

# **CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1. Background of the Project**

Racism or racial discrimination is a problem that continues to exist and lives and grows widely in every social environment and even at all levels of society. This problem is a frightening threat because it directly attacks individual racial identity. Issues based on the diversity of the human race, which should be proof that differences are beautiful, have instead become the mastermind behind problems that never end.

Racism or what is known as racial discrimination creates or shapes the thinking of some people that humans can be divided into separate and exclusive biological entities called races (Audrey Smedley: 2020). One of the most serious impacts of this act of racism was that carried out by Adolf Hitler and the German Nazi party when they carried out genocide (race extermination) or better known as the Holocaust against the Jews. Adolf Hitler considered that the Aryan race was the most holy and superior race, while the Jews were the opposite, a people who should be exterminated and unfit to live. This story is published in full in the book *Racism* by Ali Rattansi and explained by Marr.

In contrast to America, they have a "very good" score on the issue of racism, where they are a superpower that has influence on an international scale, but is the center of racial discrimination. 1619 was the year when African people were brought to America with the aim of being forced to work or, you could say, become slaves. On the journey, not everyone managed to arrive safely, some were sick and some even died in the middle of the journey due to starvation and so on according to Sagala (2017:1).

America is one of the countries that has popularized the issue of racial discrimination. The buying and selling of African-Americans, who they often called slaves, made this increasingly widely known. Not only men who were made slaves of women were also not spared from the cruelty of this racial discrimination. Even before being sold, these black

female slaves experienced sexual violence not only from white men but also from fellow black people. Sagala (2017: 6).

This racism needs to be minimized if it cannot be completely eliminated. Because racism can create a sense of superiority towards certain races which will ultimately result in oppression. In fact, each race has uniqueness and differences that actually do not need to be debated because that is the real strength of a nation and will become the identity of the nation itself.

This book has great potential to make the wider community aware of the impact of racism. We can feel the impact ourselves from experiencing traumatic social experiences, even the most tragic thing is that it results in death. The May 1998 riot case is clear evidence that citizens of Chinese descent were the victims, from harassment to massacres, these were acts that could no longer be ignored. This is of course a deep sorrow for the Indonesian people. The problem of the massacre of ethnic Chinese descendants was a series of killings of four Trisakti students during the Asian Financial Crisis demonstration on 12 May 1998. The riots apparently spread to Medan and Surakarta. Many shops and vehicles were burned and even looted and then taken home.

There is another tragedy that the government is concentrating on, namely the inter-ethnic war that occurred in Sambas, West Kalimantan in 1998-1999. This riot occurred between the Malay tribe in Sambas and the Madurese tribe who inhabit Sambas district. It all started when the Malays felt irritated by the Madurese immigrants. The jobs between the two are not much different, namely being farmers and laborers. Therefore, there was a struggle for economic resources, especially on agricultural land, then riots erupted which resulted in 1,189 people being killed, 168 being seriously injured, 34 being lightly injured, 3,833 houses being heavily damaged, and 12 cars and 9 motorbikes being fatally damaged. . Apart from that, 58,544 Madurese residents were evacuated to Pontianak by the government so that the

riots could quickly subside. This is a special concern for the government in dealing with racism or ethnic problems so that they do not happen again. All of that is well stored in the form of coverage done by Kompas.com with its editor Monica Ayu Caesar Isabela. Many news reports about racism, and there are also several books that tell about racism such as *Black Skin, White Masks* written by Frantz Fanon, *White Water* by Michael S. Bandy, *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee, and one of them is this *Racism* written by Ali Rattansi's.

Until now, there is no Indonesian version of this book, so I hope that this book can be useful for the wider community and become a guide that racism is a bad thing. Racism is not a good path to take. This book has a noble aim, namely restoring social conditions damaged by racism handed down by irresponsible people. Restore the peace lost due to racist sentiments, assuming that each tribe or ethnicity is the best and considering other tribes or ethnicities as inferior. With this translation project, we hope that many parties will become aware of the dangers of racism and hopefully it can bring about better social change.

## **1.2. The Purpose of the Project**

1. The main purpose of this project is to produce a faithful Indonesian version of the book entitled “*Racism: A Very Short Introduction*” by Ali Rattansi.
2. Aims to enlighten the mind and heart after reading this book.

