

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of the Study

West and east are two sides that will always be separated. Since the middle of eighteenth century, there have been two principal elements in the relation between West and East. The first is a systematic knowledge in Europe about the Orient which is exploited by the developing sciences of ethnology, comparative anatomy, philology, and history. The other relation is about Europe which always holds stronger position (Said 39).

The correlations between West and East then become important to discuss in the orientalism theory. Orientalism is one of postcolonial thoughts which is popularized by Edward Said. It has strong relationship with East culture and how the West considers it. As a matter of fact, there are some American popular cultures that contain orientalist constructions, for example is *Harper's Magazine*. There are also popular authors like Washington Irving, who published books such as *Mahomet and His Successors* that presents stereotypic portraits of a Muslim world which is suited better for theocratic or autocratic rule than for American-style democracy. (Little13).

There are also popular American movies production that contain orientalist constructions. At the end of twentieth century, Hollywood confirmed that American style- orientalism had done for deep roots into U.S. popular culture. In 1992 Disney Studios released *Aladdin*, modern animated classics, opened with

Saddam Hussein mirror image crooning “Arabian Nights.” The lyrics suggest old sinister images of the Muslim world punctuated by an orientalist punch line: “It’s barbaric, but hey it’s home.” (Little11).

According to Jahn in his book entitled *A Guide to Narratological Film Analysis*, movie is a multimedia narrative form based on a physical record of sounds and moving pictures. Movie is also genre a performing in the sense that is primarily designed to be shown in a public performance. Almost similar to drama, movie is a narrative genre because it presents a story. Sometimes, movie is an adaptation of an epic or a dramatic narrative. There is an assumption that watching a movie is a collective public experience and a social occasion. Movie is one of artifacts created in a process of collective and collaborative production, involving writers, producers, directors, actors, cinematographers, editors, and many more (online).

Related to the issue of orientalist constructions in the Hollywood movie production, the writer chooses *The Mummy* movie as the topic of the analysis to identify the constructions. *The Mummy* is one of Hollywood movie productions directed by Stephen Sommers. The setting of the movie is on the Middle East area in ancient Egypt. It is one of movie productions that have good responses. It can be seen from several times the movie played in the television. From online data, the writer finds information that Stephen Sommers as the director in the movie, also get two nominations from *The Mummy* movie. He received two Saturn Award nominations as the best director and the best writer academy of science fiction, fantasy and horror films in 2000 (Online).

According to Balfour in *Orientalism*, Middle East is a region that has no clear boundaries, often used as a synonym to Near East and an opposition to Far East. Egypt is one of countries in the Middle East that have better civilization than other countries. Balfour justified that the necessity for British occupation to Egypt in his mind is associated with “our” knowledge of Egypt and not principally with military or economic power (Said 32). In *The Mummy* movie, Middle East is portrayed as a country which has treasures and becomes one of special things which then interest people from other countries to come. In the book with the same title, there is also suggestion from Said that Egypt is not just another colony, but it is the vindication of Western imperialism, annexation by England, academic example of Oriental backwardness, and also become a triumph of English knowledge and power (35).

The writer assumes mummy as one of well known Egypt in this world. According to the history in Encyclopedia article, mummy is a corpse whose skin and organs have been preserved by either intentional or incidental exposure to chemicals, extreme coldness, very high humidity, or lack of air when bodies are drowned in bogs. Mummies are commonly featured in romance genres as creatures. From the same article, there is also an explanation if there are some fictions which choose mummy as the topic. During the 20th century, horror films and other mass media popularized the notion of a curse associated with mummies. One of the earliest appearances is *The Jewel of Seven Stars*, a horror novel written by Bram Stoker and first published in 1903 which concerned an archaeologist's plot to resurrect an ancient Egyptian mummy.

The writer chooses *The Mummy* to be analyzed because it is an interesting movie. There are some genre combinations in the film. There are three genres: Action, comedy, and horror. These genres can avoid moviegoer to feel bored while watching the movie. *The Mummy* can be categorized as action movie, because according to the writer, there are several scenes that show about struggle and fight. Two examples are when there is a battle that involves O'Connell (scene 00:07:12) and when some characters like O'Connell, Jonathan and Magi try to destroy the mummy of Imhotep's guards (scene 01:41:20). The other genre of *The Mummy* film is comedy. There are scenes that can make viewers laugh. Several funny scenes are also found in Egyptian dialogues like when warden touch Evy's thigh. And the last genre is horror. It is represented by the title of the movie *The Mummy*. It becomes a horror movie because the movie tells about a died person who could live again.

The other reason and the most important reason why the writer chooses *The Mummy* is because the movie contains orientalist constructions that picture the domination of Occident characters toward Orient. In the movie, people from western country are represented as the Occident or West and Egyptian represent themselves as the Orient or East. As already explained before in *Orientalism* that Middle East is portrayed as a country which has many treasures and make people from other countries to visit (Said 35). Stephen Sommers as the director of the movie portrays it in the main setting of *The Mummy* movie. Sommers sets Egypt as one of cities in the Middle East that have heritages, and it is clearly portrayed from Hamunaptra as one of the name of settings in the movie. Hamunaptra is pictured as city of the death. It is

an ancient burial site for the sons of Pharaoh and resting place for the wealth of Egypt. In the movie, Hamunaptra is set as a place which is full of gold and ancient things and this is one of the reasons why there are so many foreign people come to that place.

The writer would like to analyze orientalist constructions in the movie by using a formal style that consists of two aspects: narrative and nonnarrative. According to Miltry, narrative film theory concerns with how stories get told (Miltry 35). In the narrative analysis, the writer will analyze about dialogues in the movie that contains the orientalist constructions. The writer will analyze dialogues that show binary opposition between the West and the East such as how the director tries to explain different characters of west and east poured in the dialogues. And for nonnarrative aspect, the writer will also discuss about costumes, characters appearances, lighting, and setting of the movie which depicts Egypt as one of rich cities in the Middle East which then becomes a purpose for western people to find some treasures.

Bordwell in his book explains that nonnarrative is the other types of film forms that is also important in the film analysis (Bordwell 89). In the different book Miltry says that nonnarrative forms explain about how the film is constructed for and creates a viewing subject with camera movement, lighting, editing, and all the available techniques of filmmaking (Miltry 35). For *The Mummy* film, the writer will try to find out all scenes that show the Orientalist constructions, such as differences of west and east character appearances in the movie, the different character's costumes between

west and east, and different lightings when shooting west and east characters.

## **B. Statement of the problems**

Referring to the background of the study, the writer tries to analyze the depictions of orientalist constructions in *The Mummy* movie. Thus the writer formulates the problem as follows:

1. How are narrative forms of orientalist constructions depicted in *The Mummy* movie?
2. How are nonnarrative forms of orientalist constructions depicted in *The Mummy* movie?

## **C. Objective of the Study**

In organizing this study, there are two objectives that will be discussed by the writer. The objective of the study will be intended to answer every question that has been detailed in the statement of the problems. The objectives that are supposed to be reached are:

1. To find out narrative forms of orientalist constructions depicted in *The Mummy* movie.
2. To find out nonnarrative forms of orientalist constructions depicted in *The Mummy* movie.

**D. Significance of the Study**

This study is significant in elaborating how far the domination of the West toward the East portrayed in narrative and nonnarrative forms in the movie. This work also wants to raise the awareness of moviegoers about the role of western people that always become the main characters in the Hollywood movie production. The analysis might be helpful to understand binary opposition more and deeper that happens between West and East. However, the major significance is as a considerable contribution to the Faculty of Humanities in Airlangga University.

**E. Scope and Limitations**

Before starting to make an analysis, it is important to make a limitation in order to make the analysis run on the intended way. It is usual to determine the central focus of the analysis. This study is intended to observe orientalist constructions in the movie, and the scope and limitation will certainly focus on narrative and nonnarrative forms in order to get clear understanding about orientalist constructions that rise in the film. Finally, the writer decided to use orientalism theory as the main theory to analyze the movie.

**F. Theoretical Background**

The writer will use certain theory as the fundamental element to get deep analysis. To support the analysis of the study and to get some useful information, the writer uses orientalism theory published firstly by Edward Said. According to

*Postcolonial Theory*, orientalism represents the first phase of postcolonial theory. It is a direct attention to the discursive and textual production of colonial meanings and concomitantly to the consolidation of colonial hegemony (Gandhi 64).

Edward Said in his study about orientalism, focuses on the relationship between the Occident and the Orient. The Occident is the term for the West such as the U.K and United States, while the Orient is the term of the East such as Asia and Middle East. The relationship between both Orient and Occident is power, domination, and hegemony. Said also states that according to Occidentals, the Orientals had no history or culture not influenced by their colonial master. Said assumes that orientalist discourse is more valuable as a sign of the power exerted by the Occident over the Orient (Said 7).

Orientalism is the product of Western domination and control toward non-Western lands and people (Aschorft 169). Orientalism is chosen to help the writer to express orientalist constructions which represent binary opposition between the West and the East, and also to show the domination of Occident toward Orient depicted in *The Mummy* movie. Since this thesis is film analysis, then the writer will try to search orientalist constructions from narrative and nonnarrative forms.

Narrative is a chain of events in cause-effect relationship occurring in time and space. A narrative is thus what people usually mean as the term of story. A narrative begins with one situations, continue with a series of changes occur based on a pattern of cause and effect, and then finally a change with a new situation arises that brings about the end of the narrative (Bordwell 89).



Nonnarrative is one of types in the film forms that is also important for film analysis. That form explains about how the film is constructed for and create a viewing subject with camera movement, lighting, editing, and all the available techniques of filmmaking. There are four broad types of nonnarrative form: categorical, rhetorical, abstract, and associational (Bordwell 89).

### **G. Method of The Study**

In the process of writing this study, the writer uses library and online research. This research is done by collecting and copying data from various books, articles, encyclopedia, critics, reviews, commentaries, and other printed materials from library or internet which are needed to support this analysis. Those printed materials include the main source of the analysis of the film and other supporting information about the film itself such as the director, the history of the film, and everything related to with *The Mummy* movie. Beside that, the printed and copy materials also include theories especially about orientalism theory and nonnarrative theory that will be used in the analysis later.

After collecting some data, the writer will arrange to study them, in order to reach good understanding about the movie and make sharper and deeper analysis from some problems that rise in the movie. Afterwards, it will be easier to begin the analysis by using those provided sources based on the theories as the boundary to keep the analysis on the right way. In the data analysis, the writer intends to use descriptive analysis as the method of analysis. This method is considered suitable to

be applied in the analysis because it supports properly the description of the problems which is going to be analyzed. Finally, the next step is drawing the conclusion, so that the study is complete based on the academic research requirements.

#### H. Definition of Key Terms

- **Orientalism** : “Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between ‘the Orient’ and (most of the time) ‘the Occident’ and Orientalism is a sign of European-Atlantic power over the Orient than it is a discourse about the Orient.” (Said 2).
- **Occident/ the West** : The opposite of Orient, Occident is everything that related with western people and culture.(In the movie the Occidents are american people).
- **Orient/ the East** : It is everything that related with western people and culture. (In the movie the Orient are Egyptian people)