

RACE, MILIEU, AND MOMENT IN *GONE WITH THE WIND* BY MARGARET MITCHELL

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of creating this research is to reveal race, milieu, and moment in the novel “Gone with the Wind” written by Margaret Mitchell. The novel “Gone with the Wind” was written by Mitchell in 1926 and was first published in 1936. In this research, researchers focused on applying historical approach by Hippolyte Adolphe Taine in Guerin et al. (2005) that consists race, milieu and moment to analyze “Gone with the Wind” novel as the data source. Besides applying the theory, descriptive qualitative research by Sugiyono (2012) was also applied by researchers due to the phenomena that were found in written form. To collect the data, researchers applied library research method by George (2008) by following four steps, they are: took “Gone with the Wind” novel as the data source, read the novel carefully, find the race, milieu, and moment, and collect and divide the data found. In analyzing the data, researchers focused on analyzing the extrinsic element explained by Wellek & Warren (1949) by applying race, milieu, and moment theory and presented them descriptively. For the findings, researcher found the race or racial differences on the skin color and their nationality in United States of America on North Georgia, in the Old South region. The milieu was discovered in the character’s occupation where they worked as businessman, plantation owner, breeding farm owner, student, farmer, soldier, maid, horse coachman, doctor, and also prostitute. In addition, researchers also found the moment in the incident of Civil War and the slavery.

Keywords: *Historical approach, Racial Differences, Slavery.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Humans as social creatures always produce activities in their life. The activities produced by human that give big impacts to the others will become a history in the future. In education field, literature is a study that reflects humans’ life where the works produced are based on real experience faced by the author that already happened. Literature should not be taken lightly due to its functions that serves the source of information or a point of reference for researchers (Siahaan & Satria, 2022). Through

literature, we can learn about people’s struggles and aspirations in many eras and places (Roberts, 2007). Therefore, literary works consist the reflection of situation faced by people in a certain period of time.

In literary criticism, there is an approach that analyze literary works called historical biographical approach introduced by Hippolyte Adolphe Taine that consists three terms called race, milieu, and moment. Taine in Guerin et al. (2005) explained that literary works are the reflection of the author’s life and

times or the character's life and times. In literature, there are many types of works that reflect human's life, such as novels, poetries, dramas and many more. In this research, researcher took the novel "Gone with the Wind" by Margaret Mitchell as the data source for doing the analysis in order to find race, milieu, and moment from the characters.

Margaret Mitchell is known as an American novelist who was born in Atlanta on November 8, 1900. She grew up in a storyteller family who shared personal accounts of their involvement in American Civil War, which had finished just 35 years before Mitchell got birth. She is best known for her work "Gone with the Wind" that tells a classic depiction of the Southern States during the Civil War. Before she worked as an author, Mitchell worked as a reporter where the job is to find information for *Atlanta Journal Sunday Magazine*. From writing the novel, two awards were given to Mitchell due to her brilliant work, they are a National Book Award and a Pulitzer Prize. Besides receiving two awards from writing the novel, her work was also taken as the source of inspiration for making a classic film released in 1939 that has the same title with the novel "Gone with the Wind".

Mitchell began to write the novel "Gone with the Wind" in 1926 when she got broken ankle which made her left her job as a reporter. She shifted her focus to write a novel from a Southern perspective regarding to the Civil War and Reconstruction. In preparing to write the novel, Mitchell was conducting in-depth research about Civil War. She drew the inspiration from Confederate veterans and other people whose vivid recollections of the time that helped her in forming the story. In the story, she chose to situate

the state of Georgia as the setting due to her familiarity to the history from family tales that she had heard as a child and because she believed Virginia received too much notices in the tales of previous Civil War. The process of making this novel lasted for nine years where Mitchell only worked on the novel intermittently and wrote episodes out of order and frequently creating many drafts of the same scene. As a result, because of Margaret's research and the input of Confederate warriors who shared their vivid experiences of the war, the novel "Gone with the Wind" was ultimately created and first published in 1936.

The novel "Gone with the Wind" is a long story that describes events that have occurred in society, such as Civil War, famine, murder, rape, struggle, love heartbreak, and also enslavement. This novel tells the tribulations of young Scarlett O'Hara as the privileged daughter of a wealthy owner of a plantation who always trying to win the heart of the man that she loves and trying to battle poverty due to difficult circumstances.

This novel talks about the atmosphere and events during the Civil War in 1861. At that time, there was a war between Northern and Southern communities which was caused by injustice in the implementation of economic policies, culture, and also the problem of oppression of black people. In that era, the government could arbitrarily increase taxes on people who owned land for their business and it was also shown that black people did not have the same rights as white people because they were only used as slaves to help white people in running their business. With the popularity of this novel which describes the situation during the Civil War, David O. Selznick as owner of Selznick International

Pictures together with Victor Fleming as the director took the novel “Gone with the Wind” and filmed it to the form of film. The stars of this film are Vivien Leigh, Clark Gable, Olivia de Havilland, Hattie McDaniel, Leslie Howard, George Reeves, Thomas Mitchell, Alicia Rhett, and many more.

The novel “Gone with the Wind” was filmed in 1939 with Vivien Leigh that played the role of the main character called Scarlett O’Hara and Clark Gable that played the role of Rhett Butler. This film tells the story of Scarlett O’Hara who likes her neighbor named Ashley Wilkes, but her expressions of love are always rejected by Ashley because he already has a life partner named Melanie Wilkes. Due to her love that got rejected, Scarlett decided to marry Charles Hamilton who died not long after they got married. Due to difficult economic conditions after the war and a very high increase in tax levies, Scarlett then married a rich businessman named Frank Kennedy to save Tara, which was her father's land, from being confiscated by the government. After Scarlett's economy got improved, Frank Kennedy died due to the raid in the Ku Klux Klan which is a racist group that pro to white people. After Frank died, Rhett Butler then married Scarlett and made him Scarlett's third husband. From their marriage, they lived happily and were blessed with a daughter named Bonnie Blue Butler who eventually died in an accident while riding her horse. As a result of Bonnie's death, Rhett Butler became desperate and decided not to have a relationship with Scarlett anymore because he felt that Scarlett did not pay enough attention to her child when she was alive. At the end of the story, Rhett leaves Scarlett which makes her wake up and try to win her heart back.

This research focused on analyzing historical approach by Hippolyte Adolphe Taine in Guerin et al. (2005) that consist race, milieu, and moment to the novel “Gone with the Wind” by Margaret Mitchell due to the novel that consist the reflection of the situation in Civil War. Due to the situation stated in the story from the novel, the analysis will not only focus on the main characters, but also the other characters as well in order to reveal the phenomena as the result. By implementing the theory of historical approach that consist race, milieu, and moment to the novel, researchers hope that the result of this research can help to describe the situation and conditions that existed during the Civil War

Research Question

Due to the inequality of status and also the events depicted in the novel “Gone with the Wind” by Margaret Mitchell, researchers found three problems that can be taken to be analyzed. The problems that will be analyzed by researchers are based on historical approach by Hippolyte Adolphe Taine that consist of three elements that describe the characters and their life. The first element is race that focused on the aspect that differs the ethnics or the groups and also looking at their nationality. Second is milieu that focused on the occupation of the characters. And the last is moment as the third element that focused on the event or situation that happened in the story. As a result, researchers revealed that this research contains novelty that can be seen from the novel "Gone with the Wind" which has never been used by any researchers as an analytical object to analyze race, milieu, and moment.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Historical Approach.

In analyzing literary work, Historical approach is one of the approaches that can be taken to analyze the work of literature. Hippolyte Adolphe Taine is known as the person that stated historical biographical approach where he was known as a French historian, philosopher, and also a critic. Taine in Guerin et al. (2005) had explained the theory of historical biographical approach as the reflection of the author's life and times that got poured into literary work. Due to the novel "Gone with the Wind" that is made not based on Mitchell's experience, the word "biographical" cannot be used in naming the approach. Instead, a historical approach is applied by researchers as the name of the approach to analyze the novel. Inside historical approach, Taine had divided it into three parts, they are:

a. Race.

The word "race" is known as the ethnic or one of the groups whose members are split up according on skin tone and other physical characteristics (Sartika & Arianto, 2021). Race is also related to where the group lives, where their nationality describes the place where they stay and where they came from. According to Henry Louis Gates, Jr in Guerin et al. (2005), the phrase "race" masquerades as an impartial term of classification, but it is actually a perilous metaphor that refers to the absolute, irreconcilable differences between cultures, linguistic groupings, or followers of particular religious systems that are often also fundamentally at odds with economic interests. As a result, physical characteristics take the biggest role in determining human race because from looking at their shape and the

characteristics of their physic, we can easily find out people's race.

b. Milieu.

The word "milieu" comes from Old French language where the word is separated into "mi" that means middle and "lieu" that means place. Hobson (2004) in Oxford Dictionary stated the definition of milieu as an individual's or group's social setting. Apart from milieu that explains the person's social environment, milieu also explains the person's occupation as a part of their identity that usually stated in the story of literary work (Guerin et al., 2005). As the result, the milieu of the characters can be found from two aspect, they are social environment and also the occupation.

c. Moment.

Taine frequently used the term "momentum" to describe the person's cumulative experiences where all the experiences faced by the person is called moment. Taine also explained moment as the event that relate to cultural traditions that happened in the past and present. According to Taine, the most delicate and unguarded depictions of a culture's psychology and motivations can be found in its literature. Sartika & Arianto (2021) also stated moment as the situation of sociopolitical that happens at a certain period of time. Moment consists the event that have occurred such as problematic situation and also the condition of the society at that time. As a result, some occurrences that happen inside the story of literary work that relate to cultural traditions and experiences faced by a person is called moment.

2.2.Previous Research.

In analyzing historical approach to the novel “Gone with the Wind”, researchers took several previous researches as the reference in order to complete the analysis. First research taken by researchers is from Sartika & Arianto (2021) that took historical bibliographical approach to analyze race, milieu, and moment in “Titanic” film. In doing the analysis, researchers found there are some discriminations that occur and also social class that differs where there are characters who come from the lower class or lowly workers and also characters who are in the upper class such as nobles. On the other hand, the analysis of historical bibliographical approach was also done by Abdulqadr et al. (2021) where they analyze Ezra Pound and his work in order to find the influence of Modernism and Victorianism in his work. In their research, researchers also analyze the biography of the author and his works with the aim of finding historical and biographical facts. Besides two researches above, Mansoben (2023) also analyze poems written by William Blake in order to find the reflection of the author’s life inside the poems. In analyzing the data, researcher took ten poems created by William Blake and found the reflection of the author’s life inside the poems, such as the enemies, family, children, pets, and also the place that the author lives. The fourth research taken by researcher is from Abbas (2003) that analyze David Malouf’s novels in order to find war impact by using historical biographical approach. Researcher took three novels from Malouf and also his biography to be analyzed. In addition to describing how the war affected Malouf and his nation, these works also serve to persuade readers that war is evil and that they should reject all of it.

From four previous researches above, researchers found there are some differences and similarity between those previous researches and this research where the differences found are on the data source and the things that got analyzed. In Sartika & Arianto (2021) research, researchers found the difference on the data source where they took the film “Titanic” while in this research, researchers took the novel “Gone with the Wind” as the data source. Second, in Abdulqadr et al. (2021) research, researchers found the differences on the data source and research focus where they took the poems written by William Blake as the data source and focused on analyzing the influence of modernism and Victorianism in Blake’s works while this research focused on analyzing race, milieu, and moment in the novel “Gone with the Wind”. Third, in Mansoben (2023) research, researchers found the differences on the data source and the focus of the analysis where Mansoben also focused on analyzing William Blake’s poems in order to find the reflection of the author’s life inside the works while in this research, researchers focused on analyzing race, milieu, and moment in the novel “Gone with the Wind”. And fourth, in Abbas (2003) research, researchers also found the differences on the data source and the focus of the analysis where in his research, the data source are taken from David Malouf’s novels and the focus is on analyzing the impact of war contained in the works while in this research, researchers focused on analyzing race, milieu, and moment in “Gone with the Wind” by Margaret Mitchell. In contrast, researchers found Sartika & Arianto (2021) research is similar to this research where historical approach was applied in both researches

in order to analyze race, milieu, and moment contained in the data source.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

The creation of a research requires careful consideration of research design. The purpose of research design is to describe the research systematically and accurately. Research design is divided into two parts, they are qualitative and quantitative research. Qualitative research is known as a scientific inquiry that aims to comprehend phenomena relating to what study participants experience, such as behavior, perceptions, motives, and also actions holistically, by means the use of narrative descriptions in the form of words and language in a particular context. In contrast, quantitative research is a sort of research that collects data in numerical form and compares various factors or evaluates the efficacy of various interventions. In this research, researchers applied qualitative research by Sugiyono (2012) that stated qualitative research mainly concerned to the interpretation of the data that was found on the field. The result of this research is presented descriptively due to the result that is not in numerical form.

The object of the research is very crucial in making the analysis. In this research, historical approach by Taine that consist race, milieu, and moment was taken by researchers to analyze “Gone with the Wind” novel by Margaret Mitchell. The data that found by researchers is on the form of writing that based on the quotation found from the novel that consist race, milieu, and moment. To collect the data, researchers applied library research method by George (2008) by following four steps. First, researchers read the novel in order to understand the story. Second, looking for the data in the form of quotations

that consist race, milieu, and moment. Third, gathering the quotations that have been found. Fourth, focused on analyzing the extrinsic elements as stated by Wellek & Warren (1949) by applying the theory of race, milieu, and moment to the quotations. And fifth, researchers present the analysis result descriptively.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Race

Taine had explained race as the nationality of the characters and people that are divided into groups or ethnics based on the similarity of physical characteristics. In the novel “Gone with the Wind”, the most prominent thing related to race was found by researchers in the differences of skin color, where white people that were positioned in higher social group, and black people that were positioned in the lower social group. White people characters in the novel are described as upper-class people who have wealth and also plantation land. In contrast, black characters are categorized as lower class where they only able to work as slaves to white people such as helping them to manage the garden and also become their helpers or servants. The quotation from the novel that serves as the evidence of characters’ race based on skin color is shown below:

*“Before marriage, young girls must be, above all other things, sweet, gentle, beautiful and ornamental, but, after marriage, they were expected to manage households that numbered a hundred people or more, **white and black**, and they were trained with that in view. (Mitchell, 2007, p.59)*

From the quotation above, it is written the difference of young girls’ life before and after they got married. After they got married, they must be able to organize and manage the people

that work for them, including white and black people. The phrase “*white and black*” from the quotation above serves as the evidence of racial differences in the novel.

Besides racial differences found by researchers as the element of race, researchers also found the nationality of the novel’s characters. The quotation that shows the evidence of the characters’ nationality is shown below:

"There's none in the County can touch you, nor in the state," he informed his mount, with pride, the brogue of County Meath still heavy on his tongue in spite of thirty-nine years in America. (Mitchell, 2007, p.31)

On the quotation above, it is written that the country they live in is United States of America. America has fifty states and six regions where in “Gone with the Wind”, Mitchell reflects the setting of Civil War into the novel where the state is on North Georgia and the region is in the Old South.

4.2. Milieu.

Milieu is described as the social environment and occupation of the characters. In “Gone with the Wind” researchers have found several occupations of the characters, they are:

1) Businessman.

Businessman is one of the occupations shown in the novel “Gone with the Wind”. In this novel, Frank Kennedy as Scarlett O’Hara’s second husband is shown to have a profession as a businessman and is depicted as a rich man. The quotation that serve as the evidence of businessman is shown below:

*"I do **business** in Marietta, a lot of business," he said.* (Mitchell, 2007, p.589)

From the quotation above, it can be seen that Frank stated himself as a businessman who runs

a lot of business. In the novel, Frank is shown as a wealthy person that save Scarlett by giving her money to protect Tara.

2) Plantation owner.

Some of the characters inside the novel were depicted as the owner of a plantation. One of the characters that has a land of plantation in the novel is Gerald O’Hara. Gerald is shown as the father of Scarlett and also the owner of a plantation named Tara. The quotation that serve as the evidence of plantation owner is shown below:

*"They looked out across the endless acres of **Gerald O'Hara's newly plowed cotton fields toward the red horizon.**"* (Mitchell, 2007, p.9)

From the quotation above, it is shown that Gerald is the owner of the land and also cotton plantation.

3) Breeding farm owner.

In this novel, the occupation of minor character is also stated inside the story. One of the minor characters that the occupation got stated inside the story is Beatrice Tarleton, where her status is not just as a land owner, but also as a person who owns a breeding farm. The quotation that serve as the evidence is shown below:

*"Beatrice Tarleton was a busy woman, having on her hands not only a large cotton plantation, a hundred negroes and eight children, **but the largest horse-breeding farm in the state as well.**"* (Mitchell, 2007, p.8)

From the quotation above, it can be seen that Mitchell stated Beatrice Tarleton as the owner of a land and also the owner of horse breeding farm.

4) Student.

Beside the occupation as the businessman and the owner of a land, researchers also found two characters that have the status as student, they are Beatrice Tarleton and Brent Tarleton. Beatrice and Brent are described as young man where two of them are siblings. The quotation that serve as the evidence is shown below:

“They had just been expelled from the University of Georgia, the fourth university that had thrown them out in two years.” (Mitchell, 2007, p.6)

Based on the quotation above, it is stated that Beatrice and Brent got expelled from their fourth university. They are described as students who are not good at studying.

5) Farmer.

One of the minor characters that got depicted as the farmer in the novel is Abel Wynder. The quotation that serve as the evidence is shown below:

“Abel just ain't rich. He's a small farmer, not a big planter.” (Mitchell, 2007, p.19)

Based on the quotation above, it is shown that Abel as a minor character that does not have big plantation. In contrast, Abel is shown only as a small farmer.

6) Soldier.

Due to the situation depicted in the novel is during the Civil War, researchers found several characters that also worked as soldier. One of the characters shown inside the novel is Ashley Wilkes. The quotation that serve as the evidence is shown below:

“Ashley Wilkes was elected captain, because he was the best rider in the County and because his cool head was counted on to keep some semblance of order.” (Mitchell, 2007, p.20)

From the quotation above, it is depicted that Ashley worked as a soldier and was positioned as a captain because of his prowess in making decisions.

7) Maid.

During the Civil War era, it was depicted that the black race had a lower position than the white race. One of the black characters depicted in the novel as a servant to white people is Ruth Mammy. The quotation that serve as the evidence is shown below:

“She had been Ellen's mammy and had come with her from Savannah to the up-country when she married.” (Mitchell, 2007, p.25)

From the quotation above, it is shown that Mammy has been worked as Ellen O'Hara's maid since Ellen still young. Mammy is depicted as a leader of maid that is very loyal to the O'Hara family who also helps in monitoring the other maid.

8) Horse coachman.

In this novel, another occupation given to black people was horse coachmen. The character that has the occupation as horse coachmen is called Toby. The quotation that serve as the evidence is shown below:

“Toby, who had handled Gerald's horses for twenty years, pushed out his lips in mute indignation at being told how to

conduct his own business.”
(Mitchell, 2007, p.40)

In the quotation above, it can be seen that Toby is a horse coachman that worked for Gerald O’Hara. He also had worked for twenty years.

9) Doctor.

During the Civil War, there were many soldiers who suffered injuries and had to receive medical treatment from doctors. In this novel, there is a white character who is described as a doctor called Dr. Meade. The quotation that serve as the evidence is shown below:

“Dr. Meade is at the Institute hospital where my committee works, and everyone says he’s marvelous and—” (Mitchell, 2007, p.151)

From the quotation above, it is shown that Meade worked as a doctor in Institute Hospital, and he is described as a very good person.

10) Prostitute.

Prostitution is the oldest job in the world. In this novel, a character is described working as a prostitute called Belle Watling. The quotation that serve as the evidence is shown below:

“Many prostitutes had flocked into Atlanta, following the soldiers, but Belle stood out above the rest, due to her flaming hair and the gaudy, overly fashionable dresses she wore.” (Mitchell, 2007, p.249)

Based on the quotation above, Belle Watling is described as a prostitute that is most prominent compared to the others. She is described as a beautiful woman whose clothes stand out and are different from others.

4.3. Moment.

Moment is a real occurrence that depicts the sociopolitical climate at a certain time. Moment shows the event the situations that occur in a certain period of time. In this novel, researchers found two phenomena of moment, they are:

1) Civil War.

The story written by Mitchell in this novel describes the atmosphere during the war. The war depicted in this novel is Civil War that consist the war between southern and northern. There are two quotations that serve as the evidence of Civil War from the novel is shown below:

a. *“In after years when she thought of those last days of April, 1861, Scarlett could never quite remember details.”* (Mitchell, 2007, p.130)

From the first quotation above, it can be seen that Mitchell stated the time setting of the war which took time on April 1861.

b. *“But the South was aflame with war, events roared along as swiftly as if carried by a mighty wind and the slow tempo of the old days was gone.”* (Mitchell, 2007, p.130)

From the quotation above, it can be seen that Mitchell explained the situation in the novel during the war which can be seen from the destruction in the South due to the impact of being attacked by the North.

2) Slavery.

In this novel, the status and class differences between black and white people are told. White people are depicted as having high class and status while black people are in

the lower class where they are only allowed to work as servants. The quotation that shows the evidence of slavery from the novel is shown below:

“His own social status was assured because the Tarletons owned a hundred negroes and, like all slaves of large planters, he looked down on small farmers whose slaves were few.” (Mitchell, 2007, p.19)

From the quotation above, it is shown that Mitchell depicted Tarleton Family as a very rich and wealthy family that owned a hundred of negroes as their slaves. Negroes are the people who have black skin color. As the result, it can be seen that black people could only get low jobs and were made as slaves at that time.

5. CONCLUSION

Literature is a study that depicts the lives of people, with works generated based on actual experiences or the other stories that the authors have known. From learning the works of literature, we can learn about people's hardships and aspirations from a variety of eras and locations. In analyzing literary works, several approaches were usually applied by researchers, where one of them is historical approach by Hippolyte Adolphe Taine. Taine in Guerin et al. (2005) had divided historical approach into race, milieu, and moment. In the novel “Gone with the Wind” by Margaret Mitchell, the element of race was found by researchers on the inequality of status and position in society as seen from differences in skin color where black people have lower position than white people and they were only allowed to work as slaves. The nationality of the characters was

also found by researchers where the country they live is in the United States of America on North Georgia and the region is in the Old South. In the second element, milieu was discovered by researchers in the characters' occupation where they worked as businessman, plantation owner, breeding farm owner, student, farmer, soldier, maid, horse coachman, doctor, and also prostitute. Besides that, researchers also found the moment as the third element in the incident of Civil War and the slavery faced by black people where they were only allowed to work as slaves. Based on the discoveries from the analysis, researchers hope that the result of this research can be taken by future researchers as their reference in exploring literary works, especially in using historical approach. In addition, due to this research that only focused on analyzing race, milieu, and moment to the novel “Gone with the Wind”, researchers discovered that there are still many aspects that can be taken to be analyzed, such as the analysis of feminism or structuralism that can be applied in the story. Researchers recommend future researchers to be able to see the opportunity by finding the aspects that can be taken to be analyzed in literary works.

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