

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. Preliminary

Based on *Encyclopedia of American Studies*, Orientalism is a term once commonly employed by European and American scholars in reference to the study of Asia and its people. Now particularly in the fields of postcolonial and Asian American Studies, the term primarily refers to constructions of the East by the West during colonialist expansion, emphasizing their influence on and participation in the imperialist project as well as on similar later constructions. (266)

The book *Orientalism* was written by Edward W. Said in 1978 and has been a classical work on the cultural studies. Orientalism explains the study of orientalist from Western toward the East and how the Western represented the East based on their view. Orientalism also explains the relation between the West with Islam and Moslem people, since the middle age until the colonial age, including the description of the West toward Islam and the prejudice that grows between the two civilizations.

B. Said's Orientalism

In the postcolonial study, Orientalism is a specific part of study in discussing the relation between the West and the East. "Orientalism" is written by Edward Said, originally criticizes and opposes orientalism discourse that is used to study the East. The study of Orient is based on Eurocentrism, an assumption

that all European ideas, ideals, and experience are the standard for all humans, which the use of European culture as the standard to which all other culture are negatively contrasted. This thought causes the Western assumed that they have ability and domination to represent the East or other cultures. They give the East identity, imagery and description appropriates to the West's importance. "Therefore as much as the West itself, the Orient is an idea that has a history and a tradition of thought, imagery and vocabulary that have given it reality and presence in and for the West." (Said 1979: 5). The Orient that appears in Orientalism discourse is a result of system that framed by a whole set of forces that bring the Orient into Western learning, Western consciousness and Western empire. The East identity, imagery and depiction are given appropriate to maintain the West's hegemony and importance in Eastern countries, "Orientalism directs attention to the discursive and textual production of colonial meanings and to the consolidation of colonial hegemony" (Gandhi: 64-65)

Based on Orientalism discourse, the Eastern are not capable to represent themselves. The representation will be the Western's duty, because the West or European have idea and universal values to evaluate which is civilized one and which is not. "Orientalism is never far from what Denys Hay has called the idea of Europe, a collective notion identifying "us" Europeans as against all "those" non-Europeans, and indeed it can be argued that the major component in European culture is precisely what makes that culture hegemonic both in and outside Europe: the idea of European identity as superior one in comparison with all the non-European cultures and people." (Said 1979: 7). The European or the

West people are identified with notion “us” as the superior, dominant and civilized one are contrasted to the East people or non-European that identified by notion “the other or them” which are inferior, weak and uncivilized. “There are Westerners, and there are Orientals. The former dominate; the latter must be dominated, which usually means having their land occupied, their internal affair rigidly controlled, their blood and treasure put at the disposal of one or another Western power.” (Said 1979: 36).

The earliest orientalist such as Gertrude Bell and Lawrence of Arabia went to Middle Eastern nations and made interact to the people of Middle Eastern. The next orientalist are Ernest Renan and Silvestre Sacy, they are both scholars who focusing study in Arab and Middle East on the West colonial area. The study toward the Middle East is shown that Middle Easterner are opponent to Westerner, the Middle Easterner are barbaric and backward. The study was spread to Europe to reinforce the Western values and spread to the Middle East colony to maintain the power hegemony of colonialist and to despise the Middle East people. Orientalism discourse was spread through propaganda during colonialism expansion period. There are some stereotypes appear about the Eastern by these scholars to reinforce the Western.

The Western as a superior and dominant one, they have power to arrange their ideas and ideals to the world, particularly in Eastern, although many of those ideas and ideals are against the local cultures. “Western concepts differ fundamentally from those prevalent in other civilizations. Western ideas of individualism, liberalism, constitutionalism, human rights, equality, liberty, the

rule of law, democracy, free market, the separation of church and state, often have little resonance in Islamic, Confucian, Japanese, Hindu, Buddhist or Orthodox cultures.” (Huntington 1993: 40, Online)

C. Binary Opposition between Moslem and the Western

The Western had created description of Moslem for many centuries. The descriptions of Islam mostly are negative, whatever about the people, the culture or the law. It is related to history between the West and Islam in the Middle Ages until 19th century that dominated by wars such as the Crusades and the conquered by the European toward many Islamic nations in Africa and Asia. The West found that Moslem is the right choice to fulfill the politically and psychologically necessity of the West, to the reasonable excuse of the separation between ‘us’ and ‘them’, the separation between the insiders and outsiders so that the West protect and hold their identity as Western.

The Western as the powerful side always describes Moslem for their importance. The unstable information of Islam, the image and the identity is spread by the media and mostly believed by the people in the West. “Not for nothing did Islam come to symbolize terror, devastation, the demonic, hordes of hated barbarians. For Europe, Islam was a lasting trauma.” (Said 1979: 59). Islam is projected as the antithesis of the West, therefore, emerges negative labels to despise Moslem such as if the Western are civilized, thus the Moslems are uncivilized.

The negative image of Moslem people is connected to Orientalism discourse that Moslems are 'Other' who the opposite values to the Western values. The Middle East is always associated with Islam, although the fact that not all Middle Easterner are Moslem and Moslem not only from Middle East. Some of standard connected to Islam and Middle East include fanaticism, irrationality, violence, being anti modern, medieval, and the typical visualization of men beard with Kalashnikovs. "Islam means the end of civilization as 'we' know it. Islam is anti-human, antidemocratic, anti-Semitic, anti-rational." (Said 1980). 'We' in that quotation refers to Western. The Arab-Moslem often associate to the stereotype mentioned above, there are very few of the detail of depiction human density of life Arab-Moslem showed in Western. "...Middle Easterner increasingly complains that the West judges them by different and lower standards than it does Europeans and Americans..." (Lewis: 104).

The West stereotypes the Moslems with some negative labels in order to reinforce the Western values. There are some Western values which cannot be adapted or have not been adopted yet by the Middle Easterner "The most flagrant violations of civil right, political freedom, even human decency are disregard or glossed over, and crimes against humanity, which in a European or American country would invoke a storm of outrage, are seen as normal and even acceptable." (Lewis:105).

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS