

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

This epic romance movie was directed by Baz Luhrmann. The writers of this movie were Stuart Beattie, Baz Luhrmann, Ronald Harwood, and Richard Flanagan. *Australia* was released in November 26, 2008 by Century Fox. The time duration is about 165 minutes. *Australia* is starred by outstanding actress and actors, such as Nicole Kidman as Lady Sarah Ashley, Hugh Jackman as The Drover, David Wenham as Neil Fletcher, Bryan Brown as Lesley King Carney, and Brandon Walters as Nullah. The director of photography is done by Mandy Walker and edited by Dody Dorn and Michael McCusker. The screenplay was written by Luhrmann and screenwriter Stuart Beattie, with Ronald Harwood. *Australia* took in four different states and territories - Western Australia, the Northern Territory, Queensland and New South Wales with gross profit more than \$200 million throughout the world and it is the second-highest grossing Australian movie of all time.

Australia got many awards from Satellite Awards, such as Best Art Direction and Production Design, Best Cinematography, and Best Visual Effects. This movie is also nominated in Satellite Awards such as Best Original Screenplay, Best Original Score, Best Original Song, Best Editing, Best Sound, and Best Costume Design. In 81st Academy Awards, this movie is nominated in the category Best Costume Design. But in Movie Critics Circle of Australia, it won Best Cinematography and

Best Supporting Actor. It is also nominated for the category Best Movie and Best Music Score. In Young Artist Award and Chicago movie Critics, Brandon Walters as Nullah won as Best Performance in an International Feature Movie – Leading Young Performers – and Most Promising Performer Category, but he is still nominated in the category of Best Young Performer in Critics' Choice Awards.

Mark Anthony Luhrmann, his birth name, was born on 17 September 1962 in New South Wales, Australia. His most notable works to date are the three movies that make up his “Red Curtain Trilogy”. His first three movies, *Strictly Ballroom* (1992), *Romeo + Juliet* (1996) and *Moulin Rouge!* (2001) were dubbed the “Red Curtain Trilogy”. Baz was married Catherine Martin (a production designer and producer), 26 January 1997 and has two children. In 2005, he wanted to make a movie about *Alexander The Great* with Leonardo DiCaprio in the lead role around the same time as Oliver Stone made his movie *Alexander* (2004), but this project was dropped. Baz's next project is *Australia* movie.

This epic romance movie starts with information about World War II and its effect on Australia. The issue of this is the attempt of whites to take away aboriginal children and place them in Missions Islands to phase out the culture which is called Stolen Generations. Then the movie begins in September, 1939. Nullah (Brandon Walters) informs this entire story. He informs that Lady Sarah Ashley (Nicole Kidman) is an English aristocrat who inherits the cattle station Faraway Downs in Australia. She will go to Australia and sell Faraway Down. She goes to Australia and meets Drover (Hugh Jackman). They collaborate to erase Carney's monopoly. The

owner is Leslie King Carney (Bryan Brown). But he has commanded Neil Fletcher (David Wenham) to stop Sarah and Drover's plan. Sarah and Drover are successful to drive her cattle for the armies.

Nullah and King George (David Gulpilil) are caught by the police. Nullah is sent to the mission and King George is put in jail. Drover and Magarri are suspicious because when they have taken a rest, they see American armies come to the city. They decide to go to Darwin. They are shocked because the city is in flames. Drover looks for his wife. Then they and Ivan (Jacek Koman), the saloonkeeper, go to Mission Island. They find Nullah and others, but Magarri is slain by the Japanese armies. They go back to Darwin. Sarah, Drover and Nullah embrace each other. Fletcher is shown holding the gun, ready to take another shot for his son. But King George throws a spear at him, impaling him. King George says that Nullah is Fletcher's son but he is his grandson too. Fletcher dies, slumped over a pile of rubble.

The family is headed back to Faraway Downs when they stop for the night. Then Sarah looks back and sees King George from the distance. He beckons Nullah to come and join him. Sarah kisses Nullah goodbye and let him goes before he runs off. The final screen tells us that Australia finally ended their Stolen Generations policy in 1973. In 2008, the Prime Minister issued a formal apology for the governments actions (the members of stolen generations).

There are four reasons why the writer interest to study this movie. Firstly, this movie is based on the true story. It tells how aboriginal children in Australia in 1939, especially Nullah, struggle their rights to live there. Their buffetings becomes harder

because The World War II comes out at 6 am local time. United States Pacific fleet is attacked at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii by the empire of Japan. United State has joined the war. As the Japanese hordes poured South-wards, Darwin becomes messy and burnt, so it is not safe for Nullah, Sarah, and Drover. Nullah becomes motherless child, hence Sarah wants to adopt him, but he would go walkabout with his grandfather, King George. This movie also shows how Sarah, who cannot have a child, fights for adopting Nullah although he is an aborigine child because she loves him so much and regards him as her own son.

Secondly, this movie raises an interesting issue based on the background of the main actor, Nullah. Nullah is creamy (mixed-race). He is mixed-race who his mother is black and his father is white. Aborigine is the original race in Australia, but the government itself, treats them inhumanely. This movie shows how terrible the government treats them and how Nullah, as a child, struggles against the policy. The government takes the aborigine children out into Mission Island for the reason to look after them in the church. But as matter of fact, they are trapped because the first Japanese planes' target is to bomb the Mission Island.

Thirdly, the one of the main actors, Sarah, acts satisfactory for the onlookers. She is an independent woman, modest, and responsible. She has ever informed Drover that she cannot have a child because she is sterile. However, she proves her responsibility to adopt Nullah. When Nullah's mother dies, Nullah gets sad and gloomy. But Sarah tries to entertain Nullah by reading him a short story about *Wizard of Oz* and singing a little bit of *Somewhere Over the Rainbow* and Nullah makes

connections about King George (magic man/*Wizard of Oz*). Not only entertains Nullah, Sarah also fires Fletcher because he hits Nullah, his mother, and his grandmother when Nullah proves that the tower works well and Fletcher is a liar. She is providing people that she loves although they are poor, black, and obscure. Her act of caring for them doesn't stop there. Sarah strives for getting Nullah free from Mission Island and then works in the city for the Army at their radio headquarters. But, the main radio for Darwin is located on the same island as the mission. Japanese planes take off from a carrier and head towards Darwin and the Mission Island. She fails to save him.

The last reason is Baz Luhrmann's epic romance *Australia* has become the second-highest grossing Australian movie of all time. Just in 14th week of release, the movie has grossed \$A36.78 million at the Australian box office. The movie, starring Nicole Kidman and Hugh Jackman, is also set to pass \$US200 million (\$A307.93 million) at the global box office this weekend, with the movie still to open in Japan. Twentieth Century Fox Australia managing director Marc Wooldridge said that the ongoing box office success of *Australia* had been outstanding and a unique testament to the way the movie had been embraced by that country.

This movie is extremely close related with Marxist view because the story overall tells a racial discrimination especially for aborigine people. Meanwhile, the definition of Marxism is a concept emphasizes the role of class and ideology as the practitioners' reflect, propagate, and even challenge the prevailing social under (Murfin, 1998). In the mean time, racial means a vast family of human beings,

generally of common blood and language, always of common history, traditions and impulses, who are both voluntarily and involuntarily striving together for the accomplishment of certain more or less vividly conceived ideals of life (DuBoi, 2000:110). The researcher defines that racial discrimination is to treat someone on the basis of race, especially against blacks and other non-whites. Therefore, the researcher applies Marxist theory to analyze *Australia* because the whole story is about racial discrimination which is regarded as the lowest people.

In addition, based on the fourth reasons, the researcher decides an analysis focusing on strive against racial discrimination of aborigine child, Nullah, as the main character by using Marxist eye. In this study, the researcher gives the title **“RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN BAZ LUHRMANN’S AUSTRALIA MOVIE (2008): A MARXIST PERSPECTIVE”** for her study.

B. Literature Review

The movie *Australia* by Baz Luhrmann is an incredible movie. As far as the writer concerns, the research on the movie *Australia* has been reviewed by three persons.

The first author is Todd McCarthy (2008) entitled *Baz’s Dazzling Oz*. This review explains an embracing grand old-school melodrama while critiquing racist old-fashioned politics that “Australia” provides a luxurious bumpy ride; like a Rolls-Royce on a rocky country road, it’s full of bounces and lurches. The epic lays an Aussie accent on colorful motifs drawn from Hollywood Westerns, war films, love

stories and socially conscious dramas. But the beauty of the film's stars and landscapes, the appeal of the central young boy and, perhaps more than anything, the filmmaker's eagerness to please tend to prevail, making for movie general audiences should go with, even if they're not swept away.

The second author is Anne Thompson (2008) entitled *Drama, Suspense and All That Baz* that concerns on the success of *Australia*; about the director who has a flair for the dramatic and ambitious. The movie is resolutely old-fashioned, broad, accessible storytelling, centering on Kidman's uptight Lady Sarah Ashley as she spars with, and then falls for, Jackman's roughhewn Drover as they drive cattle across the Outback, bonding with a young Aborigine boy before being attacked in Darwin by Japanese bombers.

The last author is Michaela Boland (2008) entitled *Biz Banks Big on Baz's 'Australia'*. It emphasizes that the movie has a great deal of awards potential. It is an epic setting, great adventure and drama, all set in a unique moment in time, circa 1935, when the world was at war and Australia was the final frontier.

Based on the three previous reviews above, the researcher decides to conduct an analysis which is focused on strive against racial discrimination of aborigine child, Nullah, as the main character by using Marxist eye. In this study, the researcher gives the title "*Racial Discrimination in Baz Luhrmann's Australia Movie (2008): a Marxist Perspective*" for her study.

C. Problem Statement

Based on the background of choosing the subject above, the problem which the research raises is “How do Sarah and Drover, as the main characters, strive against racial discrimination in Baz Luhrmann’s *Australia*?”

D. Limitation of the Study

The limitation of the study is how racial discrimination occurred in *Australia*, especially viewed by Marxist. The researcher uses Marxist perspective to analyze this movie because this approach is more suitable to draw the major condition during the period within the movie.

E. Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to reveal how Sarah and Drover strive against racial discrimination on a Marxist perspective.

F. Benefit of the Study

There are two kinds of benefits of this study. They are as follows:

1. Theoretical Benefit

Giving several contributions to the larger body of the knowledge or the development of knowledge particularly studies in Baz Luhrmann’s *Australia*.

2. Practical Benefit

Giving deeper understandings in literary field as the reference to the other researcher and enriching the literary study especially for the English students in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta.

G. Research Method

In this research, the writer analyses against race discrimination in *Australia* movie by using qualitative method.

1. Types of the Study

There are two types of research, quantitative research and qualitative research. It is library research while data source are using literary data. It purposes to analyze the movie using Marxist perspective. The steps to conduct this research are (1) determining the type of the study, (2) determining the object of the study, (3) determining data and data source, (4) determining technique of data collection, and (5) determining technique of data analysis.

2. Object of the Study

The object of this research is *Australia* movie which is directed by Baz Luhrmann in November 26, 2008 and released by Century Fox.

3. Types of the Data and the Data Source

a. Type of the Data

The data in the research can be divided into two kinds of data. They are primary data and secondary data. Primary data is the main data consisting dialogue, action, and description about the character of the movie. Secondary data is supporting data consist of theoretical approach; in this case, the secondary data is data concerning Marxist approach.

b. Data Sources**1) Primary Data**

Primary data in the research consist of data collected from the movie of Baz Lurhmann *Australia*. The data are taken from the dialogue, character's description, plot and all of the statement related to the problems.

2) Secondary Data

Secondary data in the research are from the script of the movie, information from books and internet that is relevant to the subject matter.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

The technique of collecting data was purpose sampling where the researcher took sample of dialogue and ellipse of picture of the movie then used it as a starting point to analyze the issue. The analysis of the sample and dialogue and ellipse of picture could be used as a representation of general phenomena in social life. In order to make the data more complete, the researcher is doing some steps are as follows, watching movie and finding out the important sentence on the dialogues, reading script of the movie, and reading the books that are connected to the research, browsing to the internet to get some information article that related to the research, finding out the important data, arranging the important data based on its, and developing the data that are provided.

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

The technique of data analysis is descriptive. It described the structural elements of the movie and then analyzes it by using the Marxist perspective. The steps are: classifying the data, verifying the data, and interpreting the data based on underlying theories.

H. Research Paper Organization

This research paper consists of six chapters. *Chapter I* includes introduction which deals with background of the study, literature review, problem statement, limitation of the study, objective of the study, benefit of the study, research method, and the last is research paper organization. *Chapter II* contains underlying theory of Marxist perspective which would be used to analyze the movie. Underlying theory includes notion of discrimination, notion of Marxism, major principles of Marxism, structural elements of the movie, and theoretical application. *Chapter III* consists of social historical background of Australia society in the early twenty century. *Chapter IV* is related the structural analysis of the movie which involving the structural elements of character and characterization, setting, point of view, plot, theme, and discussion. *Chapter V* discusses Marxist analysis that consists of dialectical materialism, historical materialism, alienation, class struggle, revolution, and discussion. And the last chapter deals with conclusion and suggestion of the research.