

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Research

It is not new to know that literary works are reflected in reality. It might inspire by reality or even come from the reality of someone's actual experiences. Whether it is coming from reality or not, every literary work will always discuss human beings. It may start from how they lived, how they interact with other human beings, and so on. The track of human beings will be discussed in every literary work. Moreover, Hudson (1913), in his book with title *An Introduction to the Study of Literature*, states that literature is something that comes on a journey of our own life that interests our mind; it is also related to what we have thought felt about these experiences. It is stated clearly that literary works are not only a story with nothing that happens but is related to the human being; it might discuss the experience or even the important life records that are unmemorable to forget. Therefore, Albrecht (1954) shares his thoughts about literature, which lead the meaning into reflecting norms and values that included the social facts (425). On the other hand, there is a different opinion regarding what literature it is. Literature imitates someone's life; Wellek and Warren (1949) state his thoughts. Literature is written in a structured pattern or form that expresses thoughts, feelings, ideas, or other unique aspects of human experiences. The result of reading the literary work is imagination. As Aminuddin (1990) points out, through the process of imagination, the reader can experience the authors' life and their social circumstances in depth. This means that literature could come up from someone's struggling experiences

in life. From the statements above, it can be concluded that literature is a written work with a sense of value. It reflects the real-life and expresses the condition of life of the society.

One aspect of someone struggling in life is that the majority seems to have more power than the minority one. The powerful system is in charge of controlling people, such as how they should behave, what they should do, and what they should do with their lives. Everything seems to be controlled by someone who has power. This system often emerges as a government, leading a community on how they act and behave and giving boundaries on how their life should be.

The primary purpose of this system is to maintain order in the society that they govern through the lens of Marxist criticism; a ruling group may have other agendas to keep the power only in the hands of the few. Due to their high position, an institution often inserts their political views and ideologies into their people. This is where capitalism plays a part in a structured society. This ideology will lead people to achieve a status in their society, as people are the products of cultural conditioning (56).

America is a country where slavery or the injustice of human rights happened, where the cruelty of racism started, and in fact, it still appears in this modern era. Even though it is not as bad as before, almost all people with different levels and colors will receive this injustice right as human beings. Some people will be wondering what is happening with the government in America by letting people do the racism with another American that looks different in their color. Being an American with black skin at that time has become a nightmare to a people in America.

Twelve Years a Slave is an American novel that comes up from reality. It is a great story that opens the world's eyes to how struggling people with black skin were out there in America at that time. Ironically, this racism appeared when Solomon's life suffered, but this cruelty still exists in this modern world. Solomon Northup writes this story received this injustice behavior. This Novel is about a free black man from upstate New York who is just being kidnapped and sold as a slave in South America. His unexpected things happened; the cruelty he received for almost 12 years as a slave made him suffer until finally, he found a way out from the slavery circle that stuck his soul. He wrote his unmemorable and terrible experience in his book *Twelve Years a Slave* (1853)".

Solomon Northup, the author and the memoir of *Twelve Years a Slave*, was an American abolitionist. He is a free-born American African from New York and was a professional violinist. His life changed after someone sold him to the South to become a slave. He writes this book to tell the world about the cruelty of racism in America, especially in the South, that needs to stop. By writing his own experienced, he was hoping that the world would open its eyes and do something so people like him would live happy and free like normal people as human beings.

The writer believes that people have slavery in America for years over decades. One of these specific reasons is that black Americans have become a minority in America than white people who lived in America. This Racism needs to pay serious attention by seeing how America started this racism issue, especially in slavery.

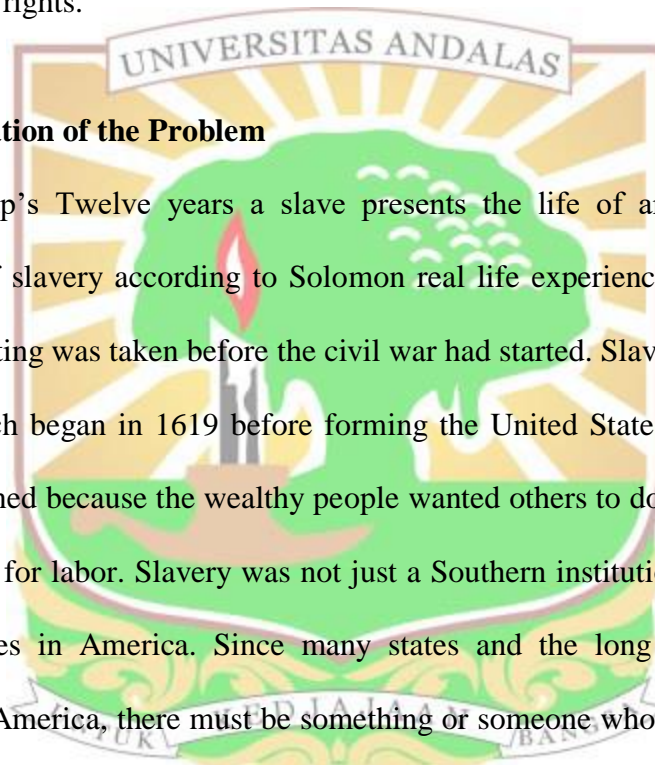
This research aims to show how slavery exists in this world, especially in America; even until now, many people struggling with racism issues are the most suffered victim. Several phenomena shown in the novel are related to slavery, as this

research title focuses on. There are Human Trafficking issues, Master Power issues, Ransom, and many more to be discussed later in the next chapter of this research.

This research is helpful in the future so that we can open our eyes more to the events around us by knowing the background of its phenomena, further, by revealing the dark history of slavery in America, the feeling of empathy of differentiation, whether it in from skin, ethnicity, racism, later on, will not exist anymore. All human beings are equal have the same rights.

1.2 Identification of the Problem

Northup's Twelve years a slave presents the life of an American slave. The phenomena of slavery according to Solomon real life experienced that he wrote on his novel. The setting was taken before the civil war had started. Slavery existed in American colonies, which began in 1619 before forming the United States a long time ago. This slavery happened because the wealthy people wanted others to do work for them; slavery was an option for labor. Slavery was not just a Southern institution, but it also happened in others states in America. Since many states and the long period of this slavery happening in America, there must be something or someone who created this cruelty and made this still happening. One of the issues is because of America's social and economic factors. Weather is because of the difference in skin color, and the class issues that disturb the happiness of human beings with became from a low class, not from the upper and middle class.



The novel shows that society was affected by their belief that black people should obey everything they instruct. People with black are slaves with no rights as the wealthy upper-middle class.

Therefore, this research will analyze the social problems in society living in South America and also the social problems society living in North America. This research will also bring the unexpected facts about the slave trade from North to South America from the experience of Solomon Northup. Furthermore, the historical background of how slavery has been made and started in America will also be discussed, more specifically in South America, where the novel is reflected in the novel *Twelve Years a Slave* by Solomon Northup.

1.3 Review of Related Studies

The writer presents some previous studies that related to this research, as follows:

The first research is a thesis titled *Slavery in Steve Mcqueen's movie 12 Years a Slave* by Hidayatullah (2016) from Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar. The purpose of his research is to analyze the slavery aspect in the movie and the messages the author tries to send to the reader by the movie. In his research, he finds out that there are types of slavery in the United States, according to the movie *Twelve Years a Slave*. There is Chattel slavery which is faced by the main character Solomon Northup who is treated as stuff, so the master has full authority to control the slaves. Second, Forced Slavery is faced by Solomon Northup because he received slavery in both physical and mental when he did not finish the work as his master's orders, he will get the punishment. The last is Forced marriage, and he finds out that forced marriage is reflected in the movie like; women slaves are free to marry; they do not have a legal marriage document by their

masters even. In his research, he concludes that there is some capitalism ideology depicted in the story, such as through individual characters, namely Solomon Northup. Capitalism is about the struggle between inferior and superior class happen in the story.

The writer interested with how Hidayatullah (2016) mentioned his analysis. Even though the object of his analysis is different with the object of this analysis. He took the movie as his source while the writer took the original novel for the analysis. His analysis about chattel slavery has lead the writer into the historical background on how chattel slavery could exist in the United States of America. According to a report issued by the Australia-based Walk Free Foundation, millions people still exist as slaves in the modern world. Among the enslaved, there are forced laborers, forced prostitutes, child soldiers, child brides in forced marriages and those in the servitude of absolute ownership.

The second is an essay by Jacky S. Charles (2017) entitled *Essays on Slavery, Intergenerational mobility and the persistence of distrust and inequality.*” This essay aims to see the background of slavery that has been more than 100 years since slavery was abolished in American by explaining the brief history of Slavery in the Americans. He found that mobility patterns for sons whose fathers are intermarried and sons whose fathers are not, the generational persistence of incomes or status is stronger for sons who belong to families where both parents belong to the same race. Charles also wondered if social barriers are reduced or increased social integration in the United States, will black-white convergence in income occur faster? He argues that history matters, and it is important to learn as much as possible about the long-run consequences of historical events.

The third is a thesis entitled *Racism Against African American Slave in Solomon Northup's Twelve Years a Slave* by Robiah Al Adawiyah (2015). This research aims to find out racism in Solomon Northup's *Twelve Years a Slave*. He argues that his interest discusses this novel because the novel is a personal narrative written based on the author's personal experience. To make his research clearer, he uses sociological literary criticism, which sees the literary work as the reflection of the sociological condition of society in real life.

The fourth is a thesis entitled *The Analysis of Slavery in Twelve Years A Slave Written by Solomon Northup* by Christian Sugiarto Wijaya (2019) as the owner of this research. In his research, he reduces practicing slavery based on Solomon's memoir as reflected in the book. He found several kinds of common slavery from this book that all slaves in the United States received as a slave. Chattel slavery, debt bondage, contract slavery, forced labor, child slavery, and sex slavery. The phenomena of slavery that he discussed seem to be similar to the researcher of this research. However, the researcher takes this research as one of the references to enrich the data for this research later on.

Compared with the research above, the writer found some similarities with the writer's research. Both were discussing the slavery-related to the social background of the Americans, whether they came from black or white people. The dark side of the historical background where black becomes a slave is also discussed in the research above, so it is beneficial for the writer to compare the research to collect some data as research later on. Besides, there are also some differentiates between those research, where Hidayatullah (2016) discuss more specific to the literary work by Solomon Northup while Charles (2017) discuss more wide include the whole American started

from the brief history of slavery in America. It did not specify works like a novel or other literary works discussing slavery as the main topic.

In order to make good research clearer, the research by Charles (2017) and Hidayatullah (2016) will be helpful for the writer, as Charles discusses the reason for slavery in America and Faiza discusses the slavery in Northup's has the same topic with the writer. However, in some aspects, the thesis by Adawiyah (2015) also will be helpful for the writer because he saw the problem in sociological literary criticism, which has a similarity with the writer.

1.4 Research Questions

This research discusses the slavery issues and the phenomena, including the historical background on how slavery exists in the United States and what is behind slavery itself. This research will be focused on Solomon's experience according to the novel that he wrote entitled *Twelve Years a Slave*.

Based on the explanation of the problems above, this research will focus on:

1. What kind of human trafficking that Solomon received as a freeman from North to the South America ?
2. What is the real Anti-Slavery community doing to the slaves in North America?

1.5 Scope of the Research

In analyzing *Twelve Years a Slave* by Solomon Northup, this research will focus on slavery in South America, including the history of slavery. Further, this research will

investigate several phenomena in the novel related to slavery, as my research title focuses on. There are Human Trafficking (in the North) issues, Master Power issues, Ransom, and many more to be discussed later in the next chapter of this research. The writer limits the discussion by seeing only from the phenomena in South America according to Solomon's twelve years as a slave to South America. The novel will be analyzed by using sociological, literary criticism.

1.6 Objective of the Research .

This research aims to reveal the slavery and, at the same time, the racism that occurred in Southern America as reflected in Northup's *Twelve Years a Slave*. Northup's *Twelve Years a Slave* shows that the social problems provoke conflicts between the social classes. This research will investigate Northup's experiences as he received after 12 years being a slave in Southern America. This research will compare the novel with the historical background of slavery in the United States to achieve this goal. Additionally, the writer wants to reflect on the reality that happens in the United States according to Solomon's experience being a slave for years.

