

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Basic Consideration

Racism is a concept that excludes a group of people based on their race or ethnicity (Toer, 1998, p. 50). If this understanding is correctly interpreted, it may lead to differences in how people view others based on a variety of factors, such as skin color, nationality, faith, and race. In reality, since everyone is born differently, prejudice does not exist because we are all one unit, regardless of ethnicity or race. However, many people continue to underestimate one another, allowing prejudice to exist in daily life. They believe that these various groups deserve to be bullied, resulting in several instances of racism around the world, including one in the United States.

Racism is still an issue in the United States (VOA Indonesia, 2005). Black people are seen as inferior and marginalized by them. The passage of time has not spared America from the problem of racism. Throughout the history of the United States, black people have always been the primary targets of violence perpetrated by their country or the majority of white people living there. Even though it was once led by a black president, it did not free America from racism and the action difference between black and white races because America has a long history of slavery that is still rooted in their minds, and black people are still treated as slaves by them. This started in 1861-1865, when slavery against black people, especially African-Americans, was practiced and legalized in the United States (Thompson, 2009, p. 190). Slavery to African-Americans was officially abolished after the formal abolition of slavery in America in 1865, but the difference still exists today. People of African-American descent are also stereotyped racially.

Racial discrimination is one of the most common forms of discrimination in society, and it can occur on a small scale, such as in friendship, the home setting, employment, or friendships, as well as on a state, national, and even national scale. We may have unconsciously engaged in racial discrimination, also known as racist acts, in our everyday encounters, such as making fun of our friends' physical differences, geographical origin, race and ethnicity, or customs or practices, even if in an informal setting. This is also the topic that we hear about the most in the media, where, for example, football players in world leagues face a great deal of prejudice.

Based on KBBI (Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia) racial discrimination is characterized as the belief held by certain racial groups that their race is superior to that of other racial groups, also known as racism. 3 Racism is a worldwide

phenomenon formed by historical, social, political, and economic influences. Politicians often exploit racial problems in order to gain support.

Since at least the 1940s, the word racist has been associated with negative connotations, and labeling a group or person as racist is often contentious. In the 1930s, the word prejudice was coined. The word is needed to explain the Nazis' use of "racist theories" to commit mass killings of Jews during Hitler's reign. Racism is still prevalent in the United States, as evidenced by the Jim Crow Act, which mandates racial segregation in hospitals, jails, and cemeteries. In fact, the rule applies to hotels, performing arts centers, elevators, and churches.

Racism between ethnicities, groups, and, especially, religions has existed for a long time, but it was clearly demonstrated when American commercial planes were hijacked and crashed into the WTC and Pentagon buildings on September 11, 2001, completely destroying the WTC Building in particular. Despite the fact that this is still a point of contention. Following that incident, the atmosphere became much tenser, especially in terms of allegations and innuendos between religions. Another issue that arose as a result of this was the publication in September 2005 of 12 cartoons mocking the Prophet Muhammad in the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten, despite the fact that it is strictly prohibited in Islamic teachings to view the image of the Prophet who is believed by that religion.

In the United States, one example of racism is in the music industry. Bob Dylan, the well-known American musician, is being investigated in France after a Croatian cultural group accused him of making racial hate remarks in Rolling Stone magazine. Dylan tried to convey prejudice was back in America in an interview with the publication. Dylan said at the time, "Blacks can taste it if they have ancestors who were slave masters or members of the (Ku Klux) Klan in their blood. Until now, Jews have tasted Nazi blood and Serbs have tasted Croatian blood." With the current case of racism in America, racist-themed films have been made, one of which is *12 Years a Slave*.

This film depicts the life of an independent New York nigger who is abducted in Washington, DC and forced to work as a slave in Louisiana for *12 years*. He also defined the extent of cotton and sugar plantations in Louisiana, as well as slave market operation in Washington, DC and New Orleans. *12 Years a Slave* is a moving film that exposes the brutality of the slavery system, which did in fact exist. The audience would undoubtedly be moved by the portrayal of slaves' lives as insignificant in the eyes of their masters and those in positions of power.

The presence of different races in the world, as depicted in the film *12 Years a Slave*, cannot be distinguished from racism. And though the era has progressed, many people still hold racist beliefs. This is not a new concept in the international community; in reality, it is deeply rooted. Racism is a community of people's viewpoint that distinguishes one race from another. Racism promotes racial inequality, which has caused tensions in the international community.

There are groups that believe they are superior (better) than others, and there are groups that feel embarrassed.

With the presence of racist films, it is clear that Hollywood's situation in many respects is indeed racist. Existing African-American films exist solely to demonstrate that the white caste is now superior to the black caste. In the other hand, the film industry in America, which is dominated by white people, supports it. However, the Hollywood film industry has reaped significant benefits from the recent output of racist films. As a result, this is a type of capitalism in America because the use of the marginalized as a theme would boost income in the Hollywood film industry. This is because it can attract the sympathy of the wider community to watch it.

Social side present in *12 Years a Slave* movie in order to show to the people how are the racism should not happened in the social life, social interaction. Related to this research, I choose this movie may contained racism, it can be seen that the black sometime become the second class in the reality life, it also can be seen in the movie *12 Years a Slave* movie. Racism is a bad attitude done by some people to the other people, it is show how the people have not respect to the other people. Racism story in a movie sometime taken from real story, many story show the racism between white and black people.

In addition, Racism in *12 Years a Slave* movie was done whether the people who make a racism is around the civil and it is done by the individual. Individual Racism in the movie *12 Years a Slave* represent about the reality between White and Black people such in America, they life together but almost all the time the racism happened among them.

It is interesting to analyze because racism is sometimes found in the real life. In another side, *12 Years a Slave* movie helps the people who watch this movie to understand that racism is something real, something that must be stop on the name of human right. In addition, racism become a part of social conflict that usually happened in the human life and it is have influence to human interaction, human social life. In this research, I would like to find out and discuss the racism in *12 Years a Slave* in social aspect by using sociology literary approach, it is difference with the other research such Irawan' research, his research designed by problem statement "how big racism in

the *12 Years a Slave* Movie”, it means that he want to measure the level of racism. Based on these explanation, I would like to conduct a research with the title “Analysis of Racism in *12 Years a Slave* Movie Directed by Steve McQueen”.

1.2. Problem Statement

The problem statement of this research is “how is racism in *12 Years a Slave* Movie?”

1.3. Objective of Research

The objective of this research is describe the racism attitudes are experienced in *12 Years a Slave* Movie

1.4. Significance of Research

The significance of this research is as follows:

1. For the researcher, it can be the experience in analyzing the real social reality happened in the real life
2. For the next researcher, it can be the reference to do the next research in another movie

