

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the general description of the paper, including background of the research, scope of the study, research questions, aims of the study, methodology, clarification of terms and organization of the paper. Those points are presented in the following sequences.

1.1 Background

A history can not be separated from our lives. We are able to know famous events and figures and also the development a country by tracing its historical background. One of the countries that has an interesting history is the United States of America (USA). Some examples of important historical features in the USA history are 4th of July (becomes the Independence Day), the famous figure of George Washington who became its first president and also the process of the country becoming a super power. Those can be revealed through history. One can not separate the discussion of USA history from racism.

To avoid the extension of racism definition, it is important for the writer to specify the definition of racism. The International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) defines racism as follows:

Any distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference based on race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin, which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise, on equal footing of human right and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, or any other field of public life.

(available at www.sahrc.org.za/definition_of_racism.html [November, 21st 2006]).

In line with the quotation above, racism creates an imbalance situation among people because skin colors, descent, or ethnic origin that might place one group of people over other groups. It is shown by historical facts in the USA, the Non-White people often face some problems with the White people. This situation happens because they feel that they are discriminated by the White people. In this case, the White people, like the Anglo-Saxon and the European people believe that they are superior or, in another word, they are the best race in this world. This belief really influences the White people's characters and abilities. Moreover, they feel that they have the right to rule others: Non-White people.

In practice, racism can take the forms of prejudice, discrimination, segregation or subordination (Barkan, 1992). In a narrow sense, racism refers to a system of oppression which includes Institutional Racism or Structural Racism. It is a racial discrimination

by government, corporations, or other large organizations with the power to influence the lives of many individuals.

It is briefly mentioned in the previous paragraphs that the United States of America is considered as a racial country. USA is one of the countries which has an extreme racism. It has been a major issue since before the country was founded. Historically, racism issues started when the White people came to this continent and regarded the Native Americans or the Indians as the savage nation. Some examples of those issues are the brutalizing and dehumanizing effects of racism where attempts were made to infect Native Americans with smallpox during Pontiac's Rebellion in 1763. In the 19th century, the Native Americans were massacred by US forces which some people considered as genocide. US President Andrew Jackson was quoted as saying that "the only good Indian is the dead Indian". The Native Americans continued to face the oppression, another tribe was the Shoshone nation who has accused the US government of racism for testing nuclear weapons close to their tribal lands (Barkan, 1992).

Besides the Indian people, the African-American also had to struggle against the White people. They became the subjects of chattel slavery since the 16th century. Another example of racism in US domestic policy is human experimentation without consent. It is a famous case of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study, in which Black males

infected with syphilis were purposefully not treated well in order to study the long-term effects of the disease (Barkan, 1992).

Racism issues may manifest in behaviour, as well as in different genres of literary works, such as novels, poems, short stories or song lyrics. For the novel itself, there is a sort of novel that includes famous historical names and events and represents real life. It is called historical novels. The writer chooses one of those historical novels entitled *The American Palace-Bless This House*, because it narrates the early issue of racism in USA with its historical background in the 18th century. It is the first volume saga novel of the five volumes written by Evan Harold Rhodes (1982).

Hawthorn (2001) states that a novel may include references to real places, events and famous people, even though its characters and actions are imaginary, but those are in some sense represent a real life. Therefore, the novel used for this research, *The American Palace-Bless This House* presents names of famous people such as George Washington, John Adam, Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. It also includes some historical places in USA such as Washington D.C, Potomac, and the event of Meriwether Lewis and Captain Clark expedition. However, this paper only analyses racism issues experienced by the Native-American people and the slaves or the Black people as representatives of American life in the 18th century. The

research subject is about the Brand, the Breech, and the Connaught families, who are considered as the representation of the White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASP). White Doe, Circumstance (a half-breed child) and the Indian tribes; the slaves are Eli, Benjamin and Tanzy are considered as the representation of the Non-White people.

1.2 Scope of the Study

In this present study, a saga novel entitled *The American Palace-Bless This House* written by Evan Harold Rhodes was chosen as the focus of the research based on the racism issues presented in the text. The experiences of the Non-White people against the White peoples' attitudes and treatments are the aspects that can be analyzed by employing the Postcolonial theory.

1.3 Research Questions

The research is guided by an umbrella question: how is the institutional racism represented in the novel?

1.4 Aims of the Study

The aims of this research are to disclose representation of institutional racism in the early-years of the founding of the United States of America in the context of the novel *The American Palace-Bless This House*.

1.5 Methodology

To disclose the representation of institutional racism in the novel, this paper applies a qualitative approach. This approach was considered more appropriate because it can be used to uncover and understand more deeply and in more detailed behind any phenomenon that happens in the text. Regarding this, Strauss and Corbin (1990) state that qualitative research can refer to research about persons' live, stories, behaviour, and research about organizational functioning, social movements, or interactional relationships. It can give the details of phenomena that are difficult to convey with quantitative method.

Therefore, employing a descriptive method should help in the elaboration on the findings. It is used to describe the documented information or the content from the sample, which is *The American Palace-Bless This House* objectively and systematically.

The findings were further analyzed by using the Postcolonial theory as proposed by Ashcroft, Griffith, and Tiffin on the construction of the colonizer or the oppressor and the colonized or the oppressed.

1.6 Clarification of the Terms

To avoid misunderstanding, the writer classifies the main terms as follows:

1. **Representation** deals with multiple realms, such as space, time, needs, and feeling. Therefore, representation in a short story or in a novel can be defined as any image or statement, which seems similar to any facts or realities (Mueller, 2003).
2. **Racism** is the belief that racial differences between people are the main influence on their characters and abilities, and especially that one's own race is the best (*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, 1987).

In this case, the white people (the White Anglo-Saxon People) believe that they are the best race in this world (superior), while other non-white people are inferior.

3. **Institutional Racism** is racial discrimination by government, corporations, or other large organizations with the power to influence the lives of many individuals (Barkan, 1992).
4. **A Saga Novel** is a series of novels that are written over a long period – a narrative about the life of a large family (Cuddon, 1998).
5. **Postcolonial Criticism** is a theory affected by the imperial processes from the moment of colonization to the present day. As a result of these processes, one part will be the self, the oppressor or the colonizer, while another part will be the other, the oppressed, or the colonized (Ashcroft, Griffith, and Tiffin, 1989).

1.7 Organization of the Paper

This paper will be presented in accordance with the format outlined in *Pedoman Penulisan Karya Ilmiah UPI*:

The Title of the Paper

Approval Page

Candidate's Statement

Acknowledgement

Table of Contents

Abstract

Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter consists of general description of the paper such as the background of the study, scope of the study, research question, aims of the study, research procedures, clarification of the terms, and organization of the paper.

Chapter II: Theoretical Foundation

This chapter presents a main supporting theory for the research namely Postcolonial Criticism that points to the racism issues.

Chapter III: Research Procedure and Data Presentation

It displays the methodology that is used in this research, the procedure of analyzing the data and the data presentation.

Chapter IV: Data Analysis and Discussion

This chapter covers the data collected and the analysis of the research findings based on the data collected.

Chapter V: Conclusions and Suggestions

It contains conclusions from this paper and some suggestions for further research.

Bibliography

Appendices

