

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **BACKGROUND OF STUDY**

I choose to analyze Nadine Gordimer's The Lying Days because it vividly describes racism, which has been a major problem in South Africa and around the world as well. The majority of the population in South Africa are black people and white people who come from Europe are the minority. At that particular moment as the setting of time in the novel, the African government applied the system called the Apartheid system.

Apartheid means disambiguation or separateness, a system which forces the citizens to live in a racial segregation. Although the racial segregation in South Africa began in colonial times, it was applied legally by the African government from 1948 to 1994. The segregation classified the inhabitants into several racial groups which are White, Black, Asian, and Native American people. A specific law feature for black people was that their rights as citizens were stripped off. The segregation was applied in education, medical care, and other kinds of public services. Therefore black people receive services which were inferior to those received by white ones.

The application of the Apartheid system caused critical effects to the society that affects the people's way of thinking in social life, leading to racial judgment, which is a way of thinking that is not written as law but more like social conventions in the society. The segregation was clearly seen anywhere, from what they have and do not have as the part of the society due to the racial judgment. The segregation made the people live in fear and stay in their racial groups; otherwise, they will be affected by law. One instance is that the Apartheid law advocated The Prohibition of Mixed Marriage Act of 1949, which prohibited marriage between citizens of different races and also there was The Immorality Act of 1950, a law about sexual relations between people of different races, which was considered a criminal offense.

Nadine Gordimer, a white-skinned writer, was concerned with this situation of segregation among races. Through her books, she tries to portray the reality of the segregation and the social relationships among the characters to the reader. In her lifetime, Nadine Gordimer was famous for her novels and short stories and she won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1991; in addition, she has 12 novels, 10 collections of short stories and essays on topics about Apartheid and Nadine Gordimer also has screenplays for television dramas and a script for the film "Frontiers". She won 11 literary awards and 14 honorary degrees for her most recent novel, The House Gun and a documentary film, Hanging on a Sunrise.

Therefore, I choose The Lying Days because it reveals the situation in South Africa, socially and politically, as well as the forbidden relationships among different races in South Africa. And I choose the novel to be discussed in my thesis because it is her first book, and the author uses her own life and her own

home town as the settings, portraying human conflicts, human interests related to emotional states between human or society. The Lying Days contains conflicts between races in the society, in which their awareness is affected by the Apartheid system applied by the government. Helen feels that the differences based on skin tone should not be applied in the society for there is nothing wrong about having friends or lovers of different races.

I am going to analyze the social conflicts found in the novel. According to Harry Shaw, 'social conflict is a struggle between man and man, and also the protagonist's struggle against society' (Shaw 92). The social conflicts occur because the protagonist, Helen's personal life is affected by the beliefs in the Apartheid. It is difficult for her to have a private relationship with other races except for white people and her parents disapprove of interracial relationship. They fear they will be treated differently by other neighbours since they live in a white people territory.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

In order to analyze the novel, I state the problems as follows:

1. What social conflicts appear in Nadine Gordimer's The Lying Days?
2. What are the causes of the social conflicts?
3. How are the conflicts resolved?

### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

Based on the statement of the problems, the purposes of the study are:

1. To show the social conflicts in Nadine Gordimer's The Lying Days.

2. To analyze the causes of the conflicts in the novel
3. To show the resolutions in the novel

## **METHOD OF RESEARCH**

The method I use is formalism. First of all, I read Nadine Gordimer's novel entitled The Lying Days. Then, I analyze the novel by referring to one of the literary elements, which is conflict. The conflicts discussed are social conflicts, which include their causes and resolutions. Finally, I draw conclusions from what has been discussed.

The type of the research is library research. I use The Lying Days as the primary source for the social conflict analysis, and in addition I also consult several books and internet websites bearing theories of social conflicts and the Apartheid system.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THESIS**

I will present my thesis in three chapters which are preceded by the Acknowledgements, the Table of Contents and the Abstract. The first chapter, the Introduction, contains 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. The second chapter contains the analysis of social conflicts. The last chapter contains the conclusion of the analysis. The thesis ends with the Appendices, which contains the Bibliography, the lists of the reference books and various sources, and the synopsis of The Lying Days.