

The Domination of White People Toward Chinese People in Linda Sue Park's *Prairie Lotus*

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Abstract. This study aims to find out the dominance of white people in the novel *Prairie Lotus* and the impact that occurs after the emergence of the domination in the novel. This study uses a qualitative descriptive research method. The data from this study is the conversation of the characters and the narrators' narration. The method of collecting data from this study is to read the entire contents of the novel using close reading techniques. In analyzing the data, the writer uses the theory of race and racism by Robert Miles and Malcolm Brown. The results show that white people dominate the way of life of minorities in this novel, namely Hanna. She gets a lot of oppression from white people in the Dakota area. This study also shows that there is an impact received by the main character in the novel 'Prairie Lotus', namely the impact on her psyche and mental health. The emergence of domination is due to the lack of an immediate sense of brotherhood and tolerance towards people from the same regions around the main character's residence in the novel *Prairie Lotus*.

Keywords: domination, race, racism, white people

INTRODUCTION

White people have a bad habit of looking at people who are markedly different from their people (Rabii, 2021). This is what makes white people feel they have the power to oppress minorities because of these differences. This oppression can be classified as an act of social violence precisely racial discrimination. Racial discrimination is a phenomenon that occurs in society in the form of oppression of other communities. Racial discrimination is one of the problems that people often face because of the dominance of a group that creates thoughts against minority groups (Harahap and Lubis, 2018). For example, someone who has a dark skin color is then oppressed by a white-dominated society. As explained by Ronald L Simon, et al. in the USA, individuals of

color, especially Black Americans, suffer a greater prevalence and earlier onset of chronic illness and disability than other ethnic groups (Simons et al., 2021:01).

In addition, cases of racial discrimination that often appear in people's lives are the oppression of a narrow-eyed group or the so-called Chinese group. In this case, certain racial discrimination cases do not only emphasize differences in skin colour orientation but also various aspects which are considered not by the existing scope in an area. McGrath (2022) explain that discrimination of sense or racism arises because of a thought from society. Society considers that a culture can reflect a person's behavior. This statement is also supported by Dalmage's statement in his book entitled 'Racism: A Very Short Introduction' that the idea that human biological characteristics such as skin colour, shape of nose, type of hair, and size of skull were associated with ingrained cultural and behavioral traits was well established (Dalmage, 2018:17). Based on this, people assume that if a new culture enters their territory, they are afraid that it will have a bad impact on the people around them. This thought is one of the reasons for racial discrimination that is still inherent in society.

People's views on ethnic Chinese apart from having slanted eyes, there are some Chinese ethnic who have slightly dark skin so it is common for the Chinese to experience racial discrimination caused by different ethnic groups. Striking skin colour differences are often the main reason for racial discrimination. As happened in America, racial discrimination still occurs, such as white dominants that become superior so that they have the right to discriminate against colour people who act as oppressed people.

The discussion of racial discrimination is one of the most interesting discussions to be studied more deeply. Julan et al., (2021) discussed 'Racial Discrimination Issues As Shown By Solomon And Patsey In 12 Years A Slave Movie' which concludes that The discrimination carried out by white people against Solomon and Patsey was classified into five types of discrimination, one of which was verbal discrimination and the other discrimination that emerged in this research was physical attacks. Bimantara, (2020) discussed 'Racial Discrimination Reflected in Series Drama Tennou No Ryouriban (The Emperor's Cook)' which concludes that the discrimination that occurs is caused by a phenomenon called Yellow Peril. It is suspected that Yellow Peril is one of the causes of discrimination in this research. The discrimination that emerged in this research is similar to previous research, namely verbal discrimination. Wijayanti & Wulandari, (2020) discussed 'The Negative Impact of Racial Discrimination Experienced by African-American People Reflected in Angie Thomas' The Hate You Give' which concludes that discrimination carried out by white people has a very negative impact on black people. One of the negative impacts that arises is disturbed mental health. Marlina (2019) discussed 'Racial Discrimination In Novel We Cast A Shadow (2019) By Maurice Carlos Ruffin' which concludes that The protagonist, an African American, tries to make peace and accepts bad treatment from white Americans so he can survive in the middle of an American city.

Having some similarities with the work above, this study discusses the discrimination caused by domination of white race descendants in the northern United States in a novel entitled 'Prairie Lotus'. In this novel, it is explained that a little girl named 'Hanna' is a descendant of half china and half white. Thus, she inherits a skin colour that is not white. Hanna had to hide her identity from her friends when she decided to go to school because

she was someone who was not white. Hanna has a desire to become a designer in her father's clothes shop. She wants to fulfill her mother's wish to have a diploma. However, because 'Hanna' is a little girl who is different from the majority of the population in Dakota, Hanna's wishes are fiercely opposed by local residents and ostracized by the white majority there.

To describe some of the questions in this study, the writer uses the theory of 'Race and Racism' from Robert Miles and Malcolm Brown which discusses racism against a race caused by one ethnic group against another ethnic group (Miles & Brown, 2003). This is also supported by the statement by Kirkinis et al. (2021:02) 'The behavioural manifestation of racism, racial discrimination, is at the intersection of power and prejudice. Racial discrimination is understood to be a combination of the ideology of racial superiority (racism) and the social structures and interpersonal behaviors associated with dominance and oppression. Solomos (1993:374) points out that the majority of us understand racism as a social evil perpetuated by prejudiced white people that could be overcome through bonding between blacks and liberal whites, through militant protest, changing of laws, or racial integration.

Miles and Brown wrote their views on racism: the concept of racism has been its (re)definition as an exclusively 'white' phenomenon (Miles & Brown, 2003:73). This is related to the white phenomenon in America, where a person of white descent always feels that he is a pioneer to move other descendants who feel below him. Miles and Brown also explained that racism is a psychological disorder 'deeply embedded in White people from a very early age on both a conscious and an unconscious level', this has, as a result, 'deluded Whites into a false state of superiority that has left them in a pathological and schizophrenic state' (Miles & Brown, 2003:74). This phenomenon is very clearly depicted in the novel *Prairie Lotus* by Linda Sue Park (2020). Linda Sue Park is a writer based in South Korea. She is one of the writers of children's novels from South Korea. Linda Sue Park managed to write 6 works of children's literature. The first novel written by Linda Sue Park was titled 'Seesaw Girl' which was published in 1999. One of the children's novels by Linda Sue Park that won an award was 'Prairie Lotus'. The novel entitled 'Prairie Lotus' is a novel that received an award from The Ohio Digital Library. The analysis of this study focuses on how the domination of white people occurs in the *Prairie Lotus* novel against the main character 'Hanna' and also focuses on the impact that will occur after racial discrimination caused by white people. Of the many reviews of the novel entitled 'Prairie Lotus', no writer has researched this novel yet. So, the writer decided to raise the theme about racial discrimination that occurred in this novel as research material for this study.

METHOD

This study used a qualitative descriptive method. The qualitative descriptive research method is a research method that describes a phenomenon that is currently happening. The source of data for this research was a novel entitled 'Prairie Lotus'. The data was taken are in the form narrative from the author and from the character utterances in the novel. This research is qualitative research, so that the key instrument in this research is the writer herself. In collecting data, the writer used documentation to collect the information.

This study applied several steps based on qualitative methods. Data analysis was carried out starting with data collection/compiling, reduction, interpretation, and conclusions. The data analysis steps were described based on the theory of Robert Miles and Brown. The first step was collecting data from the character utterances contained in the novel entitled "Prairie Lotus" by Linda Sue Park. In this step, the researcher collected the data based on the emergence of domination exercised by white people over Hanna. The second step was data reduction. In this step, the researcher analyzes and describes the results of data collection into indicators of discrimination that appear in the theory of race and racism by Robert Miles and Brown. The next step was presenting the data. In this step, the researcher presented or explained the data and focused on the answers to research questions. Finally, the steps taken were interpreting and making conclusions based on the theories of race and racism by Robert Miles and Brown.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section will explain the findings regarding the domination of white people described in the novel *Prairie Lotus* and the impact of racial discrimination.

A. The Domination of White People

As previously explained, dominance arises because of the habit of thinking someone who feels he has more power so that it can put pressure on people who are classified as weak people. In the novel 'Prairie Lotus', it is explained that the presence of minorities in Laforge makes most people think that they have the power to speak out and reject the existence of these people. This is experienced by Hanna as a Chinese woman and the main character in the novel who gets a form of social discrimination due to her presence in the city of Laforge. The discrimination experienced by Hanna has been going on for a long time, starting when she was little and lived with her mother and father. The discrimination that arises is due to his existence as an ethnic Chinese among white people in California. It can be seen in the following quotation:

Hanna stayed at Miss Lorna's for what felt like forever. But it was really only a few days before Papa returned. The news was bad. At least fifteen Chinese men had been lynched. Chinese-owned houses and businesses had been ransacked, looted, burned. While Papa stood guard at his shop, Mama had gone to check on her friends. In trying to help them save their noodle shop, she had been overcome by smoke and collapsed (Park, 2020:17)

This quotation explains that discrimination arises since Hanna's mother was still with Hanna. The murders and violence that emerged were a form of rebellion against the existence of the Hanna race and other races in Laforge, California. As time goes by the discrimination that appears in society begins to change. From non-verbal crimes committed by white people to verbal crimes. As can be seen in the quotation below:

Apparently Mr. Baxter was still not satisfied. "And she'll be kept out of school until then?" "No. She'll attend school as long as there are no problems, and it'll be up to Miss Walters to decide otherwise, same as with any other student "But that might be breaking the law!" (Park, 2020:45)

In this quote, it is explained that a white man named Mr Baxter is trying to prevent Hanna from getting equal rights, namely education. The actions carried out by Mr Baxter were a form of verbal domination carried out by white people. Based on this quotation, it can be explained that Mr Baxter as a white Laforge community carried out a critical process to give his rejection regarding the existence of 'Hanna' in a school similar to his child. Mr. Baxter considered that this could affect the laws in force in his area so Mr. Baxter cast his opinion to expel Hanna from the school. This human nature appears when he considers a threat around his territory so that the antagonistic nature of humans appears and oppresses other humans. The quotation shows the power of the white man, namely Mr. Baxter who tried to deny Hanna's existence. Furthermore, dominance appears in 'Prairie Lotus' with the arbitrary treatment carried out by school friends 'Hanna' as a white person to give a deterrent effect to 'Hanna'. This can be seen in the quotation below:

Hanna followed and watched as he peered around the side of the stove toward the water bucket. He used the dipper to fish out a sodden piece of paper and held it up. She gasped in dismay: It was indeed her penmanship work. Water streamed from the paper—nearly every word had washed away. Her shock lasted for only a moment. He knew where to find it. And I would wager he knows who did it, too (Park, 2020:50)

In the quotation, it is explained that Hanna's schoolmate carries out the bullying by deliberately spilling water on Hanna's paper. This is also a form of domination in which a schoolmate 'Hanna' has the power supported by the surrounding environment to commit the act so that it is made as if it is an ordinary mistake that is not punished but instead harms 'Hanna' who acts as a newcomer, who have no power. It is explained that the existence of racial discrimination is caused by the stigma of white people who consider themselves to be the most powerful people to oppress people of colour. As stated in the 'Prairie Lotus', white people think that people who are not white are no better than them, so they consider Hanna as a descendant of China as a dirty person. This can be seen in the quotation below:

Someone had drawn a crude, cruel caricature of her face, bucktoothed and with slits for eyes. Above the drawing, a caption: Dirty Chinaman! Below it, the words Were I you, I would not come to school! (Park, 2020:53)

Based on the quotation, there is a phenomenon that white people feel themselves as superiors. It is shown when Hanna's school friend asks her to cross out the desk as if to show that Hanna is not worthy to stay at school. Indirectly, this can be categorized as a form of expulsion carried out by white people against people who have dark skin. Furthermore, Dolly's father, a white man, carries out a form of oppression against Hanna. As stated in the quotation below:

As Dolly's father started up the horses, he leaned over the side of the wagon seat and spat. Not at Hanna—but unmistakably toward her. She saw the blob of spit hit the ground (Park, 2020:63)

In the quotation, it is explained that Dolly's father carried out a form of oppression against 'Hanna'. The suppression is in the form of ostracism carried out for 'Hanna' as if to give a warning not to approach 'Dolly'. This is also one of the views of white people

against black people that the existence of black people can have a bad impact. So, they are white people who continue to try to do some form of oppression because they feel they are the most powerful people who will get support from people around them. The analysis of the form of domination that appears in the next novel can be seen from the quotation below:

Dolly shrieked with laughter. “Well, of course you wouldn’t! How silly of me—sometimes I just don’t know what’s going to come out of my mouth!” Then she pulled a little closer to Hanna. “Your eyes,” she said, “they’re shaped so different. Is it hard for you to see?”(Park, 2020:60)

Based on the quotation above, it can be explained that white people give one very bad treatment by denouncing the physical form of the main character in this novel. This can be said as a form of habit that is carried out by white people when they meet some people who look very different from their group. This can also be categorized as a racial difference between 'Hanna' and 'Dolly', giving rise to a form of racial discrimination carried out by 'Dolly' against 'Hanna'. Furthermore, The form of domination that arises due to white people can be seen in the quotation below:

She couldn’t begin to count the number of times something like this had happened. Children pulling at the corners of their own eyes to mock her. Children, even adults, calling out “Slanty eyes!” “Slitty eyes!” “Chinaman eyes!” (Park, 2020:61)

Based on this quotation, it can be explained that hate speech committed by white people is not far from matters related to race. As stated in the quotation above, the Chinese race with the slanted eye shape of 'Hanna' is one of the ridicule that is often made by other white people. This is also a form of domination against differences in a person's physical form. Furthermore, white people also give some very conspicuous forms of resistance, because they feel they have power. It can be seen in the 'Prairie Lotus' as in the quotation below:

“I’m not saying to chase them out of town.” Baxter’s voice again. “But there’s gotta be laws about this. I know coloreds can’t go to school with our kids. Indians can’t either. Isn’t it the same for Chinamen?” (Park, 2020:45)

Based on the quotation above, it can be explained that Mr Baxter rejected the existence of other ethnic groups in the school. In this case, ethnic minorities such as India and China do not have the same opportunity to express themselves freely because there are several legal regulations that must be followed so that the majority tribes also feel they have the advantage and power to treat ethnic groups that are considered minorities. The form of domination of white people arises because they feel that the ethnic differences between the ethnic majority and ethnic minorities are very different. The majority ethnic feel themselves better in a country so that they judge other ethnic groups badly. It can be seen in 'Prairie Lotus' as in the quotation below:

“Harris, we’re all here to build new lives for our families,” said Mr. Baxter. “We’ve got the chance to make this town just the way we want it. And what we don’t want is trouble.” At least we agree on that, Hanna thought grimly (Park, 2020:44)

Based on the quotation above, it is explained that the presence of a new tribe in the area can cause conflicts that trigger a commotion between ethnic immigrants and the majority tribe in the region. So Mr Baxter strongly opposes the existence of Hanna who has half white and half Chinese ethnic ancestry. In addition, white people also have a habit of dominating an area where there are people who are not white or outside the white race. It can be seen in the narrative below:

Hanna hadn't considered what it would mean to be Bess's employer. Being in the same class at school didn't necessarily mean that they were the same age; Bess might well be older than Hanna. And the white person was almost always the boss, not the other way around. (Park, 2020:93)

In the narration above, it is explained that although many differences arise, whether they are good differences or perhaps the fact shows that the minority community is superior to the majority, the one who acts as the dominating person is the majority community. In this case, the majority of people who play a role are white people. Habits like this arise because white people think that they are the most correct people without wanting to know any facts so this can be categorized into the form of the concept of racism 'white racism'. Furthermore, the behavior of white people can be seen in the quotation below:

"How could it have been your fault? You're the one who's hurt. And a girl, against two grown men—" against two grown men—" Hanna interrupted her. "A half-Chinese girl," she said. "Against two white men. Everyone will side with them, not me." (Park, 2020:113)

In the quotation explains that white people dominate and will always be supported by most people. The quotation also explains that people outside of white or white races will forever be the weak side and the party who will always be blamed. The quotation reveals Hanna's statement that many people would always side by side with white people. In the quotation it explains how wrong it is that white people will always get support from many people except for minority people who are always oppressed. The actions of white people then became more and more chaotic as shown in the quotation below:

He scowled. "The ones who did speak to me were plenty clear. They're not coming to the opening, and from the way they were talking, they've no plans to become 30 customers, either. Not a one of them would tell me why. And for every one who spoke to me, I'm betting there are others who think the same." (Park, 2020:115)

The conversation is a conversation between Hanna's father and Hanna herself. In the conversation, Hanna's father was very frustrated to see the treatment of people around him. It can be seen from the quote that white people gave an act of refusing Hanna's existence by not attending the opening of Hanna's father's new business. In the conversation above, it can be seen that Hanna's father also seems to blame Hanna for the mistakes that Hanna has made since Hanna met two white men. This is a form of discrimination that indirectly portray about Hanna's father who also seems to regret bringing Hanna to the area thus hampering his business. Based on some data that shows the form of domination of white people, of course there are some impacts that arise after the oppression carried out by white people against the main character 'Hanna'.

B. Impact of Racial Discrimination

Racial discrimination is a habit that white people have towards racial minorities. This can hurt someone who is discriminated against. The impact of racial discrimination certainly has a very significant effect on the people who experience it as experienced by Hanna in the novel 'Prairie Lotus'. Hanna must have had a very heavy effect on her psyche after experiencing racial discrimination. As stated in the quotation below:

She shook her head, knowing that her anxiety and discomfort weren't the kind of trouble Papa meant. He was asking about trouble with the other students—the sort that came about because she wasn't white (Park, 2020:31)

Based on this quotation, it explains that Hanna's habits are one of the impacts of the treatment of the people around her. The anxiety and fear that arise is a form of trauma that he experiences due to too often receiving different treatment from the surrounding environment. This was also explained by Surayya MS & Purwarno, (2022) they elaborate that “Social factors have a big role both before the traumatic event and afterward. Also, these social actors determine whether PTSD develops. The social factors include the additional stress of lower socioeconomic status and the level of social support provided to the person as a trauma victim”. Furthermore, the impact experienced by Hanna not only affects her psychology but also has an effect on the mentality she experiences. As stated in the quotation below:

For the rest of the day, she kept her head down so as not to meet anyone's eyes; attended to her studies; made sure that her face stayed blank. By the timeschool let out, she was exhausted(Park, 2020:53)

The quotation above shows that Hanna's bodily response is a form of anxiety disorder. Every step Hanna took to try to avoid the attention of the people around her made her tired. The quote above also explains that Hanna was afraid to look at her fellow students so the behavior that Hanna showed in this case could be classified as one of the characteristics of an anxiety disorder. Hanna occasionally gets some behaviors like trying to control her anger and being unable to express the emotions that surround her. This is shown in the novel *Prairie Lotus* “Hanna clenched her jaw against the familiar twinned feelings of anger and helplessness (Park, 2020:58)”. This sentence shows that Hanna is trying to suppress her own emotions and chooses not to express her opinion regarding the actions and threats given by other parents. The quotation also shows the behavior shown by Hanna is one of the effects of her mental disorder, where this condition forces Hanna to remain silent and not act appropriately. Due to several acts of discrimination against her, Hanna did not have the strength to fight against these incidents. It also shows other effects Hanna experiences, such as surrendering to her situation in the novel *Prairie Lotus*.

Hanna stood paralyzed. He thinks being seen with me is a disgrace. She wished she could disappear, simply vanish, like a puff of smoke. She tried to think of Mama—what would she do? What would she say?—but humiliation had emptied her mind(Park, 2020:63)

In the quotation, it is defined that Hanna diverts her thoughts from the discrimination that has been previously obtained. The quotation also shows that Hanna seems to have given up on her situation and asked her mother for help to get through the various curses she was going through. Indirectly this is one of the impacts caused by the injustice he

experienced so that he has no place to vent his emotions other than pouring out to his mother, who left him first. The restlessness came back when Hanna faced Bess's Mother. As shown in the quotation below:

Bess's mother? What is she doing here? Hanna's shoulders tightened. Her mind reached for a wisp of hope: Maybe she wasn't really ignoring me outside the grocery; she was just in a hurry to get home (Park, 2020:97)

As Hanna points out in the quotation above, straining the shoulders can be interpreted as one of the attitudes that usually occur when someone feels anxious or feels excessive fear. Therefore someone tightens his shoulders so that he does not feel nervous and his body trembles with fear. The quotation explains that Hanna could not face Bess's mother due to several acts of neglect and discrimination committed by Bess's mother before, so Hanna's thoughts seemed to have been overwhelmed by previous events and made her nervous to face Bess's mother. The impact of racial discrimination further appears in the quotation below:

Hanna had been called "dirty Chinaman" more times than she could count. Usually the cruelty twisted her gut so hard that she could not speak. But she had finally tired of being angry at herself for that response, so she had spent a lot of time thinking what she should say instead (Park, 2020:100)

In the quotation it is explained that the impact given by white people to Hanna is quite large. It can be seen that white people often abuse Chinese to provoke Hanna's emotions. The impact that appears in the quotation is that Hanna always blames herself for the actions of others. This behavior is one of the effects that often arise when a person's freedom of expression is detained and blocked. He cannot express therefore he can only blame himself. In addition, the impact that Hanna got was also obtained from the pressure of Hanna's own father who is a white person. It can be seen from the quotation, "*Hanna slumped back in her chair. The conversation had lasted only a minute or two, but it had exhausted her, and she hadn't budged Papa one inch*" (Park, 2020:109). The quotation shows a narrative where Hanna is seen arguing with her father. In the quotation, it can be seen that Hanna is also suppressing her emotions so as not to peak and prefers to keep whatever she feels.

It was also seen that Hanna chose to give up and remain silent, so she felt tired of holding back all of her emotions. The next impact came when Hanna was in the crowd as contained in the quotation below:

Hanna wanted to breathe deeply, but her lungs were rigid. She could almost taste the evil in the air. Her thoughts fragmented in panic. People, not far away —just there, across the street—why did no one notice what was happening (Park, 2020:110)

The narration above is one of the situations faced by Hanna. The narration above shows that Hanna experiences fear or panic attacks when facing the public. The narration above also shows that Hanna is in a crowd but people ignore her. It could be seen that the people around Hanna did not care about the impact Hanna showed. The panic attack that Hanna experienced in the above situation is one of the effects of other mental attacks caused by people around her so Hanna has difficulty controlling her emotions and fears. The next impact that Hanna often feels also appears in the quotation, "*So unfair! Hanna felt her eyes instantly grow warm with tears. She blinked rapidly, then opened her mouth to protest. But she was too shaken to defend herself.*" (Park, 2020:111). In the quotation, it can be seen that Hanna's fear is so deep. Too often getting treatment that can silence

her rights makes Hanna also feel that she does not have the opportunity to express her emotions. It can be seen that Hanna tries to keep silent about what she is feeling. Hanna wanted to rebel but the circumstances made her silent.

Based on the impact that emerges from the data analyzed in this section, it can be concluded that racial discrimination is an act or social crime committed by many people, especially the majority community, which causes harm to one other community. In this section, the impact that arises due to racism is the impact that attacks Hanna's psychology. It is shown in some of the analyzed data that Hanna is under pressure from various directions so that it causes Hanna's mental health and psychology to begin to be disturbed and makes her a timider child in expressing her feelings

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and explanations contained in the discussion, it shows that the racial discrimination that occurred in Hanna was caused by a phenomenon called the "White Phenomenon". This phenomenon occurs because of the tendency of white people to feel that they are superior, so they have a sense of dominating weaker races. The form of domination carried out by white people is in the form of verbal treatment, namely bullying of the race of the main character in this novel, namely Hanna. . Apart from bullying, the form of domination carried out by white people is in the form of rejection of the existence of the main character in this novel. The form of rejection carried out by white people was so harsh that many racial minorities became victims and were killed.

With the dominance of white people, of course there is an impact of this dissent. The impact that appears in this novel predominantly attacks Hanna as the main character. It was explained in the previous discussion that Hanna as the main character most often received discrimination. So, this also caused Hanna to have a psychological impact. One of the impacts that emerged on Hanna was Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). This is of course very natural when you see what Hanna experienced.

It can be concluded that one of the phenomena of domination that appears in white people is a phenomenon that is very detrimental to a person, so this requires special attention so that there will be no more detrimental domination and generalizes the existence of fellow races between one race and another.

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