

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Tradition is a process of inheritance from generation to generation. There are related to habits or thought processes inherited from time to time (Nelson H. Grabum: 2001). Almost all regions have their traditions and culture. Each country has a specific tradition that can be found in the same culture, tradition, belief, or anything else inherited or distributed from the past to the present. Asia is known as the largest continent with a large population and a variety of abundant resources. Asia is home to some of the oldest civilizations and cultural traditions globally, which produce most of the major religious systems, myths, and systems of society known for ethics and morality (Craig A. Lockard: 2014). Many traditions and cultures have deficiencies, such as experiencing a change in tradition. The clash can occur between community traditions or between different cultural cultures found in the community.

Asian culture has a variety of traditions consisting of art, music, literature, structured lifestyle, and celebration traditions carried out in the past and are still being adopted today by ethnic groups in the Asian continent itself. As a place with abundant resources, Asia has the most critical civilization systems, various myths, and old codes of ethics that have been known for a long time, such as ethics and morality. Chinese culture, one of the oldest cultures and traditions

globally, is a culture that its people have embraced for generations. People who migrate with the aim of trading still adhere to and carry out the traditions of their ancestors because they believe that there are moral values contained in the traditions that have been handed down to them.

Asian culture and the behavior of the Singaporean Chinese are evident in this novel. *Crazy Rich Asians* published in 2013; Kevin Kwan creates a satirical storyline by introducing the world to a new side of Singaporean Chinese life. Wrapped with stories full of funny satire that made this novel famous, Kevin Kwan composes a brilliant satirical story about the life of Asian people, famous for being very rich and crazy (Chung: 2013).

The main story in this novel is the struggle of a pair of lovers who have problems in their relationship and how the socio-cultural form of the Chinese people in Singapore live in their luxury. Kwan also explained the customs and culture of the Chinese Singaporeans very clearly, but something was interesting about the culture. Kevin Kwan also explained some cultural traditions that were not the culture or customs of the Chinese Singaporeans, such as the Bachelor Party, modern weddings, and Afternoon tea traditions.

The wedding party is the story's background in the novel *Crazy Rich Asians*. The dream wedding of lovers Araminta Lee and Colin Khoo is best friends of the main characters Nicholas Young and Rachel Chu. Araminta Lee and Colin Khoo are native Chinese Singaporeans who have a pedigree of Chinese ancestry and migrated to Singapore. They realize their dream wedding party, the grand modern

wedding that Kevin Kwan describes in his work. Araminta Lee and Colin Khoo's elegant wedding is a Singapore-style royal wedding.

Before starting Araminta and Colin's wedding party, their best friend threw a party to celebrate the end of their single life, and the party was called the Bachelor Party. The party purposely made for fun with close friends aims to release the tension before the day when they already have the responsibilities and commitments of their lives. Kevin Kwan describes this culture as a modern culture that is currently a trend among young people.

Kevin Kwan also explained that the colonizers left traditions in the past times that are still carried out today, such as the afternoon tea tradition, which is still carried out in the Young family. Afternoon tea is a big family gathering for the Young family, which resembles the Afternoon Tea tradition in England. Some scones are famous for the deliciousness that Nicholas Young's grandmother makes.

Crazy Rich Asians is a novel full of depictions of the lives of Asian people, especially the wealthy Chinese Singaporeans. Kevin Kwan shows many customs and cultures that show that they are modern Asians, but there are exciting things from the three cultural traditions described earlier. The modern wedding tradition, the bachelor party culture, and the afternoon tea tradition are as follows. The new cultural tradition due to the development of modern times today or the tradition that has left by the colonizer from the effects of colonialism by British troops in Singapore in the past, or even becoming a modern culture because of the progress

of the times inspired by British culture, which is currently the culture very familiar because of the influence of colonialism in Singapore.

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Based on this short story, the author wants to show and examine how Kevin Kwan reveals whether the modern culture described is a modern culture that has developed over time or has indeed become a culture that was abandoned due to the effects of British colonialism on Singapore. In this study, the author wants to analyze some information about the indigenous culture of the Chinese and Chinese people of Singapore and the socio-cultural life of the Chinese Singaporean people in today's modern era.

1.2 Identification of Problem

Crazy Rich Asians depicts the Singaporean Chinese community's life, traditions, culture, and customs. This research aims to determine that three cultural traditions attract the writer's attention in this *Crazy Rich Asians* novel: modern wedding traditions, bachelor party culture, and Afternoon tea traditions. The author wants to know whether the three cultural traditions are modern cultures that have developed over time or are traditions passed down from generation to generation due to the influence of colonialism by the British colonialists on Singapore. This study also wants to know the views and background of Kevin Kwan on the cultural traditions contained in the novel.

1.3 Scope of the Research

In this case, the author limits the discussion of several traditions and cultures described by Kevin Kwan in his work. However, the author only highlights three cultural traditions that lead to cultural traditions that reflect British cultural traditions, that is bachelor party traditions, bachelor party traditions, and modern cultural traditions. In this case, the author tries to determine whether this cultural tradition is indeed a tradition of the Chinese ethnic community in Singapore.

Then, the author also analyzes how the socio-cultural life of the Singaporean Chinese community itself is, and whether this cultural tradition has indeed occurred in Singapore, seen from the factors of the socio-cultural and political life of the Singaporean society itself. Until we get the results of whether this culture

happened due to the development of modern times or whether the cultural tradition was indeed the effect of British colonialism on Singapore or the modern tradition was influenced by colonialism, a culture that is not familiar to the people in Singapore.

1.4 Research Question

In order to focus on the analysis, the writer will pose some questions to guide the writer in doing the research. Therefore, some question as follows:

1. What is the difference between the original Chinese cultural traditions with the Singaporean Chinese cultural traditions as seen in the novel?
2. What is Kevin Kwan standpoint on these cultural changes on *Crazy Rich Asians*?

1.5 The Objective of the Research

This study aims to find out that Kevin Kwan describes several traditions and cultures in his novels that represent or resemble British traditions and cultures that are unusual in the life of the Chinese Singaporean community in general. The author wants to examine whether these traditions and cultures have developmental factors from a more modern era or whether these cultural traditions result from the legacy of British colonialism forces against Singapore.

The writer also wants to examine the point of view of Kevin Kwan as the author of this novel toward one of the traditions and cultures that he describes in

his work. These traditions and cultures have become a new culture among the Chinese Singaporean and can be used by everyone.

1.6 Review of Previous Studies

The author of this study found an interesting topic about Chinese traditions and culture in Singapore that began to mix with Western culture that is happening at present. It can be seen from some of the characters that describe the event in the *Crazy Rich Asians* novel by Kevin Kwan. The author tries to provide previous studies with a source of research, including thesis, articles, and journal articles related to the novels and theories used.

First, the writer found a thesis from the English Education Department Faculty of Language and Arts Yogyakarta State University student, written by Galant Nanta Adhitya (2015), entitled *the revelation of authorial ideology through the class structure and class conflict represented in Kevin Kwan's*. The research analyzes the topic of multiculturalism in the literary text by showing the different portrayals of the Chinese, especially the American Chinese, Singaporean Chinese, and Mainland Chinese, as seen in Kevin Kwan's translated novel *Crazy Rich Asians*. In this research, the data get language features, such as words, phrases, clauses, and sentences related to the novel and the analysis.

In this research, the writer analyzes how the features of the language and others, but the writer makes research from the other view such as economic behavior and world view. The writer wants to see the different portrayals of

American Chinese, Singaporean Chinese, and Mainland Chinese with getting a conclusion of Chinese American descent being frugal and egalitarian, Singaporean Chinese descendants are closed and adhere to state-capitalism and Mainland Chinese descendants spend a lot of money, and adheres to Confucian- Communist ideas.

This study further analyzes the issue of multiculturalism in a literary text regarding the different depictions of Chinese, especially Chinese Americans, Chinese Singaporeans and Mainland Chinese. The writer in his research analyzes the form of economic behavior from a world point of view. Produce a picture of how the differences between Chinese Americans, Singaporean Chinese and Mainland Chinese and get a picture of how the three types of Chinese behave from an economic point of view.

The second previous study is a journal by Hsu-Ming Teo (2020) entitled *Cultural Authenticity, the Family, and East Asian American Romance Novels*. The research shows the rise of romance novels featuring East Asian protagonists, this essay explains the beginning of the emergence of romantic novels that feature East Asian protagonists, such as protagonists from Chinese, Japanese or Korean backgrounds, and then he explains how these novels are a reflection of the Asian people themselves who confront the concept of Orientalism belonging to Edward Said, who has a strong and weak multiculturalism configuration and refers to history and culture, above all, the idea of oppressive Asian families is used in creating a sense of authenticity from

Asian romances and its history of ethnic Chinese, and also contemporary romances using the formation of identity and identity crisis that is often found in Asian-American novels

The researcher explained that there would be more time and space to look deeper into the complex nature of family relations in the literary novel. Given the romance genre's requirement to focus on developing romantic relationships, Asian families are often limited to caricature, ironically reinforcing cultural stereotypes in culturally authentic novels.

In this study, the researcher wants to show that the prevalence of romance novels featuring East Asian protagonists, which reflects that the novel represents how Asian society itself faces multiculturalism and stereotyping situations with the concept of orientalism by Edward Said and also takes a deeper look at the complex nature of family relationships in a literary work.

Also, the analysis from a thesis English Department Faculty of Humanities, Andalas University student, written by Hamid Rahim (2019), entitled *The Allegory of British Colonization in the Relationship of Ovid and TOMIS People in David Malouf's an Imaginary Life*, the focus of this research is to analyze the allegory and meaning contained in the journey of the main character in his exile in Tomi's village. Data collection uses the literature study method to collect primary data from novels and secondary data from books and articles related to allegorical interpretation. The analysis is presented in the description method. This research produces two conclusions. First, the characters in the novel

represent early British people who came to Australia and native Australians. Second, the population of "Tomis" is "the other" Ovid. The writer concludes that these two points prove that David Malouf described the history of colonialism by the British Empire in Australia through the novel *An Imaginary Life*.

Based on that research, the researcher also applies post-colonial criticism. According to Peter Barry in his book *Beginning Theory* (1994), the ancestry of post-colonial criticism can be traced to Franz Fanons. In his book *Orientalism* (1978), Edward Said could be a specific expose of the Eurocentric Universalism, a worldview centered on a western civilization that describes what is European or Western and everything that is not European or Western inferior.

In this study, the author analyzes the characters in the novel who represent the British who came to Australia and also the indigenous Australians, which concludes that David Malouf's character is a representation in the history of colonialism by the British empire in Australia.

Another previous study is a thesis from the Department of Sociology, Lund University student, written by YueYi Qiu (2013) entitled *Chinese Marriage Traditions: Exploring Contemporary Changes*. In this research, the writer presents the transition from Chinese marriage from before 1949 to 1978 and analyzes the concept of marriage in the current era. What is included in the analysis includes the high level of divorce, leftover women, and the price of brides in Chinese culture. The writer discusses the reasons for Chinese people having difficulty getting married, especially Chinese men. In this study, there are

two theories of analysis, they are, social exchange and marriage squeeze. This analysis is also based on the price of expensive brides and how important the Chinese people are.

This study also shows that a Chinese marriage culture can change from time to time and have differences from every other area. This can be influenced by social conditions, economic structure, and family characteristics. It seems that previously people visited with their marriage partners through a partner-maker when in, people use the internet and other easy ways to find their life partners. Therefore, there has been a transition from arranged marriages to marriages of choice when Chinese women were married for fortune, but now they have quite high requirements. From time to time, when choosing and looking for a partner, Chinese men begin to focus more on the appearance of a partner, and so do Chinese women begin to focus on the talents of men who will become their future partners and also look at the social, economic and social situation of their partners.

In this study, the writer analyzes how Chinese wedding traditions begin to change from time to time and differ from region to region. It also analyzes socio-cultural factors in the current era in Chinese marriages such as the high divorce rate to the causes of Chinese people who are difficult to marry. This is because it is difficult and expensive for Chinese wedding traditions to be followed in order to respect traditions and culture and also quite a lot of requirements to reach a marriage agreement.

Another previous study analysis a thesis from the Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University student, written by Maulana Adieb Fadloly (2019) entitled “*Hibriditas Budaya Pada Tokoh Utama Dalam Novel Bumi Manusia Karya Pramoedya Ananta Toer*”. The structural analysis results showed that *Bumi Manusia* book has fifteen characters, divided into one main character and fourteen additional characters. Based on the post-colonialism analysis results, character Minke experienced cultural hybridity in carrying out mimicry actions, and then later, he resisted the existence of injustices in colonial life. Minke initially began to imitate the European culture through the H.B.S school, which he attended. Later he resisted the European nation through the knowledge he had while studying at H.B.S. school. But in the end, the resistance failed because Europeans were stronger than Indigenous, especially in terms of the law. The post- colonialism analysis showed that Minke in the *Bumi Manusia*’s book experienced cultural hybridity by looking at the following four factors: the western and eastern worlds, colonialism, cultural hybridity, and mimicry and resistance.

In this study, the results in the writer analysis show that the novel has fifteen characters which are divided into one main character and fourteen additional characters. Minke's character in the novel experiences cultural hybridity, post-colonial analysis shows that Minke's character experiences cultural hybridity from western and eastern world factors, cultural hybridity and mimicry.

Then, an article analyzes a novel that discusses the representation of the characters, entitled *The Representation of Chines Characters in Kevin Kwan’s*

Crazy Rich Asians, an article was written by Antonio Winatian in 2019, researchers want to show hybrid representation in Chinese characters. Based on this analysis, it can be found that the character chosen at *Crazy Rich Asians* upholds two American cultures and American Chinese culture, which has made it in the form of a cultural hybrid. The characters are investigated based on manifested cultural goods such as thought, behavior, and language.

The findings of the analysis using hybridity theory refer to Homi K. Bhaba (1994) and Stuart Hall that the representation of hybridity in the novel is to oppose and subvert mandarin language, which is stereotypical about yellow skin and minorities in literary works. In the characters Rachel Chu and Nick are aware of the unconscious decisions that have been enforced between 2 western and eastern cultures or American and Chinese cultures that illustrate the hybridity of each culture through experiences and interactions with people they have often met to affect them such as social life, facing family and community environment where they live.

In this study, the writer wants to show the representation of hybrids in Chinese characters. the representation of hybridity in the novel, Rachel Chu and Nick's characters realize a subconscious decision that forces them to be between 2 western and eastern cultures which represents the hybridity of each culture through social interactions in their lives.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

In completing this research, the writer used a sociological approach to literature. Sociology is a branch of science about human interaction. In contrast, the sociology of literature is a science that describes relationships between humans at the social level but still within the scope of literature. Alan Swingewood, *the Sociology of Literature* (1972), defines sociology as a scientific and objective study of people in society, social institutions, and processes. It is further said that sociology seeks to answer questions about how society is possible, how it works, and why society survives.

According to Alan Swingewood, literary works are history and not literary texts that focus on attention and point of departure for analysis; literature effectively dissolves in the face of such determinants as race, miles, class power, and personal biography (1972: 59). It means that literary works created by someone become a benchmark for social history and social background. The sociology of literature has a special effect. Based on Swingewood, sociology can be concluded into three types (Laurenson and Swingewood 1972:17-21). Explain as follows:

First, the writer's sociology as part of a collective creates literary works to express what they feel and think about their social life. The existence of social groups is a process of balance between the collective subject and the social and natural environment. Meanwhile, the constitutive element itself is a relative totality with them. For example, Kevin Kwan, writer of *Crazy Rich Asians*,

describes the conflict between Chinese families in Singapore and British culture's cultural customs and traditions.

Second, sociology describes the study of societal influences and the social conditions in which certain literary works arise. So, society cannot be separated from literature. *Crazy Rich Asians* is set in Singapore, explaining how Chinese people live in Singapore with various family conflicts and social life as Chinese Singaporeans. They are social people who live with other people or their families, who prioritize their social life. They have their ideas as literary works. With an exciting phenomenon in society, it will be followed by people's work as interpretations of phenomena based on a particular culture.

Last, the sociology of the reader, according to Laurensen and Swingewood, the sociology of readers aims to determine how the right community receives a literary work at a certain actual time. Therefore, the reader's interpretations, responses, attitudes, and opinions are taken by readers and are influenced by literary works.

Based on Swingewood's perspective above, the writer applies the first perspective, where literary works are seen as social documents that reflect the work that has been written. This perspective seems to apply in Kevin Kwan's novel *Crazy Rich Asians*, which is analyzed using a sociological approach where this work discusses the social conditions of the Chinese community in Singapore

as well as their family's social conflicts and their luxurious life to their cultural traditions that follow the Western culture.

Also, the writer uses postcolonial critiques of western representation. This study uses the concept of Orientalism theory that Edward Said coined in looking at Western views of the Eastern world. This study examines cultural power relations that focus on cultures, such as tastes, texts, and values that have been constructed by the West, which refers to how the West visualizes it.

Said describes the Orient (the East) as Western Europe's "Other." To differentiate itself from the Orient, the West has focused on generalizing, stereotyping, and inventing depictions of the Orient that conform to this opposition of West and East. This theory allows us to look at both of these areas in a new light, celebrate the cultures that exist in the world, and recognize those that have been erased.

Said argued that the orient is the stage on which the whole east is confined in his book *Orientalism*. Said believed these biased perceptions hindered a proper understanding of Middle Eastern and East Asian culture. Based on the description above, the writer believes that concept can help analyze the representation of Asian Orientalism based on power relations on culture, such as tastes, texts, and values that the West has constructed.

In this study, the author wants to show that several traditions and cultures of the Chinese community in Singapore are different from the original cultural traditions passed down from their ancestors. It should be understood that these traditions are the result of the development of the times that are increasingly developing in the modern era or whether there is any influence of colonialism that has occurred in Singapore in the past, several aspects are needed, such as looking at the situation of the original Chinese culture and Singaporean Chinese culture from the colonial era. In his theory of Orientalism, Edward Said describes how the western view of the east, from the cultural point of view, there can be changes and cultural clashes to produce a new culture.

According to Edward Said (1997), orientalism describes Asian and Islamic culture during European imperialism. The European goal is to maintain non-European power and domination using orientation and imperialism to symbolize its strength and superiority. In this respect, orientalists are treated as others, Muslims and Asians, as objects defined not in their discourse but solely within the framework of standards and definitions imposed on them from outside (Said, 1997).

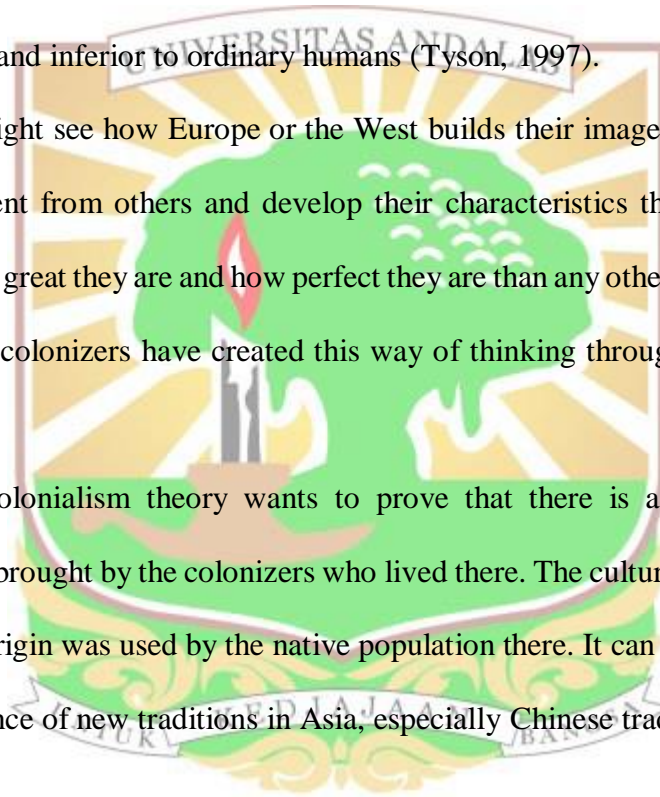
In Postcolonialism, the colonizer is superior to the colonized. It can be seen that the Chinese or Arabs or any colonized inhabitants of Asia or the Middle East are defined as cruel, cunning, evil, cunning, dishonest, and accustomed to promiscuity and perversion, and the like. In contrast, westerners as invaders are

defined as benevolent people, straightforward, kind, upright, honest, and moral (Tyson, 1997).

The colonists believed that only their own Anglo-European culture was civilized, sophisticated, or, as postcolonial critics would say, metropolitan. Furthermore, colonizers saw themselves as embodiments of what human beings should be, authentic selves, and indigenous peoples perceived as different, different, and inferior to ordinary humans (Tyson, 1997).

We might see how Europe or the West builds their image as special, and they are different from others and develop their characteristics that are intentional to show how great they are and how perfect they are than any other nation in the world. European colonizers have created this way of thinking through Orientalism (Said, 1997).

Post-colonialism theory wants to prove that there is an authentic cultural influence brought by the colonizers who lived there. The culture they got from their place of origin was used by the native population there. It can help the writer prove the existence of new traditions in Asia, especially Chinese traditions in Singapore.



1.8. Method of the Research

In processing on this research, the writer applies library research. It involves the processes of gathering information to write papers, do the presentation, and conduct research. Those processes are collecting data, analyzing data, and presenting data.

1.8.1 Collecting Data

The writer collects the data uses the library research method by using two kinds of data: primary and secondary data. The primary data are the *Crazy Rich* by Kevin Kwan. The secondary data or the extrinsic data that are obtained from the materials that have a connection and correlation with the main data, such as a book, international journals, and article, along with internet browsing to get more finding material to support the topic and the theory for the perfection of this research.

1.8.2 Analyzing the Data

In analyzing the data, the writer has to understand the storyline in *Crazy Rich Asians* and get the finding of knowing about the culture of the novel that has an impact from postcolonial. Then will apply the theory to strengthen the analysis of the topic

1.8.3 Presenting the Result of Analysis

The final step is presenting the result of the research. The result of this study is present descriptively. Bodgan and Biken said in their book entitled *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Method* that qualitative research is descriptive; the data collected in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers. The study's written result contains quotations from the data to illustrate and substantiate the presentation (1982:28)

