

**PREJUDICES, STEREOTYPES, AND DISCRIMINATION  
AGAINST MOSLEM ARAB IN EDWARD ZWICK'S *THE SIEGE*:  
SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH**



**RESEARCH PAPER**

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

Social life is an interesting subject to be studied years by years because it always changes every seconds, minutes, hours, days, till years and decades. Many researchers have studied about social life and *Muqaddimah* which was written by Ibn Khaldun is considered to be the earliest work of Sociology as a social science which emphasized on social life (Sociology, 2008). Later, this sociology is applied in literature which emphasizes a literary work based on the social life. The research about social life in literature in society becomes more popular since it proves that it influences the work of an author in making their literary works. Wellek and Warren in their book 'theory of literature' stated that "literature is a social institution, using as its medium language, a social creation. They are conventions and norms which could have arisen only in a society. Furthermore, literature represents life and life is in large measure is social reality" (Wellek and Warren, 1962: 94). In the same book as Wellek and Warren, De Bonald also stated that "literature is an expression of society" (Wellek and Warren, 1962: 95). It means that when the author is making his literary works, they are expressing the social life where the author lives. A lot of sociological theories are made because of the condition of the authors' environment. Feminism for example, it emerged because of the domination of male in the society and Conflict theory and neo-

marxist theory emerged because of the social struggle following the social movement in the 1960s.

The changes continuity in the social life in a society will bring the different point of view on seeing something or handling something at any time. The changes can happen because of the development of technology, culture, life style, the new religion, immigrant or new comers and else which are coming inside their society.

Society in Oxford dictionary is described as “a system in which people live in organized communities” (Oxford, 1995: 394). Learning about society means learning about its people, its culture, its religion, and everything relates to the society including their point of view. And because society is a system, sometimes it is not work well when a society with different ethnic, race, religion, and life style comes inside their society which is different with them because the new system brought by the new comers can influence their system and even change the system. Some societies may welcome the new system and accept the risk of the changing of their society and some are not because of their fear of changing. This fear of changing can emerge from their prejudices and stereotypes against the new system or society. In literature, this phenomenon can be presented in the form of plays, drama, films, etc.

As a literary work, and as Wellek, Warren and De Bonald stated that the literature is the expression of society; film has a big role in conveying the social value of a society to other people. For example, film is used for conveying the prejudices, stereotypes, and discrimination against other

society. One example of films showing the prejudices, stereotypes, and discrimination against other societies is *The Siege* film. The word prejudices has several meaning depend on the people who used the word, but prejudice in Oxford, (1995: 325) is described as “unfair dislike something or somebody” and in wikipedia (Prejudice, 2008), the word prejudice refers to “prejudgment: i.e. making a decision before becoming aware of the relevant facts of a case” (Prejudice, 2008). As prejudices, stereotype also has several meaning. Stereotypes in (Stereotype, 2008) is defined as “simplified and/or standardized conception or image with specific meaning, often held in common by one group of people about another group” and described as “fixed idea of what something or somebody is like” in Oxford (oxford, 1995: 407). The other aspect which is usually related to prejudice and stereotype is discrimination. Discrimination has meaning as “behavior (an action), with reference to unequal treatment of people because they are members of a particular group” (Discrimination, 2008).

*The Siege* is a 1998 film about a fictional situation where terrorist cells have made several attacks on Brooklyn, New York City. In this film, all of the terrorist were Arabs and Moslems. It was directed by Edward Zwick and stars Denzel Washington, Bruce Willis, Annette Bening, and Tony Shalhoub. Edward Zwick is an American film director and film producer who was born on October 8, 1952 in Chicago, Illinois. He received an A.B from Harvard in 1974. He attended the AFI Conservatory and graduated with an M.F.A. degree in 1975. His movies include *The Last Samurai* (2003) and *Blood Diamond*

(2006). He was one of the recipients of the Academy Award for Best Picture for *Shakespeare in Love*, he was also nominated for it for *Traffic* (Edward Zwick, 2008).

This film is regarded as box office failure because when it was released on 1998, this film was not popular. This film also received a lot of criticism from the society especially from the Islamic and Arab organizations. One of the criticism was coming from Hussein Ibish as the member of American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, a grassroots civil rights organization open to all regardless of background, faith and ethnicity committed to defending the rights of people of Middle Eastern descent and promoting their rich cultural heritage. In his e-mail which was sent to the director of this film, he stated that *The Siege* is a dangerous film which is extremely offensive and lead to hate crimes towards Arab Community (AmericanArab Anti Discrimination Committee, 1998). He also thought that *The Siege* was insidious and incendiary because of its effect in reinforcing stereotypes that lead to hate crimes (The siege, 1998). The criticism was not only coming from American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee but also coming from the Council on American-Islamic Relations which stated that Moslems have total disregard for human life in this film (The siege, 1998).

The prejudices, stereotypes, and discrimination against Arab cannot be separated from the history of western countries. The phenomena of this prejudices, stereotypes and discrimination against Arab have been appeared in Europe for centuries (Anti Arabism, 1998) and have been shown in America

for years. Philosopher and alleged cult-leader Ayn Rand displayed strong anti-Arab feelings, which she sought to infill among her followers, she stated that "The Arabs are one of the least developed cultures. They are typically nomads. Their culture is primitive, and they resent Israel because it's the sole beachhead of modern science and civilization on their continent. When you have civilized men fighting savages, you support the civilized men, no matter who they are" (Anti Arabism, 1998). Actually, the appearance of Arab in Hollywood films was happened so many times and some of the films gave an unfair judgment against the Arab. This phenomenon has been researched by Simon. In his Essay about Arabs in Hollywood, Simon gave his opinion which stated that "Arab culture has been the most misunderstood and supplied with the worst stereotypes" (Simon in his essay ": An Undeserved Image"). This social phenomena shown in *The Siege* make the researcher interested to analyze the prejudices, stereotypes, and discrimination in Edward Zwick's *The Siege* by using the sociological approach and proposes to conduct a research entitle **Prejudices, Stereotypes, and Discrimination Against Moslem Arab in Edward Zwick's The Siege: Sociological Approach.**

## **B. Literary Review**

After looking for several literary reviews in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, the writer has not found the research about *The Siege* film done by the other writers. Here, the writer will analyze *The Siege* film

focusing on prejudices, stereotypes, and discrimination by using sociological approach.

### **C. Problem Statement**

From the background of the study above, the writer would like to state the problem statement as “How the prejudices, stereotypes, and discrimination against Moslem Arab are shown in Edward Zwick’s *The Siege* film”.

### **D. Objectives of the Study**

Based on the Problem Statement above, the writer can propose some objectives of the Study below:

1. To analyze the film based on its structural elements.
2. To analyze prejudices, stereotypes, and discrimination against Moslem Arab shown in Edward Zwick’s *The Siege* based on sociological approach.

### **E Limitation of the Study**

To make the research appropriate with the objectives of the Study, the writer will make a limitation to the research. The writer will only focus on how the prejudices, stereotypes, and discrimination against Moslem Arab are shown in Edward Zwick’s *The Siege* Film by using Sociological approach.

## **F. Benefit of the Study**

The reason why someone makes a research is to get the benefit from it. By so doing, the writer expects some benefits are produced from this research, those are:

### **1. Theoretical Benefit:**

By doing this research, the writer wants to have contribution in criticizing a literary work and producing criticism as objective as the writer can.

### **2. Practical Benefit**

This research can be used by the next researchers to do a research relate to sociological approach, especially on Edward Zwick's *The Siege* film.

## **G. Research Method**

In doing a research, the writer should apply a method so that the research can be done systematically. The methods of the research are follows:

### **1. Type of the Research**

The writer will use descriptive qualitative research in this literary work. Crabtree and Miller (1999: 5) says that a qualitative is an interpretive research focusing on a natural, often human, field of activity, with the goal of generating holistic and realistic descriptions and/or explanations.

### **2. Object of the Study**

The object of the study is *The Siege* film by Edward Zwick.

### **3. Data and Data Sources**

#### a. Primary Data Sources.

The primary data source is the film itself, *The Siege* directed by Edward Zwick.

#### b. Secondary Data Source.

The secondary data sources are the other literatures those are internet, articles and everything which are relevant to the film.

### **4. Data Collecting Method and Technique**

The data collecting method will be library research, released document to be observed. Meanwhile, the techniques are:

- a. Watching the film repeatedly.
- b. Taking notes of the influence information in both primary and secondary data
- c. Arranging the data into several groups based on its classifications.
- d. Selecting particular parts considered important and relevant for analysis.
- e. Drawing conclusion and formulating suggestion

### **5. Data Analyzing Technique**

The step of analyzing the data of this research are by analyzing the structural elements of the work and analyzing the sociological perspectives of the work. Analyzing the data of this research is trying to clarify the obtained data by selecting the necessary ones.

## **H. Research Paper Organization**

In order to make this paper easy to be followed, the writer gives some order for the paper organization. Chapter I is introduction which covers background of the study, literature review, problem statement, objective of the study, limitation of the study, benefit of the study, research method, and paper organization. Chapter II is underlying theory which covers theory about sociology of literature, major principle of sociology of literature, prejudices, stereotypes, and discrimination, Moslem Arab, and structural elements of film. Chapter III is social background of America under Bill Clinton's leadership which covers political aspect, economic aspect, science and technology, and religious aspect. Chapter IV is structural analysis. Chapter V is sociological analysis. And chapter VI is conclusion and suggestion.