CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the first chapter, this research discusses the following; background of study, scope of study, problem formulation, research objectives, review on studies, method of research, significant of study and presentation.

A. Background of the Study

The United States is a country that players an important role in global politics and popular culture. The United States has a rich history of political and cultural influences over the world. As a superpower country, the United States has significant politics, military, technology, and economic power. The United States is also known for its values of democracy, freedom and justice, which form the basis of its foreign policy (Ivo H. Daalder and James M. Lindsay 2003).

In foreign policy discourse, the traditional dichotomy between realism, which centers on the pursuit of national interests through military force, and idealism, which focuses on building a peaceful and human rights-based international order, is being challenged. The modern landscape, shaped by interconnectedness and the diminishing effectiveness of military power, requires re-evaluation. Although President Biden advocates a values-based approach, echoing previous administrations, there is a contradiction between rhetoric and action. The combination of value-based conflict and geopolitical competition with Russia and China, as seen in Ukraine, highlights this tension. Moreover, a truly value-based foreign policy should priorities human rights and consider alternatives to traditional military strategies.

The Biden administration's foreign policy achievements and challenges offer insights into the emerging paradigm. While its handling of Ukraine demonstrates a commitment to supporting allies without risking escalation, its approach to counterterrorism, particularly in Afghanistan, raises concerns. Reliance on "over the horizon" strikes contradicts principles of international law and human rights, potentially exacerbating conflict. Despite these challenges, NATO's adoption of a new Strategic Concept underlines a shift towards integrating human security across military operations, mirroring efforts in countries such as the UK. Embracing a human rights-based approach to security requires a fundamental shift in military strategy and reinforces the importance of aligning actions with stated values in foreign policy.

Going forward, there are calls for the United States to priorities human security and integrate human rights considerations into military planning. This entails redefining the role of the military beyond geopolitical competition and counterterrorism towards crisis management, peacekeeping, and protection of civilians. Such an approach not only aligns with values-based rhetoric but also offers a more effective response to contemporary global challenges. By adopting a human rights-based framework, the US can navigate complex geopolitical dynamics while promoting peace, security and respect for universal rights on the international stage (Mary Kaldor, 2023).

American policy refers to any policy related to foreign affairs. It actually depends on who the president is, whether he or she is liberal or conservative. During the hostage crisis at the US Embassy in Tehran, Iran in 1979, the United States was under the leadership of President Jimmy Carter. At the time, the United States sought to resolve the complicated and tense situation. Although diplomatic efforts were made to find a peaceful solution, such as negotiations with the Iranian government, they were unsuccessful in freeing the hostages, most importantly, the United States must understand its added value

compared to other countries, by truly prioritizing issues such as multilateralism and human rights that are core to its identity, and which its rivals ignore. If it can strike the right balance, the United States can achieve important good for the world while pursuing its own interests and recognizing the interests and priorities of other countries. The Middle East would be a good place to test this new foreign policy-not only because the current violence and crises demand a better policy, but also because it is in the Middle East that the United States' aspirations are least aligned with America's true strengths (Peter Salisbury, 2024).

During the crisis, the United States faced considerable political and public pressure to address the situation. The United States government sought to ensure the safety of its hostages, while maintaining diplomatic relations with Iran. However, this incident affected the United States' foreign policy towards Iran and also worsened bilateral relations between the two countries.

After 444 days of hostage-taking, the crisis ended in 1981 when President Carter left office and was replaced by President Ronald Reagan. During the Reagan administration, relations between the United States and Iran deteriorated further, especially with the imposition of economic sanctions against Iran and other incidents.

In the context of the US foreign policy towards Iran, it is strongly influenced by domestic political and ideological factors, including the political orientation of the president and government in power. Conservatives and liberals have different approaches to foreign policy, including in dealing with situations such as the hostage crisis in Iran.

So, it can be said that the US foreign policy towards Iran during the hostage crisis in Tehran was influenced by the US internal political factors, including the political orientation of the administration in power at the time. This incident shows how the United

States is generally involved in international conflicts that involve other countries and impact its foreign policy (Dille, 2016).

In this research, America specifically refers to the United States' policy of escaping CIA agents from Tehran, as seen in the film *Argo (2012)*. The film is based on the true story of Operation *Argo (2012)* in 1979-1980, in which CIA agents posed as members of a film production team to rescue six the United States diplomats trapped in the United States Embassy in Tehran during the Iran Hostage Crisis.

In the film *Argo (2012)*, the United States' policy towards the hostage crisis in Tehran is clearly depicted. The film depicts an attempt to rescue CIA agents trapped in Iran through an undercover operation involving the production of a fictional film. Although the film has dramatic and fictional elements, the depiction of the US policy in the operation gives an idea of how they tried to save their citizens in the midst of a complex diplomatic crisis. This suggests that the United States in particular uses creative strategies in dealing with the challenges it faces in the context of international relations (Anderson, 2014).

In this study, several relevant problems and data can be identified, how the United States policy in carrying out the operation to rescue CIA agents from Tehran is reflected in the film *Argo (2012)*. How does the depiction of these policies affect public perceptions of the role of the United States in international relations. The data that can be used in this research is the film *Argo (2012)* itself, as well as historical sources and policy analyses related to the rescue operation. These sources can include books, articles, government documents, and interviews with individuals involved in the operation.

In this research, the main data used is the film *Argo (2012)* as a source of information on the US policy in the hostage crisis in Tehran. However, it is important to note that films are fictional representations that may have distortions of the actual facts. Therefore,

additional sources are needed to support the analysis of the policies depicted in the film. Sources such as history books and journal articles that discuss the US foreign policy at the time can provide a more comprehensive and accurate picture. Therefore, this research relies on a critical analysis of the film *Argo (2012)* and the use of valid sources to ensure the accuracy of the research (Mendelsohn, 2013).

The purpose of this research is to analyses the United States' policy in carrying out the operation to rescue the CIA agent from Tehran, as seen in the film *Argo (2012)*. It aims to understand the political and social context behind the policy, as well as its impact on international relations and public perception. By analyses the film and other relevant sources, this research is expected to provide a deeper insight into the US policy in the situation.

B. Scope of the Study

This research analyzes the elements of popular culture found in the film *Argo (2012)* and trace the history of the relationship between popular culture and the US foreign policy as a background to understand the context of the film *Argo (2012)* and its impact on public perception. narratives influence people's views on the US foreign policy. Finally, this research explores the impact of popular culture in shaping public opinion towards the US foreign policy, using the film *Argo (2012)* as a case study.

C. Problem Formulation

This study has some significant problems stated as follows:

1. What are the characteristics of popular culture as seen in the film *Argo (2012)*?

2. How are the roles of popular culture toward American foreign policy as Seen in the film *Argo (2012)*?

D. Objective of the Study

The objectives of this study are:

1. To Explain the characteristics of popular culture contained in the film *Argo (2012)*.

2. To Analyze the role of popular culture on the US foreign policy as seen in the film *Argo (2012)*.

E. Review of Related Studies

This research is related to research conducted by Muhammad Juwaini From Sultan Agung Islamic University Semarang entitled *The Impact of Popular Culture in creating American Hegemony reflected in the film Argo (2012)*. The study discusses the role of popular culture as soft power to prevent conflict and promote peace. The research argues that popular culture, such as film and mass media, has a significant influence on public opinion and can be used to persuade others to do what we want without coercion. It also highlights the power of media in the world and how popular culture can be a more effective tool in all areas than the use of economic and military power. The author concludes that popular culture can play an important role in conflict prevention and peace building, as it does not involve violence or bloodshed".

In addition, M. Alif Mahmudi from UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, conducted a Research entitled *PROPAGANDA IN FILM (Analysis of Anti-Iran Propaganda Techniques in Argo (2012) Film)*. This research is in accordance with the research conducted by (Muhammad Juwaini) which has been mentioned in the previous paragraph where both studies discuss about This article analyses the film *Argo (2012)* using a discourse analysis approach, focusing not only on the film itself but also on the power groups and ideologies involved in it. The analysis is conducted from two positions:

subject-object and audience or viewer, using Sara Mills' analytical model. The narrative form of the film aims to show the complexity of a character, making the audience understand the character as a whole person. The article also shows how the position of the US government is presented as the dominant point of view in the film. Overall, the article discusses how the film reflects American cultural hegemony and how popular culture can be used as a soft power to influence individuals and promote peace. However, this research focuses on a more complex analysis as it not only focuses on the film itself, but also tries to define the power groups and ideologies involved in it. This article uses Sara Mills' analytical model, which accommodates the audience's position as a second aspect in interpreting the discursive practices in a text. The film is analyzed from two positions: subject-object and audience or viewer. The narrative form of the film aims to show the complexity of a character, not only in terms of his work but also his personal life, so that the audience can understand the character as a whole person. The film also shows how the position of the United States government is presented as the dominant point of view in the film.

Another research was conducted by Nidya Utami from Riau University entitled *IRAN'S RESPONSE TO THE FILM ARGO (2012)*. The research discusses Iran's response to the film *Argo (2012)* and its portrayal of Iranian citizens. This research discusses the historical events that inspired the film, such as the CIA's involvement in overthrowing the Iranian government in 1953 and the Iran Hostage Crisis in 1979. It also explores Iran's reaction to the film, which they perceived as anti-Iranian and American propaganda. It also discusses the film's impact on Iran-the US relations and the controversy surrounding its portrayal of Iranians. Using a Realism perspective and the concept of mass media as a framework, the research highlights the influence of media in shaping public perception and its potential as a tool of political power.

The researcher found similarities and differences between this research and previous studies. The similarities are that both discuss the influence of popular culture in the context of the film *Argo (2012)* and how the film reflects American cultural hegemony and its impact on public opinion and international relations. This research brings a more comprehensive understanding of the role of popular culture in the US foreign policy and its impact on global society. The difference between this research and previous studies is that the researcher focuses on the elements of popular culture contained in the film *Argo (2012)* and the role of popular culture in the US foreign policy as seen in the film *Argo (2012)*.

F. Research Method

This research employs qualitative methods to systematically address problems through the description and identification of various textual elements, including words, phrases, idioms, sentences, and dialogues. As outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994) in "Qualitative Data Analysis," qualitative data typically consists of words that provide detailed explanations and descriptions, such as sentences, phrases, speech, and dialogue (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 45).

1. Data and Data Sources

The research data is categorized into two types:

A. Primary Data

This data is sourced directly from the film itself, specifically the dialogue from the *Argo (2012)* film script.

B. Secondary Data

This supporting data includes articles, the *Argo (2012)* film script, international journals, books, and theses related to the research topic.

2. Data Collection Technique

Data collection involves gathering information that will be analyzed using specific methods relevant to the research. The data collection methods employed in this study are:

A. Watching the Film

Since the object of this research is the film "Argo," the initial step is to watch the film repeatedly and read the film script carefully to gain a comprehensive understanding of its elements and content for analysis.

B. Identifying Data

Following multiple viewings of the film, identification is conducted to pinpoint significant parts of the film based on its dialogue. This step aims to extract the data necessary for analysis.

C. Classifying Data

This involves creating a list of dialogues from the film script and any supporting data, organizing them into a table with numbered columns named Appendix. The table includes the forms of data and their sources.

D. Reducing Data

This process entails selecting, abstracting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming the data until final conclusions can be drawn and verified.

3. **Data Analysis Technique**

Data analysis involves reporting the results based on the selected data. The chosen data are analyzed using descriptive techniques, meaning that writings reflected in the dialogue and the director's direction are interpreted by providing statements related to appropriate theories. The comprehensive analysis is presented in Chapter IV as the findings of this research.

G. Significance of the Study

This study is expected to give the readers many benefits as follows:

1. This research provides a deeper understanding of how popular culture, in this case films, can influence people's perceptions and understanding of the US foreign policy. By studying the role of *Argo (2012)* as an example, this research provides new insights into how films can shape public opinion and influence foreign policy.

2. This research explores the complex relationship between American popular culture and foreign policy. In the context of *Argo (2012)*, this research analyzes how the film reflects and shapes the political narrative of the United States. This provides a better understanding of how popular culture and politics interact and influence each other.

3. This research offers a comprehensive framework for analyzing the impact of popular culture on international relations, particularly in the context of foreign policy. By examining the role of films such as *Argo (2012)* in shaping public opinion and influencing policy, this research provides a valuable model for academics and policymakers to better understand the complex dynamics

between popular culture and foreign policy, ultimately improving their ability to devise more effective and culturally-based diplomacy strategies.

H. Presentation

The presentation of this research is important to help readers understand this thesis. This thesis is presented in four chapters. Chapter I focuses on the researcher's ideas in conducting this research which includes the research background, research question, research objectives, research scope, related research reviews and research methods. Chapter II discusses the theoretical approach, theoretical framework. Furthermore, Chapter III discusses the discussion. Chapter IV contains conclusions and suggestions.