CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Theme and Literature

The theme in a piece of fiction is its controlling idea or its central insight. It is simple thing that means the reader of novel can understand about the novel story from theme. Then Nurgiyantoro (1995: 66) explains that basically, theme is implicitly told by the author in the fiction so to get the theme of a fiction it is necessary to make an interpretation.

It is the author's underlying meaning or main idea that he is trying to convey. The theme may be the author's thoughts about a topic or view of human nature. Fiction necessary embodies issues and ideas. Even stories written for entertainment alone are based in an idea or position. In fiction ideas are taken from of an underlying theme or central idea, which helps to tie the work together. Often the author makes theme obvious, it does not give much imagination to state the theme. Further, Siswanto (2008: 161) states that theme plays the role as the starting point of the author in creating the fiction. It means that theme is used by the author to connect the meaning and the purpose in telling the fiction. What the author wants to tell can be meant as theme.

In reading a story the reader will discover, not be taught, human values. The meaning of the story with this `element discovery’ is a comment on human values embodying in the story as inseparable part of it, not something apart from the story. The observation and the way in which it is made through the interrelationship of the
various elements reveals what it is called the theme of the story. A novels theme is the main idea that the writer expresses. Sometimes the theme of the story is stated explicitly. However, frequently it is left implicit. Theme can also be defined as the underlying meaning of the story. The theme of a novel is more than its subject matter, because an author’s technique can play as a strong role in developing a theme as the actions of the characters do. A novels theme can rarely be interpreted in only way. Because of the length of novels, and the various characters, conflicts, and scenes found within them, readers can look at different aspects of the work to uncover different interpretations of the meaning of the tale.

A common theme in novels is the conflict between appearance and reality. Another common theme is the search for personality identity. The theme of individual who strikes out alone to face the world is used in many works. Some novels feature people who cannot break from their society’s convention and instead become disillusioned with conflict between their inspiration and the reality of their lives.

Throughout the history of the novel, a major theme has been the most important thing whether people can change their situation in life or whether they are in the grips of forces beyond their control. Other common themes in novels include how art and reflected in one another, the meaning of religion, and whether technology helps people or whether it is a harmful aspect of society.

The novel can present something more and more involved the more complex issues. It includes various elements that build the novel's story. Novel is frequently focused on the tension between individuals and society in which they live, presenting characters that are odds with the society. The source or the inspiration of writing
novel can be based on true story. Their true story re-telling in a story that we call as life experience. This true story is more reliable than the other one that which based on imagination. It is because the second one sometime could not happen in real life. Peck and Coyle (1984:102) stated

Writers have, of course, always been interested in the world around them, but the development of the novel reflects a move away from an essentially religious view of life towards a new interest in the complexities of everyday experience. Most of novels are concerned with ordinary people and their problems in the societies in which they find themselves.

Novel can be a reflect of our daily living around them. It could be easier because we just need to take from our daily activities and our experiences. Put the ordinary story and also tells about the ordinary person stories.

Novel itself belongs to literature. Literary writing is the imagination of the writer about something, about life, about everything they have felt or they thought in life. It could reflect the picture of the writer. Literature can be a picture of life in the past, now, and future. Further Roberts and Jacobs (1995:1,2) said that

Literature refers to compositions that tell stories, dramatize situations, express emotions, and analyze and advocate ideas. […] Literature may be classified into four genres which are poetry, drama, nonfiction prose and fiction prose. Fiction is not a real story that based on the author’s imagination. Fiction prose includes myth, parable, romance, short story and novel.

In analyzing literary works, Rene Wellek and Austin Warren in their book *Theory of Literature* (1977) introduced two kinds of approach; intrinsic and extrinsic approach. Intrinsic approach emphasizes the analysis on the text while extrinsic approach emphasizes the analysis on the external courses of literary work such as history, social culture, religion, psychology, and philosophy. Intrinsic approach would be used by the writer in this thesis.
Intrinsic approach is an approach that takes the data from literary work itself. According to Rene Wellek and Austin Warren in their book “Theory of literature”, the main part of intrinsic approach is based on the text of literary works itself by doing an interpretation and analysis of it (1977: 139).

Intrinsic approach however starts the analysis of literary works from the work itself. A. Teeuw (1983: 61) quotes from Wellek and Warren that to know the author, the social status of the work and the background of the work, the first thing to do is analyzing, interpreting and structuring the text of literary works. Teeuw (1983: 62) also says in his book that in analyzing a literary works, it is necessary to analyze the structure of the text because it is the first step which has to do in doing literary research. Further Wellek and Warren (1977: 157) states

In recent years a healty reaction has taken place which recognizes that the study of literature should, first and foremost, concentrate on the actual works of art themselves.

Intrinsic approach is applied by the writer in order to show the elements of the novel “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” especially theme that would be the tools to answer the problems of analysis.

Basically, there are some theories of literature. Abrams (1953) divides theory of literature into four kinds. They are mimetic theory, pragmatic theory, expressive theory, and objective theory. Mimetic theory is the most primitive approach of the four categories. Mimesis is the idea that art imitates reality, an idea that traces back to Aristotle who argued that the universal can be found in the concrete. Mimetic theory defines literature in relation to life, seeing it as a way of reproducing or recreating the experiences of man’s life in words. This theory focuses on the relation
between the literary text and the extra-textual “universe” which provides the source and stimulus for what the literary text actually represents.

Pragmatics theory focuses on the relationship of literary text and the reader of the literary text. It is called pragmatics because literature may give the practical result to its readers, and is sometimes called affective since literature may give emotional effect to its readers. Pragmatics theory is used to reveal the functions of literary work in the middle of society, the spread, and the development. Pragmatics deals with the competence of the readers.

Expressive theory focuses on the relationship of literary text and the writer of the literary text. This kind of critical theory of literature makes sense of the meaning and significance of literature by focusing upon what the literary text expresses about the thoughts and feelings of its writer or, in cases where it is not clear what the writer thinks and feels, about those of the speaker or the narrator in the text.

Objective theory focuses on the literary work itself, its language, forms, and devices. This kind of critical theory of literature, makes sense of the meaning and significance of literature by focusing upon the literary text in deliberate abstraction from its relations to its writer, its readers, and surrounding social-historical and political-ideological contexts; the aim here is to understand the literary work. Each work is to be judged by its own criteria for internal consistency, its intrinsic rather than extrinsic qualities.

Mimetic theory is an appropriate theory in doing analysis in this thesis. Mimetic theory defines literature in relation to life, seeing it as a way of reproducing or recreating the experiences of man’s life in words. Harriet Beecher Stowe’s Uncle
Tom’s Cabin is a simple reflection of the author’s experienced in her environment that actually reflects the real condition of the society at that time.

2.2 Racial Discrimination

2.2.1 Definition of Racial Discrimination

Discrimination is the prejudicial treatment of an individual based on their membership in a certain group or category. It involves the actual behaviors towards groups such as excluding or restricting members of one group from opportunities that are available to another group. The act of discrimination could cover all aspects of life, because everybody could be discriminated no matter who ever and where ever you are.

Bowling (2002:38) states,

Discrimination consist of unequal, unfavorable and unjustifiable treatment based on a person’s sex, gender, ‘race’, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, class, sexual preference, age, physical disability or any improper ground. It includes refusal to offer employment, pay fair wages, to provide housing or medical treatment or to provide a commercial or social service. It can also take the form of harassment, attack, exclusion and expulsion.

According to Omi and Winant in Sacknel (2003:2), race is a concept that “signifies and symbolizes social conflicts and interests by referring to different types of human bodies.” It is a “sociohistorical process, by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed. While people may interchange or confuse the concepts of ethnicity and race, the differences are important. Race has always existed as groups of people living in certain areas, developing lifestyles and language feature that distinguish them from others.
Most of the countries in the world consist of various races. Those various races can be a big power for those countries if the people can accept the varieties which exist among them because they have skills to increase their life and their country. On the other hand, it also can cause a big problem if they cannot regard one to another. This condition happened in United States which had various races. The White people created a new kind of understanding and interpretation of human differences that gave bad effects and sufferings towards black people. White people cannot accept the existence of black people, as consequence they never treat black people as the true human beings due to the different types of physical characteristics. The Black people always become the victims of white people bad treatments. Smedley in Sacknel (2003:7) states

Whites Americans relegated black Americans to a low status and constantly portrayed them as “culturally backward, primitive, intellectually stunted, prone to violence, morally corrupt, undeserving of the benefits of civilization, insensitive to the finer arts and (in the case of Africans) aesthetically ugly and animal like.

It means that the concept of race can not be accepted by white people well and the concept of race discrimination appears in United States.

Based on the description above, racial discrimination is an unequal treatment based on a person’s race. Further, Bowling (2002:21) states that racism is the belief that certain group are innately, biologically, socially, morally superior to other groups, based upon what is attributed to be their racial composition.

The term racial discrimination is usually used to describe the action of a dominant majority in relation to a weak minority, of course, by implying an immoral
and undemocratic behavior or way. In a broader sense, racial discrimination is the active and overt aspects of negative prejudice toward a person or a group of people.

2.2.2 Forms of Racial Discrimination

According to Bowling (2002) there are two types of discrimination, those are; direct and indirect discrimination.

Direct discrimination is a type of discrimination which is more obvious. It involves in treating someone less favorably because of their possession of an attribute such as sex, age, race, religion, family status, national origin, military status, sexual orientation, disability, body size or shape, compared with someone without that attribute in the same circumstances. Further, Bowling (2002:39) explains

A distinction can be made between direct and indirect discrimination. Among the best examples of direct discrimination are those which have been enshrined in law. The South African apartheid legal system, for example, prohibited black people from voting or participating in the political process, created separated 'white’ residential areas and schools, and also prohibited ‘mixed marriages’.

The other type of discrimination is indirect discrimination. It refers to treatment which might be described as ‘equal’ in a formal sense between different groups, but is discriminatory in its actual effect on a particular group. The ‘minimum height’ requirement for appointment as a police officer in some jurisdictions is an example of indirect discrimination (Bowling, 2002:40). Unlike direct discrimination, this type of discrimination works smoothly and tends to be undetected. One example
of indirect discrimination is the capability test used in job applications to disqualify certain ethnic.

One example of direct discrimination is racial discrimination. Racial discrimination also has two forms, those are prejudice and slavery.

2.2.2.1 Definition of Prejudice

Prejudice is an unfair, intolerant, or unfavorable attitude toward a group of people. Prejudice as the possession of negative attitudes targeted against members of a particular religious, racial, ethnic, social, and/or political group. These attitudes give rise to negative or unfavorable evaluations of individuals seen as belonging to that group. Individuals that have a prejudice against specific groups will tend to experience intense negative feelings when they come into contact with these groups, either directly or indirectly (Baron, 2007:177).

According to Feldman in Simanjuntak (2011:5), prejudice is the negative (or positive) evaluations or judgments of members of a group that are based primarily on membership in the group and not necessarily on the particular characteristics of individual members. Usually prejudice in racism towards minority groups, their right have been destroyed by the majority groups.

Feldman states that minority group means a group in which the members have significantly less power, control, and influence over their own lives than do members of a dominant group. In African-American, minority group is the blacks or African and majority group is the whites or American. In the nineteenth century, the
black were made as a slave to the whites. They had no right for their self and as if any hope and better future for them.

According to Sacknell (2003:3), white Americans naturalized their new racial attitudes by focusing on physical differences and concluded that black Americans were a lesser form of human being dictated by the laws of nature, or that it was God give. As the superior race, the white people played a great deal in determining other race life. Because of the unlimited power that white people possessed at the time, the black people were forced to live their live in fear, intolerance, separation and hatred.

Lipsitz in Sacknel (2003:6) also describes how strong the power of white people among black people. He says:

The power of whiteness depended not only on white hegemony over separate racial groups, but also on manipulating racial outsiders to fight against one another, to compete with each other with for white approval, and to seek the rewards and privileges of whiteness for themselves at the expense of other racial populations.

From the definition, racial discrimination usually deals with the prejudice. Prejudice is an attitude of superiority group such white people toward a minority group, in this case a black race people.

2.2.2.2 Definition of Slavery

Another form that deals with racial discrimination besides prejudice that the writer found in Uncle Tom’s Cabin novel; it is slavery.

The most prominent and notable form of American racism began with the institution of slavery, during which Africans were enslaved and treated as property
Prior to the institution of slavery, early African and non-white immigrants to the Colonies had been regarded with equal status, serving as sharecroppers alongside whites. Slaves were primarily used for agricultural labor, notably in the production of cotton and tobacco. Slavery means human discrimination since the treatments towards slave are usually unfair. Most slaves are tortured. They are put in to the lowest level, cannot join with the whites, cannot get formal education and do not have right as human being.

Slavery in America grew into a major economic and social system. By the dawn of the nineteenth century the economy of the southern states, and thus that of the nation, was rooted in the agricultural system of chattel labor. The economic health of plantations rested in the right of planters to hold fellow humans without their consent and to demand their labor without paying them wages. This tenuous master-slave relationship informed the emergence of American society in both the North and the South. In the South, most blacks were enslaved and most worked as agricultural laborers. While they lived in close proximity to their masters and other whites, legal and social codes relegated blacks to outcast status. In general, whites did not recognize blacks as having fundamental human rights and needs and presumed that they did not have the intellectual and moral capacity to comprehend the motives and actions of their white enslavers.

Though slavery had ended in the North by the 1820s, the experience of northern free blacks was not overwhelmingly better than that of their southern counterparts. At the conclusion of the colonists' fight for independence there were free blacks able to trace their ancestry back to several generations of free blacks. This, however, left them no more secure than those freed blacks of less impressive
ancestry, nor did it distinguish them significantly from first-generation slaves or their offspring. Whiteness signaled freedom and privilege, while blackness marked the opposite; whether slave or free, the place of blacks in American society grew out of this black-white dichotomy. Free blacks faced constant reminders that their freedom was limited: from laws that restricted their movement, that excluded them from legal protection and privileges, and that often against reality gave them their identity, free blacks understood well that their status was simply a step above those in bondage. In America, slavery and blackness were considered one and the same.

Similar with Agustissi (2000:40), in a specific way, slavery also means racial discrimination especially the discrimination to the blacks’ race. The blacks proved their endurance from slavery so that most slaves in United States were blacks.