus lets his kids call him as name only was not the father.

Most of white people and Maycomb have their own nick name for people who care about niger it's called nigger-lover. Because Scout's father defending niger so he's one of the person that people called as the nigger lover. As a kid, Scout doesn't really know about the truth meaning of that nick, something that she does know is if that nigger lover is something bad because how the way people mention that words while they are talking to her and that's why she feel uncomfortable and make her influenced from people action if people shouldn't be a nigger lover.

Except the kids, adult people also influenced of environment action :

Atticus sat down in the swing and crossed his legs. His fingers wandered to his watchpocket; he said that was the only way he could think. He waited in amiable silence, and I sought to reinforce my position: "You never went to school and you do all right, so I'll just stay home too. You can teach me like Granddaddy taught you 'n' Uncle Jack (Lee, 1960:29).

The quotation shows that Atticus is very fondly loving to his children as long as what is done by his children is right, and would be very scold to his children if they make a mistake without partiality to his children. The role of Atticus as a single parent, but he is able to play the role of a father and a mother as well. This attitude resembles the wisdom which Atticus practises. In this case adult people who should can think more than kids also get bad influences because of the social condition that created from the culture and condition. They influence to others if they should act like the others because they want to be part of the people who want to accept from the other in a group of people.

Atticus decides to become a lawyer for a black man in a case; because of that the life of Atticus's family is changed. For Maycomb citizens, a black man is a second class who is considered as a scum of society and always gets prejudice as a slave.

Atticus sighed. "I'm simply defending a Negro—his name's Tom Robinson. He lives in that little settlement beyond the town dump. He's a member of Calpurnia's church, and Cal knows his family well. She says they're clean-living folks (Lee, 1960:77).

The quotation shows that Atticus works to be a lawyer unbiased way to anyone and be neutral. No matter the condition however though that is being handled is the case a nigger.

Censure comes for the Atticus family from all over the town. At the school Jem and Scout are also ridiculed by his friends because they have a father who loves nigger. Not only from the surrounding environment does Atticus get challenges than her own sister, Alexandria. Lawyer of Tom Robinson, with wisely Atticus advises to Scout and Jem that they have nothing to be ashamed of because of he defends a black man, Atticus suggests to Scout and Jem that they need to stand on their own feet and refuse to respond with violence if they receive scorn.

This one's mine, I guess. You might hear some ugly talk about it at school, but do one thing for me if you will: you just hold your head high and keep those fists down. No matter what anybody says to you, don't you let 'em get your goat. Try fighting with your head for a change... it's a good one, even if it does resist learning. (Lee, 1960:78)

Although he gets a lot of opposition from the surrounding neighbors and even from his own family, Atticus keeps on steady in resolving this case. Even with two children, he teaches them not to be afraid or angry when they are derided by their school friends and neighbors. Atticus tells the children to keep their heads up right in what they do what is right, and they should help people who are oppressed as a form of duty.

In Maycomb everything that had any relation between people and social life was arranged, so most of the people had a same assumption in one case;

The Radley Place was inhabited by an unknown entity the mere description of whom was enough to make us behave for days on end; Mrs Dubose was plain hell (Lee, 1960:7)

In Maycomb's social life people judge if become a normal person they should have their social life as Maycomb people which is have their routine activity but a family who live in Radley's place have different life with most of Maycomb people. In this case, because most of people don't know about the people who live in Radley's place regularly than they make their own assumption from irresponsible issues.

So when the nigger got a case some white though if the other white shouldn't defend them because they don't like it. It refers to how law was so racist in that time because of the point of view from those people.

The Negroes, having waited for the white people to go upstairs, began to come in. "Whoa now, just a minute," said a club member, holding up his walking stick. "Just don't start up them there stairs yet awhile." (Lee, 1960:218)

The coloured balcony ran along three walls of the courtroom like a second-story veranda, and from it we could see everything. (Lee, 1960:219)

The black people always in the second list after white people in some activities in court, like when the Negroes waiting for the white people before they entrance. And the other proof was how the sitting place was arrange, which was the white people get in down stair and the black got in the upstairs it means they are separate and cannot mix in one condition or place even in a law area such a court.

From the law in that time, there was a particularly result in a court when there was a case that happened with black which was a judgment black always wrong. There was no secret when black people must be lost in a court and defending black could be something in vain. Even they knew the reality how was something impossible fought with white. They never lose a hope.

At the court, Atticus has delivered defense and the fact that Tom Robinson is innocent. A court who applies jury systematic decides that Tom Robinson is guilty, and like a usually that jury never defends a blackman.

I know, and lots of 'em probably deserved it, too—but in the absence of eyewitnesses there's always a doubt, some times only the shadow of a doubt. The law says 'reasonable doubt,' but I think a defendant's entitled to the shadow of a doubt. There's always the possibility, no matter how improbable, that he's innocent (Lee, 1960:223).

Although he fails to defend Tom Robinson because no matter the plea has been given by Atticus, the jury decides the rape is blamed upon Tom Robinson. Atticus has

taught the spectators who are present at the court the principles concerning the fairness, equality, and civil liability.

In the novel, people who got bad treatment was not only the nigger but people who defended nigger always got almost the same treatment from the environment. So the prejudice that cause hatred for the black also influenced the children not only adult people. It was showed by Cecil who treated Scout so bad because her father defend a nigger. From the statement, actually the mind set of children was influenced a lot by adult so that they do have same perception about nigger. The effects of defending negro was got a lot of hatred which was expressed by unproper words from the environment. Complaint about the disagreement of Atticus' decision to defending negro at first came from his own family and when the main member family of Atticus went out they got same bad treatment from people.

The writer wants to extend another characteristics. First, Atticus always wants to be wise: no matter how young Jem, his children is, he shows his love for Jem by listening to the children's opinion. Second, as a lawyer, he is not picky to handle his cases: he takes the case of Tom Robinson in this case. Third, as a father, he realizes never educates Jem, but he would always let them learn anything from him. This characteristics makes Scout, his daughter, a little girl who becomes smart and critical. She is determined, just like Atticus somehow. Besides that, Scout is quite brave to oppose things which she thinks they are bad. She has curiosity of crime against the

truth. So, Faziah and Winarni do not seem to see that Atticus is not only a reputable lawyer, but he is also a responsible father.

5. CONCLUSION

To Kill a Mockingbird is a classic novel because, one of the many reasons, it presents the figure of Atticus. He is the figure who suffers from repression because, as a white man, he defends a black man named Tom Robinson on a trial. The repression becomes a strong reading experience in the novel.

Faziah's study analyzes the cause and effect on what happens to Atticus, and why the social condition does not like what Atticus does to defend a black man. Whereas Winarni says that the novel presents the condition in the character of Atticus along with his conflicts, explaining that the battle of his *id* and *superego* influences his decision to put forward the case.

The writer somehow has a different viewpoint about Atticus. The writer affirms that Atticus's personality is wise. Atticus is a father who loves his children; a lawyer who never objects what cases he receives to handle; and a determined person who always defends anyone who is right no matter what other people say.

This novel teaches readers about forgiveness which can be seen through the character of Atticus. Atticus does not get angry at his children when he takes the case of Tom Robinson. It seems like Atticus understands the children well; Atticus seems to forgive the children's complaint. Besides that, most people do not seem to

dissagree Atticus is decision to defend Tom Robinson. Yet, Atticus does not get irritated easily it seem like Atticus forgives the disagreement which the people put on his shoulders. Thus, the readers can learn from Atticus's a forgiveness through this novel.

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APPENDIX

