

CHAPTER II

RELATED STUDIES AND LITERATURE REVIEW

A. RELATED STUDIES

One study about 'Nyai' which influences the writer to analyze the phenomena of 'Nyai' in E. Breton de Nijs' *Faded Portraits* is Katrin Bandel's *The Character of 'Nyai' in Pramoedya Ananta Toer's Work (Nyai Dasima and Nyai Ontosoroh, An Intertextual Study)*. In the study, Bandel compares the two characters, G. Francis' Nyai Dasima and Pramoedya Ananta Toer's Nyai Ontosoroh. Comparing the two, she argues that Pramoedya is successful in presenting a new story about 'Nyai' through a little change in point of view and characterization of the story.

The story of 'Nyai' in Pramoedya's work is a critic toward both Javanese culture and colonialism. It expresses the ambivalency of (post)colonial experiences (Bandel). According to Bandel, the similarity of the two stories lies on the part of 'Nyai's' daily life relationship with the master. The stories are different in the focus. The story of *Nyai Dasima* mainly focuses on the external aspects (not about the psychological development) of the character. On the other hand, Pramoedya's *Nyai Ontosoroh* presents the psychological development of the character in which the author lets the character tells her experiences freely with her own words.

Nyai Dasiam is a kind character, but she is weak as she is a stereotype of a Javanese/Sundanese woman. Her master loves her because of her 'female

nature': her beauty, her obedience, her loyalty, and her skill in 'female works' inside her house. Her tragedy seems to be mainly caused by her weakness and her 'female special characteristics'. In the story, it is told that Ma Boejong succeeds in influencing her. Ma Boejong provokes her that having status as a 'Nyai' is a negative status in the society because she is not legally married by the master. Besides, living with her master causes her stands far from slam as her religion. Previously, she is not aware of her negative status as a 'Nyai' and she loves her master because he often gives her gifts. Her Javanese/Sundanese woman stereotype, which positions her as a dependant and passive woman, causes Samioen to easily cheat her.

Different from Nyai Dasima, Nyai Ontosoroh in Pramoedya' work is initially a weak woman. Her experience of being sold by her father to Mellema makes her realize to react against the bad experience by changing herself to be a strong and a clever woman. She has a strong desire to learn new skills and knowledge as much as possible. Not only making her learn about 'female works' inside her house, Mellema also gives her a chance to learn Dutch, to write, read, and manage Mellema's company. Nyai Ontosoroh is really aware that she has negative status as a 'Nyai' in the society. This leads her to force herself not to depend much on her master. She realizes that her master can leave her anytime as their relationship is not under a legal marriage.

Comparing the two stories, Bandel argues that Nyai Dasima is naïve in experiencing her negative status as a 'Nyai'. She loves her master and enjoys the relationship. She considers the gifts she got from her master as kind of presents.

On the other hand, Nyai Ontosoroh makes use of her negative status as 'Nyai'. She argues that everything she got from her master is not a matter of present. She deserves to get salary, for example, because she does a job: manages her master company.

In *Nyai Dasima*, the inferior and bad status both as a woman and as a native is presented as something which deserves to be experienced by a native woman. Nyai Dasima receives her colonization as a 'Nyai' without any opposition because she considers it as the result of her nature of being a native as well as a woman. In Pramoedya's *Nyai Ontosoroh*, the negative status of a 'Nyai' is presented as a form of colonization which should be opposed by the 'Nyai'. Nyai Ontosoroh experiences her status as a 'Nyai' as something insulting and colonizing her identity as a woman as well as a native. However, she is successful in holding her status to get her own happiness by learning new knowledge. It leads to her new awareness of her identity and self esteem. Nyai Ontosoroh experiences her marginalization as her (post)colonial ambivalency. Her ambivalency can be seen as she does not like to depend herself much on her master. She avoids returning back to her parents as she considers that Javanese culture concerns much on the social hierarchy. As a 'Nyai', she is not accepted in the hierarchy. However, Nyai Ontosoroh has experienced a contact with a foreign culture so that there is no chance for her anymore to send her self back to her Javanese society.

At last, after comparing the way a 'Nyai' is presented in the two novels, Bandel concludes that both G. Francis' *Nyai Dasima* and Pramoedya's

Nyai Ontosoroh experience double colonization, as a woman and as a native. Bandel concludes that as a woman, the contact with the colonizer causes Nyai Ontosoroh not being accepted in the traditional Javanese social hierarchy. As a native, the relationship with the colonizer opens the chances for her to get access to the colonizer knowledge and wealth. This places Nyai Ontosoroh 'in between' position. These positions lead her into not being received by the two societies.

Compared to the study which the writer of the thesis will do, both studies have similarity since the two present the marginalization experienced by the 'Nyai'. However, Bandel analyzes the phenomena of 'Nyai' by doing intertextual study on it, while the writer of this thesis will explore complex marginalization experienced by a 'Nyai' and the reaction of the 'Nyai' toward it in E. Breton de Nijs *Faded Portraits* by using postcolonial theory. The theory would be useful to point out how the identity is constructed and stereotyped by the colonizer and how it perceived and internalized by the colonized. It can be used to scrutinize the causes and the operation of marginalization and how the marginalized reacts toward the condition.

B. POSTCOLONIAL THEORY

Race, gender, class, and religion are sources of different identity. Having different identity often results in discrimination and colonization. Racial discrimination done by the Whites toward the Blacks in South Africa can be taken as an example. Having similar issue, the analysis of the novel is mainly related with the problem of different identity as the result of having status as a 'Nyai'. In

this matter, the status leads the 'Nyai' into having more than one identity. Simply, as a 'Nyai', Titi's identities are as a woman, as a Javanese/Sundanese, and also as a native woman/ a colonized. About the sources of identity, Woodward (1) in *Identity and Difference* writes:

Identities in the contemporary world derive from multiplicity of sources – from nationality, ethnicity, social class, community, gender, sexuality- sources which may conflict in the construction of identity positions and lead to contradictory fragmented identities.

Woodward (1) continues:

Each of us may experience some struggles between conflicting identities based on our different positions in the world, as a member of a particular community, ethnicity, social class, religion, as a parent,.... However, identity gives us positions in the world and presents the link between us and the society in which we live:....

Furthermore, the consideration of the novel as a postcolonial novel is based on the conflict built in it: the Dutch colonization toward Indonesia which causes 'Nyai' phenomena and the colonial society stratification constructed by the Dutch and its effect on the relationship between/among the races constituted in it. Clearly, the matter of colonization and marginalization in the novel occurs as the result of having different identity between the colonizer and the colonized.

Therefore, the analysis will use Homi K. Bhabha's *Stereotype, Discrimination, and the Discourse of Colonialism Theory* and Stuart Hall's *Cultural Identity* as the theories. The use of the two would complete and support

each other in giving the answer for both of the statement of the problem. In this matter, the writer finds that there are some notions both in Bhabha's and Hall's which can be used to scrutinize the first and the second statements of the problem. In his stereotype, discrimination, and colonial discourse, Bhabha intends his notion to complete the problem of Said's use of Foucault's concepts of power and discourse which, in Said's *Orientalism*, results in self-other and master-slave relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. In this matter, in Said's *Orientalism*, "subjects are always disproportionately placed in opposition or domination through the symbolic decentring of multiple power relations which play the role of support as well as target or adversary" (Bhabha 72). In his second way of thinking of identity, Hall finds out that his notion support Said's *Orientalism* and Foucault's *Knowledge and Power*.

B.1. BHABHA ON STEREOTYPE, DISCRIMINATION, AND THE DISCOURSE OF COLONIALISM

In his book *The Location of Culture*, in one of his writing entitled "*Interrogating Identity*", Bhabha proposes that there are three processes of identification which is shaped as the result of the colonial alienation of the person (41); they are 'overdetermined from without' by the colonial subject (43), alienation within identity (43), and split representation of body and soul (44). As has been explained in his further article entitled "*Stereotype, Discrimination, and the Discourse of Colonialism*", in the discourse of colonialism, those three

processes influence the practice of stereotyping the colonized which lead into the colonized discrimination and marginalization.

In colonial discourse, differences are apparatus of power will which turn on the recognition and disavowal of racial/cultural/historical differences. It seeks authorization for its strategies by production of knowledge of colonizer and colonized which are stereotypical but antithetically evaluated. Despite the 'play' in the colonial system which is crucial to its exercise of power, colonial discourse produces the colonized as a social reality which is at one an 'other' and yet entirely knowable and visible (70-1).

The producing of 'other' is done by the process of ambivalence through imposing stereotype. In here, stereotype as mode of ambivalence should shift from the ready recognition of images as positive or negative to its *process of subjectification*. In the process of subjectification, the colonizer imposes the bad stereotypes the colonized have in order to justify their colonization over the colonized. Then, the stereotype as the colonized is perceived by the colonized as something that they deserve to have. On the other hand, the colonizer imposes that they themselves have right of domination over the colonized realizing their racial and cultural identities. In the process of subjectification, the place of to dominate and to be dominated is imposed by the colonizer and then self –imposed by the colonized. The colonizer consider that they deserve to dominate and the colonized consider that their proper place is under the domination of the colonizer. The process of subjectification is possible to be practiced by engaging its *effectivity*: by proposing positions of power and resistance, domination and dependence that

construct the identification of both the colonizer and the colonized. Thus, the production of ambivalence through stereotyping results in ‘otherness’ or articulation of difference contained within the fantasy of origin and identity (67). In this matter, Bhabha argues that stereotype is complex, ambivalence, contradictory mode of representation, as anxious as it is assertive (70).

Realizing the problem occurring in Said’s *Orientalism*, Bhabha argues that stereotype functions as phobia as well as a fetish. In marginalization, fetish – disavowal of difference- represents absence and difference. It gives access to an ‘identity’ which is predicated as a form of multiple and contradictory belief in its recognition of difference and disavowal of it (74-5). Stereotype is the primary point of subjectification. It is arrested, fixated form of representation that constitutes a problem for the *representation* of the subject in significations of psychic and social relation (75). In this matter, in their colonization, the Whites use racial difference, for example, of the Blacks as the sign of *negative difference*. It is to impose stereotype of the Blacks as licentious, dirty, and such.

At last, Bhabha argues that:

Stereotype-as-suture is recognition of the *ambivalence* of that authority and those orders of identification. The role of fetishistic identification, in the construction of discriminatory knowledges that depend on ‘the presence of difference’, is to provide a process of splitting and multiple/contradictory belief at the point of enunciation and subjectification. (80)

In the novel, the explanation can be seen in how Sophie and Alex hold their identity as the Dutch (Eurasian) which deserve to dominate Titi by realizing Titi's identity as a native woman (a colonized) who is proper to be dominated. Realizing the differences, Alex and Sophie always stereotype Titi as a native woman as: dirty, lazy, indolent, immoral, and so on.

B. 2. STUART HALL'S CULTURAL IDENTITY THEORY

Hall's cultural identity theory is used to complete and support Bhabha's notion of the power of stereotype and discrimination in colonial discourse. Hall's theory is useful to analyze Titi's internalization of her identity as a Javanese/Sundanese (woman), as a 'Nyai', and as a colonized (native) which leads to her passive reaction.

In his article entitled "*Cultural Identity and Diaspora*" (in Woodward, ed.), Hall takes his starting point the questions of who and what we represent when we speak. As his starting point, Hall argues that practices of representation always implicate the positions from which we speak or write –the position of enunciation (Hall qtd in Woodward 51). He writes that identity is "a 'production', which is never complete, always in process, constituted within, not outside representation" (51). Hall continues that we all write and speak from particular place and time, from culture and history which is specific. What we say is always 'in context', positioned 51.

Hall argues that there are two ways of thinking about 'cultural identity'. They are:

First, by defining 'cultural identity' in term of one, shared culture, a sort of collective 'one true self', hiding inside in the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed 'selves', which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common (51). Within this term, our cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as 'one people', with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history. Second, by recognizing that there are critical points of deep and significant *difference* which constitute 'what we really are'; or rather –since history has intervened- 'what we have become' (52).

In this matter, Hall argues that identity is 'a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'. It belongs to the future as much as to the past' (52).

Hall continues only from the second position we can understand the traumatic character of 'the colonial experience'. The ways in which the colonized were positioned and subjected in the dominant regimes of representation were the effect of cultural power and normalization. Not only, in Said's 'Orientalist' sense, were we constructed as different and other within the categories of knowledge of the East by those regimes. They had the power to make us see and experience ourselves as 'Other'. Every regime of representation is a regime, as Foucault

reminded, of power formed by internal 'power/knowledge'. It is one thing to position a subject or sets of peoples as the Other of a dominant discourse. It is quite another thing to subject them to that 'knowledge', not only as a matter of imposed will and domination, by the power of inner compulsion and subjective conformation to the norm. This inner expropriation of cultural identity cripples and deforms. If it is silences are not resisted, they produce, in Fanon's vivid phrase, 'individuals without an anchor, without horizon, colourless, tasteless, rootless' (52-3).

Those Hall's two ways of thinking cultural identity, Hall's first thought of identity is internalized by Titi within her Javanese/Sundanese culture, as she defines her identity as a Javanese/Sundanese woman who has to obey her cultural values. The second one is hold by Titi when she defines her identity as a 'Nyai', as a native woman who deserves to be dominated as the result of Alex's and Sophie's Self concept as the colonizer.

CHAPTER III

THE DUTCH COLONIZATION TOWARD INDONESIA AND THE JAVANESE/ SUNDANESE CULTURE AS THE INFLUENTIAL FACTORS OF "NYAI" PHENOMENA