

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Africa is a vast country that has lots of resources, yet native Africans have not been able to take advantage of the resources because of the lack of tools and abilities. This makes other countries use Africa's resources for their own property. Beginning in the medieval period around the 8th century, Arab traders arrived into Africa along the Nile river towards Nubia, and across the Sahara into West Africa. They were interested especially in native African slaves, therefore the slave trade was performed by the Arab. In 1420 the early Portuguese expedition to Africa was led by prince Henry to secure the island of Madeira and Canary Islands as well because of the strategic location of the island. (Diffie 1977). In the 17th century, the Dutch began to explore Africa and started the West and East Indies Company in Africa, controlling over the Atlantic and Indian Ocean that eventually creates conflict between the Portuguese and the Dutch. The portuguese was driven out by the Dutch. Another European country like England also came to Africa in 1530 to trade and build Ford James that later taken by the Dutch. In 1626, France also set foot in Africa and created de l'Occident. This company driven out the Dutch from Africa, making it the first Africa's area that being controlled by the French. (Fage 2016). There are many European countries had already explored Africa but America has not yet performed an expedition to Africa until the early 19th century.

While European countries had set their foot into Africa, America at the time was still busy dealing with their own country. America wanted to expand its territory by colonizing the native Indian and drove them away from their land. For example, an American expedition held by Lewis and Clark in 1804 was a major chapter in the history of the American expedition. The expedition was to explore the Louisiana Purchase and the Pacific Northwest resulting in the

establishment of 178 new plants to be identified. However, the main objective of Lewis and Clark expedition involved diplomacy with the native Americans. The expedition held councils with Indians, perform an agreement with the chief indian, in which the corps had military parades, by handing out peace offering, and gifts, delivered speeches, trade promise, and intertribes peace. (Buckley 2019). Although it was meant for peace, the expedition held another intentional purpose such as taking minerals sample, new plant specimen, and local artifacts to send back to the expedition source. However, this is a form of exploitation of natural resources. Other motives such as colonizing often appear in the expedition. In Lewis and Clark expedition, as they settled in the native Americans area, they also indirectly colonized the natives by making the natives work for the expedition and also they took the resources for themselves. Not only colonized the native Americans, but the expedition also colonized the natural resources. Expedition itself, according to Jonathan (2002) is a movement by some “individual or group in order to research something, much like exploration, discover something new, for science, economy, or military”.

In 1855, American scholar and traveler Paul Belloni Du Chaillu was sent by the Academy of Natural Sciences at Philadelphia on an African expedition. The expedition was not about taking resources or trading, but to hunt and collect gorillas specimens in the African jungle. Du Chaillu also sold his hunted gorillas to the Natural History Museum in London. During the expedition, Du Chaillu collected and identified several new species for science, including African giant Otter, African Bat, and Crocodile. This makes animals the target of the expedition as well as the resources and natives (Conniff 2011). In 1874, American journalist Henry M Stanley mapped the central African Lakes and navigating the Congo River as the objective of his expedition. Stanley also thought that the Africans were savages and only valued force, power, boldness, and decision. Stanley somehow respected the native Africans when he hit one of his colleague John William Shaw, a racist white man in the expedition for mistreating the natives (Stanley 1890).

Another reason the Americans exploited resources is because of industrial development. In early 1800s, steam became the most useful source of power (Hunter 1979). Later, steam was considered not strong enough to continue the industrial development, especially in metalworks. Around 1940s, American scientists began to study atomic energy that later known as nuclear power. Nuclear power is powerful enough to generate electricity and in 1957 atomic generators were used to produce electrical energy to the U.S. power grid (Ramana 2011). However, nuclear power considered dangerous for the earth and humans. Nuclear power can be unstable and can explode, causing harmful radiation for living things in the area near the explosion. Nuclear was also used in weaponry that is widely known as a nuclear bomb. America used atomic bomb to destroy Nagasaki and Hiroshima in Japan for only a few seconds in 1945 and caused radiation to a radius of 1.3 km (Bernstein 2007). Not just for weaponry, nuclear kept having accidents in reactor test in 1960s. Many anti-nuclear protests attracted national public attention during the 1970s and 1980s. The anti-nuclear protests preceded to shutdown dozen of nuclear power plan in the U.S. and by the mid-1970s it became clear that nuclear power would not grow nearly as fast as once believed. Cost overruns were sometimes a factor of ten above original industry estimates, and became a major problem (Brian 2007). The fall of nuclear power made Americans searched for new source of power and began to abandon the atomic energy.

The search for alternative powers made America explored the world. Through expedition, the Americans were able to examine various materials from the world. On the other hand, America is not the only one searching for alternative energy. America and Europe are the two most technologically developed countries in the world, both struggling for the development of industrialism and technology, making Europe the toughest competitor in industrial development. Since 1953, the U.S. and the E.U. hadve dominated global trade with the advantages in economic and military power (Clark 2008). Japan was also one of the competitors that worth mentioned. Since 1870, japan has been trying to catch up with the west in the field of industrial development (Maddison 2003).

Because of the effort required by the expedition was demanding power, until 18th century there were only male expedition groups, while women were expected to look after the house and children. However, in 1766 a women joined French's world expedition. Jeanne Baret is recognized as the first woman to circumnavigate the globe. Although the French's expedition prohibited women to board the ships, Baret disguised herself as a man (Jean Baret) and travelled on the vessel along with 300 men (Ridley 2010). Although not as leader, Baret still played an important role in the expedition as an assisstant and got a private cabin in the vessel. Baret true gender later discovered and she was returned to France. In 1978, Arlene Blum was the first female American expedition leader. She lead the first all women expedition into Himalaya (Kramar 1980). At first, the idea of all women expedition into Himalaya was rejected and received many criticism from male climbers. Arlene Blum ensured that the women were prepared for the expedition, they underwent psychological tests and individual training programs. As the first female team, many of the women were specifically determined to forge their own leadership methods and styles regardless of the male lead expeditions before them. Their bravery later inspired other climbers, especially female climbers (Lichtenstein 1978).

Michael Crichton's novel, *Congo*, first published in 1980, is one of the novels that tells about expedition that led by women. *Congo* is a sci-fi thriller novel created during 1979 by Michael Crichton, one of the best writers and the author of the Jurassic Park series. Congo also got its movie adaptation in 1995 directed by Frank Marshall. The Congo story began with an expedition by a private company ERTS (Earth Resources Technology Services) to the jungle of Congo in Africa. The purpose of this expedition is to find an alternative energy, especially the rare kind of diamond that could be mined there. The first group, led by Kruger, had a terrible accident that cost the life of the researchers. ERTS sent a second group to investigate the accident. The second group was led by female doctor Karen Ross accompanied by Munro, a local guide and a gorilla expert Dr. Peter Elliot along with a female gorilla called Amy who can do sign language taught by Elliot. As the story goes, the group found an ancient city in the middle

of the jungle. The ancient city was occupied by grey (mutant) gorillas that lived there. It turns out that those grey gorillas killed the first group that protected the city. The city became the source of diamond mining site near the volcano area. The grey gorillas were specifically created by the native inhabitants of the ancient city to guard the mine. With the help from Amy, the group was able to avoid the trouble. In the end, Ross's group unintentionally triggered the volcano to erupt that destroyed the ancient city and killed all the grey gorillas. After surviving the eruption, Ross's group decided to end the expedition. Ross resigned from ERTS and choose to work as a scientist with the government. Elliot continued his project Amy and later decided to let Amy go to its habitat in the jungle. Munro, who secretly kept a piece of diamond got a profit after selling the diamonds.

Previously, numerous literary studies have examined the novels. A study by Cary Wolfe examined Faux Posthumanism in "*Animal Rites: American Culture, the Discourse of Species, and Posthumanist Theory*" (Wolfe 2003). In her study, Wolfe examined contemporary notions of humanism, ethics and animals by reconstructing a little known but crucial underground tradition of theorizing the animal. By using Hemingway's fiction, the film and Michael Crichton's novel *Congo*, Wolfe explored what it would mean, in theory and critical practice, to take seriously "question of the animal". A pathbreaking contribution to the discussion of posthumanism, "Animal Rites" must attract readers' interest in a wide range of fields, from science and literature to philosophy and ethics, from animal rights and ecology to literary theory and criticism. Another study by Martin Kevorkian mentioned Neocolonialism in "*Color Monitors: The Black Face of Technology in America*" (Kevorkian 2006). Kevorkian argued that Crichton's novel, *Congo*, continuously associates primates with black people through the mutual affinity they envision for the machine.

The novel tells about the expeditions led by two different people, Kruger and Karen Ross. Kruger is a experienced expedition leader and Karen Ross is a newcomer to the expedition field, how they treat the environment will affect their mission differently. Basically, there are two genders of human, male and female.

According to Schiebinger, they describe socio-cultural categories in everyday language; these terms are used differently in biology. Because femininity and masculinity are gender identities, they are shaped by socio-cultural processes, not biology (and should not be essentialized). Femininities and masculinities are plural and dynamic; they change with culture and individuals (Schiebinger 2011). The constructed identities as male or female affect their view towards nature. Male is usually more rush and aggressive, while female is softer and slower. The different point of view towards nature appears in Crichton's *Congo* expedition leaders, Kruger and Ross. Both of them are chosen by the ERTS to lead the expedition into Congo's jungle, yet the outcome was completely different. In this study, the writer will focus on the differences in views towards nature by the expedition leaders.

Commonly, the issue of environment does not concern about gender or sex. It usually concern on the treatment toward nature itself. However, in *Congo*, the treatment is no longer become the main focus, but rather than the difference of views toward nature by male and female. The views or the perspective itself become the drive-point on how both male and female treat the nature, making connection with the common issue, although it has nothing to do with it.

To help analyze the issue, the writer used Postcolonial-Ecocriticism as the main theory and Ecofeminism as the supporting theory. In "*Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment*", written by Graham Huggan and Hellen Tiffin, they examined the relationship between humans, animals, and the environment in a postcolonial literary text. They argued that human liberation will never be fully achieved without challenging how human societies have to construct hierarchical relationships with other human and non-human communities (Graham Huggan 2010). The book mainly focuses on postcolonial and the environment, including the development and its entitlement. The human is also one of the concerns matters in this book, dealing with beliefs, behavior, sex, and emotion. As the supporting theory, the writer used *Ecofeminism* by Greta Gaard. According to Gaard, Ecofeminism is a theory that has evolved from

various fields of feminist inquiry and activism such as; peace movements, labor movements, women's health care, and the anti-nuclear, environmental, and animal liberation movements. Drawing on the insights of ecology, feminism, and socialism, ecofeminism's basic premise is that the ideology that authorizes oppressions such as those based on race, class, gender, sexuality, physical abilities, and species are the same ideologies that sanctions the oppression of nature (Gaard 1993).

1.2 Statements of the Problem

Based on the previous description, the problems formulated in this study are as follow:

1. How did the American expedition turn into colonizing people and the nature of Congo?
2. How do the views of American male and female expedition leaders towards nature affect their mission differently?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Based on the statement of the problems mentioned above, the main objectives of this study is to find the portrayal of hierarchical relations in Michael Crichton's *Congo* that focused on:

1. To examine how the American expedition colonized people and the nature of Congo.
2. To explain how the views of male and female expedition leaders towards nature affected their mission.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to add additional data for the next researchers or students in English Department of Universitas Airlangga who would like to conduct a research in Michael Crichton's *Congo* or the related studies and theories. The writer aimed to describe how the story portrays the hierarchical

relations between human and environment, focusing on the differences in action towards nature by male and female. Furthermore, this study also aimed to help students of English Department in Universitas Airlangga understand more about postcolonial ecocriticism study.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

- Expedition** : An expedition is defined as a group undertaking a journey of some length and difficulty in the outdoors for a definite purpose. This will include educational, social, recreational and adventure journeys (Journal of Wilderness Medicine, 1994)
- Leadership** : Influence others in order to complete a particular task, and thus it gives the ability to transform and influence people and institutions (Astin, 2000)
- Natural Exploitation** : The use of natural resources for economic growth, sometimes with a negative connotation of accompany environmental degradation (Richard, 2009)
- Colonization** : The action or process of settling among and establishing control over the indigenous people of an area (University of Saskatchewan)
- Postcolonial Ecocriticism** : Postcolonial ecocriticism is a branch of postcolonial theory that examine the relationships between humans, animals and the environment in postcolonial texts (Tiffin 2010)