

CHAPTER V

SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

The sociological analysis of *To Kill a Mockingbird* is presented in this chapter. The researcher wants to analyze this novel through sociological perspective, because the researcher finds the correlation between the theories, story, and social background of American society in the middle twentieth that has been explained before on the preceding chapters. This chapter is divided into two parts. Firstly, sociological analysis consisting of six aspects: social aspect, economic aspect, politic aspect, cultural aspect, religious aspect, and science and technology aspect and secondly discussion.

A. Sociological Analysis of Literature Aspect

1. Social Aspect

The social aspects of America in the middle twentieth century are reflected clearly in Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The aspects are containing the social structure and social status, family role, and the social relation. The American social structure in the middle twentieth century was divided into a middle class and the lower class. The middle class were professional class such as the lawyers, judge, editors, doctors, educators, policemen, and others. Meanwhile, the lower class was the hard workers such as carpenter, bricklayer, labors, etc.

Harper Lee describes the social structure and the social status in *To Kill a Mockingbird* through the characters, setting and the plot. The author of *To Kill a Mockingbird* does not explain the social status explicitly, but the reader could see the social phenomenon through the characters, such as Atticus, Hack Tate, Miss Caroline, Jack Finch, John Taylor, Mr. Underwood, Mr. Gilmer, Dr. Raymond, Aunt Alexandra, and Mr. Link Deas who represent the middle class, while the lower class is presented by the character of Mr. Cunningham, Tom Robinson, Bob Ewell, Calpurnia and Zeebo.

The American society at that time was dominated by the middle class based on the job status, income, capital, etc. *To Kill a Mockingbird* portrays Atticus as a middle class man. He was a senior Lawyer who came from a farmer family, after start his practice he get reasonable income that enough for his family.

...but after getting Uncle Jack started, Atticus derived a reasonable income from the law. (TKAM, 5)

Before became a lawyer, Harper put him in lower class family, he was just came from a farmer family. His family is a cotton farmer, and has been hereditary for Finch family to stay at Finch Landing and make their living from cotton. Atticus and his brother, Uncle Jack decided to leave Finch landing and going to Montgomery to studying jurisprudence while Uncle Jack decided to go to Boston to studying medical science and leave their young sister Aunt Alexandra remained at the Finch Landing.

...yet the tradition of living on the land remained unbroken until well into the twentieth century, when my father, Atticus Finch, went to Montgomery to read law, and his younger brother went to Boston to study medicine. Their sister Alexandra was the Finch who remained at the Landing... (TKAM, 4)

Harper Lee creates other characters that represent the middle class such as Hack Tate as police officer, the teacher Miss Caroline, The Doctor Jack Finch and Dr. Raymond, John Taylor as judges, Mr. Underwood as editor, the other Lawyer Mr. Gilmer, and also Aunt Alexandra, and Mr. Link Deas.

Uncle Jack Finch confined his passion for digging to his window boxes in Nashville and stayed rich.. (TKAM, 44)

Beside the reflection of social structure in the characters, *To Kill a Mockingbird* also reflects the social structure in setting. In a school, Walter Cunningham as Mr. Cunningham so have to end his study to help his father it causes he was failed a grade and stay in first grade. It different with other kids from middle class family they can go to school every day but Walter Cunningham cannot do that because he must help his father. Thus, the American society considered that Walter Cunningham belongs to the lower class that had no opportunity to enjoy his study like other normal children for he had no enough money to do that.

“Reason I can’t pass the first grade, Mr. Finch, is I’ve had to stay out ever’ spring an’ help Papa with the choppin’, but there’s another’n at the house now that’s field size.” (TKAM, 24)

Most family in the novel represents the middle class family. They are Atticus family, John Taylor family, Aunt Alexandra family, and Dr. Raymond family. They all follow the American family role. It can be seen in the job status. Beside Atticus family, the father in that family was the moneymaker in the family. Meanwhile, the mother was just a housewife.

The above family role was mostly working in a middle class. In fact, some lower classes applied the same role. Tom Robinson family stood on the lower class. They got the money from plucking the plants. The husband work for Mr. Link Deas, but the wife followed the middle class family role. She did not work out of home like the ordinary lower class family. Helen, the wife was only a homemaker too.

“I picks for Mr. Link Deas.”

“Were you picking cotton in November?”

“No suh, I works in his yard fall an’ wintertime. I works pretty steady for him all year round, he’s got a lot of pecan trees’n things.”
(TKAM, 194)

The social aspects of *To Kill a Mockingbird* contains the social relations which explore the relation among the member of a family, the relation between the ethnic, and the social relation among the ethnics, and the social relation of gender. The relation among ethnic can be seen through the characteristic of the social. It involved the racial discrimination which was showing a great depression in the middle of twentieth century. Harper Lee tries to inform this fact through the characters in the novel. The racial discrimination happened to Tom Robinson Family and other colored people.

...they couldn't be fair if they tried. In our courts, when it's a white man's word against a black man's, the white man always wins. They're ugly, but those are the facts of life." (TKAM, 224)

2. Economic Aspect

The economic condition in America was dominated by the farmer, transportation and the service industries. This economic aspect is reflected through the economic condition of the characters. Atticus, the father of Scout and Jem, who come from a middle-class family, own his own car.

When Atticus came home that evening he said we were in for it, and asked Calpurnia if she wanted to stay with us for the night. Calpurnia glanced up at the high ceilings and long windows and said she thought she'd be warmer at her house. Atticus drove her home in the car. (TKAM, 70)

Dr. Raymond also owned a car it possible for him as a middle class family to own a car, his job as doctor give him enough money for buy a car, especially his job need a personal transportation to make sure that he can go to his patient as soon as possible.

"I can ease around and turn my car lights on," said Dr. Reynolds, but he took Mr. Tate's flashlight... (TKAM, 278)

From the above clues, the researcher takes a conclusion that the middle twentieth century was the time when people began to need cars. It caused the traffic regulation along the main road.

In American society, money is the most important and valuable thing. In order to get it, people may do something immoral like, cheating, stealing, and selling her or his body, etc. Since money is an important and valuable

thing, some people choose to pursue material comfort rather than pursue their ideal. This phenomenon happens in all of the professions starting from business, farmers, workers, judges, etc. It is portrayed in the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Harper Lee tries to convey how money can give impact to someone deal with their life, it happen when Bob Ewell lost his job and start to threat and blaming Atticus as the causes.

Ruth Jones, the welfare lady, said Mr. Ewell openly accused Atticus of getting his job. She was upset enough to walk down to Atticus's office and tell him about it... (TKAM, 252)

3. Political Aspect

From the Plot of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Harper Lee describes that the political in American uses Democracy party, it is shown in the election of the state legislature. In this novel, Atticus Lake is elected of the state legislature.

Our mother died when I was two, so I never felt her absence. She was a Graham from Montgomery; Atticus met her when he was first elected to the state legislature. He was middle-aged then, she was fifteen years his junior. (TKAM, 6)

The evidence above, describe that the middle class and high class society was easier to be a legislature member than lower class, people prefer to trust person who came from high and middle class, when lower class only can be a voter.

The racial discrimination in America also inspires Harper Lee to criticize it through the plot of the story. Harper Lee writes that the process of Tom Robinson case is not emphatic. It is shown in the before and when court took place, before the court some people try to meet Atticus and bring

him into his office, they try to lobbying Atticus to give up and give Tom Robinson to them. They were trying to intimidating Atticus and say that what Atticus do was useless. While the court took place we can see when Atticus can prove that Tom Robinson is clear but the judges still convicted as guilty. It was prove that the law is not fully clear, in law they can also engage in politics.

4. Cultural Aspect

The cultural condition in America in the early twentieth and middle twentieth century influences Harper Lee to make the character. Family life style is a part of the American cultures. Moreover, in the early twentieth family life style become the most subtle in American cultures. Living on a land and inherit it from generation to generation has become a tradition in America culture, it can be seen when Simon inherit his land from generation to generation until Atticus and his younger brother broke it.

Simon would have regarded with impotent fury the disturbance between the North and the South, as it left his descendants stripped of everything but their land, yet the tradition of living on the land remained unbroken until well into the twentieth century,....(TKAM, 4)

There so many ethnic in America, they are Hispanic, Asian, African, European, etc. They are inheriting their own culture and continued from generation to generation. It shows that some culture is still preserved and some began to disappear.

Finders were keepers unless title was proven. Plucking an occasional camellia, getting a squirt of hot milk from Miss Maudie Atkinson's

cow on a summer day, helping ourselves to someone's scuppernongs was part of our ethical culture, but money was different. (TKAM, 36)

5. Religious Aspect

The middle twentieth century of the United States was primarily Christian. It can be seen that the main character family was a Christian family, she was born in Christian family, Christian society and also Christian city, she was also going to church every week and that makes Scout grow as a good Christians.

When Mrs. Merriweather shook her head, her black curls jiggled. "Jean Louise," she said, "you are a fortunate girl. You live in a Christian home with Christian folks in a Christian town. Out there in J. Grimes Everett's land there's nothing but sin and squalor." (TKAM, 235)

Beside Atticus Family, the society in this novel was almost all Christians. Atticus said that he was never heard that any catholic in Maycomb, it prove that Christian was a major religion in Maycomb and also in America. It causes church in Maycomb also dominated by Christian church.

"Never heard of any Catholics in Maycomb either," said Atticus, "you're confusing that with something else. Way back about nineteen-twenty there was a Klan, but it was a political organization more than anything..." (TKAM, 148)

Although dominated by Christians, but the Christians divided into several sects, such as Baptist, foot washing Baptist, Presbyterians, etc. it

show that Christian in Maycomb major religion but they are also divided into several sect that they are embraced.

Miss Maudie settled her bridgework. “You know old Mr. Radley was a footwashing Baptist-”

“That’s what you are, ain’t it?”

“My shell’s not that hard, child. I’m just a Baptist.”

“Don’t you all believe in foot-washing?”

“We do. At home in the bathtub.”

“But we can’t have communion with you all-” (TKAM, 45)

Even though Maycomb County dominated by Christians racial discrimination still happen between them. There is an unwritten rule where colored people cannot worship in white people church.

First Purchase African M.E. Church was in the Quarters outside the southern town limits, across the old sawmill tracks. It was an ancient paint-peeled frame building, the only church in Maycomb with a steeple and bell, called First Purchase because it was paid for from the first earnings of freed slaves. Negroes worshiped in it on Sundays and white men gambled in it on weekdays.

The evidence above show that colored people must build their own church, but even they have purchased their own church, white people still used it to gamble. It was proving that the racial discrimination happen from white people to colored people.

6. Science and Technology Aspect

In the early and middle twentieth century the technology in America was not too developed. It was because Maycomb is small city and the people work in farm and field. There is no high technology stuff, people mostly use traditional stuff. This condition has inspired Harper Lee to

criticize this condition through the plot of the novel. In the novel, Harper Lee describe Hoover cart. It is the example of transportation used in maycomb. This criticism is reflected in the story as quoted as follow:

we would see only a couple of farmers studying the enema bags in the Mayco Drugstore window. Or two dumpy countrywomen in straw hats sitting in a Hoover cart. (TKAM, 136)

The quotation above describes that people prefer to use Hoover cart or house to go to near place while use their car to go to further place.

As far back as I could remember, there was always a Chevrolet in excellent condition in the carhouse, and Atticus put many miles on it in business trips, but in Maycomb he walked to and from his office four times a day, covering about two miles. (TKAM, 150)

Grisham also describes the camera and picture show. It is the high technology that can be used in middle twentieth century. It was also high technology that only can be used by middle and high class people.

His family was from Maycomb County originally, his mother worked for a photographer in Meridian, had entered his picture in a Beautiful Child contest and won five dollars. She gave the money to Dill, who went to the picture show twenty times on it.

“Don’t have any picture shows here, except Jesus ones in the courthouse sometimes,” said Jem. “Ever see anything good?” (TKAM, 7)

The quotation above, describes that high technology appears in American Society, and there are limited. Only a photographer who had camera and not every people can see picture show because not every city had it.

B. Discussion

Based on the sociological analysis above, it is clear for the researcher to state that structural elements of this novel are worthy with the essence of the study using sociological approach.

Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* discusses the American society in the middle twentieth century. Harper Lee sees that social life is important to America society and get influence from it. The social background of American society in the middle century gives influences to Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

The story of *To Kill a Mockingbird* is the phenomenon of what happened at that time. Therefore, social background at that time influenced Harper Lee in creating his novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Harper Lee criticizes this phenomenon through the characters of Jean Louis "Scout" Finch. She represented an innocent child, a child who curiously and see the society through her innocent thought. He encountered a problem, which guide her to understand it. She found a problem where people see and judging people through their prejudice. Harper Lee gives some idea about prejudice to the colored people through the characters' act in the novel.

In the late twentieth century, social, economic, politic, cultural, science and technology, and religious condition lead the United States to great depression. The social condition of American in the middle twentieth century was one of the influential factors to Harper Lee in making literary

work. In the middle twentieth century, American Social is bad. Where are colored people lives in insecurity and iniquity condition. Races are important thing in this era.

The sociological analysis above shows that the racial discrimination depends on the social background of America in the late twentieth century. Based on the above analysis, it is obvious for the researcher to state that the structural elements of the novel are matching to the main idea of Harper Lee viewed by sociological approach.