

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

In the 17th century, slavery was practiced in America. The black people in America became victims of the slavery and racism. They received bad treatments from the whites. Some of them lived on large plantations along the Mississippi river as slaves. Most of the slaves worked in the production of cottons as field hands. They were treated like a piece of property of the whites' and could be bought and sold on the slaves markets (Mississippi 1860 Slave Census). The issues of slavery and racial discrimination have become the inspiration for many great writers in the world, especially in America. These issues are still considered interesting topics to discuss nowadays.

One of the writers that explore these issues into his literary work is Mark Twain. Mark Twain, the pen-name of Samuel Langhorne Clemens, was born in the slavery period. He wrote a lot of stories about Mississippi river with its great detail, where along this river the societies at that time treat the black people as slaves. Although Mark Twain was born and raised in the slavery period, he rejects the injustice of the slavery and any form of senseless violence ("Mark Twain").

Mark Twain becomes one of the greatest writers in the world for his great works which are worth reading and considered as masterpieces in American literature. His works are read by many people around world. For his worth reading books and inspirational topics, he is praised as the father of American literature.

One of his masterpieces that become a great controversy is The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. This book is used in many schools in some states in America, but it is also considered to be subversive in some states. The repetitions of the word ‘nigger’ in this book is considered as an insult for the African American because Twain’s underlying message may appear far too radical for many people to handle. But on the other hand many great writers are inspired by this book and many critics praised the book as one of the greatest works among American literatures (Nesbit paragraph 18). The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is a story about Huckleberry Finn, a smart white boy who runs away from his “civilized” live and his savage father. Another major character, Jim, the ‘nigger’, is a runaway slave who gets bad treatments from the society. Huck Finn and Jim meet up on the journey and experience adventure together. Both Huck and Jim come from a low class society, and they are treated differently by the society, but still they respect and take care of each other. Huck always protects Jim from the people who want to capture him, while Jim becomes Huck’s mentor, and father which certainly a far better than Huck’s own father. Their relationship goes deeper along their journey trough the Mississippi river (Nesbit paragraph 15).

I found that Huck Finn and Jim are both very interesting characters. Both Huck and Jim are having some similarities on their characteristics. They come from different backgrounds and treated differently by the society. That is why I choose to analyze them in my thesis. At the end of my analysis I want to show that

even though they come from different backgrounds and are treated differently by the society but Huck, who represents the white people and Jim, who represent the black people are actually share some similarities and they are supposed to be equal.

Statement of the Problem

1. What are the characteristics of the major characters?
2. What are the purposes of the author in creating the characters in the novel?

Purpose of the Study

1. To show the characteristics of the major characters.
2. To show the purposes of the author in creating the characters in the novel.

Method of Research

In writing this thesis, I use the library research. First I read the novel, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn as the primary texts. I also search and read some texts that are taken from books and the Internet. Then, I analyze the novel and draw some conclusions.

The Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of four chapters preceded by Abstract, Acknowledgements and Table of Content. Chapter One is the Introduction, which consists of the Background of the Study, the Statement of the Problem, the Purpose of the Study, the Method of Research, and the Organization of the Thesis. Chapter Two is the discussion of The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Chapter Three is the Conclusion, followed by the Bibliography and the Appendices, which consists of the Synopsis of the novel and the Biography of the author.