

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. **Background of the Study**

The term "cult" originates from the Latin word "cultus," meaning "care," "adoration," or "worship." It refers to a structured system of devotion centered on an adored object. However, since the early twentieth century, the term has been used to describe religious groupings that are feared and despised in the United States. These groups are often misinterpreted and their dangers exaggerated. The term "brainwashing culture" is a psychological manipulation used by cult leaders to dominate an individual's thoughts, beliefs, and actions. This culture often leads to ritual abuse, extreme acts, and even bloodshed. The term "cult" has also been associated with the myth of the omnipotent leader and passive follower (Wessinger C, 2012).

The study of brainwashing difficulties in cults in America is based in the 1960s anti-cult movement, which combined the notions of brainwashing and cults. The anti-cult movement appeared in response to growing concern about the impact of cults on individuals and society, as well as the potential use of brainwashing techniques to recruit followers and engage in activities such as sexual abuse, prostitution, kidnapping, and fraudulent fundraising (Campbell, 1972).

In America, ritual abuse concerns produced by cult brainwashing involve a complex interaction of psychological manipulation, group dynamics, and the power of cult leaders. The investigation of ritual abuse concerns created by brainwashing in American cults is focused on understanding the psychological manipulation of individuals as well as the elements that lead to their vulnerability to cult influence. It also tries to examine the debate over the validity of ritual abuse allegations, the role of the media, the impact of the anti-cult movement, and the politics of psychotherapy. The ultimate purpose of this research is to safeguard people against excessive influence and to develop effective intervention and therapy solutions (Victor J, 1998).

Apostle (2018) movie tells the story of a man named Thomas who tries to save his sister, who was kidnapped and then taken to an island. Thomas had to bring some money to free his sister. Throughout the journey, all the passengers behaved strangely. Thomas deliberately tricked the other passengers so they wouldn't find out that he was an intruder. When he arrives on an island, Thomas senses that the inhabitants are wrong. Thomas occupies a room where each room contains a bible, and it is known that the island he lives on is home to a cult community, which obviously not everyone knows about. In this film, Thomas carries out his disguise well. This film presents a lot of bloody scenes due to scenes of cult rituals that are inhuman.

1.2. **Research Problems**

A cult community that leads to negative things can cause social problems to occur such as murder under the guise of a cult. The following is a research question regarding a cult in the film.

1. What are the intrinsic aspects in *Apostle (2018)*?
2. How is a community in *Apostle (2018)* movie declared as a cult?
3. How did people in *Apostle (2018)* get interested to join the cult?

1.3. **Scope of the Study**

Apostle (2018) is a thriller film written and directed by Gareth Evans. The film depicts a man named Thomas Richardson who infiltrates a cult to rescue his kidnapped sister. Thomas experienced strong psychological problems due to the trauma he experienced and his dark past. Conflict occurs when Thomas has to face difficulties and challenges caused by several people as a consequence of religion affecting their lives. This study focuses on intrinsic and extrinsic elements in the *Apostle (2018)* movie. Theme, people, conflict, setting, cinematic elements, and sound are among the inherent elements of film. While the extrinsic elements will contain the analysis of cult in sociological approach and brainwashing activity to ritual abuse.

1.4. **Aims of the Study**

This aims of the study are as follows:

1. To identify the intrinsic aspects in *Apostle (2018)* movie.

2. To analyze how the community in *Apostle (2018)* is referred to as a cult.
3. To explain how people are be attracted to join the cult in *Apostle (2018)*

1.5. **Previous Studies**

In the article entitled "*Heaven's Gate: A Study of Religious Obedience*", by Davis W. (2000) analyze the ethic of obedience in religious movements, particularly in the context of Heaven's Gate cult. The article examines how cults like Heaven's Gate foster an ethic of radical obedience, suppressing doubts and promoting conformity among their followers. The article challenges the theory of brainwashing as an explanation for cult behaviour, suggesting that cult members are not recruited as zombies but rather make a conscious choice to commit to the group.

For second article by Barker Eileen (1986) examines theories on why people join movements and their influences in the article "*Religious Movements: Cult and Anticult Since Jonestown*". This article focuses on after effects of mass suicide/murder of Jim Jones' followers. The article highlights the role of sociologists as witnesses in court cases and participant observers at conferences organized by the movements. It suggests the need for further comparative research and refined classificatory systems in understanding these movements. The paper mentions the demographic changes, death of leaders, and changing

relationships with society as areas of future study caused by 'brainwashing' activities carried out by cult members to attract potential new members to enter their community.

For third article, Chryssides (2018) with the article "*Suicide, Suicidology, and Heaven's Gate*" discusses suicide pacts and their rare occurrence. The Heaven's Gate group followed Derek Humphry's recommendations for suicide. In this article, charismatic leaders secure group loyalty and isolate them from reality.

In researching literature, Julia List (2009) examines how three contemporary novelists namely Thomas Pynchon, Katherine Dunn, and Don DeLillo interpret the spread of cults and other independent communities in the United States in the article "*Call Me a Protestant: Liberal Christianity, Individualism, and the Messiah in 'Stranger in a Strange Land', 'Dune', and 'Lord of Light.'*" The interpretations are a critique of individualism and the destructive consequences of individual surrender, which then develops an effort to keep the peace but always attention to danger.

Another example of literature dealing with cult is the article "*Toward a Sociology of Cult Films: Reading 'Rocky Horror'*" by Patrick T. Kinkade and Michael A. Katovich (1992). They discussed the sociological ties found in the film "*Rocky Horror*". The sociology contained in this film is loyalty in social that does not affect changes in the

infrastructure of society because it has created and inspired social changes that are not always visible.

Based on the studies above, this research is different from several previous studies with the topic of how the people in the film *Apostle* (2018) live in a cult that is formed due to the brainwashing culture that influences them and also how the community faces a ritual in the name of God in the name of God for their cult community.

1.6. **Research Method**

1.6.1. **Data and Source of Data**

The research presented here focuses on qualitative data in the form of a compilation of sequences from the movie. The data will be subsequently supported by importing screenshots and narration relevant to the analysis. The primary source of data for this research is the movie *Apostle* (2018), whose official script was authored by Gareth Evans. Then, the secondary data for this research used library research such as books, journals, and articles about the topic.

1.6.2. **Method of Collecting Data**

This research collects its data through library research. According to Zeid (2004:4), library research involves collecting data from research that utilises library sources. In addition, library research requires finding and recognising sources that offer personal or expert opinion or data based on researchers, a requirement for all other sorts of research (George, 2008:6). On the other hand, library research collects and analyses data

using library sources. Additionally, the researcher draws on and incorporates her ideas to synthesise the conclusion. The researcher uses a variety of sources and books as references for this study. It was also restricted to library research, as the data did not originate from the field but were compiled from various references.

1.6.3. **Method of Approach**

This study uses the sociological approach by Durkheim (1984) to analyse the cult community with brainwashing activities and ritual abuse using Durkheim's sociological method, one can apply his theory of religion as a cohesive system of beliefs and practices centred around sacred entities that unite people into a single moral community. Durkheim's perspective emphasizes the role of religion in promoting social cohesion, behaviour consistency, and offering strength during life's transitions and tragedies. This approach allows for an understanding of how cults use sacred symbols and practices to control and influence their members, which is essential in the context of brainwashing activities and ritual.

1.7. **Organization of the Study**

The organization of this writing consists of 4 chapters:

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter has seven sub-chapters such as background of the study, research problems, scopes of the study, aims of the study,

previous studies, research method, and and organization of the writing.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, author wrote the theory of intrinsic and extrinsic elements in the *Apostle (2018)* movie.

CHAPTER III

DISCUSSION

This chapter will explain the results and discussion of the research based on research problems.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, author will show the conclusion based of the result of research problems.

BIBLIOGRAPHY