



WHITE SAVIOR IN MELFI'S *HIDDEN FIGURES*

A THESIS

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
For S-1 Degree in American Studies
in English Department Faculty of Humanities
Diponegoro University**

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PRONOUNCEMENT

The writer honestly confirms that she compiles this thesis entitled “White Savior in Melfi’s *Hidden Figures*” by herself and without taking any results from other researchers in S-1, S-2, S-3 and in diploma degree of any university. The writer ascertains also that she does not quote any material from other publications or someone’s paper except from the references mentioned.

Semarang, July 6th 2018

Erinda Wanti

MOTTO AND DEDICATION

If you can dream it you can do it

Walt Disney

If something is destined for you never in a million years will it be for someone else

Al Hadith

The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

I, with all my heart, dedicated this thesis to myself, who has been doing great all the time, my parents, who pour me with their love, and my friends, who push me back up when I was at my lowest stage.

APPROVAL

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As this thesis has been completed, I am fully aware that this thesis is still far from perfect. Therefore, by this, I will gladly receive any constructive criticism, recommendations, and suggestions to improve this thesis. I do hope that this thesis will be useful for those studying racism in Hollywood movie industry.

Semarang, July 6th 2018

Erinda Wanti

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ABSTRACT

Rasisme seringkali terwujud dalam tindakan yang tidak menyenangkan seperti kekerasan, segregasi bahkan perbudakan antar suatu kelompok ras. Namun pada praktiknya, ternyata terdapat bentuk baru rasisme atau *new racism* yang dilakukan secara lebih halus dan tak terlihat. Salah satu contohnya adalah melalui penggambaran citra orang kulit putih sebagai pahlawan terhadap ras dengan warna kulit lain yang disebut *white savior narrative*. Tujuan dari karya tulis ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi bentuk-bentuk dari rasisme yang konvensional dan rasisme yang baru dalam film *Hidden Figures* yang terefleksi dalam *white savior narrative*. Sumber dan fakta yang mendukung tulisan ini diperoleh penulis dengan menerapkan studi pustaka, yaitu meneliti secara menyeluruh film *Hidden Figures* dan juga membaca sumber-sumber tertulis lainnya, seperti penelitian terdahulu, jurnal, buku, dan *e-books*. Dari penelitian ini, penulis mendapati adanya bentuk rasisme yang konvensional dan rasisme yang baru yaitu *white savior narrative* dalam film *Hidden Figures* yang diperkuat oleh indikasi dan teori yang ada.

Kata kunci: Rasisme, Rasisme Baru, *White Savior*

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Nowadays, many people believe that inequality, discrimination and also racism do not exist like what minority experiences in many part of the world. Racial discrimination or racism is "the belief that one racial category is innately superior or inferior to another" (Macionis, 2011: 326). Basically, people who stand as the majorities are expected to be the superior, while the minorities are thought to be inferior. In fact, racism does still exist in where freedom and equality are believed to exist. In the American life context, this racism is mostly experienced by non-white people. As a concept, "racism is closely tied to the distinction between different racial groups made by the member of society that raise different behave of one race to another" (Murji and Solomos, 2015:22). In the past, this racism or racial discrimination was presented through the abusive acts, such as holocaust or slavery. Yet racism now has transformed to be more invisible, systematic and institutionalized. It is shown through various media, and movie is one of tools used to deliver racial issues in well narration both implicitly and explicitly. This racial issues depicts in some American movie, and *Hidden Figures* movie is one of them.

Hidden Figures is a 2016 American biographical movie directed by Theodore Melfi and written by Melfi and Allison Schroeder. This movie is adapted from a biography with the same title. It is depicted the struggle of the Black American women against racial discrimination while pursuing their dreams. In this movie, it would be seen a lot about the struggling of these three African-American women against the oppression in their daily life, especially the struggle in their work environment.

This movie, however, is being debated by the American media as some of the scenes of this movie are not adapted from the books. Explicitly, the viewers will witness the issues of women struggle in breaking the oppression in this movie. Based on some existing elements such as the glorification of white character, and the plot or narration this movie also presents us the white savior narrative, which is a new form of racism. Meeta Rani Jha in her book: *The Global Beauty Industry: Colorism, Racism, and the National Body* said that the white savior narrative is a recurring device in cultural representation in which white men and women get to be heroes and rescue people of color from their suffering and oppression (2006:55). According to the explanation, hence the writer try to examine the white savior narrative as the findings of a new racism in the *Hidden Figures* movie.

1.2. Purposes of the Study

There are several purposes of this study:

1. To analyze the intrinsic elements of the movie such as characters, setting, and conflicts.
2. To analyze racism reflected in the *Hidden Figures* movie.
3. To examine the white savior in the *Hidden Figures* movie as the new racism and compare it to racism.

1.3. Scope of the Study

In writing this thesis, the author will analyze the intrinsic and the extrinsic aspects of the movie. The intrinsic aspect consists of narrative elements such as characters, setting, conflict, and cinematographic elements. The examined extrinsic aspect of *Hidden Figures* movie is racism and white savior. Besides, the author will identify the white savior narrative as the new form of racism depicted in the *Hidden Figures* movie.

1.4. Methods of the Study

1.4.1. Method of Research

In making the thesis, the author uses library research to collect the data. Books, lecture materials, internet sources, and DVD are used as references to this research. The primary data source in this study is *Hidden Figures* Movie by Theodore Melfi. The secondary data of this study are taken from other sources

such as literary books , previous studies, articles, journals, and also websites related to the theory.

1.4.2. Method of Approach

In this paper, the writer uses objective approach which is used to analyze the narrative elements such as character, setting, and conflict in the movie. Moreover, in analyzing the extrinsic elements, the writer will use sociological approach. According to Kennedy and Gioia's, "Sociological approach examines literature in the cultural, economic and political context in which it is written or received" (1995: 1801). In the extrinsic elements, the writer is trying to analyze this movie using the white savior film theory reflected in the act of the white characters of *Hidden Figures* Movie.

1.5. Previous Study

To finish this analysis, the writer also needs the previous study to look for the similarity and the differences of the study conducted before. In addition, the previous study is conduct to avoid the plagiarism. There are two previous studies that the writer found.

First, Delastuti (2017) in her undergraduate thesis entitled *The Representation of Female Characters as Black Feminists in Hidden Figures Movie*. She examined that the representation of black feminist by the characters leads to the development of black women's orientation and African American women empowerment which result to the improving life of the characters.

Secondly, on Pimentel journal (2014), entitled *The White Cinematic Lens: Decoding the Racial Messages in The Blind Side*. It was explained about how is white savior narrative as a racism form reflected in *The Blind Side* movie.

According to the previous studies above, the writer uses different analyzing by identifying the new form of racism through white savior narrative reflected in the *Hidden Figures* movie.

1.6. The Organization of the Writing

In writing the thesis ‘White Savior in Melfi’s *Hidden Figures*’, the study will be arranged in chapters and sub-chapters as follows:

Chapter 1 Introduction

It contains Background of the Study, Purpose of the Study, Scope of the Study, Method of the Study, Previous Study, and The Organization of the Writing.

Chapter 2 Synopsis of the Movie

This chapter contains the summary of *Hidden Figures* Movie

Chapter 3 Literary Review

This chapter consists of theoretical frameworks and theories that can be used as guidance and references for analyzing the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects.

Chapter 4 Discussion

The chapter contains the analysis of the movies through intrinsic and extrinsic aspects. This chapter contains the analysis of the intrinsic aspects

including theme, characters, setting (place, time), conflict (internal and external), and cinematography. For the extrinsic aspect, the writer will analyze the white savior narrative reflected in the *Hidden Figures* movie.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

The last part is conclusion where the whole of the discussion and analysis is put together into short summary, containing the focus of the paper.

CHAPTER 2

SYNOPSIS OF THE MOVIE

Hidden Figures is a movie adapted from a true story with the same title. Apparently, this movie takes a setting in the 1960s era, it was the era when the colored people were given bad treatment by the whites or we called it as racism in America. Moreover, the place taken for this movie is in Virginia, where racism commonly existed at that time. This movie stories about the attempt of three African-American women, name Katherine G. Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan, and Mary Jackson to break down the racism in their workplace and environment. They are actually brilliant women, working as the brains at NASA and witnessing the launch of one of the greatest operations in the history that is the launch of astronaut John Glenn into orbit, the impressive achievement that revived the American confidence. They broke gender and race lines to inspire the generations to have a big dream.

Since the launching of Russian satellite, America is triggered to launch their own satellite in the space. Katherine is assigned by her supervisor, Vivian Mitchell, to assist Al Harrison space task group. In this team, Katherine is the first African American team member to assist in an important group and she even works in the building that doesn't even have bathroom for the coloured people. At the beginning, Katherine is underestimated and debased by the people in the team, especially by Paul Stafford, the head engineer who differentiates her, thus she has

to face many challenges such as she has to drink coffee from a separate pot of the white member.

In the different place, Dorothy requests to her supervisor, Vivian, to be officially promoted to a supervisor. Unfortunately, her wish to be a supervisor is rejected by Vivian. Meanwhile, as being placed in the engineering team, Mary identifies an imperfection in the experimental space capsule's heat shields, and that moment leads her head engineer encouraging her to pursue an engineering degree.

One time, Katherine attends a barbecue party with her family. She meets a US Army Officer named Jim Johnson there. However, they do not start their meeting with the right note as Jim is skeptical about the woman ability on mathematics. Yet later, Jim proposes Katherine and her children from a previous marriage over and finally they decide to marry.

Harrison invites his staff members to solve a complex mathematical equation, yet no one do it and at last Katherine takes a step forward, and makes everyone in the room impressed. One day, the astronauts of Mercury 7 astronauts visit NASA, Langley and the astronaut, John Glenn is very friendly to the West Area Computers employees, especially for the colored women that are working there.

One day, in a crucial time, when Harrison needs Katherine, He cannot find Katherine on her desk, it is shocked him when she tells him that it takes nearly half an hour to walk over to the next building to go to the rest room as in the building where Katherine assigned there is no rest room for the colored people.

Harrison is so angry hearing what Katherine said to him, then by his own self, he breaks down the board outside the bathroom and allows everyone to use the same bathroom. He also includes Katherine in the important meetings.

Besides, Mary who is encouraged to pursue her engineering degree, goes to court and convinces the judge to grant her permission to attend night classes in an all-white school to obtain her engineering degree.

Along with it, Dorothy learns how to use an IBM electronic computer that could replace her co-workers. She visits the computer room on the slay and starts the machine successfully. After that, she visits a public library with her son, she enters the section where only white who could go there to borrow a book about FORTRAN, as the consequence of being screwed by the librarian. Fortunately, she could take the book along with her. Then she learns about FORTRAN and share her knowledge about FORTRAN to other black colleagues at West Area to avoid them to be fired. Because of that, Dorothy is chosen as the supervisor. Vivian congratulates Dorothy on her work, she assures Dorothy that she never treated her differently due to the color of her skin and she is happy about Dorothy that is chosen as the supervisor.

As the final arrangements for the launching of Glenn, Katherine is informed that she is no longer needed at STG and she is being reassigned back to her previous worked area, West Area Computers.

Yet, a disparity calculation in the launching process rises. The capsule's landing coordinate calculation is mismatched. Glen requested Katherine to be called back and recheck the calculation. Katherine quickly calculates it and brings

the result to the control room. Unfortunately, after she gives the paper, the door is closed. Nevertheless, Harrison takes her to enter the control room and carry out the results to Glen together.

After the space capsule is successfully launched, its warning light is indicating a heat shield problem, the mission control team decides to land it after three orbits instead of seven. Katherine understands the situation and suggests that they should leave the retro-rocket attached to heat shield for reentry. Her instructions is correctly proven and Friendship 7 successfully lands in the ocean.

After the mission, the mathematicians are desisted and replaced by electronic computers. Katherine is reassigned to the Analysis and Computation Division, Dorothy stands as the Supervisor of Programming Department, and Mary attains her engineering degree as the court grant her permission to take the night class with the whites.

CHAPTER 3

LITERARY REVIEW

3.1. Intrinsic Aspects

Intrinsic aspects are essential to build the work. As it is a movie analysis, the intrinsic aspects consist of two sub-elements: narrative elements and cinematography elements.

3.1.1 Narrative Elements

Understanding the narrative elements is significant for the viewers to comprehend the story of the movie in detail. In *A Glossary of Literature Terms*, Abrams stated that, “a narrative is a story, whether told in prose or verse, involving events, characters, and what the character says and do” (1999: 173). Therefore, the narrative elements is required for the viewers to understand the movie. In this study, the narrative elements will be about settings, characters, and conflict only.

3.1.1.1 Settings

Setting is an essential element in a story. Setting conveys a realistic impression and builds a certain ambiance of the story. Hugh Holman in *A Handbook to Literature* stated that “Setting is the physical, and sometimes spiritual, background against which the action of a narrative (Novel, drama, short story, etc.) takes place” (1960:453). Holman classified setting into three categories; setting of time, setting of place, and setting of social environment.

3.1.1.1.1 Setting of Time

Setting of time refers to such sign when a certain event occurred. According to *A Handbook to Literature*, Holman says that “setting of time determines the time or period in which the action takes place, e.g., epoch in history, season of the year, etc” (1960:453).

3.1.1.1.2 Setting of Place

Setting of place conveys the viewer where the story is taken. Holman in *A Handbook to Literature* states that “setting of place is the actual geographic location, including topography, scenery, and such a physical arrangements as the location of the windows and doors in a room” (1960: 453).

3.1.1.1.3 Setting of Social Environment

This setting will affect the story through the social background of the characters. “Setting of social background is the general environment of the character, e.g., religious, mental, moral, social, and emotional condition through which the people in the narrative move” (Holman, 1960: 453).

In this study, setting of time, place and social environment are required to view the condition of the U.S. society in 1960’s back then in the movie comparing to the real condition at that time historically.

3.1.1.2 Characters

Character is one of the important elements in a story. Character becomes significance elements in a story since the character takes what the writer wants to convey to the reader or viewer. According to Kennedy and Gioia, a character is “presumably imagined person who inhabits story” (1983: 45). Through the character, the readers will understand about the plot of the story. According to Himawan Pratista on *Memahami Film*, he also says that,

“The plot would not flow by the absence of actor or character which motivating the act. The character always does the act by a purpose. In order to reach the purpose, the characters must be facing problem that is able to motivate the purpose. If there is no problem, the plot would not able to develop”(2008: 43).

Perrine (1956) also classified characters into two groups, namely dynamic and static characters. This classification is based on the changes and the development of the character, those are dynamic character and static character. “Dynamic character undergoes a permanent change in some aspects of character, personality, or outlook” (1956:68). This characters grow or develop their character in the story as they experience some problems or conflicts. While “static character is the same sort of person at the end of the story as at the beginning” (1956-69). It shows that this kind of characters do not change in the course of story.

3.1.1.3 Conflict

Based on Laurence Perrine in *The Story Structure, Sound, and Sense*,

Conflict is a clash of action, desire, ideas, or goods in the plot of a story or drama. Conflict may exist between the main character and some other person or persons (man against man); between the main character and some external force, physical nature, society, or fate (man against environment); or between the main character and some destructive elements in his own nature (man against himself) (1956: 1408).

Conflict has a significant role to develop the plot, without conflict the story will be boring and monotone. Regarding to Meyer, conflict is divided into internal conflict and external conflict

3.1.1.3.1 Internal conflict

In *The Bedford Introduction Literature*, Michael Meyer states that “Conflict may also be internal; in such a case some moral or psychological issue must be resolved within protagonist. Internal conflicts frequently accompany external ones” (1990: 46). Internal conflict occurs inside the heart. In internal conflict, a character should deal with his feelings or emotions.

3.1.1.3.2 External conflict

According to Michael Meyer in *The Bedford Introduction Literature*, “external conflict places the major character in contradictory situation between him and other characters, society, nature, or all of those” (1990: 46). In this external conflict the character must deal with the problems with the other character such as the competition or being oppressed by another character or the character should be dealing with the social culture or natural condition.

3.1.2 Cinematic elements

Cinematic element is the intrinsic element of the movie which supports how the story is built and presented into the scene in the movie. "Cinematic aspects are the technical aspects on creating film", (Pratista, 2008:1). The cinematic elements refer to the art of the film technique to build a good movie such as camera shot, camera angle, sound duration etc. In this study, the writer will focus on two elements only, namely shots and audio aspect in order to support this analysis.

3.1.2.1 Shots

1. Distance

According to Pratista on Memahami Film, shot distances are divided into seven, namely extreme long shot, long shot, medium long shot, medium shot, medium close-up, close-up, and extreme close-up (2008:104).

- **Extreme Long Shot**

Extreme long shot is a shot technique to take the object from the farthest distance. This technique is mostly used to present the large panoramas or views. In this shot, the physical appearance of the object is small due to the long distance between the camera and the object (Pratista 2008:105).

- **Long Shot**

In this shot, the physical appearance of the object taken is clearly visible yet the background is still dominant. This shot is mostly used to establish shot or to be the opening shot in the film (Pratista 2008:105).

- Medium Long Shot

This shot shows a relatively balanced composition between the environment and the object. This shot presents the human figure from the knees to the head (Pratista 2008:105).

- Medium Shot

Through medium shot, the viewers can see the expression of the actor as the medium shot creates a frame of human body from the waist up (Pratista 2008:105).

- Medium Close-up

This shot is often used for the conversation scene. As this shot frames the body from the chest up, the actor expression is dominantly seen while the background is not (Pratista 2008:105).

- Close-up

Generally, this shot is purposed to show the object in detail for instance the face, hand, leg, or a small object. Frequently, this shot is used to show the human expression in clearly (Pratista 2008:105).

- Extreme Close-up

Opposite to the extreme long shot, the extreme close-up is the shot technique from the closest distance. It functions to present the part of human face such as the eyes, ears, nose and etc. in more detail (Pratista 2008:106).

2. Angle

According to Pratista, angle is the camera point of view toward the object in frame. This angle is classified into three, namely, high-angle, straight-on angle, and low angle (2008:106)

- **High Angle**

The camera shoots the object from the lower place, so the object will seem smaller, weak and intimidated (2008:106).

- **Straight-on Angle**

The camera shoots the object straightly (2008:106)

- **Low Angle**

The camera shoots the object from the higher place, so the object will seem bigger, dominant, confident, and strong (2008:106).

3.1.2.2 Audio aspects

Himawan Pratista in *Memahami Film* classifies the sound into three, namely dialogues, music, and sound effect (2008:149).

1. Dialogue

Dialogue is a spoken or writing conversational exchange between two people or more. According to Pratista, dialog is a verbal communication language used by the characters in the story (2008:150).

2. Music

Music is one of significant elements which has a role to strengthen the mood, nuance, and atmosphere in a movie thus this elements will support the audiences to understand and touch the movie. (Pratista, 2008:154)

3. Sound Effect

In a movie, sound effect is known as noise. Sound effect is all of the additional sound or voice exclude the dialogue, song, or music. It has a function as the background voice (Pratista, 2008:156)

3.2. Extrinsic Aspect

3.2.1 Racism

In general, racism is a distinction of some races which lead to a behavioral or ideational consequence of those racial classification. Macionis states that racial discrimination or racism is "the belief that one racial category is innately superior or inferior to another" (Macionis, 2011: 326). Mostly, people who stand as the majorities are expected to be the superior, while the minorities are thought to be inferior. In addition, Todorov in *Theory of Race and Racism* states that "Racism is an ancient form of behavior that is probably found worldwide; racialism is a movement of ideas born in Western Europe whose period of flowering extends from the mid-eighteenth century to the mid-twentieth." (Solomos, 2015:64).

Initially, in the American life, racism occurred as the consequence of the racial group distinction by its physical appearance. Black American or African

American is the group of people who experienced the racism or racial discrimination the most as they have a huge difference in physical appearance to the whites. The whites believe that blacks and other people of color are biologically inferior: they are naturally less intelligent and have other innate flaws that keep them from getting a good education and otherwise doing what needs to be done to achieve the American Dream. This notion is supported by Richard J. Herrnstein and Charles Murray revived this view in their controversial book, *The Bell Curve*, in which they argued that the low IQ scores of African Americans, and of poor people more generally, reflect their genetic inferiority in the area of intelligence (Minnesota Publisher, 2016:370). This racism led to discrimination and segregation. This racial discrimination can be seen by the implementation of *Jim Crow* laws or known as *traditional* or *old-fashioned* racism, which is based on violence or segregation real occurred between 1877 and mid-1960s.

According to Pilgrim, Jim Crow is not only laws, but they also etiquettes which required that whites should have priority and are better treated than the black, while Blacks are exception to the treatment in public transportation and facilities, bureaucracy, justice, employment and the environment (Pilgrim, 2000). It leads a differentiation treatment between the whites and the blacks, for example, more than half of all whites thought that blacks were less intelligent than whites, more than half favored segregation in public transportation, more than two-thirds favored segregated schools, and more than half thought whites should receive preference over blacks in employment hiring (Minnesota publisher, 2016:351).

In brief, racism is the behavioral or ideational consequence of the racial distinction which results the dominant group being superior to the minority groups. In the past, this old racism is implemented by the segregation and kind of abuses.

3.2.1.1 Jim Crow

Jim Crow was an era in which whites conducted methods sometimes legal, illegal, often deadly, yet mostly immoral, to maintain political and cultural domination over the blacks, and it did not always only occur in the South. Blacks were considered as the second-class citizenship. Blacks were denied the right to vote, and kept separate from the whites in most phases of life. In general, Blacks were treated as if they were subhuman, it is an effort to justify white supremacy and keep the black population under tight control of the whites. Racial segregation was the core of Jim Crow, and the adoption of explicitly racist laws intended to keep blacks and whites away from each other everywhere is the mark of Jim Crow era. In this era, Black access to public accommodations like restaurants, buses and trains was restricted, and blacks were forced into separate (and inferior) schools (The American Civil Right Unions, 2014:1-6).

Here are some laws which decreed segregation according to The American Civil Right Unions in their book *The Truth about Jim Crow*:

“Buses: “All passenger stations in this state operated by any motor transportation company shall have separate waiting rooms or space and separate ticket windows for the white and colored races.” (Alabama law)

Libraries: “The state librarian is directed to fit up and maintain a separate place for the use of the colored people who may come to the library for the purpose of reading books or periodicals.” (North Carolina law)

Restaurants: “It shall be unlawful to conduct a restaurant or other place for the serving of food in the city, at which white and colored people are served in the same room, unless such white and colored persons are effectually separated by a solid partition extending from the floor upward to a distance of seven feet or higher, and unless a separate entrance from the street is provided for each compartment.” (Alabama law)

Schools: “Separate rooms [shall] be provided for the teaching of pupils of African descent, and [when] said rooms are provided, such pupils may not be admitted to the school rooms occupied and used by pupils of Caucasian or other descent.” (New Mexico law)

Schools: “[The County Board of Education] shall provide schools of two kinds; those for white children and those for colored children.” (Texas law)

Toilets: “Every employer of white or negro males shall provide for such white or Negro males reasonably accessible and separate toilet facilities” (Alabama law)” (2014: 6-7).

3.2.1.2 New Racism

Jim Crow racism or old fashioned racism has been replaced by symbolic or modern racism which is kinder and gentler. It is taken to keep the superiority of the whites as the dominant group still exist. The whiteness and white supremacy are notions used to remain the status quo of the whites as the dominant group (Bonilla-Silva, 2003).

Whiteness, just like race, is a socially constructed category that reflects social relationship and it cannot be understood apart from racialized social systems. In the context of the U.S. racial system, “whiteness” transformed from a

relatively nebulous descriptive term to a basis for the rights and privileges of citizenship and a claim to superiority based on biological differences. This whiteness has played a key role in maintaining white supremacy (Bonilla-Silva, 2003).

Thus some experts believe that whiteness and white supremacy is the new form of racism. Bonilla-Silva in his book, *White Out: The Continuing Significance of Racism* says that,

“I have labeled this new, kinder and gentler, white supremacy as the “new racism” and have argued that it is the main force behind contemporary racial inequality. Although the “new racism” seems to be racism lite, it is as effective as slavery and Jim Crow in maintaining the racial status quo. The central elements of this new structure are: 1) the increasingly covert nature of racial discourse and practices; 2) the avoidance of racial terminology and the evergrowing claim by whites that they experience “reverse racism”; 3) the invisibility of most mechanisms to reproduce racial inequality; 4) the incorporation of “safe minorities” (e.g., Clarence Thomas, Condeleeza Rice, or Colin Powell) to signify the nonracialism of the polity; and 5) the rearticulation of some racial practices characteristic of the Jim Crow period of race relations. In what follows, I explain why this “new racism” emerged and succinctly, because of space constraints, discuss how it operates in the area of social interaction” (Bonilla-Silva, 2003).

Based on that statement, even though old racism does not exist anymore yet racism actually does which is kinder, gentler, inevitable, and invisible. This new racism builds whiteness and white supremacy opinion in the American society. It results the opinion of the public that white people are better and dominant to others in a better way.

In this globalization era where information and communication are flowing fast, to build public opinion about the white supremacy, new racism practices are easily framed and presented in various media, and movie is one of

them. Collins in her book, *Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender, and New Racism*, says that “The films, music, magazines, music videos, and television shows of global entertainment, advertising, and news industries that produce superstars like Jennifer Lopez help manufacture the consent that makes the new racism appear to be natural, normal, and inevitable” (Collins, 34: 2004).

In sum, new racism is a kinder, gentler, and invisible racism which present the superiority of the whites as the dominant group in a better way. In this era, an attempt to introduce the new racism, movie is one of the media used to present the superiority of the whites in well narration.

3.2.1.3 White Savior

Meeta Rani Jha in her book: *The Global Beauty Industry: Colorism, Racism, and the National Body* said that the white savior narrative is a recurring device in cultural representation in which white men and women get to be heroes and rescue people of color from their suffering and oppression (2006:55).

Hughey, in *The White Savior Film: Content, Consumption and Critics*, states terms for instance, "noble savage," "manifest destiny," "white man's burden," and "great white hope" refer to previous iterations of the complex relationship between the tropes of the white savior and the dysfunctional "other" in need of help or saving. A trope is a recurring cinematic motif that shows a specific and poignant symbolic meaning. Films are often driven by tropes that could define particular genres, whether the stories are about an outsider teacher in an urban school or a lone cowboy in an exotic land (Hughey, 2014).

Hughey also classifies the characteristics of white savior movie as follows:

1. Crossing the color and culture line

The story contains crossing the color and culture line.

2. His saving grace

The white character saving nonwhite people from oppression or problem through his grace.

3. White suffering

In some white savior narrative movies, mostly the white as the main character experiences suffering because of his or her decision to protect a group of nonwhite people or the savior sacrifices his or her life at the end of the film so that the people of color may have better lives.

4. The savior, the bad white, and the natives

This narrative mostly consists of the savior, the bad white and the native characters. The white saviors are commonly positioned next to two types of other characters to distinguish them. First, the savior is juxtaposed with racist, domineering, completely uncaring, and extremely violent white characters. Second, the native or a nonwhite community, suffering a social problem, surrounds the savior and contextualizes his character development.

5. The color of meritocracy

The white savior movie is the patterned conflation of whiteness with an ethic of hard work, delay of gratification, and a mindset wholly focused on the individual triumph over obstacles. This dimension is particularly flexible and grounds the white savior as the source of social uplift and redemption through an array of characters and cinematic plots.

6. White civility, black savagery

This white savior narrative situates whiteness (especially U.S. and European whiteness) as the par excellence manifestation of civilization and rationality relative to the construction of blackness (especially African, West Indian, South American, and U.S. inner city American) as savage, emotional, and even exotically magical in its quaint and pre modern folkways.

7. "based on a true story"

The movie is mostly adapted by a true story or based on actual or historical events in order to strengthen the white savior as a non-fictional character (244:2014).

Hernan Vera and Andrew Gordon in *Screen Saviors: Hollywood Fictions of Whiteness* state that it is easy to recognize the white savior genre through the presence of a white person as "the great leader who saves blacks from slavery or oppression, rescues people of color from poverty and disease, or leads Indians in battle for their dignity and survival" (2003: 33).

Based on Hughey, he categorizes some movies that contain white savior narration, namely, *Conrack* (1974), *Glory* (1989), *Dances with Wolves* (1990), *Dangerous Minds* (1996), *Sunset Park* (1996), *Amistad* (1997), *Music of the Heart* (1999), *Finding Forrester* (2000), *Hardball* (2001), *The Last Samurai* (2003), *Half Nelson* (2006), *Gran Torino* (2008), *Avatar* (2009), *The Blind Side* (2009), and *The Help* (2011), are the example of the white savior film genre. (Hughey, 2014)

The white savior film is an important cultural device and artifact because it helps the myth of white supremacy built or repaired. The white savior film eternalizes, in subtle and friendly terms, the archaic paradigm of manifest destiny, the white man's burden, and the great white hope. "As Cinema is everywhere a fact of our lives, saturating our leisure time, our conversation, and our perceptions of each other and of self. Because of this, race in cinema is neither fictional nor illusion. It is real because it is meaningful and consequential; because it impacts real people's lives" (Hughey, 2014:29). Moreover when movie begins with "based on true story" label.

This white savior can also be a new form of racism. In brief, white savior helps the whites to build image of the whites in a better way by using an image as the savior, or hero for the needed people of color. This white savior film is mostly characterized by the existence of some aspects, namely, the white character as the savior who is often showed as protagonist or good in character, and the people of colored suffers from problems or oppression that impossible to handle by the colored people.

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

4.1 Intrinsic aspect

Intrinsic aspect analyzing of *Hidden Figures* movie is used to support the extrinsic aspect analysis of this movie. This analysis will be examined through the narrative elements of the movie that is obviously shown, namely the settings, the characters, and the conflicts. Moreover, cinematography element will be accounted to support the movie analysis, this cinematography element is covering the shots and the dialogues.

4.1.1 Narrative elements

4.1.1.1 Setting

4.1.1.1.1 Setting of Time

Generally, this movie setting of time occurs in two major periods depicting the life progress of the main characters. The first setting of time describes the childhood life of the main character; Katherine, in 1926 which is portrayed in the beginning of the movie. The second setting of time is the present time setting that is 1960s period. Some events in the movie scenes indicate the movie's setting of time taken around 1960s.



Picture 4.1. Mass demonstrating to end segregation (00:49:13)



Picture 4.2. President John F. Kennedy giving a speech (01:07:53)



Picture 4.3. John Glen landing successfully (01:57:16)

Some sequences which point to the movie's setting of time are the demonstration mass to end the segregation in picture 4.1, scene 00:49:13, which uses close-up shot. This scene shows people yelling provocatively while bringing some boards asking to end the segregation. This event refers to civil right movement which occurs around 1960s, it is strengthened by Carson in Encyclopedia Britannica that ".. Through nonviolent protest, the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s broke the pattern of public facilities' being segregated by "race" in the South and achieved the most important breakthrough in equal-rights legislation for African Americans .." (Carson, britannica.com/event/American-civil-rights-movement). It shows that in 1960s racism is still practiced in some parts of America through the segregation.

Adapted from a true story, *Hidden Figures* portrays factual events which really happens in the past with the exact setting of time which can be seen in picture 4.2, scene 01:07:53. The scene is taken in medium close up and presents the 35th President of the United States, John F. Kennedy giving a speech as a response to Alan Shepard and Freedom 7 launching to the space on May 5, 1961. As well as the scene 01:57:16 in picture 4.3, this scene portrays the success of NASA about the mission of John Glenn’s Friendship 7 orbit flight in 1962. In brief, this movie story portrays the factual events that happen in USA around 1960s.

4.1.1.1.2 Setting of Place

Hidden Figures movie takes place in the southern America. In major, there are 2 setting of places. The first one is West Virginia, a place where Katherine spent her childhood. It could be seen through the conversation between the teacher and Katherine’s parents who suggests Katherine to attend a better school, “West Virginia Collegiate Institute is the best school for Negroes in the state (*Hidden Figures*, 00:01:00-00:01:02)”. In addition, in picture 4.4, shows that the young Katherine walking to the school through the path in White Sulphur Springs wood while holding her book in tight.



Picture 4.4. Young Katherine walking in White Sulphur Springs wood (00:01:00)



Picture 4.5. Katherine, Mary and Dorothy escorted by white police man in Hampton highway, Virginia (00:06:42)

The second setting of place of this movie is Hampton, a place where adult Katherine lives in. It is seen by the conversation of Katherine, Dorothy and Marry, in picture 4.5, on the scene that a white police officer guide them go to NASA office after debating with 3 of them, Marry mention about Hampton clearly, “Three negro women are chasing a white police officer down the highway in Hampton, Virginia, 1961” (*Hidden Figures*, 00:06:40-00:06:46). Besides the obvious statement of Marry about Hampton, this setting of place is also reinforced by the correlation of the past situation that there is a difference for being the Negro and the White. Hampton and NASA office are located in the southern America that is Virginia. Historically, Virginia as southern America should be practicing racism at that time, and it is simply seen through Marry statement about her proud to be a Negro that could chase down a white police officer in Virginia, means that during that time is rare for the Negro to chase down the police, especially the white police. In short, this movie stories us the event occurred in the southern part of America that is West Virginia and Hampton, Virginia.

4.1.1.1.3 Setting of Social Environment

In 1960s, racism was practiced in Virginia through segregation, it was marked by the notion “separate but equal” of Jim Crow laws.

Virginia Commonwealth University stated that “Jim Crow Laws were statutes and ordinances established between 1874 and 1975 to separate the white and black races in the American South. In theory, it was to create “separate but equal” treatment, but in practice Jim Crow Laws condemned black citizens to inferior treatment and facilities.” (Virginia Commonwealth University, socialwelfare.library.vcu.edu/eras/civil-war-reconstruction/jim-crow-laws-andracial-segregation)



Picture 4.6. Black people church (00:32:93)



Picture 4.7. Public water tap separation (00:49:29)



Picture 4.8. Seat bus for colored people (00:50:25)

This notion emphasizes the separation of the whites and blacks in any part of life such as public facility separation where the use of the public facilities; school, bus, library, even the rest room should be separated between the whites and the blacks. Separation is legally practiced through the regulation of laws in some areas of southern America. Through this movie, segregation could be identified according some scenes such as in picture 4.6 about the church where only the blacks who attend, public water taps segregation is portrayed in picture 4.7, in this scene, the public water taps is distinguished in to two, they are public water tap for white only and public water tap for black only. Also, in picture 4.8, it is seen that even the seat in the bus, they are segregated between the whites and blacks.



Picture 4.9. Situation in Space Task Group (00:19:15)



Picture 4.10. Situation in West Computing Group (01:43:05)



Picture 4.11. Rest Room for Colored employee in NASA (00:22:33)

Moreover, this movie portrays that the segregation or separation between the black and the whites is not only occurred to the low class of blacks but it also occurred to the blacks who are well educated and economically wealth off. This situation could be seen through some scenes that portray racism practice through segregation. In picture 4.9 which is taken in extreme long shot presenting the NASA's Space Task Group office at the East Group where Kathrine works as geometry analyst with the white colleagues. While in picture 4.10 taken in extreme long shot, is indicating a different circumstance where black women computers do their duty in West Computing Group which is the place segregated with the main office. Also in picture 4.11 portrays about colored ladies room which means the rest room between the white and the black women worker in NASA is segregated.

In addition, Theodore Melfi; the director of *Hidden Figures*, in an interview with New York Times, he explained about the scene goals he wanted to present, “It also sets the time. It shows you what 1961 Virginia was like. And it puts you in social context with the importance of the space race and how meaningful the astronauts were to Americans.”

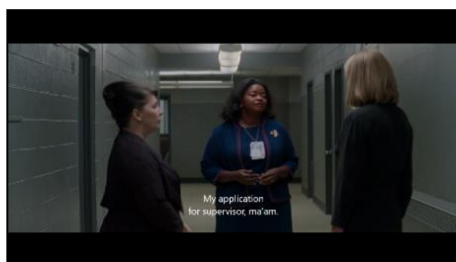
(Murphy, [nytimes.com/2017/01/12/movies/theodore-melfi-narrates-a-scene-from-hidden-figures.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/12/movies/theodore-melfi-narrates-a-scene-from-hidden-figures.html)).

It shows us that the movie setting focuses on social problem that is racism which happened around 1960s. According to the movie, social environment setting of this movie obviously shown is racism.

4.1.1.2 Characters

4.1.1.2.1 Dynamic character

4.1.1.2.1.1 Dorothy Vaughan



Picture 4.12. Dorothy announces the task for colored girls in the room (00:10:47)

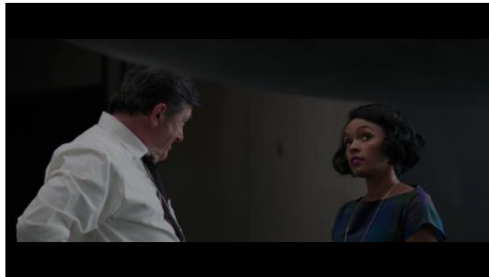


Picture 4.13. Dorothy requests her supervisor application to Vivian (00:12:07)

Dorothy is a middle-aged woman and she is the head of colored computers at West Computing Group at NASA. She has a great leadership skill and she always acts as supervisor at West Computing Group. It can be seen from picture

4.12. Even she announces the task for every girls in the room. Dorothy depicts herself as a risk-taker, brave, and extrovert woman in front of people. This can be seen from the picture 4.13 which is captured in medium long shot with eye level angle. In the picture, she has conversation with her boss, Vivian. She requests her application as permanent supervisor to be taken into account, but unfortunately Vivian always rejects it. Firstly, Dorothy always thinks positive to the whites, yet after her supervisor application is rejected by Vivian with unclear reasons, Dorothy puts less respect to the whites. In further, she puts lower respect to the white when she is expelled from the library by the whites. However, at last, her attitude towards Vivian is getting better, as Vivian be nice to her. According to the explanations above, the writer can define this character as a dynamic character.

4.1.1.2.1.2 Mary Jackson



Picture 4.14. Mary and Mr. Zielinski talking about capsule prototype (00:14:54)



Picture 4.15. Vivian talking to Mary that she cannot extent her degree as engineer (00:46:46)

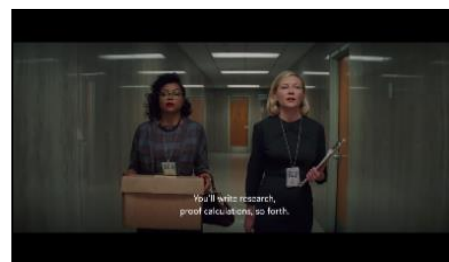
Mary Jackson is the youngest one among Katherine and Dorothy. Mary's role at NASA is as computer and engineer assistant Mr. Zielinski in testing capsule prototype, it is seen in picture 4.14. She is considered as a bold character

in the movie. She is straight-forward and always speaks out her thought. This is indicated by Kathrine's comment on her, "Nobody wants to go jail behind your mouth" (Hidden Figures, 00:04:15). Firstly, Mary is always skeptic to the white people as they are being segregated. She assumes that the whites always find an attempt to obstruct the blacks getting their dreams. It occurs when Vivian says that Mary cannot attend the engineering training program as some regulation reasons, it is seen in picture 4.15. However, at the end, she tries to think positively to the whites after being supported by Mr. Zielinski to be an engineer and being allowed by the judge to attend the engineering class.

4.1.1.2.1.3 Vivian Mitchell



Picture 4.16. Vivian speaking with Dorothy (00:12:18)



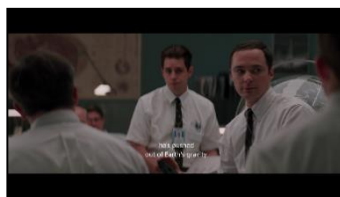
Picture 4.17. Vivian talking to Katherine about working instruction at Space Task Group (00:16:03)



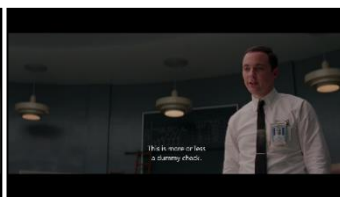
Picture 4.18. Vivian speaking with Dorothy tenderly (01:50:07)

Vivian Mitchell presents character as a self-centered, persistent, and cynic person. Her duty is supervising the colored computers in the West Computing Group division. Yet, she does not seem enjoy her duty to work with them. It is proved by her attitude towards the black employee, she mostly speak impudently about the black computers and their circumstances. Once she was going to the West Computing Group, she said that “Didn’t think I’d come all the way down here” (Hidden Figures, 00:11:52-00:11:53). It implies that she is interfered to be there. Moreover, she often underestimates the black employees and her acts towards the black mostly manifestation of prejudice and discrimination. Picture 4.16 showing Vivian facial expression wincing while speaking with Dorothy is in medium close-up and eye level angle. While Picture 4.17 using medium long shot and eye level angle presents her carrying Kathrine to Space Task Group, Vivian gives working instructions and caution to Katherine which emphasize racism. She also refuses Dorothy proposal to be a supervisor rudely. However, Vivian’s manner gradually changes. It can be seen from Picture 4.18 in eye level angle and medium close shot which shows different personality through her friendly expression and tenderly spoken after she has an unusual conversation with Dorothy in the rest room.

4.1.1.2.1.4 Paul Stafford



Picture 4.19. Paul leading discussion (01:17:56)



Picture 4.20. Paul giving task to Katherine (00:40:07)



Picture 4.21. Paul serving Katherine a cup of drink while smiling (01:58:20)

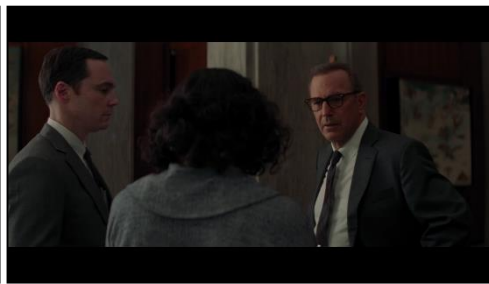
Paul Stafford is the leader of Space Task Group engineer. His duty is checking everyone's math before Kathrine takes over his task. Picture 4.19 showing Paul leading the discussion about the orbital mission of John Glenn with his employee is taken in medium shot. He is bossy and arrogant, but he is considered as careless person. It is seen when Paul is surprised as the administrator disagree to Paul's thoughtless comment about Russia's achievement. He is always contrasted with Kathrine Johnson. It can be proved by his treatments over Katherine which always seems underestimating. Picture 4.20 which is taken in medium shot captures Paul's supercilious expression while saying Kathrine has no clearance to look the complete files. Nevertheless, in the end, Paul attitudes towards Katherine is changing. In picture 4.21, it is seen that Paul gives a cup of drink and smiling at Katherine.

4.1.1.2.2 Static Character

4.1.1.2.2.1 Al Harrison



Picture 4.22. Harrison giving motivation to his employee about NASA mission (01:20:09)



Picture 4.23. Harrison allowing Katherine to join the important meeting which men only could attend (01:22:07)

Harrison is the head of Space Task Group. As a character he does not. He is portrayed as a real leader, having a great leadership skill, caring, kind and

religious. It is seen in the picture 4.22, this picture is the picture he encourages his employee about NASA mission. At the end, he always asks his employee to say amen on his wishes at every meetings with his employee. His caring is depicted on some scenes in which he always brings Katherine out from the oppression or problem. One of the scene is depicted in picture 4.23 when Harrison letting Katherine to come into the Pentagon meeting after prevented by Paul.

4.1.1.2.2.2 Katherine Johnson



Picture 4.24. Young Katherine solving difficult mathematics (00:02:27)



Picture 4.25 Adult Katherine writing down her calculation (00:42:47)



Picture 4.26. Katherine interacting with her 3 girls (00:30:05)

Kathrine Johnson is a 45 years old African woman. She is a genius whose intelligence is recognized and praised by people around her. In picture 4.24 using medium shot, portraying the young Kathrine solves difficult mathematics and she successfully unravels the equation which makes the older students and the teacher amazed by her ability. Adult Kathrine works in NASA is as a geometry analyst for supporting the space launching program at Space Task Group. Picture 4.25 which uses medium shot shows Kathrine doing calculation for Redstone Rocket Trajectory on office's blackboard. She is also Independent and tough person. This is portrayed in her status as widowed woman with 3 little girls which is showed in picture 4.26. Her character does not change a lot. She is actually always

underestimated and discriminated by her white colleague but rather than angry, she chooses to be silent and proves her ability in calculation.

4.1.1.2.2.3 Karl Zielinski

Karl Zielinski is an engineer and a NASA mission specialist. He is also Mary Jackson's mentor in the movie. He is portrayed as the kind man who is not racist and works against it. Mary Jackson specifically requested to be assigned to his team as he recognizes her talent. In a scene, Zielinski encourages Mary to enter the engineering program.

- Mr. Zielinski : There is another opening in the Engineer training program.
Mary : Flat head rivets would reduce wind drag.
Mr. Zielinski : Mary, a person with an engineer's mind should be an engineer. You can't be a computer the rest of your life.
Mary : Mr. Zielinski, I'm a Negro woman. I'm not gonna entertain the impossible.
Mr. Zielinski : And I'm a Polish Jew whose parents died in a Nazi prison camp. Now, I'm standing beneath a spaceship that's going to carry an astronaut to the stars. I think we can say we are living the impossible. Let me ask you. If you were a white male, would you wish to be an engineer?
Mary : I wouldn't have to. I'd already be one.
(*Hidden Figures*, 00:15:07-00:15:47)

Though, he only takes a small part in this movie, yet he could present us an image of the kind white man character.

4.1.1.3 Conflict

4.1.1.3.1 External Conflict

External conflict is significant to perceive the white savior issue in this movie, as the external conflict discusses about the relation between man versus

another man or society. While internal conflict focuses on the relation between men with their own selves. Thus, white savior in this movie could be analyzed through the external conflict which someone interacts with others socially or someone interacts with society or system.

Man versus man conflict is seen in this movie in a scene where Katherine prevented by Paul Stafford to know the current data for John Glenn. This conversation leads to conflict as there is opposite views between them. Paul believe that woman cannot attend the meeting and personally, Paul does not like to compete with woman, especially black woman. This is proved by the dialogue in the following below.

Kathrine	: If I could attend the briefings. I'd be more useful to the project
Paul	: Pentagon briefings are closed doors.
Kathrine	: Yes, but if we don't have the information of the changes, we can't keep up. I need those changes as they occur. As you said, it's a pin head.
Paul	: Kathrine, that's the job. You asked for this assignment, so just calculate with what you have. Or we'll find someone who can. (<i>Hidden Figures</i> , 01:18:42-01:19:03)

Then Paul intimidates Katherine that if she persists to come to the meeting, she will lose her job.

In further, external conflict also could be raised through the man versus society or system conflict. It could be seen in some scenes which carry the 3 main characters into clashes. This conflict is shown in a scene when Mary Jackson has an issue in the office. She applies a training program about engineering suggested by Mr. Zielinski yet one day, while Mary, Katherine and Dorothy having lunch

together in colored section cafeteria, Vivian announces that Marry cannot attend the engineering class as she is not qualified for the requirement because she only has mathematics and physical science degree. This conflict is shown in the dialogue between Vivian and Mary below.

- Vivian : We now require advanced extension courses through the University of Virginia. It's in the employee handbook. In addendum. In case you haven't read it.
- Mary : Every time we have a chance to get ahead, they move the finish line.
- Vivian : I just follow the rules around here and I expect everyone who works for me to follow them as well. There are no special circumstances for anyone. You all should be thankful you have jobs at all.
(*Hidden Figures*, 00:47:00-00:47:21)

As stated in the dialogue, Mary has to conform to the new rules about the extension courses that means she has to deal with a problem that she could not take an engineering class. Moreover, Vivian responds to Mary's derisive comment in rude way. Through Vivian Mitchell, we can see obviously that NASA system which is seemed racist, resulting the clash among the colored workers.

In occasion, Dorothy cannot be promoted as supervisor as there is no place for the black. This conflict aroused could be seen in the dialogue below between Dorothy and Vivian.

- Dorothy : Mrs. Mitchell, if I could.. My application for supervisor, ma'am. I was just wondering if they're still considering me for that position
- Vivian : Well, the official word is no. they're not assigning a permanent supervisor for the colored group
(*Hidden Figures*, 00:12:02-00:12:18)

This excerpt presents us a portrayal about the racism experienced also by Dorothy in which brings the clashes in the movie.

In addition, external conflict also built when Harrison getting angry to Katherine as she is not at her desk when he need her because she needs to go out the main building where she does her duty to the another building just to relieve herself as in the main building only has rest room for the whites not colored rest room. It is seen in Katherine monologue below which explains how she has to struggle on her job in NASA.

Kathrine : There is no bathroom. There are no colored bathrooms in this building or any building outside the West Campus, which is half a mile away. Did you know that? I have to walk to Timbuktu just to relieve myself and I can't use one of the handy bikes. Picture that, Mr. Harrison. My uniforms. Skirt below my knees, my heels, and a simple string of pearls. Well, I don't own pearls. Lord knows you don't pay coloreds enough to afford pearls. And I work like a dog, day and night, living off of coffee from a pot none of you wanna touch.
(*Hidden Figures*, 01:01:50-01:02:38)

4.1.1.3.2 Internal Conflict

Mary Jackson has a quarrel with her own self whether she could continue her study or not as she is a Negro woman when the head of engineer division, Mr. Zielinski, encourages her to take engineer training program so she could be a female engineer. This internal conflict can be seen the dialogue below.

Mr. Zielinski : There is another opening in the Engineer training program.
Mary : Flat head rivets would reduce wind drag.
Mr. Zielinski : Mary, a person with engineer's mind should be an

engineer. You can't be a computer the rest of your life.

Mary : Mr. Zielinski, I'm a Negro woman. I'm not gonna entertain the impossible.

Mr. Zielinski : And I'm a Polish Jew whose parents died in a Nazi prison camp. Now, I'm standing beneath a spaceship that's going to carry an astronaut to the stars. I think we can say we are living the impossible. Let me ask you. If you were a white male, would you wish to be an engineer?

Mary : I wouldn't have to. I'd already be one.

(Hidden Figures, 00:15:07-00:15:47)

That dialogue implies about Mary thought that she could not be an engineer as she is a Negro and woman and it is kind of impossible for her to go far beyond the boundaries, race and gender. While Mr. Zielinski is fully supporting her by sharing his tragic past that he accomplished to change his life which is seemed impossible. Also, Mr. Zielinski tries to prove that Mary has a great willingness to be an engineer by asking an analogy question about how if she is a white male. This dialogue between Mary and Mr. Zielinski carries an influence in Mary thoughts and how her performance in further.

4.2 Extrinsic aspect

4.2.1 Racism

The female characters in this movie experience racism in every part of their lives. While at that time, racism is presented in a segregation law form. Using a notion "separate but equal" the blacks are no longer violated by the whites physically as what the black people experienced in the past as slavery, yet

the blacks or colored people have an equal chance to live with the whites. Actually, this equality between the blacks and the whites remains a racism as they have different treatment.



Picture 4.27. Black people church (00:32:93)



Picture 4.28. Public water tap separation (00:49:29)



Picture 4.29. Seat bus for colored people (00:50:25)

Through this movie, racism ambience in which conducted by segregation practices, could be seen in some scenes such as in picture 4.27 about the church where only the blacks who attend, public water taps segregation is portrayed in picture 4.28, in this scene, the public water taps is distinguished in to two, they are public water tap for white only and public water tap for black only. Also, in picture 4.29, it is seen that even the seat in the bus, they are segregated between the whites and blacks.

Not only differentiating through the public facility, racism also occur in the professional word, in this case is NASA, which is believed as a professional institution, at that time, NASA cannot resist racist system.

This racism is raising the conflict in this movie. It could be seen in some scenes which carry the 3 main characters into struggle. Racism issue in education and work is portrayed through a scene when Mary Jackson has an issue in the office. She applies a training program about engineering suggested by Mr. Zielinski yet one day, while Mary, Katherine and Dorothy having lunch together in colored section cafeteria, Vivian announces that Mary cannot attend the engineering class as she is not qualified for the requirement because she only has mathematics and physical science degree. This conflict is shown in the dialogue between Vivian and Mary below.

- Vivian : We now require advanced extension courses through the University of Virginia. It's in the employee handbook. In addendum. In case you haven't read it.
- Mary : Every time we have a chance to get ahead, they move the finish line.
- Vivian : I just follow the rules around here and I expect everyone who works for me to follow them as well. There are no special circumstances for anyone. You all should be thankful you have jobs at all.
(*Hidden Figures*, 00:47:00-00:47:21)

As stated in the dialogue, Mary has to conform to the new rules about the extension courses that means she has to deal with a problem that she could not take an engineering class. Moreover, Vivian responds to Mary's derisive comment in rude way. Through Vivian Mitchell, we can see obviously that NASA system which is seemed racist that not allowing black to take an engineering degree. It is

also supported by the dialogue between Mary, Dorothy, and Katherine while they are in Dorothy house below.

Mary : "For those that cannot attend classes at the University of Virginia, Advanced Extension Courses are available at Hampton High School."
Katherine : That's still a segregated school.
Mary : Virginia acts like Brown versus the Board of Education. Never happened. They'll never just let a "colored" woman take classes at an all white school!
Dorothy : Sounds about right
(*Hidden Figures*, 00:47:28-00:47:47)

It conveys us that being educated is not merely freeing them from racism. Although Mary has capability to get a better education, they have no capability to end the segregation system.

Another segregation is pictured in a scene about Dorothy who cannot be promoted as supervisor as there is no place for the black. This problem could be seen in the excerpt below between Dorothy and Vivian.

Dorothy : Mrs. Mitchell, if I could.. My application for supervisor, ma'am. I was just wondering if they're still considering me for that position
Vivian : Well, the official word is no. they're not assigning a permanent supervisor for the colored group
(*Hidden Figures*, 00:12:02-00:12:18)

This dialogue presents us a portrayal about the racism experienced also by Dorothy. Here we could see that Dorothy is refused to be a supervisor as she is from the colored group, not because she is not able to supervise. It brings us to an understanding that at that time, even NASA which is known as a professional institution, still commits a different treatment between the whites and the colored people.

This racist treatment is not only occurred on Mary and Dorothy, but also Katherine. It could be seen in a scene where Harrison getting angry to Katherine as she is not at her desk when he needs. It is seen in Katherine monologue below which explains how she has to struggle with racist treatment in NASA.

Kathrine : There is no bathroom. There are no colored bathrooms in this building or any building outside the West Campus, which is half a mile away. Did you know that? I have to walk to Timbuktu just to relieve myself and I can't use one of the handy bikes. Picture that, Mr. Harrison. My uniforms. Skirt below my knees, my heels, and a simple string of pearls. Well, I don't own pearls. Lord knows you don't pay coloreds enough to afford pearls. And I work like a dog, day and night, living off of coffee from a pot none of you wanna touch.
(*Hidden Figures*, 01:01:50-01:02:38)

This monologue presents us how terrible the segregation is. This separation disturbs Katherine, as the colored people to undergo her activity and most of all is her life. In short, this movie shows us that although “separate but equal” is less violated than slavery in the past far from 1960s, yet this segregation is still a form of racism and of course it harms the black.

4.2.2 New Racism

4.2.2.1 White savior

The analysis of white savior undertakes the idea of white savior meaning that is the white standing as savior or hero of the colored people which suffer an oppression. Mostly, the colored people are portrayed as they cannot free from the sufferings or oppression by their own unless the whites take them out. This movie

indicated contains white savior narrative. In some scenes, the white savior could be obviously seen.



Picture 4.30. Harrison asking where has she been to Katherine (01:01:37)

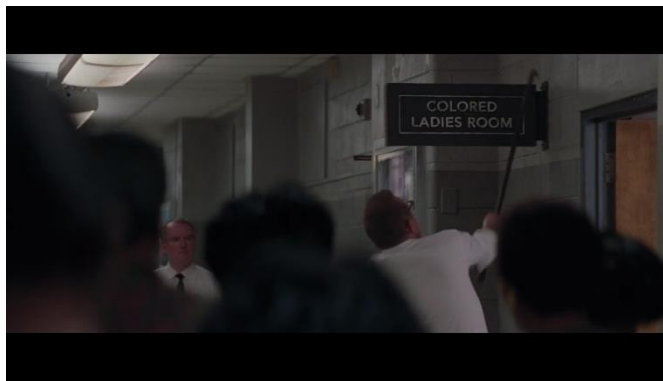
In picture 4.30, it is the scene where Harrison is angry to Katherine as she is not in her desk when he needs her.

Harrison : Where the hell have you been? Everywhere I look you're not where I need you to be. And it's not my imagination. Where the hell do you go everyday?
Katherine : The bathroom, sir.
Harrison : The bathroom! The damn bathroom!
Katherine : Yes, sir. The bathroom.
Harrison : For 40 minutes a day!? What do you do in there!? We are T-minus zero here. I put a lot of faith in you.
Katherine : There's no bathroom for me here.
Harrison : There's no bathroom? What do you mean there's no bathroom for you here?
Katherine : There's no bathroom here. There are no COLORED bathrooms in this building or ANY building outside the West Campus. Which is half a mile away! Did you know that? I have to walk to Timbuktu just to relieve myself!
(*Hidden Figures*, 01:01:14-01:02:38)

At that scene, Katherine says while crying that she cannot use the rest room in the building where she has the duty as it is only for the whites, then she should go to the colored rest room in another building which takes a lot of time to

go. Moreover, she also says how her struggle across the segregation or racism that she was experienced there.

After hearing all Katherine explanation. Harrison breaks down the board outside the bathroom and allows everyone to use the same bathroom while saying a caution.



Picture 4.31. Harrison breaking the colored ladies room board (01:03:43)

Harrison : There you have it! No more colored restrooms. No more white restrooms. Just plain old toilets. Go wherever you damn well please. Preferably closer to your desk. Harrison snatches up the sign. Here at NASA, we all pee the same color!
(*Hidden Figures*, 01:03:57-01:04:22)

In that scene, it could be seen the white savior narrative conducted by Harrison for Katherine in which he is breaking down the colored rest room board he could breaks down the rule about using different bathroom for different skin color. Absolutely, it is impossible for the blacks to break the rule by their own. Thus, the Harrison presence as the white boss who has a power changes the situation. This Harrison action is seemed similar to the white savior narrative where Harrison as the white person stand as the hero for Katherine who get

oppressed by the racism rule. At last, Katherine and other colored people get a privilege to use the same rest room.

In scene 01:20:12-01:20:25 Paul Stafford does not allow Katherine to get into the meeting and say that she cannot go to the meeting as she is a woman. It could be seen in the following dialogue.

Katherine : Sir. If I could attend these briefings...I'd be able to stay current
Paul : We've been through this, Katherine. It's not possible. There's no protocol for women attending.
Katherine : There's no protocol for a man circling the Earth either, sir.
Paul : That's just the way it is.
(*Hidden Figures*, 01:20:12-01:20:25)

Then Katherine is debating with Stafford that she should get into the meetings and help them to get the exact calculation. Harrison who witnesses Paul and Katherine in fight then asking to two of them about what really happens. Then Katherine explains what they are talking about and asking Harrison to get into the meeting.

Paul : And she's a woman. There's no protocol for a woman attending.
Harrison : Okay, I get that part, Paul. But within these walls, who makes the rules?
Katherine : You, sir. You're the boss. You just have to act like one.
Harrison : You keep quiet.
Katherine : Thank you, sir.
(*Hidden Figures*, 01:21:48-01:22:16)



Picture 4.32. Katherine giving report to Paul, yet Paul asking her to change it (01:21:10)



Picture 4.33. Katherine asking to join the meeting (01:21:23)



Picture 4.34. Men in the meeting staring at Katherine surprisingly (01:22:25)

After that dialogue, Harrison lets Katherine come into the meeting room. As picture 4.32, the people in the meeting room seemed to be surprised to see Katherine come into the important meetings. Harrison's action about carrying Katherine into the room, of course, is a new and extraordinary thing among the people in the room because it never happened before. The action that Harrison took, it implies that Harrison has broken the rule or broken the common sense by letting a woman in to the important meetings. Moreover, the one who makes the rules is Harrison himself. Here, Harrison gives a privilege for Katherine to join meetings that only white men could be in. Once again, Harrison acts like a hero for Katherine.



Picture 4.35. A white man closing the door (01:45:20)



Picture 4.36. Harrison inviting Katherine to the control room (01:46:36)

This similar scene also presented in picture 4.33. In this scene Harrison allows Katherine to enter the control room to carry her calculation result which at first there is a white man who close the control room doors after Katherine gives the result to him. In this scene the viewers, again, are presented the character of Harrison as the hero or savior for Katherine who always be there for Katherine when she gets oppressed, needs a help and nothing she could do but waiting for Harrison hands to help her getting a privilege.

In another scene, Vivian says to Mary that she could not attend the class with NASA regulation as the reason.

- Vivian : We now require advanced extension courses through the University of Virginia. It's in the employee handbook. In addendum. In case you haven't read it.
- Mary : Every time we have a chance to get ahead, they move the finish line.
- Vivian : I just follow the rules around here and I expect everyone who works for me to follow them as well. There are no special circumstances for anyone. You all should be thankful you have jobs at all.
(*Hidden Figures*, 00:47:00-00:47:21)

This dialogue is also supported by another dialogue among Mary, Dorothy and Katherine in the following below.

Mary : "For those that cannot attend classes at the University of Virginia, Advanced Extension Courses are available at Hampton High School."
Katherine : That's still a segregated school.
Mary : Virginia acts like Brown versus the Board of Education. Never happened. They'll never just let a "colored" woman take classes at an all white school!
Dorothy : Sounds about right
(*Hidden Figures*, 00:47:28-00:47:47)

As the regulation prevents Mary to get her engineering degree, Mary tries many ways to get the permission to attend the engineering extension class. Then Mary goes to the court and asks a petition to get a legitimation for attending the class. In the following below is the excerpt of Mary trying to convince the judge why he should allow her attending the white class.

The Judge : What would warrant a colored woman attendin' a white school?
Mary : The point is, your Honor... Mary leans in. No Negro woman in the State of Virginia has ever attended an all white school. It's unheard of.
The Judge : Yes. It's unheard of.
Mary : And before Alan Shepard sat on top of a rocket, no American had ever touched space. He will forever be remembered as the Navy man from New Hampshire who was the first to touch the stars. And I, sir, plan on being an engineer at NASA. But I can't do that without taking those classes at that all-white high school. And I can't change the color of my skin. So...I have no choice but to be the first. Which I can't do without you. Mary looks around the courtroom.
Mary : Your Honor, of all the cases you'll hear today, which one will matter in a hundred years? Which one will make you the "first?"
The Judge : Only the night classes.
(*Hidden Figures*, 01:11:13-01:13:05)

Finally the white judge allows Mary to attend the engineering class which only the whites who can attend. Here is the white judge stands as a savior for Mary that could break the rule about the prohibition for the blacks to attend the same class with the white. Mary stands as the oppressed character who needs a hand by someone that has a power to defeat the boundaries that no one black could do. It is also implied when Mary says that it cannot do without the judge. Through the excerpt, it is portrayed how powerless is the black people and they need a help by the savior, that is the white who has the power.



Picture 4.37. Vivian says to Dorothy that she never treated her differently (01:34:51)

In picture 4.34, Vivian which at first always be rude to Dorothy now congratulates Dorothy on her achievement for being a supervisor, she assures Dorothy that she never treated her differently due to the color of her skin and she is happy about Dorothy that is chosen as the supervisor in IBM.

Vivian	: I hear the IBM is at full capacity.
Dorothy	: Appears so.
Vivian	: You certainly have a knack for it.
Dorothy	: Well. Good night, Mrs. Mitchell.
Vivian	: You know, Dorothy... Despite what you may think...I have nothin' against ya'll.
Dorothy	: I know. I know you probably believe that.

(*Hidden Figures*, 01:34:17-01:35:00)

In this scene, Vivian does not stand as a hero for Dorothy yet she changes her character that at first so rude person and always took for granted about Dorothy proposal to be a supervisor in to a good character of white. Here, we get an image about the whites that they are actually good persons and having no intention to do racist behavior for the blacks.

In addition, white savior indicated in this movie contains some of characteristics which Hughey conveys, namely, (1) crossing the color and culture line, (2) his saving grace, (3) white suffering, (4) the savior, the bad white, and the natives, (5) the color of meritocracy, (6) white civility, black savagery, and (7) "based on a true story".

1. Crossing the color and culture line

This characteristic that the story contains crossing the color and culture line is obviously true. This movie clearly shows us about the crossing color line problem between the whites and black people and the culture line at that time which the whites and the blacks work at the same place.

2. His saving grace

The white character saving nonwhite people from oppression or problem through his grace is one of the characteristic of white savior narrative movie. Obviously, this movie presents the white character's saving grace. It is clearly seen through Harrison action to Katherine in which some situation Harrison always brings out Katherine from the oppression such as the scene about Katherine who is struggling about racist treatment like what she states in the monologue below.

Kathrine : There is no bathroom. There are no colored bathrooms in this building or any building outside the West Campus, which is half a mile away. Did you know that? I have to walk to Timbuktu just to relieve myself and I can't use one of the handy bikes. Picture that, Mr. Harrison. My uniforms. Skirt below my knees, my heels, and a simple string of pearls. Well, I don't own pearls. Lord knows you don't pay coloreds enough to afford pearls. And I work like a dog, day and night, living off of coffee from a pot none of you wanna touch. (*Hidden Figures*, 01:01:50-01:02:38)

Then Harrison gives his saving grace by breaking down the colored ladies room board while it is breaking the rules about the segregating rest room.

3. White suffering

In some white savior narrative movies, mostly the white as the main character experiences suffering. In this case, they are disliked by the colored people or getting some oppression as they against the common sense.

4. The savior, the bad white, and the natives

Of course, these three main aspects will always appears in the white savior narrative. In this movie we could find Harrison and the white judge as the savior. We also found Paul Stafford and Vivian Mitchell as the bad white characters. Also, we have Mary, Dorothy, and Katherine as the natives or the colored people who need to be carried out from suffering or the oppression by the bad white characters or society system.

5. The color of meritocracy

Most of white savior narrative movies, present the color of meritocracy between the whites and colored people. Through this movie, the whites are pictured as the educated people, which have ethic of hard work, delay of gratification, and a

mindset wholly focused on the individual triumph over obstacles. It is obviously seen from the white characters in this movie such as Harrison, Paul and Vivian. Unless this movie tries to expose that black people are also educated and a never give up person.

6. White civility, black savagery

At some movies which contain white savior narrative, it will be found a narration portraying the whites that are most civilized than the black. Here also we could see through the three of black female characters which is presented as more stubborn than the whites. Moreover, in some scene, the white characters are also described as the civilized people seen through how they talk to each other. In this movie, most of the time, the black people always speak loudly, while the whites are not.

7. "based on a true story"

To strengthen the white image building, most of white savior movies are labelled as the adaptation movie or a *based on true story* movie, so the image of the whites as the savior or a good person is real, not a fiction. It is also what this movie is presented. This movie is produced in 2016 adapted from a book which is a true story. Moreover, this true story also labelled in the scene of the movie 00:00:40. "*Based on true events*" words appears on the scene, these words bring an assumption that what shown in this movie truly happens at that time as well as the good image of the whites.

However, this kind of narrative-white savior narrative- could bring an image of white people as a savior or good people for the colored people. It could

be bad for the whites as instead of acknowledging about what they had been doing to the black people, they prefer to build their image in such a good way that is the savior for the blacks. It could be seen in a scene where Harrison breaks the colored ladies room board and allow the people to use the same toilet. Of course, Harrison is breaking down the rules that he might create by his own and acting like he is the person who saves the black right.

It is also implied on the dialogue below.

Paul : And she's a woman. There's no protocol for a woman attending.
Harrison : Okay, I get that part, Paul. But within these walls, who makes the rules?
Katherine : You, sir. You're the boss. You just have to act like one.
Harrison : You keep quiet.
Katherine : Thank you, sir.
(*Hidden Figures*, 01:21:48-01:22:16)

According to the dialogue, it is found that Harrison is the one who makes the protocol about woman attending and at last, Harrison is also the one who breaks the rules. It seems obvious that Harrison also involves in the making rules. Yet he is also the one who stands as the savior for Katherine as the colored people who get oppressed by his rules. In further, this leads an image about white people as the savior for other race.

Hughey in his book *White Savior, Content, Critics and Consumption* stated that "The white savior film is an important cultural device and artifact because it helps repair the myth of white supremacy and paternalism in an unsettled and racially charged time. The white savior film perpetuates, in subtle and friendly terms, the archaic paradigm of manifest destiny, the white man's burden, and the great white hope." (Hughey, 2014:29)

In short, through this movie, we could see two kind of racisms, namely old racism and new racism. Racism, in this movie, is conducted through segregation. While the new racism which is gentler, invisible, is seen through the white superiority depicted in the good image of the whites presented by the white characters in this movie. It leads us to the understanding that racism is not always presented in an abusive or bad form, yet sometimes racism can be presented in a good way, by giving a privilege or building a good image in order to remain the power of the whites.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Hidden Figures movie produced in 2016 is very interesting as it portrays the racism issue in 1960s between the blacks and the whites in NASA. Through this movie we could see that racism is not always portrayed in an abusive form such as slavery or segregation yet sometimes racism could be in a good form or a privilege. In this case, the new racism is portrayed in white savior narrative, which is the image building of the whites as the savior for the non-colored people. This analysis between racism and white savior in this movie leads to a portrayal about old racism and new racism. The old racism is identical with the violence and inequality treatment, we could see it through “separate but equal” notion or segregation experienced by the black characters in this movie. While the new racism is identical with the nonwhites gaining privilege or kindness from the whites in which this movie presents us about the whites who bring out the blacks from the oppression or obstacles. The portrayal about how the whites save the colored people from the sufferings and oppression build an image about how powerful the whites are. In brief, this movie presents that both old racism and new racism showing us to the superiority of the whites towards the nonwhites. In further, this movie also fulfill the characteristics of the white savior narrative movie according to Hughey, namely; (1) crossing the color and culture line, (2) his saving

grace, (3) white suffering, (4) the savior, the bad white, and the natives, (5) the color of meritocracy, (6) white civility, black savagery, and (7) "based on a true story".

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