

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Have you ever think of a question “What does it mean to be a human? What is humanity? How can we identify ourselves as human being both physically and mentally?”? Sometimes we forget to ask this kind of question to ourselves because we have common assumption that we are human. There is nothing else to argue. However, since “being human” is our nature, we often hard to describe what it takes to be called as a human. We just take the notion “human” for granted. On the other hand, other question may appear: Does “being a human” deal with physical appearance or more closely to the mental state?

Human have moral value as the part of humanity. It is the most important thing for human being to be acknowledged as human. It distinguishes human from animal and other living creatures. This hierarchy (human-humanity and nonhuman-inhumanity) is often taken for granted with no doubt on it. However, the World War I and II, the never ending conflict in Gaza between Israel and Palestine, human trafficking, slavery, genocide and other serious humanity problems have shown us to remember the importance of asking ourselves the question “what does humanity deals with human? If humanity is the most basic part of human life, why such tragic humanity disasters could happen? Is there any parallel connection between the large numbers of humanity conflicts and our ignorance of being realized our nature and capacity to be a human?”

Began with these questions, this study was made up. Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* will be chosen as the object of the study. The reason is because this novel has many interesting issues concerning to the humanity and "being human". The novel has unique way to illustrate its view about humanity by imposing the human characters and non human character (human and androids) side by side, thus creating the conflict regarding to the question what it takes to be called as a "human". The novel also had adapted in a movie entitled *Blade Runner* which gained good reception among the film critics. Another reason why this novel is chosen is the fact that there are numerous binary oppositions that work and contribute to build the story of the novel. This binary opposition is needed to help working with deconstruction theory that will be used in the study.

The novel covers the story of Rick Deckard, a bounty hunter (someone who retires or "kills" androids that escape from Mars to Earth), and his journey to retire six Nexus-6 androids. The novel follows Deckard and a secondary character - John R. Isidore - through an apocalyptic United States of America. The earth has been heavily damaged by the nuclear war of World War Terminus. The people who survive choose Mars as the destination to continue their life. Androids, which are built to be humans' slaves on Mars, often escape back to earth. They must be retired because they are assumed dangerous for human life. Because of its tremendous storyline, the novel itself became one of the nominees of Nebula Award for Best Novel in 1969 (Wands, "Philip K. Dick").

Philip Kindred Dick was born in Chicago, 1928. He lived most of his life in California. He briefly attended the University of California, but dropped out before completing any classes. In 1952, he began writing professionally and proceeded to write numerous novels and short story collections. He wrote *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* in 1968. He won the Hugo Award for the best novel in 1962 for *The Man in the High Castle* and the John W. Campbell Memorial Award for the best novel of the year in 1947 for *Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said*. Philip K. Dick died on March 2, 1982, in Santa Ana, California, of heart failure following a stroke (Wands, "Philip K. Dick).

The definition of "human" itself has been searched from time to time. Robert Pepperell stated in his book, *The Posthuman Condition: Consciousness beyond the Brain*, as follows: "Humanists saw themselves as distinct beings, in an antagonistic relationship with their surroundings. Posthumans, on the other hand, regard their own being as embodied in an extended technological world (*Posthuman Manifesto*)" (Pepperell 177). This statement can be concluded into two things: 1). Humanists point out that "human" is referred to something particularly powerful and special, thus they have the ability to exploit their surroundings. Since the exploitations here are used to satisfy their needs, the relationship between humans and their surroundings are mostly in antagonistic way. 2). Rather than differentiating themselves, posthuman students see that "human" is a part of technological world. Both human and technology are inseparable. Humans used technology, addicted, and became dependant on it. They become a part of technology.

However, Herbert Marcuse proposed through his writing, *One-Dimensional Man*, that “modern men” (or modern society) is a society who has one point of view. It has no opposition, therefore, closes all the access for discussion. This phenomenon is referred in the introduction of the book as “the paralysis of criticism” (Marcuse 2). Sciences are useful as far as it is applicable and operable. Technology does not play neutral role in human’s life, but also manipulates them. It creates needs that never appear before the technology was invented.

In this study later, the relationship between humanity and inhumanity will be examined through the ambiguity and ambivalence of the text, as well as its inconsistency. By examining these elements, it would be possible to reverse the binary opposition of humanity and inhumanity in the text as well as placing the unprivileged element in the equal side of the privileged one. To understand the way the binary operation of humanity and inhumanity and how they contradict each other, the writer will use Jacques Derrida’s deconstruction theory. This theory is suitable for this novel, since the novel itself is very deconstructive. It consists of numerous binary oppositions such as the characterization, the plot, and the meaning of humanity and inhumanity. As stated by Niall Lucy that if things are deconstructible, they are deconstructible already-as things (Lucy 11).

1.2. Statement of the Problems

Based on the background of the study above, the statement of the problems of this study are as follow:

1. How are the binary opposition of 'humanity' and 'inhumanity' portrayed throughout the novel?
2. What is the ideology of the novel?

1.3. Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to find the portrayal of both term 'humanity' and 'inhumanity' by look for any possible arguments that can prove the hypothesis of the existence of contradiction from both of them. This study also wants to reveal the ideology of the novel after it is deconstructed.

1.4. Scope and Limitation

There is a lot of issues in Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream Of Electric Sheep?*. Hence, the writer will only focus on any parts of the novel that include the binary opposition of humanity and inhumanity. The writer will also pay attention on another binary opposition that can be related to the main opposition of humanity and inhumanity. This limitation is needed in order to reveal the ideology that was constructed in the text.

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study wants to explore the application of Derrida's theory of deconstruction on the work of Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream Of Electric Sheep?*. The writer hopes this study may help for anyone who wants to explore the vast field of knowledge called "humanity" and its way in trying to be

“human”. Furthermore, the writer also expects that this study may give enlightenment for those who are interested in analyzing Dick’s works, add some extra information and references as well for the one who wants to apply deconstruction in other literary works.

1.6. Theoretical Background

The founder of deconstruction is Jacques Derrida, a French philosopher and teacher in 1966. The main idea of deconstruction is similar to postmodernism: it denies the existence of objective reality. It also against New Criticism belief that there is only one single correct interpretation of the text because, according to Derrida, “language is not the reliable tool of communication we believe it to be, but rather fluid, ambiguous domain of complex experiences in which ideologies program us without being aware of them” (Tyson 241-242). Derrida believes that there is no such single interpretation of the text. Everyone has their own experience and appreciation in reading, so there is no such thing like logocentrism, yet he admits that human can never totally get away of themselves from logocentric way of thinking since when they deconstruct one “center”, the opposite of that “center” will be a new “center”.

Deconstruction bases its idea on the linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure concerning the statement that language is a system based on differences. By hearing and noticing the difference of two phoneme, we know both of them are different (A is not B because it is not B). Derrida extends this concept by assuming that the way human understand any concepts is by differentiate them.

Furthermore, deconstruction might cause multiple reading and interpretation of the same text without telling which one is correct, thus creating the undecidability of the text. Undecidability refers to the notion that a text's meaning is always indefinite, undecidable, and plural (252). It is always in flux and never final. Moreover, this statement concludes one of deconstruction's goal: to reveal the undecidability of the text. By having undecidability of the text, it does not mean that the text have no ability to express what it says or have zero meaning. Deconstruction argues that both the reader and the text are connected each other by the dynamic development and the flexibility they shared altogether.

Derrida begins the method of deconstruction of a literary text by recognizing the existence and the operation of binary oppositions within the text (Bressler 122). This step is important in order to find the main opposite ideologies that have major influence within the text. After any of these hierarchies is acknowledged, we can reverse its elements to show that the "truth is very elusive" (123). We can put the center on its opposite element as the part of deconstruction.

Overall, deconstruction provides a new way to reveal the text's meaning. Its primary goal is to have new perspective and understanding about the literary text, not to substitute the older center with a new one. By examining center and its deconstructed form, the writer is assumed to find the meaning that arises from the differences of them.

1.7. Method of the Study

This study will use close reading method in order to analyze the text. The main purpose is to find the binary opposition reflected on the characters which contains humanity and / or inhumanity value. Furthermore, there are four levels of close reading: linguistic, semantic, structural, and cultural (Tyson 141). In this study, the writer will use close reading method until the fourth level: the cultural step.

First of all, in linguistic level, the writer will pay attention on the words, syntax, and structure of the sentences. The writer will try to understand the text in descriptive way. Then, the writer will move to the semantic reading, where he starts to look deeper in the text's connotative and denotative meaning rather than its surface meaning. In this level, his goal is to understand the text cognitively. On the third level, structural, the writer starts to look for the connection between each element in the text. In this level, the main goal is to study and relate all of the supporting ideas within the text in order to reveal their relationships. The last stage is cultural. It deals the text with the intertext (the environments, cultural value, philosophy, or other writings concerning to the text's elements). With the aid of intertext, the writer will be able to interpret the text. The fair interpretation can be made based on the relationship between the novel and the cultural value outside it.

The next step is the identification of binary opposition that constructs the story of the novel. This construction can be acquired through the cultural level of close reading. After the identification, the writer will try to reveal the ambiguity,

ambivalence, and the inconsistency of the text in order to get the text's unstable condition. From this instability, the writer will reverse the previously identified elements of binary oppositions by putting the unprivileged elements into the privileged ones. To conclude this study, the writer will try to propose the ideology of the text based on the process of deconstruction.

1.8. Organization of the Paper

The thesis is divided into four chapters: introduction, theoretical background, analysis, and conclusion. Introduction consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, theoretical background, method of the study, definition of the key term, review of related studies, and organization of the paper. The second chapter is theoretical framework. It explains the concept and the logical way of thinking of the deconstruction that the writer has used in his thesis. The third chapter is analysis. It discusses the binary opposition between the hierarchy of human-humanity and android-inhumanity: how they contradict each other throughout the novel. It also discusses the possible new interpretation from the deconstructed work. The final chapter is conclusion. It summarizes the result of the analysis of the writer's thesis.

1.9. Definition of the Key Terms

This study uses several terms that are needed to be defined for the limitation of the study and this subchapter provides brief definition and

description of the key terms which are used. These definitions are important to help the readers cope with the idea of this study.

- Deconstruction : an approach or strategy for reading devised by the French literary critic Jacques Derrida to discover “how” a text means by asking a different set of questions than structuralist critic. Its aim is to show that what a text claims it says and what it actually says are discernibly different.
- Binary opposition : a term introduced into literary theory by Jacques Derrida to represent the conceptual oppositions on which he believes Western metaphysics is based, such as light/dark, good/bad, and big/small.
- Humanity : the quality or state of being human; often related with human culture, especially literature, history, art, music, and philosophy (Concise Oxford English Dictionary).
- Inhumanity : the quality or state of being cruel or barbarous.
- Human : a bipedal primate mammal (*Homo sapiens*).
- Android : a mobile robot, usually with human form.
- Ideology : system of beliefs and values that operates at any given point in time and in any cultures (Tyson 253).
- Posthumanism : the term refers to the general convergence of biology and technology to the point where they are increasingly becoming indistinguishable (Pepperell 13).