

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter are presents background of the study, statements of the problem, objectives of the study, scope and limitation of the study, and significance of the study. Those subchapters are required to inform this scientific study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Freedom is a part of human rights, that humans should have in their life. Meanwhile, in reality sometimes humans are not free, humans are bound by a value that has prevailed in their society and inevitably they must obey the prevailing values such as slavery. This is in line with Bales (2005) that slavery is the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised (p. 5). It means slavery as situation when master has power or ownership to slaves that working without salary and without freedom. Liston (1970) states that the motion of slaves is really limited because the slaves forbidden to learn about reading and writing then have to permit to their master if they want to travel or meet their friends for social, religious, or others. The brutality of slavery carried out by the slave owners is when they treated them as property even though they know that the slaves are human (p. 82). According to Rodriguez (2007) defined about the limited of slaves motion such as forbidden to learn about reading and writing would produce insurrection and rebellion. (pp. 616-617).

The example issue of slavery ever happens in United States around 1600s until 1800s especially in Georgia cotton plantation that is usually owned by whites as slaveholder. The large plantations as in Georgia plantations have supervisors or guards that make slaves have no chance to escape. The slaves in Georgia worked every day from morning to evening and if they did mistake, they got punishments such as whippings or beatings because they were considered like a properties that have no value at all. During and after the Revolutionary War in around 1700s, abolitionist laws from the state of the northern America opposed slavery began to create a movement to abolish it. The slavery was abolished in 1805 then in around 1820 there were many rebellion of slaves and they escaped from their master. After the rebellion, slavery in America was officially abolished when Abraham Lincoln won the president election in 1860 as President of America with a platform to stop the expansion of slavery in America (Torr, 2004: 15-19)

Slavery is the sensitive issue, but it is an important thing that should be learned from the history in the past. Thus, the issue of slavery is widely published in the form of literary works such as books and novels. One of the novels that explain slavery issue is *The Underground Railroad* published in 2016, by American author named Colson Whitehead. Therefore, to analyze the slavery issue, the writer chooses the novel as source of data because the novel was very suitable to be analyzed with slavery theory. Moreover, *The Underground railroad* novel by Colson Whitehead as source of data won many awards such as Oprah's Book Club Selection, National Book Award for Fiction, Goodreads Choice Award for Historical Fiction, Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, Kirkus Prize Nominee for Fiction

in 2016, Hurston/ Wright Legacy Award For Fiction, The Rooster – The Morning News Tournament of Books. NAIBA Book of the Year for Fiction, the Arthur C. Clare Award, the Andrew Carnegie Medal For Excellence, John W. Campbell Memorial Award Nominee for Best Science Fiction Novel, Man Booker Prize Nominee for Longlist, and PEN/Jean Stein Book Award Nominee in 2017.

The Underground Railroad novel written by Colson Whitehead represented the slavery in Georgia, especially in Randall cotton plantations. The slaves in Georgia treated brutally because they assume as property of their master so that if they violate the Randall cotton plantation rule that is given by her master, they will receive the punishment such as beating, whipping, or sexual abuse. Furthermore, the writer focuses on one family of slaves in cotton plantation owned by Randall's family in Georgia named Cora's family because the family has ways dealing with the slavery that is very brutal. The family includes Ajarry as Cora's grandmother, Mabel as Cora's mother, and Cora herself. Moreover, one day Cora meets other slave that is bought by her master from Virginia named Caesar and working on the plantation with Cora. He makes a bid for freedom by following Underground Railroad which is portrayed as rail transport system with a series of safe houses and secret routes.

The Previous Study that has relation with this study are thesis of Dana S. Hathaway (2012) *Human Trafficking and Slavery: Towards a New Framework for Prevention and Responsibility* from Portland State University, Thesis of Defri Andi Tegus H.S. (2015) *The Impact To Discrimination On Black Women In America In Nikki Giovanni's "All I Gotta Do" 1975th: A Mimetic Study* from

University of Trunojoyo Madura, Thesis of Teguh Nurrohman (2018) *The Matrix Domination, Controlling Images, And Journey Of Self-Definition As Portrayed In Colson Whitehead's The Underground Railroad: Black Feminist Criticism* from Airlangga University, and article of Alfred, Muhammad Natsir, Ririn Setyowati (2017) *Slavery of The Main Character Solomon Northup in The 12 Years A Slave Movie* from Mulawarman University.

1.2 Statement of the Research Question

In this research, the researcher found two problems:

1. How are slavery in Georgia portrayed in the novel?
2. How do Cora's family dealing with the slavery in the novel?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Related to statement of research problem above, the objectives of the study are to describe:

1. The portrayal of slavery in Georgia in the novel.
2. The ways of Cora's family dealing with the slavery in the novel.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study are:

1. Theoretically, this study is expected to give the contribution to the study of slavery in literary work, especially in novel.
2. Practically, first this study is expected to give contribution to society and can show them in order to slavery never happen again in future and second this study can be used as references to further researcher.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

The scope of this study is applying the slavery theory that focuses on analyzing the issue of slavery issue represented in *The Underground Railroad* novel by Colson Whitehead. It aims to find out the slavery in Georgia portrayed in the novel and the ways of Cora's family dealing with slavery in the novel. Meanwhile, this study is limited on the portrayal of slavery in Georgia, such as slaves life, constant toil, the torturing od slaves, life of squalor, disease and death, working without dignity, and the ways of Cora's family dealing with the slavery such as Ajarry, Mabel, ad Cora's ways. The data collected in the form of word of character utterance and the narration of source of data.