

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introductory elaboration about the present research. It covers seven sections: background, scope of study, statements of problems, aims of study, research procedures, clarification of terms, and organization of the paper.

### 1.1. Background

For hundreds of years, Indonesian people lived under other's colonialism. They were abused both physically and psychologically by the colonizers who intended to steal Indonesia's land and natural wealth. Discrimination existed everywhere. The colonizer lived in prosperity, while Indonesian people, as the colonized and the host of the land, lived in painful suffering, long-lasting trauma, and great depression.

An area which is now called Indonesia was colonized by other nations, the most notable of which are Dutch and Japanese. Dutch did the longest colonization term in Indonesian history, i.e. 350 years, since early 17<sup>th</sup> century until the mid of 20<sup>th</sup> century (Badrika, 2006). Japanese is the only one Asian nation who colonized this nation. They replaced Dutch to colonize Indonesia for about three years starting from 1942.

The three-year colonization by Japanese is said to be worse than those by other nations because there were sex slavery and forced labor which

existed everywhere (Badrika, 2006). Men were forced to work with no payment, while women were forced to satisfy sexual desire of the Japanese armies. This was going on until on August 17, 1945, Soekarno officially declared the free and independent Indonesia.

These historical moments often become the setting of literary works. Many issues related to colonization process frequently become themes in literary works. For instance, the issue of power is found in Remy Sylado's novel *Kembang Jepun*, since the setting itself involves three historical periods of Indonesia, those are Dutch colonization, Japanese colonization, and local rebellion periods. This novel, hence, truly reminds readers of Indonesian historical moments.

*Kembang Jepun* is a fiction about a Menadonese woman, Keke, who became a most celebrated geisha in Surabaya in 1930s. The strikingly pretty child was taken from Menado to Surabaya by her brother and was sold to a Japanese man named Kotaro Takamura. She was taught to become a real Japanese and renamed Keiko. Essentially, she was trained to be a most desirable geisha to attract men's attention. Time brought her to recognize the cruelty of life and the glory of love. She stayed survived for the sake of reunion with her husband, Tjak Broto.

Besides narrating the strength of love, power is one of the interesting issues to be analyzed in this novel. Since the setting is the colonialism era where one's nationalism is forced to be turned, and where physical abuse is legalized by the colonizers, the power issue between the oppressor and the oppressed clearly exists.

Within this context, the present study examines how power is constructed in the novel within the framework of postcolonial literary theory. Principally, postcolonial theory deals with the reading and writing of literature written in previously or currently colonized countries, or literature written in colonizing countries which deals with colonization or colonized people (Lye, 1997). In its use as a critical approach, 'postcolonial' refers to a collection of theoretical and critical strategies used to examine the culture (literature, politics, history, and so forth) of former colonies of the European empires, and their relation to the rest of the world.

Shortly, because the dominant oppressor in this novel is the Japanese characters, the present study will focus on investigating the power issue involving Japanese characters. It is expected that the research investigating the power issue in the novel *Kembang Jepun* by Remy Sylado will be an alternative way of reading literary works.

## **1.2. Statements of Problem**

The research is conducted to answer the umbrella question: *How is the Japanese exercise of power constructed in the novel?* To answer this question, the study will be guided by the following research questions:

1. What kinds of power are exercised by the characters in each conflict?
2. In what ways is power exercised by the characters as evidenced in the text?

3. What kinds of reaction (resistance) coming from the oppressed are evidenced in the text?

### **1.3. Aims of Study**

Given the above background and research questions, the study investigates the issues of power between the oppressed and the oppressor as evidenced in the novel. Specifically, this research paper aims to:

1. figure out kinds of power exercised by the Japanese characters as evidenced in the novel.
2. disclose how power is exercised by the characters.
3. figure out kinds of reaction (resistance) resulting from the exercise of power.

### **1.4. Research Procedures**

The present study is largely qualitative which is descriptive in nature. Qualitative analysis is the analysis of research that tends to use the forms of words rather than numbers (Miles and Huberman, 1984). Alwasilah (2002) claims that qualitative research focuses on a certain phenomenon which has no generality but has internal validity and contextual understanding. Kirk and Miller (cited in Moloeng, 1990) define qualitative research as a particular tradition in social science which fundamentally depends on one's investigation in his or her own area. Therefore, a descriptive qualitative research specifically deals with various personal interest and certain values. It involves personal interpretation toward the texts.

The research is started by observing the source text, i.e. Remy Sylado's novel *Kembang Jepun*, that is, reading the novel thoroughly. The events that show the negotiation of power are highlighted. This reading process also aims to figure out how conflicts in this novel start and end.

The next research process is listing conflicts which contribute to the issue of power, and identify those which involve the Japanese characters since the research aims to find out the construction of Japanese exercise of power in the novel *Kembang Jepun*. After that, the research is continued by analyzing the oppressed and the oppressor of each conflict. Since this study is a postcolonial analysis, which is built around the concept of resistance (Lye, 1997), the study will analyze the reactions/resistances established by the oppressed. Every speeches, activities, or utterances of the characters will be taken to be the main consideration.

### **1.5. Clarification of Terms**

The following are the key terms that needs clarifying:

- **Japanese:** since the present study aims to figure out the construction of the Japanese exercise of power in the restricted context of the novel *Kembang Jepun*, it is important to be highlighted that *Japanese* in the context of this study is Japanese as an individual, not Japanese as a nation.
- **Colonialism:** Colonialism is the policy of expanding control or authority over foreign countries in order to maintain the glorious

of the empire, either through direct or indirect territorial control of other countries (Loomba, 2000).

- *Jepun*: the former term of 'Japan' in Bahasa Indonesia.
- *Geisha*: Traditional Japanese entertainment girl who provides singing, dancing, conversation, drinking-tea celebration, and sometimes sexual satisfaction to costumers in certain teahouses or restaurants. This makes, sometimes, geisha's generalization as prostitutes (Wikipedia Encyclopedia, 2005).

## **1.6. Organization of the Paper**

The paper is presented in five chapters. Chapter 1 presents an introductory elaboration of the present study. It comprises background of this study, scope of the study, statements of problem, aims of study, research procedures, and organization of the paper. Chapter 2 presents theoretical foundation of the study. It contains the explanation of the theories which supports and underlies the present research. Chapter 3 presents research methodology, which discusses research procedure and data presentation. Chapter 4 presents data analysis and discussion. It reports the analysis of data presented in the previous chapter and the discussion of the findings. Finally, Chapter 5 presents the final interpretation toward the findings of the research in form of conclusion and suggestion for further research.

