

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Literature is an interesting subject to be studied. It discusses about the picture of human life. In studying of literature, the reader combine his emotion, imagination, and logical. It helps the reader think personally and intellectually. Literature is written work and exists in our society as a communicative practice with our social life. By reading literary work, the reader can understand human dreams and struggle in different places and time that he would never otherwise know. Literature it self is common term related to the fictions world. Wellek and Warren (1965: 94), said that:

Literature is social institution using as its medium language, a social creation such as traditional devices as symbolism an metre are social arisen only in society. But, furthermore, literature represents life and life is, in large measure a social reality even though the natural world and the inner or subjective world of the individual have also been objects of literary imitation.

The quotation states that literature deals with human life. Some literary works talk about the relation between individual with God, individual, and individual with society. Since their medium is language, they not only can encourage the writer to assist in producing creative and talented people, but also help those who need recognition and support. The reader can get some moral lesson or motivation for his life by reading literary works. It also tells how the writer should behave.

Literature can be categorized into drama, poetry and prose. According to John Dryden (1665: 295), Drama is work of literature or a composition which is

designed for performance, purpose and delineates life and human activity by means of presenting various actions often either monologues or dialogues of a character or a group of characters.

This research discusses a drama entitled *All God's Chillun Got Wings* written by Eugene O'Neill. Eugene O'Neill was born in New York, 16<sup>th</sup> October 1888, his father is James O'Neill. Eugene's father as a famous actor in melodrama with entitled *The Count of Monte Christo*. With the profession his father, so Eugene must be moved from city to city in America with his parents. Moving from city to city makes Eugene able to see and have some experience when he live in America. He is one of the famous American playwright. He published play, *Beyond the Horizon*, *The Emperor Jones*, *Desire Under the Elms*, *All God's Chillun Got Wings*, *The Hairy Ape*, *A Long Day's Journey Into Night*, and *A Moon for the Misbrgotten*.

In the beginning of the play, Negro and white children play on the streets and there is no race prejudice to be discovered in their attitudes toward each other. Two of them are seen growing up in the following scenes, a colored Negro boy and white girl, and prejudice grows along with a sharp consciousness of it in the minds of the town. The girl is a worthless girl, the boy an ambitious youth. She is cast aside by a prize-fighter and being alone in the world, is grateful to the negro for his adoration and marries him in order to have someone to love her sincerely. But she is white and he is black, and neither they nor those they live among forget it. Furthermore, she cannot blind herself to the fact that, save for her color, which gives her a sense of superiority, she is inferior to him. So all his ambitions to grow

into a man of importance are thorns to her and she thwarts them as best she can. He tries to pass examination that will admit him to the bar and she gloats when he fails. By this time she has lost her sanity and little, shallow, good-for-nothing that she is, she brings the play to a close by shrieking at him the word "Nigger". In her mind, sums up her feeling toward him, despite the fact that she loves him and is grateful.

*All God's Chillun Got Wings* has a lot of racism and it is shown when the white people threaten Jim. Ella and Jim as a couple of an interracial marriage, experience a real hard marriage. As in some ways their mind is still colonized with the colonial ideology of white supremacy. The more difficult challenges come from the society where Ella and Jim live. Pressure from both white and black society push them though they got married. Either white and black society does not accept their marriage. Not only does the play cover the tensions between black and white but also conflict in their own race. The drama *All God's Chillun Got Wings* shown about American life in 1920. This research focuses on main character experienced of racism. Therefore, the writer analyzed the racism experienced by the main character, Jim Harris.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

After reading the drama *All God's Chillun Got Wings* the writer has found some problems that are interesting to be discussed. Therefore, the writer formulates the problems as follows :

1. How does main character experience the racism in Eugene O'neill's *All God's Chillun Got Wings*?
2. What are the effects of racism toward major character in Eugene O'neill's *All God's Chillun Got Wings*?

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

Objectives of the study of this research are as follows:

1. To explain main character experience of the racism in Eugene O'neill's *All God's Chillun Got Wings*.
2. To describe the effect of racism toward major character in Eugene O'neill's *All God's Chillun Got Wings*.

### **1.4 Limitation of the Study**

The limitation of the study is about Jim Harris that experiences the racism in Eugene O'neill's *All God's Chillun Got Wings*. The writer limits the discussion on the Jim Harris experiences racism, after he married the white woman Ella Downey, also the effect racism toward Ella Downey.

### **1.5 The Significance of the Study**

The analysis hopefully can give some sense for the writer and the readers. For the writer, this research is very interesting and useful. It gives a concise description about how the racism between black race and white race. It is hoped this research can make the reader understand the racism in America as seen in

Eugene O'Neill's *All God's Chillun Got Wings*. Finally, the research is significant because it can be reference for the other researchers in doing further researches about racism.