

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Here, there will be aspects explained regarding the topic used in this study starting from background of the study, statements of the problem, objectives of the study, scope and limitation of study, and significance of the study.

#### 1.1. Background of the Study

People live within different cultures and inhabitant that lie on the extent of how the way they speak, dress, and behave. Postcolonialism theory distinguishes a cultural gap which occurs between community live in superiority and the inferiority. It shows that there is a part where the superior one states their race as the good one and others are not as good as them. The quality of the human shows the power which influence going through times. Theorists then divide the superior one as the *West* and the inferior one as the *East*. It is true that the *West* starts their expansion over the *East* in the context of ideology. The ideology of liberty or freedom is seen as the important aspect in humanity which needed by *East*. The *East* requires considering the ideology to make the people more at ease since the tradition restricts most of the people. Moreover, the conservative people live within tradition that seems unfair in term of equality between one another.

As stated by Bill Ashcroft, more than three quarters of the people living in the world today have had their lives shaped by the experience of colonialism (1989:1). Over three quarters of the Eastern people experience the suffer of colonialism and the influence of colonialism as well. The people suffer since the

colonizer dominates and forces them to adopt the Western culture, but, on the other side, they can feel the difference between the tradition that is mostly *Patriarchy* they uphold, and the freedom or liberty the Western tradition offers to them that releases the limitation for the people, especially for the women. The impact of colonialism lies in the range of cultural identities, language, education and etc. There is always aspects of Western modernity lived within Eastern tradition. Here, post colonialism sees the unequal forces done in the East as an issue regarding humanity and the experiences of colonialism is one of a chance in spreading the thought of being free from such restriction comes over the owned tradition.

“One of the big problem in post-colonialism is culture” (1999:186). From the Ashcroft’s statement, it can be highlighted that the culture of the colonized has been influenced by the culture of the colonizer eventhough the original one can be preserved by the colonized. Thus, ambivalence related with the colonizer and colonized through the change of the culture that characterizes the people. According to Ashcroft (1998:12), adapted from the theory of Homi Bhabha, ambivalence is the complex mix of attraction and repulsion that characterizes the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. It is said as ambivalence since the colonized is never simply opposed the colonizer. To the colonized, the process of colonialism seems nurturing and exploitative. The colonizers leave science that is important for their knowledge, but they also hold any forces for them to absorb the way the colonizer behaves.

The ambivalence experience is portrayed clearly in Pearl S. Buck's *East Wind West Wind* novel through the main woman character, Kwei-Lan. Novel is an invented prose of narrative that has such considerable length and a certain complexity that deals imaginatively with human experience, usually through a connected sequence of events involving a group of persons in a specific setting. According to Abrams' statement, a novel is a narrative written in prose, and distinguished from the long one (1999:190).

The novel is distinguished from the short story and from the work of middle length called the novelette; its magnitude permits a greater variety of characters, greater complication of plot (or plots), ampler development of milieu, and more sustained exploration of character (Ibid).

The difference is that a novel represents such portrayal of human which action usually reflects a real life. The author herself, Pearl S. Buck, has written the novel of *East Wind West Wind*, in a very interesting and complex way within the purposes of entertaining the readers.

This study focuses on analyzing the novel written by Pearl S. Buck entitled *East Wind West Wind* through the issue of ambivalence experienced by Kwei-Lan. This study uses this novel since the writer, Buck, was a bestselling and Nobel Prize-winning author of fiction and nonfiction in 1938, she is the first American woman who wins the honor and gets critics from the readers for her ground breaking depictions of Chinese rural life. *East Wind West Wind* is her first novel published in 1930. Through this novel, Buck explores many differences between East and West, tradition and modernity, and frequently centers the hardships of impoverishing people during times of social upheaval. Buck is still praised by

most of people for helping Chinese culture more understandable. She is still known as an “imperialist” and not permitted to enter the China in 1972.

There are conflicts faced by Kwei-Lan regarding the patriarchal tradition and Western modernity that the husband brings. In Jones’s view, conflict in a story gets the readers involved emotionally in the plot (1968:30). The concept of conflict then is used to examine Kwei-Lan’s ambivalence because of the existence of the husband and the family’s forces upon her character as well. The husband himself is modern since he learns in medical school in America over 12 years, and he mimics and even adopts the Western culture. He then persuades Kwei-Lan to join in the modernity of the West within the idea of freedom to free her from the tradition that weakens most of women in China. The husband prefers everything modern and resembles the look of the colonizer.

Kwei-Lan is introduced to the Western world through the rediscovery of her own identity as a woman and a wife. She reexamines her own beliefs in the light of a fascinating cross-cultural parallel between the East and the West. Kwei-Lan’s emotional journey emerges the fragile in fulfilling equilibrium she reaches by incorporating both Western and Eastern elements into her own existence. The novel is interesting to be analyzed, it portrays the fade of Kwei-Lan’s tradition that is caused by her husband’s desire which suggests herself to be a modern wife. Here, there is no essay, journal, article, and thesis found for analysing the ambivalence of Kwei-Lan in *East Wind West Wind* by Pearl S. Buck.

## 1.2. Statements of the Problem

Based on the background of the study, two problems then required to be discussed. They are elaborated as follows:

1. How are the conflicts faced by Kwei-Lan portrayed in Pearl S. Buck's *East Wind West Wind*?
2. How do the conflicts construct Kwei-lan ambivalence identity ?

## 1.3. Objectives of the Study

To answer the statements of problem, the objectives of the study then described as follows:

1. To identify the conflicts faced by Kwei-Lan portrayed in Pearl S. Buck's *East Wind West Wind*.
2. To explain the construction of Kwei-Lan's ambivalence in Pearl S. Buck's *East Wind West Wind*.

## 1.4. Scope and Limitation of the Study

In the novel of *East Wind West Wind* written by Pearl S. Buck, there are several issues, events and conflicts which can be analyzed through various perspectives. Therefore, this study limits the issue so that the research will not be too wide ranging. This study focuses on the main Chinese woman's character, Kwei-Lan, that experiences ambivalence through two different cultures she faces. Kwei-Lan's ambivalence will be examined throughout her reaction towards her patrilineal family structure and her husband's modernity – as the impact of

mimicry since the husband has lived in America over 12 years – in form of dialogues or monologues analyzed in chapter IV. Here, ambivalence is seen as the conflict happens to the character of Kwei-Lan that later affects her determination of which way of life she should follow. After doing a close reading, this study mainly discusses about the *conflict* related to the issues of *postcolonialism* that include the concept of *East and West*, and *ambivalence* experienced by the main character, Kwei-Lan, in the novel.

### **1.5. Significance of the Study**

By reading this thesis, it is hoped that the readers will know the way of postcolonialism applied in a literary work especially in the novel entitled *East Wind West Wind*. Even though the readers live in the era of globalization, we should appreciate and proud of our original identity. Besides it, we should appreciate and adapt the foreign cultures by seeing whether the culture is suitable or not with whose culture.

By organizing this study, it is hoped that the readers become more critical in reading many texts and literatures related to the term of postcolonialism. And for English Department of Muhammadiyah University, it is also expected that this study will help the students to more understand about postcolonialism used in this novel. Then, it is also hoped that the readers will recognize that there are different cultures appear as obstacles in the main woman character in the novel, Kwei-Lan. Further, this thesis is hoped to encourage the readers in managing the varieties of cultures in order to build a good character in the real life.