

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Literature is a reaction of the author toward his environment and his period. Actually, there are many opinions about literature. Some people think that literature is aimed just for pleasure and they read literary works only to get rid of their boredom after doing activity during all the day. Further, they think that it is useless to read literature. In fact, there is a lot of experience and knowledge about human life in literature. Literary works have existed for many centuries. Literature is kind of equipment that has a function as an appliance to express our feeling. In literature, we can express our idea, feeling in an experience that happen in our daily life.

According to Jones (1968; 1) in *An Outline of Literature*, literature is simply another way we can experience the world around us through our imaginations, feeling and thought. Literature in its broadest sense includes all written materials. It means that literature fall into history book, philosophical works, short, stories, novels, poem and plays. Literature may divide into; drama, novel, poetry and short story. Each of them has their own characteristic. The simplest one is novel. Novel is the popular form of literature. Novel gets great estimation because it can be enjoyed at home, not only used to express the nature of life, but it is also used to reflect how to living must

be. According to Jones (1968; 80) in *An Outline of Literature*, a novel is a long story written on prose, but because it is long, it differs from a short story in other ways”.

Actually there are many conflicts in *Black Like Me*, but there is a problem that is more interesting to be analyzed. So, in this writing the writer wants to analyze about racial discrimination in the novel entitled *Black Like Me* written by John Howard Griffin. The novel entitled *Black Like Me*, written by John Howard Griffin was published in 1961. The era of publishing the novel due to the end of the World War II happened. *Black Like Me* tells about the racial discrimination in the Deep South of America. Discrimination itself formally classifying into different groups and according the members of each group distinct, and typically unequal. The criteria of delineating the groups, such as gender, race, or class, determine the kind of discrimination (Houghton Mifflin; 2000).

According to Randall taken from racial discrimination is concerning to the violation of all typical problems in both communities, the Whites and Black, such as; culture, religion, class, etc (<http://academic.udayton.edu>). Racism has relation with the freedom of right. It means that the development of racism absolutely has to do with how the human things about their freedom of living. The more people cannot control their freedom, the more the discrimination wider. This story based on true story that is experienced of the author. As we know that America has different races belongs to the citizen. The minor community in America is a Negro and this population rapidly grows in certain region that is in Deep South.

According to Clark (1962; 4) in the book of *The Ghetto Game*, racial conflict can be meant below:

Racial Conflicts in the City, race relations have been marked by violence, frustration and widespread suffering. They have been the central factor in a prolonged schism between the two oldest regions of the country. The problem of race has mocked the power of religion in our national life. It is in the light of these facts that the citizens must now dispose their selves to deal with racial problems in the fluid and contradictory environment of the growing city.

Talk about negroes, it has relationship to the slavery, crime and other bad opinion that is coherent, because negroes usually have lower in economic and less of education. It is proved by the quotation taken from the internet, stated by Houghton Mifflin that is:

These differing criteria for assignation of membership in particular races had relatively little to do with biology and far more to do with White supremacy -- the social, geopolitical and economic agendas of dominant Whites' vis-à-vis subordinate Blacks and Native Americans - and racism. At the time, Blacks were valuable commodities as chattel slaves; and Native Americans, whose vast lands were the ultimate target of acquisition in a doctrine of Manifest Destiny, were subjects of marginalization and systematic extermination.

(www.thefreedictionary.com/racial)

The quotation above gives some information about the problems faced by the Negroes in America. The differentiation of stage and culture has the important value of existences the differentiation. Because of these social and cultural differences, in the Deep South practically full of crime, violating a human right and much horrible problems found. Between the Negroes and the White man has a gap that both two races cannot enter their community easily.

The writer finds some quotation in the novel, which refers to John Howard Griffin; that is:

If a White man became a Negro in the Deep South, what adjustment would he have to make? What is it like to experience discrimination based on skin color, something over which one has no control? How else except by becoming a Negro could a White man hope to learn the truth? The only way I could see the bridge the gap between us was to become a Negro. I decided I would do this.

(*BLM*; 1961:7-8)

It shows that the author is a White man. So, because the author is a White man, of course to approach Black community is not easy. These problems challenge the author to be his duty, how to overcome this problem. That is why the author decided himself to be a "Black" man, so he can be easy adapting new atmosphere full of real Negro society in the Deep South. From this case, the author wants to make a research concerning to the discrimination due to the racism in this region.

From the explanation above, the thesis writer is interested in analyzing the racial discrimination experienced by John Howard Griffin. The writer thinks that this writing has an interesting and a unique problem to be analyzed. It was surprised that a White man changed his skin to be a Black man, just to observe the Negro community. So, the thesis writer decides himself to make a choice of this novel for his object research. It is hoped that this writing would be of a description of literary work which is not only viewed as an aesthetic entity but primarily an evidence of one of the aspects of the American mind in term of dramatic racial conflicts concerning to racial discrimination.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In John Howard Griffin's *Black Like Me*, the writer formulates the problems as follows:

1. What are general characteristics of John Howard Griffin in John Howard Griffin's *Black Like Me*?
2. What does the cause and the effect of racial discrimination experienced by John Howard Griffin?
3. What kinds of racial discrimination experienced by John Howard Griffin?

1.3 The Limitation of the Problem

The writer analyzes the novel entitled *Black Like Me* written by John Howard Griffin in 1961. In analyzing this novel, the writer limits the writing only in the racial discrimination experienced by John Howard Griffin and the factors causing the existence of racial discrimination.

1.4 The Objective of the Study

As the thesis writer has stated in the statement of the problem, there are many reasons why he analyzes this novel. The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To analyze the general characteristics of John Howard Griffin in John Howard Griffin's *Black Like Me*.

2. To elaborate the factor causing the racial discrimination and the effect of racial discrimination experienced by John Howard Griffin.
3. To understand the racial discrimination experienced by John Howard Griffin.

1.5 The Significance of the Study

The writer knows, by studying this topic, the readers will have the deeper and comprehensive understanding of the issues of the racial discrimination experienced by John Howard Griffin. The writer hopes that the readers will understand the practices of racial discrimination, commonly existing in social community. This study will help readers to be conscious that certain practices, behaviors, and custom in society can be categorized as the racial discrimination although most of the people take them for granted. By understanding the social issues of racial discrimination will help the readers to consider literary works not only as a means of entertainment, but also as a means of communication values, moral teaching, etc.