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Exploring Social Injustice in Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Dissertation submitted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of *Master in Literature and Civilization*

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Declaration of Originality

I hereby declare that this submission is my work and that, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution.

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Dedication

This thesis is proudly dedicated to my faithful parents, who never stop encouraging and supporting me. My love for you can never be quantified. God bless you.

My beloved sister Maouahib, and my brothers Islam and Mohamed.

To all those who love and support me. I dedicate this modest work.

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Abstract

Social injustice against African Americans has occurred among groups of people since the dawn of civilisation. Colored skin people have never been welcomed in the White society because White believes in their superiority. Thus, this research work examines the White's preconception that grew up strongly against the African Americans in the county of Maycomb, Alabama during the Great Depression through Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Moreover, it tries to bring attention to the victimization of the mockingbirds who are harmless and innocent characters and are treated unfairly in society. Therefore, it aims to represent how the life in Maycomb community was during the Great Depression. This paper adopts three theories, mainly Postmodernist theory, Marxist theory, and Critical Race theory. This research-based on the structural analysis of each element; characters and characterisation, setting, story, point of view, style, and topic are all interconnected and contribute to the novel's overall form and quality. It sends the message that racial and social injustice must be eradicated since all persons of all races are equal before the law.

Keywords: African Americans, Critical Race Theory, Great Depression, Marxist Theory, Postmodernist Theory, social and racial Injustice, *To Kill a Mockingbird*

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List of Abbreviations

CRT: Critical Race Theory

FDR: Franklin Delano Roosevelt

KKK: Ku Klux Klan

NAACP: National Association for the advancement of Colored People

SEC: Securities and Exchange Commission

TKAM: To Kill A Mockingbird

General Introduction

General Introduction

African Americans have been subjected to racial injustice. In the early twentieth century, racial prejudice was a major issue. It has occurred in different countries around the world, particularly in America as a melting pot society with various multicultural characteristics. After the abolition of slavery by President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation during the American Civil War (1861-1865), it appeared that Whites and Blacks would interact differently; Whites freed Blacks by passing segregation and Jim Crow laws. These laws were enacted to treat Blacks as equals to Whites while keeping them apart.

Nonetheless, Jim Crow Laws, which were designed to provide Blacks with separate but equal facilities, was nothing more than a transparent falsehood that reduced Blacks to second-class citizens. As a social problem, racial and social prejudice has a link to literature, which is viewed as a reflection of society. Harper Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* is one of the literary masterpieces that depict the realities of racial and social prejudice.

Harper Lee outlines the issue of racial prejudice during the Great Depression, in Southern America exactly in Maycomb, Alabama. People in that community cannot accept things that are not similar to their beliefs and traditions. In the novel, society makes all of the decisions. It determines whether something is good or not. Racial prejudice develops in society, whether against members of their group or blacks.

To Kill a Mockingbird as a title does not speak about a bird. It appears many times in the novel. It is the most significant symbol. It represents the idea of innocence, harmless, and purity that Maycomb's Whites exterminated in the 1930s.

Racial and social class discrimination among Maycomb people in the United States is the first issue that the novel tackled. The literature emphasizes racial and social discrimination as basic issues that might lead to the unfortunate fate of innocent in society.

This work is entitled *Social Injustice in Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird*, focuses on racial, and social class discrimination. It also attempts to shed light on the causes of these issues. Maycomb's people have a certain division of race and social class which results in these problems. Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* is regarded as a purposeful work since it addresses critical issues that are still prevalent in today's world: racial, and social prejudices. This study is considered to be a valuable resource for readers interested in learning more about social injustice in Alabama during the Great Depression. In this regard, the study will address the following research questions:

- What aspects of the novel deal with racial and social preconceptions?

- What are the causes of the social injustice and how do they impact the novel's characters?
- How did Harper Lee help in shaping the American reality during the Great Depression through *To Kill a Mockingbird*?

In this vein, the aforementioned research questions have three research objectives:

- To examine the racial and social discrimination aspects in the novel.
- To investigate the causes behind the social injustice.
- To present Harper Lee's role in shaping American reality during the Great Depression.

A qualitative research method has been adopted to achieve the objective of the study. To approach and analyze the novel, the researcher used Critical Race Theory which is important to analyze white's racism against black people, the Marxist theory to show how social injustice and the Whites' ideologies led to class conflicts between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The postmodernist theory is used to explore how identity is formed, with the help of sources like books, articles, and internet materials.

This dissertation consists of three chapters. The first chapter is entitled *The Historical Background of To Kill a Mockingbird*. It deals with the historical events of the novel, during the 1930s the Great Depression was a historical event. It impacted every group of Americans, particularly African-Americans. Even with the abolition of slavery, Blacks were still subjected to segregation and inequality, and Whites' hate of Blacks was stronger. This chapter also tackles the Great Depression's impact on the America Economy. It sheds light on how Blacks suffered from racism during that period. It gives the case of Scottsboro boys to introduce the American criminal system of justice. Finally, it will provide an overview of the Ku Klux Klan as a terrorist society, and it shows how they aimed to achieve political and economic equality for African-Americans.

Furthermore, the second chapter is entitled *The Literary Background of To Kill a Mockingbird*. It provides a background for Critical Race Theory (CRT), Postmodernist theory, and Marxist theory that will be applied in the analysis of the novel in the last chapter.

The last chapter is entitled *Social Injustice in To Kill a Mockingbird*. It is concerned with analyzing the novel through applying the CRT that examines how white's supremacy, racial, and social discrimination have harmed Black people's lives and denied them their rights, which led the Blacks to a state of double consciousness. Then, the researcher also used the Marxist theory to study the social life of the Maycomb community in the 1930s. It shows the social conflict between the Bourgeoisie and the Proletariat. In addition, the postmodernist

The theory was also employed to analyze several themes in the novel such as identity, racism, and a search for goodness in humanity which comes from the Civil Rights Movements.

Chapter One:
Historical Background of
the Novel

1.1 Introduction

In the 1930s, America was in a Great Depression after World War I. It was hard to imagine life during the Great Depression. Although the depression started at the end of the 1920s, the entire nation suffered most drastically during 1929–1933. It was the worst and longest economic collapse in the industrialized countries. However, in various ways and degrees of severity, the effect of the depression on countries was different. The following chapter aims to shed light on the status of the African Americans during the Great Depression, and its impact on the American economy. Moreover, it presents an overview of the Ku Klux Klan as a terrorist society.

1.2 Background of the Novel

Harper Lee initially set her novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* in the mid-1930s. It was when many white individuals were racist towards black individuals, particularly in the Southern States of America. Black people have been trying to shift the constant prejudice they have experienced. A black woman named Rosa Parks in 1955 in Montgomery, Alabama gave up her seat to a white male.

People always say that I didn't give up my seat because I was tired, but that isn't true," Parks said in her 1992 book, *Rosa Parks: My Story*. "I was not tired physically, or no more tired than I usually was at the end of a working day. I was not old, although some people have an image of me as being old then. I was 42. No, the only tired I was, was tired of giving in" (*Fight Inc, Rosa Parks Refused To Give Up Her Bus Seat Igniting The civil Rights Movement, 2019., para.3*).

This caused her to be convicted and fined ten dollars. It inspired other black individuals, to express their support for her. Black people have declined to use buses for just over a year.

The bus companies lost a massive sum of money. Black people have been threatened with violence and the loss of their jobs, but before the Supreme Court ruled that bus apartheid could no longer occur, they refused to give in. A black minister, Martin Luther King, was actively involved in such campaigns for equal rights for black people; he said, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." (*America's Foundation Document, n.d., para. 4*)

In the United States of America, the Great Depression was the most severe problem the nation ever faced, apart from the Civil War. Many depressions had been endured by the U.S. nation before, none of them were as severe and long-lasting as the Great Depression. Vast numbers of people lived in poverty and misery. During the depression, the African Americans lost their jobs, stopped making money, and as a result, stopped spending money. War Advertising Council Slogan: "Use it, wear it, make it do, or do without" (America During the Great Depression, 2009, para, 4), represented the spirit of the times. In the economic Depression of the 1930s, frugality and resourcefulness helped many families survive it.

1.3. The Status of African-Americans during the Great Depression

In the History of the industrialized world, the Great Depression was the worst economic downturn, lasting from the stock market crash of 1929 to 1939. Virtually, the problems of the Great Depression impacted every group of Americans. However, no group was harder hit than African Americans. As Wilson said in his interview:

First Measured Century: Interview': During the Great Depression, African Americans were faced with problems that were not unlike those experienced by the most disadvantaged groups in society. The Great Depression had a leveling effect, and all groups experienced hard times: poor whites, poor blacks (William Julius Wilson Interview, n.d., para. 1).

In 1931, nine black boys, who had been riding the rails, were arrested for vagrancy and irregular behavior. Two young white women, dressed as boys; were traveling with a group of white boys, came forward and said that the black boys assaulted them. The case tried in Scottsboro, Alabama, reignited decades of racial hatred and highlighted the court system's injustice. The all-white jury quickly convicted the boys and sentenced all but one of them to death, despite significant proof; the women had not been raped at all, along with one of the women who later recanted her testimony. The verdict pierced the curtain of indifference to the plight of African Americans, and demonstrations broke out in the North among newspaper editors, intellectuals, and social reformers.

The United States Communist Party offered to handle the case and requested a retrial. This campaign was later joined by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The case has been tried three different times in total. At the initial trial, the defendants were refused legal counsel by the agreement of both The U.S. Supreme Court and

the defense lawyers of the Communist Party, and due legal procedures denied as provided in the Fourteenth Amendment, as a result of the exclusion of any prospective black jurors in October 1932. Many of the defendants were sentenced to long prison terms with the possibility of parole, but the death penalty was avoided. Some of the early groundwork for the modern American civil rights movement was eventually laid by the Scottsboro case.

By 1932, approximately half of African Americans were out of their jobs. Whites in certain Northern communities demanded that African Americans be dismissed from all employees as long as whites were unemployed. Racial violence has resurfaced in the United States, particularly in the South.

Although most African Americans had historically voted Republican, President Franklin Roosevelt's election started to change the voting habits. At the White House, Roosevelt was known for welcoming African-American visitors and for having a diverse group of black advisors. Many African Americans were excited by the passion in which Roosevelt started solving the issues of the Depression, according to historian Franklin (1995), acquired "a sense of belonging they had never experienced before" (para.3) from his fireplace. Still, discrimination existed in New Deal housing and job programs, President Roosevelt did not embrace all the laws favored by organizations such as the NAACP for political reasons.

Roosevelt did not promote the enactment of federal anti-lynching law or endorse attempts to ban the poll tax that kept many African Americans from voting. Because he needed the help of Southern Democrats to pass his New Deal agenda. And, under the New Deal, the economic support received by African Americans solidified their renewed allegiance to the Democratic Party. African Americans were executed at the state level, where racial prejudice still widespread, even though New Deal programs provided much-needed financial help to them. During the 1930s, the New Deal did nothing to challenge the current racial segregation and Jim Crow laws. (9 FDR's New Deal | History Hub., n.d).

The Civilian Conservation Corps created racially segregated camps when the Federal Housing Administration declined to insure mortgages in communities in African America (NCpedia., n.d.). The Agricultural Adjustment Association paid white landowners to leave their fields barren. Despite this, they were unable to transmit any funds to the African-American sharecroppers and tenant farmers who worked the land (Teaching American History., n.d.).

Yet, despite this tremendous support, Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) has not been a civil rights champion. Roosevelt understood the struggle of African Americans. But he was afraid that if he went too far, his New Deal policies would have a negative impact on race relations. Among Northern whites and white Southerners who were strongly opposed, there was no active support for civil rights reform. The ability of FDR to get legislation through Congress relied on the support of several central committees headed by long-serving southern Democrats (Franklin D. Roosevelt: The American Franchise | Miller Center.2009). Later, as World War II approached, to resolve isolationists in Congress who opposed increased military expenditure and assistance to Britain, he would need these same Southern committee chairmen.

The New Deal provided African Americans to serve in government. Beneficial New Deal leaders chose African Americans as special advisors to help focus aid efforts on the black population. This so-called "black cabinet" met regularly to direct the government towards more inclusive policies.

The decade of the 1930s saw the rise of the Civil Rights Movement presiding over African American activism. Mary McLeod Bethune founded the National Council of Negro Women of the National Youth Administration in 1935, a representative and close friend of Eleanor Roosevelt, and the first meeting of the National Negro Congress was held the following year, an umbrella coalition of numerous African-American groups that have been fighting for anti-lynching legislation, the abolition of poll taxes and eligibility of agricultural and domestic workers for the social security (Mary McLeod Bethune Council House National Historic Site., n.d). The Southern Negro Youth Congress, which registered voters and organized boycotts, was founded by young African Americans in 1937.

Roosevelt selected far more African Americans to positions within his administration than his predecessors, and he was the first president to nominate an African American as a federal judge. According to the Roosevelt Institute, FDR tripled the number of African Americans serving in the federal government. New Deal officials named African Americans as special advisors. While none filled Cabinet-level places, these public policy advisors were linked to the "Black Cabinet" and the "Black Brain Trust." Maybe the best-known member of the Black Cabinet was its only woman, Bethune, a close friend of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and founder of Bethune-Cookman University (Miller Center., n.d.).

The verdict pierced the curtain of indifference to the plight of African Americans, and demonstrations broke out in the North among newspaper editors, intellectuals, and social

reformers. The United States Communist Party offered to handle the case and requested a retrial; this campaign was later joined by the NAACP. The case has been tried three different times in total. The U.S.

In October 1932, The Supreme Court agreed with the defense lawyers of the Communist Party that at the initial trial, the defendants were refused proper legal counsel and that due process, as provided for in the Fourteenth Amendment, was denied as a result of the exclusion of any prospective black jurors. Many of the convicted subsequently obtained long jail sentences and subsequent parole, but the death penalty was avoided. Some of the early groundwork for the modern American civil rights movement was eventually laid by the Scottsboro case.

1.3.1. The Impact of Depression on American Economy

Before, Americans had experienced depressions, but none of them were as extreme as the 1930s Depression. Because of its duration complexity, and durability, the latter was distinct. It was, indeed, a global, agricultural, industrial, and commercial crisis at the same time. By the year 1932, an approximate quarter of the United States population was unemployed. Factories had been shut down due to the harsh economic climate; banks had failed in their operations, and businesses had been closed. As 1933 approached, the stock exchange in New York was barely a fifth of its 1929 peak (The Great Depression Effects on American Economy, n.d.). The Great Depression, as this is what it was called, had several causes and a lot of effects on the American economy and the world as a whole (Smiley, 2008). The stock market did not cause the Great Depression, but it did lead to it; as, Klein (2001) puts it, "Unlike most market disasters, the Great Crash was not the event of one day, but a series of events stretched initially across the week from Wednesday, October,23, through Thursday, October,31" (p.1). Many people do believe the crash took place in a single day.

“Black Tuesday” October,29,1929 was the most devastating day in the History of the New York stock market, 16,410,030, shares were sold, and for two weeks, the market continued to drop until prices reached their lowest level on the thirteenth of November of the same year.

All the components of a market economy were related to each other. Therefore, when an incident happens in one part of the economy, other sectors will inevitably feel the consequences. This is what occurred after the stock crash of 1929. The entire economy suffered the same results as the financial system was crashing. The Great Depression's most damaging

effect was human misery. World production and living standards fell precipitously in a short period. In the early 1930s, as many as one-quarter of the labor force in developed countries were unable to find jobs.

The stock market attracted not only financiers and businesspeople but also ordinary Americans. Many people took their savings out of banks and invested them in stocks and services to make money. Some people also went as far as mortgaging their homes to increase their investment capital. The following passage by Frederick (1931) from his book *Only Yesterday: An Informal History of the Nineteen Twenties* exemplifies this diversity:

The rich man's chauffeur drove with his ears laid back to catch the news of an impending move in Bethlehem Steel; he held 50 shares himself on a twenty-point margin. The window cleaner at the banker's office paused to watch the ticker, for he was thinking of converting his laboriously accumulated savings into a few shares of Simmons. Edwin Lefevre (an articulate reporter on the market at this time) told of a broker's valet who made nearly a quarter of a million on the market, a trained nurse who cleaned up thirty thousand following the tips given her by grateful patients; and of the Wyoming cattleman, thirty miles from the nearest railroad, who bought or sold a thousand shares a day. (p. 233)

Although conditions started to improve by the mid-1930s, it was not until the end of the decade that complete recovery was achieved. Human suffering was the most destructive impact of the Great Depression. In a brief period, world manufacturing and living standards dropped precipitously. Up to one-quarter of the labor force in developing countries could not find employment in the early 1930s. While by the mid-1930s, conditions began to change, it was not until the end of the decade that full recovery was achieved.

In many countries, in the 1930s, government control of the economy, especially of financial markets, increased significantly. For example, in 1934, the United States formed the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to control new stock issues and trading activities in the stock market. In the United States, the Banking Act of 1933 created deposit insurance and forbade banks from underwriting or trading in securities. Deposit insurance, which only became standard worldwide after the Second World War, essentially removed banking panics as an aggravating factor in post-1933 U.S. recessions.

During the 1930s, the relationship between citizens and the president changed, and discussions about the president's role in initiating and narrating responses to economic problems changed. Roosevelt "personalized federal power," as Cohen says, transforming the president into a cultural, as well as a political, figure.

1.3.2. The Life of the African Americans during the Depression

The economic condition in the South, where the majority of African Americans lived, had long been especially dire. There had been no property or compensation. Most African Americans are looking for ways to support themselves now that they have more independence. There were few options for them and their families other than agriculture. Ford (1936), mentioned the blacks struggle in *The Communist's Way Out for the Negro*, "The struggle for Negro freedom and Negro rights depends upon the organization of the masses to struggle for their daily immediate needs, better wages, unemployment, and social insurance, civil rights, and equal rights" (pp. 94-95).

Everyone was affected by the Great Depression. From the very young to the old, the events of this era have dramatically changed the lives of all; an observer recalled one such settlement in Oklahoma City:

Here were all these people living in old, rusted-out car bodies. (...) People were living in shacks made of orange crates. One family with a whole lot of kids were living in a piano box (...) People were living in whatever they could junk together (The Great Depression, n.d., para. 3).

Several individuals found themselves out of work and looking for a better life. When children were able to attend school, they had to struggle with improvements in their education. The youths and their parents were on a quest to find a better life. The middle class had a life without money and stability to contend with. For those who lived through them, the years of the Great Depression were very harrowing and represented a significant period in the history of this country as well.

Children were denied an education at this time since many families were forced to close their schools due to a shortage of resources during the 1932-1933 school years. Teenagers who felt that they were a burden to their families or who were ashamed of their unemployment and poverty felt compelled to leave home and start their own lives. Many teenagers of this time

were notorious for "riding the rails." They decided to take the adventure of living alone and trying to find a better life for themselves (Ganzel, 2003).

Most of the African-American population of the country lived in rural areas during this time and worked on farms owned by white landowners. While most of the lives of these rural African-Americans had experienced poverty, the Great Depression was a heavy blow. View of the fact that the farmers they worked for lost their land, their living conditions deteriorated. Life was difficult in urban areas for African-Americans. Those in these fields, however, continued to work hard at their careers. They would do hard manual labor or work in places such as foundries that were notorious for their hazardous conditions (Miller Center: African-Americans., n.d.).

Others may have worked for white individuals as domestic servants. Some worked for railroads, steel mills, and coal mines as well. Still, others became street vendors or peddlers. During the Great Depression, farmers found themselves in a very horrible position. Farmers were already losing money in the decade before this period because of greater industrialization in towns. The Great Depression, for them, had just exacerbated an already dismal condition.

The food prices created by farmers deflated so much at the beginning of the depression that farmers could not make a profit off their land. They declined to sell what they produced as a consequence of this. If they lived in the middle part of the country, known as the Dust Bowl at this time, they also endured drought starting around 1932. They were no longer able to make money from what they provided for the land. Usually, it was barely enough to support their families. As farmers grew deeper into debt and were no longer able to make payments on their land and equipment, their land was foreclosed by the banks where they borrowed money. Some of these displaced farmers were planning to migrate west to pursue better farmland and better jobs for themselves and their families.

During the Great Depression, Women began turning flour and feed sacks (made from cotton) into clothing, underwear, dish towels, curtains, and other household products. Some producers saw this pattern and began producing flour and feed sacks with glossy, colorful motifs so that the bags might be used as fashionable apparel fabrics. Of course, some women had gone to college and had a hard time finding jobs, like their male counterparts. When the family's principal source of money was out of work, those with families had the job of holding their family together. With what they had; these women had to be creative (Underpaid, But

Employed: How the Great Depression Affected Working Women: Women's Work' During the Great Depression., n.d.).

Many women joined the labor force and would perform jobs that men had previously held. During this challenging period, these females worked as hard as they could to maintain their families (The Confidence Crisis, n.d.). When so many men were out of work, some people blamed married women for taking jobs, while women also took clerical or service industry roles that were not seen as socially acceptable to men at the time. Women found jobs as secretaries, teachers, telephone operators, and nurses. Yet, in many instances, women workers are paid less by employers than their male counterparts (The history of women's work and wages and how it has created success for us all: A historical perspective on women in the labor force., n.d.).

In the 1930s, the average American family did not have extra money to spend on leisure activities. Going to the movie theater was a significant pastime before the Depression. After the stock market collapsed, fewer Americans could afford this luxury, so more than one-third of the cinemas in America closed between 1929 and 1934. Sometimes, individuals tend to spend time at home. The neighbors met to play cards and board games together.

During the Great Depression, everybody had to adapt to a new way of life. To survive, the people of this time recognized that they had to adapt. Practically everybody has had to deal with substantial losses and dramatic changes. The lack of a stable life and education had to be dealt with by children. Farmers had to learn to deal with the devastation of their farms that had helped their families. The middle class had to deal with the lack of money and their social class's possible disappearance. For this country, this era may have been a dark one, but it has brought about many changes that still impact the country to this day, and, thus, this was a very significant time for the History of America.

1.4. The White Racism against African Americans

By the mid-20th century, Black Americans had had more than enough of racism and abuse against them. They, along with many white Americans, organized and started an intense fight for equality that spanned two decades. Black people were denied access to the same public services as white people, as well as the right to live in many of the same towns and attend the same schools. Interracial marriage was banned, and most Black people could not vote due to a lack of voter literacy.

Discrimination towards black people occurred at work when they attempted to buy a home and tried to receive an education. To make the situation worse, some states have enacted legislation limiting Black Americans' ability to vote. The majority of African-Americans were low-wage farmers, factory workers, domestics, or servants. War-related employment was booming in the early 1940s, but most Black Americans were denied better-paying jobs. They were also convinced not to enlist in the military.

In the Southern, race relations in America, the 1930s were a tumultuous period. In the Southern states, racism was as intense as ever; despite the collapse of organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan, racism was as strong as ever states. Several New Deal programs offered opportunities for black Americans that were often scarce in the past, while also helping to bring their everyday hardships to light for Northerners. Federal initiatives such as the Federal Music Project, the Federal Theatre Project, and the Federal Writers Project enabled black artists to find words during the Depression (Klux Klan a History of Racism., 2011).

1.5. Ku Klux Klan as a Terrorist Society

According to the National Geographic Society (2020), “The Ku Klux Klan is a domestic terrorist organization founded shortly after the United States Civil War ended. It has used intimidation, violence, and murder to maintain white supremacy in Southern government and social life” (p.1). They were a terrorist society, as it is mentioned in Angela Allen’s article *The Incongruous Intersection of the Black Panther Party and the Ku Klux Klan*: “The Ku Klux Klan, a secret association formed by white vigilantes during Reconstruction, carried out violent attacks primarily against African Americans.” The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) was a “violent and explosive” “organized terror group.” (p. 39)

At the ending of the American Civil War, the KKK was created to repress the rights and freedoms of African Americans. It was founded in 1865 and disappeared in the 1870s but formed again in 1915 and has continued today. The KKK first emerged in Alabama after the Civil War, where many Confederate soldiers and Democratic Party supporters founded the group to oppose the expansion of citizenship and voting rights among former slaves and to end Republican Party control of the state government. They were a secret group that used terror tactics to intimidate newly liberated African Americans. “The KKK wanted white people in the South to continue to have advantages in government and society” (National Geography Society, n.d., para.4).

The KKK attracted former Confederacy warriors who resented the changes of Reconstruction. It was a period, from 1865 to 1877, following the Civil War. Many efforts were made during Reconstruction to help freed slaves become a part of society. The incorporation of the 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution was one of the changes. Fair rights and the right to vote and be elected were guaranteed by the amendments. Furthermore, to protect the civil rights of freed slaves, federal laws were passed. However, black voters faced harassment and abuse as they sought to exercise their new rights. The majority of these tasks were coordinated by the Klan. The KKK used secrecy, coercion, terror, and murder to prohibit formerly enslaved African American men from voting. Black officeholders and their followers were mainly targeted by them (History: Ku Klux Klan., n.d.).

By 1870, the KKK had branches in almost every southern state. Klan did not claim a well-organized system or strong leadership even at its height. Famous Klan members, often wearing masks and dressed in long white robes and hoods signed by the group, typically carried out their attacks at night, acting on their own but supporting the shared goals of defeating Radical Reconstruction in the South. Klan activity expanded significantly in the regions of the South where Black people were a minority or a slight majority of the population and was relatively restricted in others (History: Ku Klux Klan., n.d.).

South Carolina was one of the most prominent places of Klan violence, where a lot of masked men stormed the Union County jail in January and lynched eight black prisoners. In the territories where most Klan violence took place, local law enforcement officers either belonged to the Klan or failed to take action against it (*Francis B. Simkins., The Ku Klux Klan in South Carolina, 1868-1871., p. 608*). Even those who arrested suspected Klansmen found it challenging to locate witnesses prepared to testify against them. In the South, other leading white people refused to speak out against the party's actions, granting them tacit approval. After 1870, Republican state and local governments in the South turned to Congress for assistance, leading to the passage of three Enforcement Acts, of which the Ku Klux Klan Act of 1871 was the strongest.

Laws against the KKK were passed in 1871, during the presidency of Ulysses S. Grant. These laws permitted the President to declare martial law, which is a military rule in a certain territory when the government is unable to rule. Those powers were not used by Grant to the full extent of the statute, but some progress was made. Nine counties in South Carolina were

put under martial law, and some of the KKK members were arrested (*History: Ku Klux Act passed by Congress.*, n.d.).

Many of the reconstruction period's advances did not last long. State legislators focused on Jim Crow rules after Reconstruction ended in 1877. White supremacy and segregation were maintained by these rules. The new laws put enormous difficulties in the way of voting for blacks. Black voters have been coerced or blocked from voting and voting by registration. In the 1870s, the early KKK disbanded, partially because of federal legislation but also because its aims had been met. Then, the KKK was revived in the early 20th century (*The South after Reconstruction: Boundless US History.*, n.d.).

The KKK was also working against Catholic and Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe this time around (*The Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s*, n.d.). In 1915, white Protestant nativists launched a rebirth of the Ku Klux Klan near Atlanta, Georgia, spurred by their romantic vision of the ancient South. In addition to being a Black, this second generation of the Klan also took a stance against Roman Catholics, Jews, immigrants, and organized labor. The group used a burning cross as its emblem and organized rallies, parades, and marches worldwide.

The Klan's membership dropped dramatically during the Great Depression of the 1930s, and the remaining remnants of the organization momentarily disbanded in 1944. For the next 20 years, the Klan was quiescent, but it had a revival in some Southern states during the 1960s when civil-rights workers attempted to compel Southern communities' compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Klan could not curb the rise of a new racial tolerance in the South in the years that followed. Though the group continued some of its covert activities into the early 21st century, incidents of Klan abuse became more sporadic, and its membership had diminished to a few thousand. The Klan became a chronically fractured mélange made up of many different and conflicting groups (*History: Ku Klux Klan.*, n.d.).

Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* depicts the KKK's brutality against African Americans, particularly when a black man, Tom Robinson, is accused of rape against a white woman. At the time, defending a black man, especially against a white woman, was virtually impossible. Following Tom Robinson's accusation, the book starts to expose the actual existence of the Ku Klux Klan's actions in the 20th century, when Atticus Finch, a white defense lawyer of Tom at the Maycomb County Jail, as their sort of punishment, a lynch mob arrives at the jail with the intent of murdering Tom Robinson. One of the men in the lynch mob says: You

know what we want,” another man said. “Get aside from the door, Mr. Finch” (Lee, 1960, p. 202). Maycomb and the Ku Klux Klan shared that whites are superior to blacks because they both believed that violence should be used to hold whites superior and blacks inferior (TKAM History Research Paper., n.d).

1.6. Conclusion

To conclude, the Great Depression during the 1930s hit America like a storm. It was a time of extreme poverty, unemployment, homelessness, and general economic instability. African Americans barely managed to get through the Great Depression and joblessness by creating organizations and voting for Roosevelt. Roosevelt was just a temporary solution, as this did not solve all the racial discrimination and lynching. The Civil Rights movement and black power movements were explicitly needed to achieve racial equality.

The KKK aimed to achieve political and economic equality for African-Americans. Its representatives carried out an undercover campaign of bullying and abuse against Republican politicians, both white and black. This chapter has given an overview of the great depression, the life of African Americans during that period and how it impacts the American economy. Then, this chapter shed light on the white racism against the African Americans. Moreover, the end of this chapter introduced the Ku Klux Klan as a terrorist society. Thereafter, the second chapter will deal with the most suitable theories to analyze Lee’s novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

**Chapter Two:
Literary Background of
the Novel**

2.1 Introduction

To Kill a Mockingbird deals with many social issues for example racism, classism, violence, inequality, conflict, and insecurity. Therefore, this chapter aims at introducing the most suitable theories to analyze this work. It aims to shed light on Postmodernism as a theory which attempts to define how society has progressed to an era beyond modernity, the Critical Race theory, which examines race and racism in society. Moreover, it presents another theory which is the Marxist theory; it focuses on the struggle between capitalists and the working class.

2.2 Postmodernism as a Theory

Postmodernism is a theoretical approach developed in the 1980s to describe a historical period known as postmodernity, which is thought to have started in the late 1960s and early 1970s. During this period many parts of the world were experiencing social upheaval as a result of the Cold War. The philosophical ideas of Michel Foucault, Richard Rorty, and Jacques Derrida gave rise to the postmodernism theory. According to the Postmodernist philosophy, the world is a text, and text-reality is the only possible model. Sidky (2004) defined postmodernism as “A theoretical perspective that focuses on culture as open-ended negotiated meanings and stresses the examination of how ethnographies are written” (p. 436).

Fuchs (1996, p. 58) defined postmodernism as “the ideology of a “new class” of symbolic workers who specialize in self-referential techniques for manipulating signs, images, and multiple layers of representation’. Postmodernism is a ‘culture’ that emphasizes that ‘there is a better world than the modern one” (Lemert, 1997, p. 22). It is one of the most significant cultural, philosophical, artistic movements of a contemporary era

Postmodernism extends from the year 1970s to the year 1990s, which means the theories, currents, and philosophical, intellectual, literary, critical, and artistic schools that emerged after structural, semiotic, and linguistic postmodernism. Postmodernism has come to undermine Western metaphysics, and to destroy the central categories that have dominated ancient and modern Western thought, such as language, identity, origin, sound, and reason. The mechanisms of dispersal, skepticism, difference, and alienation have been used, and postmodernism is associated with the philosophy of chaos, nihilism, deconstruction, meaninglessness, and disorder.

One of the most ambiguous and exciting terms in the postmodern period is the term “postmodernity” itself, as postmodern critics and scholars differed about it; due to the

multiplicity of its concepts and implications from one critic to another. Rather, we find that the meanings given to the concept of postmodernism are contradictory, different, and overlapping, until an extensive discussion arose about the use of the term “postmodernity,” as it is considered one of the most important terms that:

It has spread and prevailed since the fifties, and no one has yet been guided to determine its source: There are some refer the term to the British historian Arnold Toynbee in 1954, and there are those who link it to the American poet and critic Charles Olson in the fifties, and there are those who refer it to the cultural critic Leslie Fiedler and identifies its time in 1965. However, the search for the origins of the word led to the discovery of its use much earlier than these dates, as in John Watkins Chapman’s use of the term “postmodern painting” in the 1870s, and the emergence of the term postmodern in Rudolf Banfitz in 1917 (Al-Bazai & Al-Ruwaili, 2000, p. 138).

In philosophy and critical theory, postmodernity refers to the state or condition of society which that is said to exist after modernity, a historical condition that marks the reasons for the end of modernity.

It has been clear that the ideas of postmodernism are relatively different from the concepts of previous modernity. Some historians see that the ideas of postmodernism are radically different from the ideas of modernity. Some of them believe: "It is possible to consider writers and artists in the pre-modern period as postmodern". This is closer to the argument that Freud's theories of the unconscious were pre-existing in German Romantic thought. The German philosopher Habermas (1996) discussed in his journal article ‘ ‘ the project of modernity' and the parameters for a critical sociology: an argument with illustrations from medical sociology” (para.6) that the project of modernity has never ended, as this project continues the pursuit of its goals (Scambler, 1996). By this, Habermas means the enlightenment values of reason and social justice. The term postmodernism is also considered by many to refer, in general, to the role of the media in capitalist societies in the late twentieth century.

Whatever its preferred use, it is clear that the theory of explaining social and cultural developments using grand narratives is no longer possible or acceptable, and that ideas can no longer be intimately connected with historical reality. Everything is text and image. For many, the world depicted in the movie "The Matrix", where we find human life imitating the machines that control it, tries to convince the viewer of a postmodern world, to convince him of a

nightmare from the world of science fiction, this world is a metaphor for the current human condition.

Some researchers and scholars link postmodernism to the philosophy of deconstruction and undermining and the destruction of the significant central categories that dominated Western culture from Plato to the present day. In this regard, Carter (2006) says in his book *Literary Theory*, “These postmodern attitudes express a fundamentally skeptical attitude to all human knowledge, and these attitudes have affected many academic disciplines and fields of human activity (from sociology to law and cultural studies, from among other fields” (p. 131). For many, postmodernism is dangerously nihilistic, undermining any sense of order and the central control of the experience. Neither the world nor the self is a coherent unit.

Hence, the postmodern philosophy has relied on skepticism, undermining, and nihilism, as well as on intertextuality, disorder, and inconsistency, and reconsidering many of the postulates and central statements that Western thought has known in the past and present. Thus, postmodernism, according to Carter (2006), shakes all the traditional notions of language and identity, as we hear many foreign students studying English literature describing anything they do not understand or express as postmodern. Literary texts in postmodernism often reveal the absence of closure. And it analyzes to focus on this, and both texts and criticisms are concerned with the lack of clarity of identity, and what is known as “intertextuality”: is the reformulation of early works or the interconnection between literary texts.

Within the framework of postmodernism, it has four perspectives towards it: the philosophical perspective; which sees that postmodernity is evidence of a vacuum in the absence of modernity itself. The historical perspective; which views postmodernism as a movement away from modernity or rejection of some of its aspects. The political-ideological perspective, which sees postmodernism as an exposure of Western utopian delusions, The textual strategic views, which considers that the approach of postmodern texts does not adhere to methodological standards, and there is no single reading, but relatively open, and multiple readings.

Postmodernism, in its historical, reference, and contextual dimension has been linked to the development of Western postmodern capitalism socially, economically, politically, and culturally. It is also closely related to the development of the media. Postmodernism also came as a response to linguistic structuralism and the central Western categories that refer to domination, exploitation, and alienation. Postmodernism also aimed to undermine Western

philosophy and expose capitalist institutions that control the world, monopolize the means of production, and possess scientific knowledge. Postmodernism also criticized logic through the mechanisms of skepticism, distraction, anatomy, and deconstruction (Al-Bazai & Al-Ruwaili, 2000).

It appeared in complex political conditions, after the end of World War II, especially in the context of the Cold War, the spread of nuclear weapons, the declaration of the birth of human rights, the emergence of the theater of the absurd (Samuel Beckett, Adamov, UNESCO, Arrabal...), and the emergence of philosophies irrationalities such as surrealism, existentialism, Freudianism, absurdity, and nihilism. Deconstruction was a major passage for the transition from modernity to postmodernism.

Postmodernism first appeared in the field of formation, drawing, architecture, and civil engineering, before moving to philosophy, literature, art, technology, and the rest of the sciences and human knowledge. It is not possible to talk about single postmodernity, but there is general postmodernity and sub-postmodernity. Postmodern theory has invaded all branches of knowledge, such as literature, criticism, art, philosophy, ethics, education, sociology, anthropology, cultural science, economics, politics, architecture, formation, etc. (Carter, 2006).

Postmodernism in Western culture is based on a set of intellectual, mental, artistic, aesthetic, literary and critical components and foundations, and it can be summarized in the following elements and principles:

- Undermining postmodern theory aims to undermine Western thought and destroy its central hypostases, through dispersal, postponement and dismantling. In the sense that postmodernism has been armed with shovels of demolition and dissection to expose official discourses and expose eroding prevailing ideologies, using the language of difference and contradiction.

- Doubt: The most important characteristic of postmodernism is the questioning of certain knowledge, and the criticism of cultural institutions that own discourse, power, knowledge, and authority. Hence, skepticism became a mechanism to challenge Western philosophy based on reason, presence, and vocal signifier. Jacques Derrida's deconstruction is a questioning of Western metaphysics from Plato to the period of modern philosophy.

- Nihilistic philosophy: Whoever contemplates the essence of postmodern philosophies, they will find them nihilistic and chaotic philosophies, based on the absence of meaning, and

the undermining of reason, logic, order, and harmony. In the sense that postmodern philosophies are philosophies that do not offer realistic and pragmatic alternatives, but rather are absurd and unreasonable philosophies that spread despair, complaints, and chaos in society.

- Disintegration and dissonance: If the philosophy of modernity or the currents of structuralism and semiotics are looking for order and harmony, and aim to unify texts and discourses, group them into cosmic plants, and abstract them into general formal rules, to create harmony and conformity, and achieve totality and universal membership, then the postmodern philosophies are against order and harmony. On the other hand, it calls for pluralism, difference and disorder, and the dismantling of what is organized and recognized.

- Image dominance: postmodernism accompanied the development of the media, so the visual image became a semiotic sign that testifies to the development of postmodernism, and language is no longer the only organizer of human life, but rather the image has become the main engine for cognitive achievement, and knowing the truth. It is not surprising that we find Gilles Deleuze concerned with the cinematic image, in his two books: *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* (1983) and *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* (1985), as he divides it into image-perception, image-emotion, and image-action, and considers the world to be deception, as cinema deceives time and space by deceiving the senses.

- Oddity and mystery: postmodernism is characterized by strangeness, oddity, and ambiguity of opinions, ideas, and positions. Jacques Derrida's deconstruction - for example - is still vague and ambiguous, difficult to understand and comprehend, so that the term deconstruction itself has sparked a lot of discussion and different interpretations in various cultural fields. Gilles Deleuze's philosophy is also complex and ambiguous, difficult to represent with ease.

- Intertextuality: it means taking inspiration from other people's texts consciously or unconsciously. Any text interacts and overlaps textually with other texts through absorption, imitation, and dialogue. Intertextuality in its near and far meanings indicates pluralism, diversity, background knowledge, and memory deposits. Intertextuality has theoretically been linked with the dialogue criticism of Mikhail Bakhtin.

- The power of liberation: postmodern philosophies work to liberate man from the oppression of institutions that own discourse, knowledge, and power, and also liberate him from the illusions of ideology and white mythology, and also liberate him from the philosophy of the

center, and enlighten him with the philosophies of the marginal, the accidental, the daily and the popular.

- Breaking down the boundaries between literary genres: If structural poetics respect literary genres, as it places each gender separately by classification, diversification, and stereotyping, and defines its rules and its naturalization literature, then postmodernism does not recognize gender boundaries, as it has destroyed all the rules of literary naturalization, and ridiculed the theory of literature.

- beyond the truth Postmodern philosophies deny the existence of a certain, fixed truth. Jean Baudrillard, for example, denies the truth, and considers it an illusion and a deception, as Nietzsche linked the absence of truth to the errors and delusions of language. While Baudrillard links the truth with the media, which practices the language of deception, misinformation, illusion, and exaggeration (Al-Bazai & Al-Ruwaili, 2000).

It is known that postmodernism had pioneers, theorists, philosophers, and critics, and among them: the French philosopher Jean Baudrillard (1929-2007), who is best known for his critique of modern technology and media. Hence, Jean Baudrillard presented a set of concepts, such as the floating truth, the super-truth, the interest in science fiction, and the care for virtual unrealized worlds. He criticized the relationship between the signifier and the signified in Ferdinand de Saussure, where like Jacques Derrida he denied the existence of clear meaning, but rather said with floating connotations or hidden meaning. Thus, "he refused to distinguish between appearances and the realities behind these appearances" (Carter, 2006, p.132). For him, the distinctions between signifier and signified finally collapsed. Signs no longer refer to signifiers in any reasonable sense, as the real world is made up of floating signifiers (Carter, 2006).

The French thinker Jean-François Lyotard (1924-1998), who denied the truth like Nietzsche, especially in his book *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge (Theory and History of Literature, Volume 10)* (1979). In this book, Lyotard (1979) argues that knowledge cannot claim to present truth in any absolute sense, because it depends on the language manipulations which are always relevant to specific contexts. Here, we find that Lyotard owes much to Nietzsche and Wittgenstein, as he claims that the aims of the Enlightenment In the liberation of man, the spread of reason has produced only a kind of scientific arrogance. Jürgen Habermas refuses to accept this assessment of the fate of the goals of the Enlightenment since he believes that they are still viable (Carter, 2006).

Postmodern philosophies are shovels for demolition, undermining, and dismantling, and are working hard to liberate man from the central categories that have controlled Western culture for a long time philosophically, ontologically, and linguistically, while freeing him from Western mythology based on domination, exploitation, alienation and canning, Westernization, by arming itself with a set of intellectual and methodological mechanisms, such as questioning Western cultural institutions, exposing their ideological delusions, exposing their repressive discourses based on power, force and violence, condemning their Orientalist colonial discourse, and dispelling racial, color, sexual, cultural, class and civilized discrimination (Carter, 2006).

However, postmodernism also has its serious flaws, and the most important of these defects is that it is an absurd, anarchist, nihilistic, and undermining theory that contributes to the establishment of tyranny, oppression, and abuse, and makes man an absurd, chaotic and worthless being in this hidden universe, living a life of strangeness, perversion, irony, and paradox, and disintegrates ontology in this world, in turn, is fragmentation, diminutiveness, collapse and dispersal (Carter, 2006).

2.3 Critical Race Theory

A broad social science approach to the study of race, racism, and culture is known as Critical Race Theory (CRT). In the 1980s, Kimberlé Crenshaw and Derrick Bell popularized critical race theory within the critical legal studies subfield. Both Crenshaw and Bell referred to the fact that despite the civil rights legislation in the US, the social and economic conditions of African Americans had not improved. Bell also argued that the reason civil rights legislation was enacted in the first place was primarily that it served the needs of America's white elite, using the principle of "interest convergence" (Global Social Theory: Critical Race Theory, 2011, para. 1).

In racial realism, people of color, according to Bell (1991), should reject the concept of equality because it is impossible to achieve in the United States. People of color should instead seek out their oppressors and acknowledge that the fight is "a manifestation of our humanity that persists and gets stronger through resistance to tyranny, even if oppression is never overcome" (De La Gaza, 2016, p. 3).

CRT considers many of the same topics as traditional civil rights and ethnic studies discourses do, but in a wider sense that includes economics, culture, context, community- and self-interest, as well as feelings and the unconscious. Critical race theory emerged in the mid-

1970s when a group of lawyers, activists, and legal theorists (Derrick Bell, Alan Freeman, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Richard Delgado, Cheryl Harris, Charles R.) noticed that the groundbreaking civil rights achievements of the 1960s had slowed and, in many ways, were being reversed (Tate, 1997).

According to Decuir and Dixon (2004), Ladson and Tate (1995), CRT was first used as an analytical framework to assess inequity in education in 1994. As they also mentioned, CRT analyzes the role of race and racism in perpetuating social disparities between dominant and marginalized racial groups. Although it started as a movement in law, it has quickly spread beyond that sector. Many educators today consider themselves critical race theorists, and they use CRT's ideas to explain problems like school discipline and hierarchy, monitoring, and curriculum and history debates.

In their work *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*, the legal scholars Delgado (one of the founders of CRT) and Stefancic (2001) address some general propositions that they say would be embraced by many critical race theorists. According to the authors, these "simple tenets" of CRT contain the following claims: First, the race is a social construct, not a biological one. Second, racism in the United States is natural, not abnormal: it is something that most people of color have to deal with on daily. Third, Legal advances (or setbacks) for people of color appear to represent the needs of dominant white groups, according to what critical race theorists call "interest convergence" or "material determinism." As a result, ostensible changes in the legal status of poor or disadvantaged citizens can have little effect on the racial hierarchy that characterizes American society or even strengthen it. Fourth, depending on the needs or preferences of whites, members of minority groups are subjected to "differential racialization," or the attribution to them of differing sets of negative stereotypes.

Fifth, no person can be adequately classified by membership in a single category, according to the "intersectionality" or "antiessentialism" thesis. A woman, a feminist, a Christian, and so on are all possible identities for an African American. Finally, people of color, according to the "voice of color" thesis, are specially qualified to talk on behalf of other members of their community about the forms and effects of racism. This agreement has fueled the development of the "legal storytelling" movement, which contends that the self-expression of victims of racism and other types of injustice provides crucial insight into the legal system (Hartlep, 2009).

Racism is a structural characteristic of social structure, according to critical race theory. Racism is far more than human discrimination and bigotry. Given how deeply racism is ingrained in society, Bonilla-Silva (2015) contends that racial discrimination is often misunderstood as a natural phenomenon rather than a by-product of a system of racial dominance. Racism's persistence means that it has power over the political, social, and economic spheres of American society. According to DeCuir and Dixson (2004), Delgado (1995), Ladson-Billings (1998), and Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995); racism is seen as an intrinsic part of American civilization in CRT, with White people having an advantage over people of color in almost every aspect of life, including education.

Professor of Sociology Silva (2015) brings from his article *More than Prejudice: Restatement, Reflections, and New Directions in Critical Race Theory* an example of whites remain one of the most racially segregated classes in the world, rather than explaining this through systems like housing discrimination and whites trying to "flock together," this fact is often explained away through a colorblind argument that "like-minded people instinctively gravitate towards each other.

Critical Race Theory has had an impact on scholarship in areas other than law, such as women's and gender studies, education, sociology, and American studies. Critical race theorists including; Bell (1995), Freeman (1995), Crenshaw (1995), Delgado (2001), Cheryl (1993), Lawrence III (1993), Matsuda (1993), and J. Williams (1991) discussed a variety of topics in the early 20th century, including police violence and criminology, hate speech and violent acts, health care, racial equality, poverty, diversity, and voting rights, among others.

2.4. Marxism Theory

Marxism is a highly complex issue, and that sector of it is identified as Marxist literary criticism. Marxist criticism examines literature in terms of the historical circumstances that create it, and it must be mindful of its historical conditions. Literary criticism focused on socialist theories is referred to as Marxist literary criticism. The English literary critic and cultural theorist, Eagleton (1976) define Marxist criticism in his book *Eagleton - Marxism and Literary Criticism* as:

Marxist criticism is not merely a 'sociology of literature', concerned with how novels get published and whether they mention the working class. it aims to explain the literary work more fully; and this means sensitive attention to its forms, styles, and meanings.

But it also means grasping those forms, styles, and meanings as the products of a particular history. (p. 13)

Marxism is a philosophy created in the mid-nineteenth century by Karl Marx and, to a lesser extent, Friedrich Engels. It started as a collection of three concepts: philosophical anthropology, a historical theory, and an economic and political program. The intellectual transformations of the Enlightenment, the technological breakthroughs of the Industrial Revolution, the political conflicts in the aftermath of the American (1776), and French (1789) revolutions, and the rise of global trade and empire led by Europe affected Marx's works significantly.

Marxist criticism is more than just "sociology of literature," concerned with how books are released and whether or not they mention the working class. Its goal is to better understand the literary work, which necessitates paying close attention to its forms, styles, and meanings. It also entails comprehending their forms, styles, and meanings as products of a specific past (Silva, 2015).

Marxist criticism situates a work of literature within the context of class and class assumptions. Marxist critique is based on the idea that literature can be considered ideological and evaluated using the Base/Superstructure model. The economic means of production inside society, according to Karl Heinrich Marx, account for the base. A base determines its superstructure. The superstructure is made up of human organizations and beliefs that produce art and literary texts, including those important to patriarchy. Thus, class, socioeconomic standing, power relations among various segments of society, and the representation of those segments are all highlighted in Marxist criticism.

The value of Marxist literary criticism is that it allows readers to see the role of class in a text's storyline. According to Bressler (2011), "Marxist theory has its roots in Karl Heinrich Marx's nineteenth-century writings, yet his ideas did not fully develop until the twentieth century" (p. 183). Bertolt Brecht, Georg Lukács, and Louis Althusser are all important players in Marxist thought. Although these figures influenced Marxist theory's principles and trajectory, Marxist literary criticism did not emerge directly from Marxism. A Marxist approach to a literary piece does not necessarily imply support for Marxist philosophy.

Marxism holds that society advances via conflict between competing forces. This fight between competing classes is what leads to social change. This class battle is what propels history forward. Throughout history, class conflict has arisen as a result of one class's

exploitation by another. There are common interests among classes. The proletariat and the capitalist class are always in conflict in a capitalist system. According to Marx, the system will eventually be replaced by socialism as a result of this conflict (Rummel, 1982).

The dialectic, which was first conceived by the 18th-century German philosopher Hegel, was another major term used by Marx. Hegel (1975) was an idealist philosopher who used the word to describe the process of new ideas emerging from the clash of competing concepts. He believed that thinking governs the world, and that material reality is the manifestation of immaterial spiritual essence. Marx (1975), on the other hand, employed the same notion to explain the growth of the material universe. According to him, Hegel turned the world upside down by prioritizing ideas, whereas Marx attempted to turn it around. As a result, Marx's dialectic is referred to as dialectical materialism.

All ideological systems, according to Marx (1975), are products of real social and economic reality. For example, rather than reflecting divine reason, the legal system reflects the interests of the dominant class at specific historical periods. The science of the universal and abstract laws of evolution of nature, society, and thought can be defined as Marxist dialectic. It sees the cosmos as a cohesive whole in which everything is interconnected, rather than a collection of disparate elements. Internal dialectical contradictions exist in everything, and they are the basic cause of motion, change, and evolution in the world. In the hands of Marxists, dialectical materialism was an effective tool for unveiling the mysteries behind social processes and their future trajectory of development.

The concept of base and superstructure, which refers to the relationship between the material means of production and the cultural realm of art and ideas, is one of the core conceptions of traditional Marxist thinking. It is simply a symbolic concept that uses a building's structure to describe this relationship. The superstructure represents art, law, politics, religion, and, above all, ideology, whereas the foundation or base represents socio-economic relations and mode of production. It refers to the theory that culture is shaped by historical circumstances and the dominance and subordination relationships that exist in a given community. Morality, religion, art, and philosophy are all thought to be echoes of real-life events. They are "phantoms formed in the brains of men", as Marx (1975, p. 3) puts it. From this perspective, all cultural products are inextricably linked to a society's economic foundation (MAMBROL, 2020).

- Marxism's tenets are all specific and not universal. It has not developed a universal theory that can be used everywhere. Marx's concepts of "base" and "superstructure" are true, but their application varies by location. Only specific descriptions of specific things at a certain time in history are legitimate statements.

- Marxism is not a philosophy or science. It is simply a critical and practical examination of the current state of affairs. Marxism is founded on precise and verified information. It is possible to empirically test or verify it. As a result, it is a doctrine based on empirical evidence.

- Capitalist society is the core theme of Marxism. By employing dialectical materialism, Marx surveyed practically all of the essential components of capitalist society.

- Its main goal is to transform the capitalist society, not just to analyze it. Philosophers have understood the world, according to Marx, but the actual mission is to transform the world or society (Features of Marxism, n.d).

Marxist philosophy is based on two main parts; to deal with various scientific, philosophical, and social topics, and these two sections are:

a- Dialectical materialism :

Materialist philosophy is based on confronting all forms of idealistic philosophies, and confirms the impossibility of reconciling them. Dialectical materialism is the section that deals with the science of nature and its laws, and is concerned with knowing the laws on which matter is developed, and this is the function of Marxist debate, and dialectical materialism is based on a set of foundations that are:

- The world is material in nature: everything that exists for material reasons and evolution arises according to the laws of motion of matter and they are called the laws of dialectics.

- The reality of the matter is objective: it exists outside the minds of humans and is independent of them, and everything is mental or immaterial is completely separate from matter, just as the whole soul is nothing but a product of material processes.

- Knowing the laws of the world is not impossible: it is possible, unlike all that is unreal and metaphysical; Metaphysics is unknowable.

b- Historical materialism :

It is the “study” in the theory of Marxist society, Marx and Engels developed this study, and it is one of the first philosophical and sociological theories, which established the scientific understanding of the existence of the historical process in its entirety, which forms the theoretical basis for other sciences, and the materialist interpretation of history is summarized in Recognizing that the material life of society, and in the first place the practical one, is not only one of the necessary factors in social life, but rather is the basis for the interaction of all other social phenomena, which ultimately determine the spiritual field in the life of society, we conclude from this that spiritual, metaphysical and religious activity is what It is only the final result of material production, according to Marxist thought (Karl Marx's Philosophy and Its Relevance Today, 2017).

Marxism is a guide to national liberation movements in third-world countries. Marxism was mostly confined to anti-capitalist and anti-exploitation ideology until the end of World War II. However, during the 1950s and 1960s, practically the entire continent of Asia and Africa was engulfed in anti-imperialist conflict, and the leaders of the liberation movement were inspired by Marxism (The History and Ideas of Marxism: The Relevance for OR., 2008).

2.5 Conclusion

As a conclusion, this chapter provided an overview about the suitable theories to analyse Harper lee’s novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* which are the Postmodern Theory, the Critical Race Theory, and then it introduced and described the Marxist Theory. Thereafter, the final chapter will cast light on the social injustice in the novel.

Chapter Three:
Social Injustice in *To Kill a*
Mockingbird

3.1 Introduction

Harper Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* highlights several social injustice issues that affect many characters in the novel. Rezazade and Zohdi (2016) said that "Injustice is deeply rooted in the individuals of Maycomb the segregated blacks are isolated from the whites. Moreover, being poor and black generated vulnerability to this group of Afro-Americans" (p. 5). This chapter aims to show racism against black people, their dual identity, and then the class division in the novel. It represents the social conflict in Maycomb society. Furthermore, it sheds light on the social and economic status of people in Maycomb society.

3.2 White's Racism against Black People

To Kill a Mockingbird is a novel told through the eyes of the protagonist, a young Girl Scout, who lives in a small town in Alabama called Maycomb with her father Atticus and brother Jem, whose father, defends a black man named Tom Robinson who is wrongfully convicted of raping a white girl named Mayella Ewell. The story shows different aspects of the sin and the entire town's misunderstandings are due to the rumours and stereotypes told by members of opposing races. As a result, the story shows how racial prejudices and injustices can stifle social cohesion.

Living as an African American in Alabama during the 1930s was extremely hard. African-Americans had only been free citizens for sixty-five years when the year 1930 rolled around. Whites and African-Americans had separate facilities such as schools, restrooms, buses, and restaurants. The majority of White people thought of African-Americans as second-class citizens. The story and themes of *To Kill a Mockingbird* mirror the racial tensions that led to these events.

Scout's family is depicted as being racially neutral in a deeply divided town. Scout's Cousin Francis, for instance, portrays Atticus as a "nigger-lover," which seems like a terrible insult. Scout says that she has no idea what it means, but she disapproves of Francis' usage of it. One of the most famous quotations on racism is a long conversation between Mr. Atticus and his little daughter Scout, in which Scout asks him what the term "nigger-lover" means and why people are offended by it. Atticus clarifies that the word has no meaning: "Nigger-lover is just one of those terms that don't mean anything like snot-nose (...) it's slipped into usage with some people like ourselves when they want a common, ugly term to label somebody" (Lee,

1960, p. 113). People in Maycomb used the term "nigger-lover" to describe persons who care about black people and believe they are entitled to equal rights.

Scout lived in a fanatical and greedy society that only favored its own. Because whites were the majority, many crimes were committed against African Americans. Despite this, Atticus' family did not consider skin color to be a socially divisive aspect. They used to show sympathy, and respect for those oppressed people. Atticus even gave his legal services destitute black man named Tom in a rape case. This decision has infuriated the Maycomb society. In Chapter nine, Scout's classmate Cecil argues that Atticus is protecting a "Negro". "Do you defend niggers, Atticus?" Scout asked. Atticus replied, "Of course I do. Don't say nigger, Scout. That's common" (p. 79). Scout and Cecil get into a fight as a result of Scout's claim. Scout is so mortified by Cecil's racial remark that she loses her cool and confronts her.

Atticus raises concerns about the legal system's ability and the social traditions, to ensure that black people in society are treated equally in the administration of justice. Such premises, according to the Critical Race Theory, are indicative of the view that legal reforms and updates, such as changes in the civil rights movement, are adequate to ensure equality for minorities (Bell & Derrick, 1980). The potential that changes or activities by white people that appear to benefit African Americans are often in the interests of white leadership is emphasized by Critical Race Theory.

Slavery was abolished in the 19th century; colored people were treated as equals to their white counterparts, yet they were kept apart. As a result, segregation persisted due to disparities in the facilities available to different ethnic groups. Minority groups were viewed as inferior, and as a result, their rights were infringed, much as Tom's rights were in the novel. Tom was falsely accused of rape by a white parent and daughter and was found guilty, even though he did not commit the crime. Tom was wrongly imprisoned just because he was black. Not only were black people treated harshly, but so were those who supported them; most white people believed that individuals who had any relation to black people should also be punished like black people. In this case, Atticus, who was defending Tom, the black man, was treated horribly by his community. As was mentioned in the novel, Scout's schoolmates mistreated her father by saying: "You gotta make me first". "My folks said your daddy was a disgrace and that nigger oughta hang from the water-tank" (p. 9). Also, by his family when Scout's cousin Francis said to Scout:

“I guess it ain’t your fault if Uncle Atticus is a nigger-lover besides, but I’m here to tell you it certainly does mortify the rest of the family” “Francis, what the hell do you mean?” (p. 9)

“Grandma says it is bad enough, he lets you all run wild, but now he’s turned out a nigger-lover we’ll never be able to walk the streets of Maycomb again. He is ruining the family” (p. 9). Racism was reflected not only among mature people but also in kids. Because Atticus defends a black man, the entire town appears to turn against him and his children, who are ridiculed by both youngsters and adults. Scout grows upset, she said: “Do all lawyers defend Negroes, Atticus?”, “Of course they do Scout” (p. 9).

Boo, a quiet white individual who lives with Mr. Radley fascinates Scout, Jem, and their friend Dill. Strange rumors about Boo attract the three children to his yard in an attempt to catch a glimpse of him. When Radley sees Jem's shadow, he mistakenly believes it is an adult person and fires at it. The inhabitants of Maycomb then assume he shot an African-American, claiming that "Mr. Radley shot at a Negro in his collard patch" (p. 11). Racists accuse "blacks" of committing any crime in town and consider them to be inferior people.

The situation of Tom Robinson highlights the complex intersectionality that exists in this environment. Tom's perceptions are influenced not only by his race but also by the position or work he performs in this small society. He is poor and illiterate and his position allows him to perform only the most menial of activities, such as picking cotton, like in the days of slavery. Nonetheless, race rather than class or wealth plays a more considerable influence in determining social standing in Maycomb.

According to the findings of the CRT by Gillborn (2015), characteristics other than race and gender may be important drivers of social outcomes (Intersectionality, Critical Race Theory, and the Primacy of Racism, Race, Class, Gender, and Disability in Education, Qualitative Inquiry., 2015., para.11). Race, on the other hand, continues to be the most visible factor in Maycomb's overall judgments about society and the court. Even before Tom's trial, it is the backdrop of justice that finally shows the racial inequality in this community. Lee's novel weaves together different people to highlight the disparities in perception and viewpoint on crime inside the dominant society's thinking.

Although one is white and the other is black, Boo and Tom Robinson have a lot in common. Tom Robinson, as a black man, encountered the racial prejudice that many black people in the Deep South suffered throughout the 1930s. Because of his race, Tom Robinson is

prejudged. Many individuals have preconceived notions about him. The trial of Tom Robinson has become the most egregious example of racial prejudice. When the Prosecutor asked Tom ‘‘ Were you so scared that she'd hurt you, you ran, a big buck like you?’, Tom Replied ‘‘No, I’m scared I'd be in court, just like I am now, scared I'd hafta face up to what I didn't do ‘’ (p. 165). Mayella Ewell was never harmed by Tom Robinson. He felt sorry for her because she was alone and had many younger siblings to look after, so he attempted to assist her.

The Southern world was a society that had a moral base, starting from the 1960s the society has moved from this moral base toward postmodernist moral relativity. The beliefs are valid but not true, the secularism of personal views, the hostility of authority, and the overarching notion that there are no absolutes if there is no God. Harper Lee demonstrates this postmodernism in her work, by giving an example of moral relativity in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, when Aunt Alexandra refused to allow Scout and Jem to attend the Black Church because she was concerned that the black perspective would be imposed on the children. ‘‘ I told him in detail about our trip to church with Calpurnia. Atticus seemed to

enjoy it, but Aunt Alexandra, who was sitting in a corner quietly sewing, put down her embroidery and stared at us. ‘‘You all were coming back from Calpurnia’s church that Sunday?’’

Jem said, ‘‘Yessum, she took us.’’

I remembered something. ‘‘Yessum, and she promised me I could come out to her house some afternoon. Atticus. I’ll go next Sunday if it’s all right, can I? Cal said she’d come to get me if you were off in the car.’’ ‘‘You may not. ‘‘Aunt Alexandra said it (p. 181).

This example is proof of isolated ideas and beliefs or of the unwritten rule that ‘‘ no one should impose their beliefs on others’’ (Post Modernism in *To Kill a Mockingbird*., para., 12).

Lee’s novel employs the autobiographical parallel approach popular among Postmodernist writers. Scout Finch's narrator has a lot in common with author Harper Lee, who once remarked, ‘‘A writer should write about what he knows and write truthfully’’ (‘‘Harper Lee,’’ in *American Decades* (Gale Research, 1998). Lee has followed her advice and written about what she knew.

3.3 Negro's "Double Consciousness" and Black's Dual Identity

Despite daily intermingling of Whites and Blacks, Lee's depiction of their interactions in the novel proves Du Bois' (2007) claim in his book *The Souls of Black Folk* that "there is almost no community of intellectual life or point of transference where the thoughts and feelings of one race can come into direct contact and sympathy with the thoughts and feelings of the other" (p. 23).

Furthermore, Harper Lee, like most 1950s writers, dealt with the suffering of African Americans seeking identity, particularly in the divided South. Lee, for example, used several characters to show the concept of double consciousness, which is a characteristic of postmodern writing.

Scout's awestruck by the notion that her African-American housekeeper Calpurnia "led a modest double life (...) the idea that she had a separate existence outside our household was a novel one, to say nothing of her having command of two languages" (p.138). Scout viewed that Calpurnia speaks differently when she is among her friends and family at her church, but she speaks proper English at the Finch house. This is the moment of Scout learning to imagine others complexly which, after all, is her real education.

Calpurnia's double life is a prime example of what Du Bois (2007) called a "double-consciousness" in his book. Du Bois describes "double consciousness" as "the sense...of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity" (p. 2). He also claimed that "One ever feels his two-ness, an American, a negro, two souls, two thoughts, to unreconciled strivings two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keep it from being torn asunder" (pp. 2-3). Calpurnia is aware of how she looks in the eyes of others.

Calpurnia internalized the racism of whites as the classism inside her community, and she treads carefully in both worlds. And she's also a woman; she has to navigate gender expectations. Although she allows Scout to wear overalls, she dresses her up for church. This gesture demonstrates how deeply ingrained ideals of southern femininity are in Calpurnia's life, she would not allow Scout to act like boys at home.

Calpurnia has lived among the Whites since she was a child, but she is still a Black woman who lives among them. As a result, she lives with a combined identity, a dual personality that manifests itself in her use of words. When she becomes enraged, she reverts to

her true character as a Black woman, and her grammar becomes chaotic. Her predisposition toward White identification, on the other hand, is evident when Jim tells her, “that doesn’t mean you hafta talk that way when you know better”, and she said that

It’s not necessary to tell all you know. It’s not ladylike- in the second place, folks don’t like to have somebody around knowin’ more than they do. It aggravates them. You are not gonna change any of them by talking, they’ve got to want to learn themselves, and when they don’t want to learn there’s nothing you can do but keep your mouth shut or talk their language. (p. 143)

She does have an identity crisis. She is an African-American woman who lives two lives.

As is mentioned in *Negro’s Double Consciousness*, Du Bois (2007) reacts to African Americans' self-consciousness about their identity by stating that “negroes are Americans by birth, language, political ideals, religion, and citizenship. And their patriotism stops there; they are still Negroes, descended from a vast historical race” (p. 4). Calpurnia is a Negro even though she lives with a White family.

3.4 Class Division in the Novel

Scout is worried by the hatred and violence she witnesses in her town. At the beginning of the novel, Jem explains the social order of Maycomb:

I’ve thought about it a lot lately, and I’ve got it figured out; there are four kinds of folks in Maycomb County. There is the ordinary kind like the neighbors and us; there is the kind like the Cunninghams out in the woods, the kind like the Ewells down at the dump, and the Negroes. The thing about it is, our variety of folks doesn’t like the Cunninghams, the Cunninghams don’t like the Ewells, and the Ewells hate and despise the colored folks. (p. 302)

Scout disagrees with this, claiming that there is “just one kind of folks” (p. 304). Jem is striving to comprehend the bias he observes in his environment. The hatred and discrimination he follows on daily basis can be attributed to his categorization of individuals into four groups. Scout's response, is expressing her personal perspective on the world. She is not seeking to comprehend discrimination she is just acknowledging its existence. This allows her to recognize that everyone, regardless of their background, is one. On the other hand, Jem is not convinced, he said:

“That's what I thought, too, when I was your age. If there's just one kind of folks, why can't they get along with each other? If they're all alike, why do they go out of their way to despise each other? Scout, I think I'm beginning to understand something. I think I'm beginning to understand why Boo Radley's stayed shut up in the house all this time (...) it's because he wants to stay inside.” (p. 304)

He is concerned by Scout's remark since it implies that discrimination based on race or class has no logical basis. This is in sharp contrast to his perception of the world as a logical place. That is why, after Tom's trial, he is so upset: Tom should have been found not guilty.

Class is deeply entrenched in Maycomb; when Scout asks her Aunt Alexandra if she can invite a poor classmate named Walter Cunningham home, Alexandra tells her: “you should be friendly and polite to him. You should be gracious to everybody dear. But you don't have to invite him home” (p. 228). And when Scout pressures further, Alexandra says “(...) he is trash that's why you can't play with him. I'll not have you around him, picking up his habits and learning Lord knows what ” (p. 228).

Aunt Alexandra believes that her family is superior to the Cunninghams, who she considers to be lower-class trash. Scout's refusal to socialize with the Cunningham family demonstrates Alexandra's class discrimination. Finch family is one of Maycomb County's oldest and most recognized families, but Walter Cunningham does not come from a well-known, well-rooted family. His family is good-hearted and honest, yet they are poor. As a result, Aunt Alexandra advises Scout to be friendly with Walter and to keep her interactions with him to a minimum. The Finch family, according to Aunt Alexandra, is far too good to be linked with the Cunninghams.

No one taught Scout how to pay young Walter Cunningham proper respect. It is Calpurnia because Scout was rude to Walter when he eats at her house; she asks Walter: “what the same hill he was doing” (p. 28). After he puts syrup over his food, then Calpurnia takes Scout to the kitchen; she explains that guests, no matter who they are, must be treated well and then tells Scout that if she is not going to behave, she won't eat at the table, she has to eat in the kitchen. She learned from Calpurnia how to appropriately treat others regardless of their social status or reputation.

Arthur Boo Radley feels isolated in society because the people of Maycomb tell stories about him when he is not there and is terrified of him. He also feels alienated within the

community since he has been hidden from the outer world for so long. The black people on the courtroom's balcony handed over their seats to Jem, Scout, Dill, and Reverend Skyes; “four negroes rose and gave us their front-row hearts” (p. 216), demonstrating the proletariat's lack of authority. Scout is also exposed to gender injustice and racial discrimination, which she struggles to understand, making her appear naïve to the reader. Atticus wants to keep Jem and Scout away from the trial's prejudice and violence “get your supper and stay home” (p. 276) because he does not want them to be exposed to the wicked world that consumes some of Maycomb's inhabitants.

Lee is demonstrating that actual class and color do not always go hand in hand. Calpurnia may be black, but she possesses far more true type than Aunt Alexandra, who later refuses to invite Walter to dinner because she believes he is a bad influence on Scout. Through these words, Lee shows that white notions of superiority based on race are incorrect.

3.5 Social Conflicts in the Novel

Lee describes what occurs in the small southern town of Maycomb. She exploits the power of tradition, such as roles and familial ties, to demonstrate that they are sources of conflict. Gender, age, race, and family roles bind characters to act, look, and even speak in specific ways throughout the novel, producing internal, external, and family conflicts. Physical, historical settings and anti-stereotypes are the notions that diverse sorts of roles and familial relationships are the foundation of conflict is produced.

According to Lee, Scout suffers external tensions as a result of the pressure to fit into stereotyped gender norms accustomed to girls at this point in history; throughout the novel, Scout is confronted with numerous conflicts. She interacts with a diverse group of people in Maycomb County. The difficulties and frustrations she encounters are a natural part of growing up. Scout's conflict with Calpurnia appeared in the middle of chapter three, “if you can't act fit to eat at the table you can just sit here and eat in the kitchen” (p. 33); Calpurnia punishes Scout for Scout, expressing her displeasure with Walter's dining manner. Scout truly wants Atticus to fire Calpurnia because of their disagreement. Of course, he does not do so, and Scout is left fuming for the rest of the afternoon until she returns home to discover Calpurnia baking her favorite cracklin' bread. Scout is bewildered when Calpurnia tells her she misses her, and she doesn't know what to think.

Another conflict is when Scout and Jem were walking home after an intense at Scout's school; Bob Ewell approaches from behind them and attacks them. Scout is knocked down and becomes trapped inside her outfit. Bob breaks Jem's arm and Jem falls to the ground. Boo Radley then comes out of his house for the first time in years, and then murders Bob and takes the children back to his house. Scout and Jem were confused about how to think about Boo, because at the beginning of the novel, in chapter one, Scout describes Boo as a "malevolent phantom" by saying "Inside the house lived a malevolent phantom. People said he existed, but Jem and I had never seen him. People said he went out at night when the moon was down and peeped in the window" (p. 9). Jem describes him as a "monster from a horror story" by saying:

Boo was about six-and-a-half feet tall, judging from his tracks; he dined on raw squirrels and any cats he could catch, that's why his hands were bloodstained if you ate an animal raw, you could never wash the blood off. (p. 13)

After the unflattering rumors about him saving them from Bob, the children are confused and conflicted about what they think of Boo Radley.

Atticus' conflict with himself is also an important one in the novel because when Judge Taylor approached him and requested him to represent Tom Robinson, he agreed. Atticus debated with himself on whether or not he should take the case. He is well aware that he has a slim probability of winning the case. But Atticus understands that if he declines the case, he will be betraying everything he stands for and will never be able to tell Jem and Scout what to do again. Despite receiving negative feedback from the community due to his taking the case, Atticus ignores the criticism and continues to defend Tom Robinson to the best of his ability.

Tom Robinson is killed as a result of his conflict with the Ewell family. Tom stands trial against the Ewells after being falsely accused of assaulting and raping Mayella Ewell. He is wrongfully convicted. The practice of Tom brings out the racism in the majority of the town's inhabitants, making proving Tom's innocence even more difficult. The trial impacted the black community because it demonstrated that a white man's word is more important than a black man's. The jury believed a white woman who had lied about a black man. It has an impact on the white community since racism emerges in each of the town's residents. Scout and Jem learned about racism through Tom Robinson's case, because Mayella was white and Tom was a black man, the children discover that this makes the case very controversial.

As a result of Tom Robinson's trial, the Finches and the Ewells' conflict, and the incident teaches the Finch children that the world may be a dangerous place since not everyone is good. Many people were unhappy with Scout's father for defending Robinson. Scout got into conflicts at school, with her cousin, Mrs. Dubose, and her neighbor chastised her. She had no idea about what was the deal.

Throughout her story, Harper presents the ideology of Marxism. She focuses on the representation of class conflict as well as the reinforcement of the bourgeoisie-proletariat divide. Atticus is forced to defend a black man accused of raping a white woman. He is a staunch supporter of white-black equality, one of the Marxist system's core beliefs. The characters rely on societal consciousness to some extent in deciding their presence. Walter Cunningham's social standing is important to him, which is why he declines the money offered to him. As a result, the class system remains strongly divided because the standards are not challenged. For example, it is not men's consciousness that determines their existence, but rather their social existence determines their consciousness.

The theory is significant to the book because the character Tom Robinson, who is a black person in society, faces numerous difficulties as a result of his race, as he is condemned for rape. The bourgeoisie, represented by Finches, Dolphus Raymond, Miss Stephanie Crawford, Miss Maudie Atkinson, and the proletariat, who are regarded less in society, are clearly distinguished in the novel, as the story encourages black people's impotence and portrayal as worthless. The author makes it apparent that the bourgeoisie exclusively accepts white lower-class people due to their skin color. The Cunninghams are regarded as "country folks farmers" (p. 21), and "Atticus came from a set breed of men" (p. 28), according to the story. This depicts that there is class inequality in Maycomb because there are individuals who have a higher position or status such as Atticus, who is a lawyer and comes from a "set breed of men," illustrating Atticus' wealth and status. He cannot change his social status because it is not malleable as he was born into it. This allows for a Marxist interpretation, such as "the base of the society determines its superstructure" (Antonio, 1990, p.2).

This theory is essential to the text because it divides men "into a breed," allowing society to direct people into specific categories based on their duties within the community, solidifying the superstructure. He does not, however, corroborate this form of class disparity, as he uses his generosity to help the illiterate and blacks.

Even though Atticus Finch is a warm-hearted man, his sister Alexandra despises and criticizes the lower class, referring to the Cunninghams as “trash” (p. 301). This shows how social classes divide people, even if they are from the same county. The Marxist viewpoint demonstrates how the class is a significant factor in society, as well as inequality and barriers to wealth. Throughout the story, unlike the Ewells, the Cunninghams are depicted as generous, polite, and do not exploit black men, they refuse to accept charity from others. Furthermore, through the character Tom Robinson, Lee shows class inequalities. Because he is black, he is denied justice.

3.6 The Social and Economic Status of People in Maycomb Society

3.6.1. A *The Social Status*

In *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Tom Robinson's status as a black person makes him an easy target for prejudice and bigotry. Mr. Ewell, a typical white man who hates black people, testified in front of a public audience “I have seen that black nigger yonder ruttin’ on my Mayella” (p. 231), this absence of language, specifically the use of “ruttin’”, makes Tom and black men seem like animals, he is trying to differentiate himself from the blacks. The term "nigger" is an insulting term used to refer to black people. However, calling someone a "black nigger" and using the needless term "black" implies that all he sees is Tom Robinson's black skin. Another harsh racial remark appears later when he refers to black people's homes as "that nigger- nest down yonder" (p. 234).

Far away from Ewell's racist remarks about Tom Robinson, it is important to consider how racism towards black people is manifested in a broader and social context. Behind Atticus, the lawyer's remarks in court is a startling reality about the bigotry that exists among practically all Maycomb residents. He stated in court

What was the evidence of her offense? Tom Robinson, a human being. She must put Tom Robinson away from her. Tom Robinson was her daily reminder of what she did. What did she do? She tempted a Negro. She was white, and she drew a Negro. She did something that in our society is unspeakable: she kissed a black man. Not an old uncle, but a strong young Negro man. No code mattered to her before she broke it, but it came crashing down on her afterward. (p. 272)

This quote exemplifies a pervasive and stereotyped racist mindset among the town's residents. Whether it is irrefutable truth or not, people have an unjustly natural predisposition to believe

that a white lady was raped by a black man and refuse to accept that she would choose to kiss a black man of her own volition. He also brought out what the general population thought about black people by saying his closing remark:

In the cynical confidence that their testimony would not be doubted, confident that you gentlemen would go along with them on the assumption-the evil assumption-that all Negroes lie, that all Negroes are immoral beings, that all Negro men are not to be trusted around our women, an assumption one associate with minds of their caliber... There is not a person in this courtroom who has never told a lie, who has never done an immoral thing, and no man is living who has never looked upon a woman without desire. (p. 273)

It makes no difference whether Tom Robinson committed the crime or not; what matters is that he is black. Atticus pointed out that almost everyone has spoken a lie or done something unethical at some point in their lives, implying that wrongdoings are not restricted to the black community.

3.6.2. *The Economic Status*

To Kill a Mockingbird was written in the 1930s, during the Great Depression, which led to suspicion that the economic situation in Lee's time was similarly severe. In the first chapter, Lee gives an overview of Maycomb. Maycomb, according to her description, was a quiet town with little activity, with people moving slowly and dilapidated buildings. "There was nothing to buy and no money to buy it with," Lee continued (p. 6), which reflects the poor economic situation at the time. Lee, on the other hand, claims that it was a period of hazy optimism for some of the residents: Maycomb County having recently been told that "it had nothing to fear but itself to fear" (p. 6). It's fascinating to understand this comment about Maycomb because it contains the historical meaning of the story, which takes place in the early 1930s. The worry stems from a speech given by Roosevelt on his first day in office in 1933.

Although Americans' livelihoods were suffering during the Depression, many of them believed that things would improve soon under President Roosevelt's leadership. He encouraged people to overcome their anxieties by assuring them that the economic situation would eventually improve. Nonetheless, this hope is based on a nebulous optimism that has yet to be realized, and it is clear from Lee's depiction that the economy is still slow.

According to Lee, "boney mules hitched to Hoover carts flicked flies in the sweltering shade of the live oaks on the square" (p. 6). It appears to be a typical depiction of a

rural scene at the time; the phrase Hoover carts, in historical context, referred to the Hoover administration's terrible legacy as a result of their failure to take meaningful efforts to limit the Great Depression. As the historical context reveals, Herbert Hoover was elected as the 31st president of the United States in 1929, just as the Great Depression began to explode. However, when the Depression worsened, Hoover failed to recognize the gravity of the situation promptly or take meaningful actions to keep the problem under control.

During the Great Depression, the public had hatred against Hoover which led to the naming of items after him as a method to demean him. This word can be used to show that the inhabitants of Maycomb, like all other Americans at the time, criticized and mocked Herbert Hoover, while also reflecting the dire economic condition that was exacerbated in part by Herbert Hoover.

The novel's setting, the south, was one of the hardest-hit places. The Great Depression, along with natural disasters such as pest plague and large-scale flooding, decimated the region's economy in the 1930s. Atticus explains to his children that farmers like the Cunninghams are the most brutal hit and that because he earns little money, he has to pay the interest with what he does have. He can choose to work for the Works Progress Administration (WPA). This program was started by Roosevelt to provide more work for the unemployed. However, if he chooses the WPA, he must sacrifice the opportunity to work on his farm, which is why, despite his lack of funds; he refuses to accept the position. As a result, farmers cannot pay professionals such as doctors or lawyers such as Atticus, resulting in widespread poverty in the community.

Cotton's economic situation was comparatively good before the Depression, compared to that of the Great Depression; at the very least, they could make a living from cotton. Lee said "It was customary for men in the family to remain on Simon's homestead, Finch's Landing, and make their living from cotton" (p. 4). It's not difficult to understand how cotton became unprofitable to grow in the first place. As the Great Depression continued to wreak havoc on Alabama's farm families, cotton prices plummeted, making it uneconomical to cultivate cotton because farmers could hardly make a profit.

As a result of this situation, people, particularly in a rural county like Maycomb, became poorer and poorer. In the novel, the Finch family had a brief talk: "' Are we poor, Atticus? '", "we are indeed.", "Jem's nose wrinkled. Are we as poor as the Cunninghams?" "Not exactly. The Cunninghams are country folks, farmers, and the crash hit them hardest" (p. 27). The disruption of agriculture, which was caused partly by the Depression, clearly impacted farmers

the most. Still, it also had a rippling effect on other professionals such as doctors, dentists, and lawyers. Scout's father stated "Professionals were poor because farmers were poor" (p. 27).

Tom Robinson's living situation appears to be even worse since Atticus stated in a conversation with Scout that Tom Robinson "lives in that little settlement beyond the town dump" (p. 100). Tom Robinson was in a bad living situation, and his financial woes may easily be linked to the Great Depression because he lived in the impacted area.

Tom Robinson's misfortune and inequity treatment could be attributed largely to racism and the dire economic problem of the time or a combination of the two forces consigned him to a situation in which he suffered more and lived a more impoverished life than his white counterparts. From the standpoint of history and Robinson's false accusation, it is clear that the long-standing discriminatory attitude toward black people, which has existed since enslavement and even after the Civil War, was generating a blatant sin, a stereotype that black people are untrustworthy, suspicious, and quickly involved in crime and other evils.

3.7 Conclusion

Harper Lee wrote her novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* to show moral values and the differences of right versus wrong. She used situations throughout the novel to show that people should treat one another fairly, as equals, and with respect, and not be blinded by prejudice towards people of different races, colors, classes, backgrounds, or creeds. Lee depicts the nature of a community in which biases abound and the severe consequences of this. She introduces strong characters that move beyond the obstacles of the Maycomb society and fulfill prosperity.

As a result, the preceding discussion seeks to provide visual representations of the unfairness that persisted in the Maycomb community, throughout the 1930s. Many people in Maycomb victimize and hurt some mockingbirds. The majority of Maycomb's inhabitants were consciously or unconsciously brainwashed to support oppressive ideas that ruined the mockingbird's innocence.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Through Harper Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*, she uses the term "mockingbirds" as a symbol to pure, harmless, and innocent characters such as Boo Radley, Tom Robinson, and Atticus Finch. Lee defined them as human mockingbirds. The majority of Maycomb's residents are racist and discriminators, they form their racial preconceptions based on unfavorable feelings toward race and social class. This research work examined the White's preconception that grew up strongly against the African Americans in the country of Maycomb, Alabama during the Great Depression through Harper Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Moreover, it brought attention to the victimization of the mockingbirds who are harmless and innocent characters and are treated unfairly in society. Therefore, it aimed to represent how the life in Maycomb community was during the Great Depression.

Furthermore, Lee's novel depicts the segregation of African-Americans in many aspects of life. Colored people are impoverished, trash, and inferior to Whites, that is why they live in a separate neighborhood. In addition, religion does not protect Whites from their racism, separate churches exist for Blacks and Whites to worship the same God. Moreover, white men exploit Blacks' churches as a place to gamble as a form of embarrassment and disrespect.

African-Americans are denied the right to be the same person. They have a dual identity because their roots are Africans and their lives are Americans. Blacks could not obtain quality work, they have no major roles in white supremacist society, and they cannot obtain employment except as employees in the Maycomb community.

Social injustice emerged in the Maycomb community because the Radley family does not do what Maycomb residents have always done. The majority of them prejudge the descendant of a family with a bad habit. Maycomb county's white people have a high level of racial prejudice against black people. They believe that black people are socially inferior to

them. Furthermore, people in Maycomb will continue to feel different for a long time because others believe it is a societal problem.

As a result, the researcher might conclude that the foundation of social injustice in Maycomb County thrives because they are passed down from one generation to a generation. Therefore, *To Kill a Mockingbird* aspires to demonstrate how distinct feelings are passed down from one generation to another. As long as certain individuals strive to widen the gap between them, it will continue to widen.

The impact of social injustice can disrupt social cohesion. It has the potential to create social division by separating certain groups from others, particularly between minorities and majorities. In society, the majority frequently segregates the minorities. As a result of segregation, certain persons are denied access to public facilities, regardless of their entitlement to citizenship. Colored people cannot employ the same tools as white people segregation conceals human equality in the acceptance of the same right. Furthermore, social injustice can lead to discrimination in society. As a result, different people in society cannot receive the same treatment. It can cause someone to oppress the other.

Harper Lee contributed to the depiction of American realities in the 1930s through her novel; she did it by relying on her observation of racial, economic, and social class issues that were prevalent in the American South. Further, the novel provides vivid examples of social injustice such as racism, oppression, inequality that were exacerbated during the Great Depression.

To Kill a Mockingbird becomes a reflection of Alabama's social injustice. Many real-life occurrences in Alabama serve as inspiration for Harper Lee's novel. In 1931, nine black boys were subjected to unjust treatment after they were accused of raping two white ladies even though was no proof to support their accusation. This case is comparable to that of Tom

Robinson. In addition, the segregation experienced by black people in *To Kill a Mockingbird* was similar to what occurred in the case of Rosa Park in 1951. They both had the same problem. They were separated from the places and amenities used by white people. Furthermore, social injustice can strike anyone, anywhere, at any moment.

Throughout the work, readers can see how Lee wants her audience to apply moral education; she reminds them to understand their moral duty in how they treat others. Harper Lee emphasizes at the end of the novel that the most important life lessons are tolerance, sympathy, and understanding. *To Kill a Mockingbird* is about growing up as a female in the South, gender role is an essential issue that can be explored further in research. Lee portrays how a woman is treated in the same way that a poor African American is treated. Women in the Maycomb community have little power; they are weak, powerless, and inferior to men.

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Appendices

Appendices

Appendix A:

Author's Biography

Nelle Harper Lee was born in 1926 in Monroeville, Alabama. Her father, Frances Finch, was a lawyer who served in the Alabama State Legislature and owned a local newspaper. Her mother was a stay-at-home mom. She was a tomboy and a reader when she was younger. Truman Capote, the author of *In Cold Blood*, was one of her most cherished childhood buddies.

Lee took an interest in literature while in high school. In 1944, she graduated from high school and went on to an all-women's college. She stood out because she was unconcerned about fashion, make-up, or relationships, preferring to concentrate solely on her writing. Twelve years later, she received a year's worth of pay as a Christmas present from writer and composer Michael Brown, allowing her to concentrate purely on writing for a year. Her lone novel was written in collaboration with editor Tay Hohoff. *Go Set a Watchman*, then *Atticus*, and then *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

To Kill a Mockingbird was first published in 1960 and quickly had success. It received a lot of good critical acclaim and was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in 1961. It was named the finest novel of the century in 1999. This book was a coming-of-age story, but it also mirrored many of the South's racial biases. She has had a few pieces published to this day since the popularity of her work and the fame that came with it were too much for Lee. Despite her best efforts to avoid it, Lee was frequently thrust into the spotlight. Gregory Peck, who played Atticus Finch in the screenplay version of *TKAM* and received an Oscar for his portrayal, became a close friend of hers.

President George W. Bush bestowed the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Lee in 2007, the highest civilian honor bestowed by the United States. Harper Lee is now a patient of an assisted-living facility, confined to a wheelchair, partially blind and deaf, and suffering from slight memory loss (Jordan Sylar: *American Literature*, Harper Lee).

Appendix B:

Summary of the Story

Harper Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* is a masterpiece. Even though it was published in 1960, it is set in the mid-1930s in the small town of Maycomb in Alabama. Scout Finch, a six-year-old tomboy living with her lawyer father Atticus and her brother Jem, tells the story. Throughout Scout, Jem and his friend Dill attempt to persuade their reclusive next-door neighbor Boo Radley to leave his house. Boo has not been seen in Maycomb since he was a teenager.

Many people in Maycomb are racists, and Atticus is asked to defend Tom Robinson, a black man who has been wrongfully accused of raping a white lady. Even though everyone knows he has a small chance of winning, Atticus accepts the case. Scout and her brother receive crucial life lessons about tolerance, sympathy, and understanding from their father, and the reader observes the challenge unfold through Scout's childish eyes (BBC Bitesize: *To Kill a Mockingbird* - Plot summary).

Appendix C:

Characters

Scout Finch

The story's narrator and protagonist, Jean Louise "Scout" Finch resides in Maycomb with her father, Atticus, brother, Jem, and black cook, Calpurnia. She is clever and, by her period and place's norms, a tomboy. Scout has a fighting spirit and a strong belief in the goodness of her neighbors. As the novel progresses, this faith is tested by the hatred and prejudice that emerge during Tom Robinson's trial.

Jem Finch

At the start of the story, Scout's sibling and regular playmate. He increasingly distances himself from Scout's games as he grows older, but he remains her close companion and protector throughout the story. During the novel, Jem enters adolescence, and his values are severely rocked by the evil and injustice he witnesses during Tom Robinson's trial.

Charles Baker "Dill" Harris

Jem and Scout's friend is an active boy. Throughout the narrative, he grows fascinated with Boo Radley and symbolizes the innocence of childhood.

Atticus Finch

Scout and Jem's father is a Maycomb lawyer who comes from a long line of locals. Atticus, a widower with a dry sense of humour, has implanted his strong sense of morals and fairness

in his children. He is one of the few Maycomb citizens who believe in racial equality. He exposes himself and his family to the wrath of the white community when he offers to represent Tom Robinson, a black man accused of raping a white woman. Atticus serves as the novel's moral backbone, with his strong principles, wisdom, and sensitivity.

Aunt Alexandra

Atticus's sister, a strong-willed woman who is devoted to her family to the point of death. Alexandra is the quintessential Southern lady, and her reverence for etiquette and tradition frequently causes her to conflict with Scout.

Calpurnia

The black cook for the Finches, Calpurnia is a strict disciplinarian who serves as a link between the white world and her black community for the children.

Arthur "Boo" Radley

Boo, a recluse who never leaves his house, a clever boy who has been emotionally harmed by his harsh father, exemplifies the danger that evil poses to innocence and virtue. He is one of the novel's "mockingbirds," a nice person who has been harmed by mankind's depravity.

Tom Robinson

Tom is one of the book's "mockingbirds," a symbol of purity shattered by evil. He is accused of raping a white lady 'Mayella Ewell'.

Mayella Ewell

She is the abused, lonely, and sad daughter of Bob Ewell. Though one can sympathize with Mayella because of her domineering father, she cannot be forgiven for her slanderous accusations against Tom Robinson.

Bob Ewell

An alcoholic member of Maycomb's poorest family, who is unemployed. Ewell epitomizes the ugly side of the South in his intentionally false charge that Tom Robinson raped his daughter: illiteracy, poverty, squalor, and hate-filled racial prejudice.

Mr. Walter Cunningham

An impoverished farmer who is a member of the mob plotting to lynch Tom Robinson in jail. When Scout's civility causes Mr. Cunningham to disperse the men at the jail, he demonstrates his human goodness.

Walter Cunningham

He is Scout's classmate and Mr. Walter Cunningham's son. Walter can't afford lunch one day at school and unintentionally puts Scout in trouble (Softschools.com: To Kill Mockingbird: Character List).