

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Colonialism, which began in the fifteenth century, is a term used to describe about Western countries which try to expand its territory and occupy the natural resources in the Eastern countries. Many colonizer countries from Europe such as Britain, Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, and France came to Eastern countries in order to expand the area or looking for new territory. India, Indonesia, Africa, Malaysia, Singapore, and Hongkong are the countries which had become the colonized countries which were colonized by the European. When they come to the colonized countries, they take all natural resources in the country and colonize the inhabitant. They also embed their culture, language, value and education system in that new country. The colonizer is more powerful than the colonized and they assume the colonized as inferior, undeveloped, weak and uneducated. It makes the colonizer embed their culture and changes the colonized life.

In the past, many Western people came to the Eastern, but now people from Eastern countries immigrate to the Western countries. They immigrate to study and work because there are many chances to study and work abroad which make them interested in order to get better education and jobs. It is called diaspora when people immigrate from their original homeland to other land. Based on Hawley's *Encyclopedia of Postcolonial Studies*, the traditional

notion of diaspora depicted a dislocation of people from their own place of living or way of life (144).

Every country has its own culture and tradition. The different culture sometimes influence people's life and their identity. When people move to another country, they will confuse and shock with new culture, new people, and new environment. It causes a desire to mimic the culture in that country in order to be accepted. This situation is called mimicry.

Mimicry is one of the postcolonial issues. Mimicry can cause some effects such as in-between-ness and double consciousness. In-between-ness issue, usually experience by the second generation of diasporic people because they trapped in two different cultures and they could not decide which culture they would take. People who move to other land, they will be trapped in "in-between" situation and sometimes they remember about their own culture which then introduce us to double consciousness issue which happen in state of mind.

We can find mimicry issue in some literary works such as in Jhumpa Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies*. *Interpreter of Maladies* is Lahiri's collection of short stories before *Unaccustomed Earth*. In "Interpreter of Maladies" Lahiri talks about Indian-American people who come to India and they does not know about Indian culture eventhough their origin is from India. In *Unaccustomed Earth*, Lahiri writes some short stories such as "Unaccustomed Earth", "Hell-Heaven", "Only Goodness", "A Choice of Accommodations", "Nobody's Business", and "Hema and Kaushik" which are divided into three

parts that are “Once in a Lifetime”, “Year’s End”, and “Going Ashore”. The writer wants to analyze about mimicry issue depicted in all the main characters in “Hell-Heaven” and “Hema and Kaushik”.

The title “Hell-Heaven” in this story relates with the main issue. It shows us about the people changes which really contrast such as hell and heaven. It happens in Usha as the main character in “Hell-Heaven”, an Indian, who wants to be an American with mimic the American culture. The word ‘Hell’ depicts as India and ‘Heaven’ depicts as America because Usha feels that America can make her free, independent, and happy. The issue mimicry also happens in “Hema and Kaushik” story. Hema and Kaushik as the main characters, they adapt the American culture to be accepted by their friends. It makes the writer choose both of the short stories because the issue of mimicry is matching with the problems which experience by all the main characters in “Hell-Heaven” and “Hema and Kaushik”. Moreover, Jhumpa Lahiri is a famous writer and many of her short stories are interesting to be analyzed.

“Hell-Heaven” is the second story in the *Unaccustomed Earth* . This story tells us about Usha, an Indian child who lives in America with her parents, Shyamal Da and Boudi. Although they had lived in America for a long time, their Indian tradition and behavior still exist. Usha, as the second generation of diasporic people, she wants to be an American. When she becomes a teenage girl, she fight her parents’ Bengali traditions because she wants to change her life and leaves her Bengali’s tradition. She begin to lie her mother. She goes

to parties, drinks beer and allows boys to kiss her. She also changes her Bengali's style and starts wear jeans, a thick sweater and sneakers.

In the second story, the writer would like to use "Hema and Kaushik" story which is divided into three parts that are "Once in a Lifetime", "Year's End", and "Going Ashore." "Once in a Lifetime" is a story about Hema's life when she met Kaushik for the first time. "Year's End" is a story about Kaushik's life after her mother passed away. "Going Ashore" is a story when Hema and Kaushik met in Rome and fell in love with each other.

Concerning with the author, Jhumpha Lahiri is an Indian American author. She was born in London and she is a daughter of Indian immigrants from the state of West Bengal. She started her debut with writing short stories *Interpreter of Maladies* which awarded the Pulitzer Prize, the PEN/Hemingway Award and The New Yorker Debut of the Year. After that, she published *The Namesake*, her first novel, which then became famous and a movie was made as an account to her novel. Lahiri's second collection of short stories is *Unaccustomed Earth* which consists of eight short stories, received the 2008 Frank O'Connor International Short Story Award (the world's largest prize for a short story collection) and was a finalist for the Story Prize. (barclayagency.com)

The writer would like to analyze about the crisis identity which happened in "Hell-Heaven" and "Hema and Kaushik" using postcolonial literary criticism. According to Bressler's *Literary Criticism*, Postcolonial criticism is a criticism that investigates ways that texts bear traces of colonialism's

ideology and interpret such texts as challenging or promoting the colonizer's purposes and hegemony. Those who engaged in this type of criticism analyze canonical text from colonizing country (356). If we looked in the history point of view, we know that colonizer is known as "whites" which perceived as the best. They have advanced technology, advanced society, rich, and educated. Therefore, when they came to a new territory especially in the east area, they described the natives as weak, poor, undeveloped and uneducated. The effect of colonialism then influenced the colonized identity and assumed that the colonizer's culture was a lot better than theirs.

Many colonized people use English in their daily activities and learn English in their schools. The way colonized people wear clothes is also depicted as the crisis identity in our life because they wear clothes just like those western people. It shows us that mimicry issue still exist until now because many people wear clothes like colonizer. According to Lois Tyson's *Critical Theory Today*, mimicry is a duplicate of the colonizer's culture, behavior, speech, lifestyle, and their clothes. They believe that white's culture or colonizer's culture are better than their culture itself that is why they interest to apply the colonizer's culture (421). Thus, people who experience mimicry, they will be a duplicate of colonizer.

The writer would like to analyze the mimicry issue depicted in "Hell-Heaven" and "Hema and Kaushik" because the issue is really match with the problem in both of short stories with apply Homi.K.Bhabha's theory. The

writer will also elaborate in-between-ness and double consciousness as the effects of mimicry.

1.2 Statement of the Problems

Based on the background of the study above, the writer would like to answer research questions as formulated in the following statements:

1. How is the mimicry of Usha in “Hell-Heaven” and Hema and Kaushik in “Hema and Kaushik” portrayed in Jhumpa Lahiri’s *Unaccustomed Earth*?
2. How do Usha’s, Hema’s and Kaushik’s mimicry affect their postcolonial identity?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The objectives of this study are formulated in these following statements:

1. To figure out the portrayal of mimicry in Usha in “Hell-Heaven” and Hema and Kaushik in “Hema and Kaushik in Jhumpa Lahiri’s *Unaccustomed Earth*.
2. To find the effects of Usha’s, Hema’s and Kaushik’s mimicry on their postcolonial identity.

1.4 Significant of the Study

The significance of this study is to understand about postcolonial identity, especially mimicry issue in Usha in “Hell-Heaven” and Hema and Kaushik in “Hema and Kaushik” as second generation of diasporic people. Through this

study, the writer hopes that the reader will be interested in analyzing mimicry issue and give contribution to the students of literature in English Department, Airlangga University who analyze Jhumpa Lahiri's *Unaccustomed Earth* applying Postcolonial Criticism.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

The writer would like to analyze mimicry issue from "Hell-Heaven" and "Hema and Kaushik". Both of the short stories were written in Jhumpa Lahiri's *Unaccustomed Earth*. This analysis will be using the theory from Homi.K.Bhabha. Through this study, the analysis will limit to analyze mimicry issue which happened in Usha in "Hell-Heaven" and Hema and Kaushik in "Hema and Kaushik" which is influenced by their new place and new society. The writer also elaborated in-between-ness and double consciousness as the effects of Usha's, Hema's and Kaushik's mimicry.

1.6 Theoretical Background

Postcolonial theory depicts the relation between colonized, colonizer and the impact of colonialism itself. According to Tyson, postcolonial criticism is study that used to understand the concept of colonialist and anti-colonialist ideologies (418). Eventhough colonialism had happened long time ago but it left the impact to the colonized. The impacts of colonialism deals with some issue such as diaspora, double conciousness, mimicry, ambivalence, in-between-ness and so on.

In this study, the writer will be focus on mimicry to analyze the short stories by using the mimicry theory from Bhabha. Bhabha states that mimicry is the process by which the colonized subject is reproduced as almost the same, but not quite (86). It means that people who mimic other culture or wants to be such as Western can not be the same because of natural factor. It is what Bhabha means with his statement “almost the same, but not quite”. Mimicry is one of postcolonial issue which explains the situation of people who adapt the other culture and this is can make some effects such in-between-ness and double consciousness.

In-between-ness is one of the impacts of mimicry. Bhabha write in his book, in the place of the polarity of a prefigurative self-generating nation "in-self" and extrinsic other nations, the performative introduces as a temporality of the "in-between" (148). In-between-ness usually will be happened in the second generation or the children of people who immigrate. They trapped in the two different culture and they can not decide what culture they would take.

Double consciousness is also the effect of mimicry. It describes people who trapped in between situations. Sometimes they still remembered their memory of their country. According to Tyson, postcolonial theorists often describe the colonial subject as having a ‘double consciousness’ or ‘double vision’, in other words, a consciousness or a way of perceiving the world that is divided between two antagonistic cultures: that of the colonizer and that of the indigenous community (421)

1.7 Method of the Study

In this analysis, the writer would like to apply qualitative method. The writer will analyze the text of “Hell-Heaven” and “Hema and Kaushik” and apply the theory from Homi.K.Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture*. There are some references books and articles to support the data. The study is analyzed through the following steps. First, the writer will do close reading which is reading “Hell-Heaven” and “Hema and Kaushik”. From close reading, the writer find the issue is mimicry that can be analyzed by Homi.K Bhabha’s theory.

Second, for the analysis, the writer will begin to explain about the nature of Usha, Hema and Kaushik to be categorized as diasporic people which caused mimicry. Moreover, the writer will explain about the portrayal of Usha’s, Hema’s and Kaushik’s mimicry and the differences between their mimicry. In-between-ness, and double conciousness will be elaborated as the effects of their mimicry.

Finally, after collect the data and answerall the statement of the problem, the writer will make the conclusion of this analysis.

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

- **Immigrant** : The people who moved in another country
- **Diaspora** : A situation where people from their original homeland moved to another land

- **Mimicry** : A postcolonial issue which people adapt the colonizer's culture (language, lifestyle, behavior)
- **In-between-ness** : One of postcolonial issue which depict people in the two different culture and they did not pick one of those cultures
- **Double consciousness** : A situation where people who moved in other land trapped in the 'in between' situation and still remembered the situation in their own land.