

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This introduction discusses three main points. First, the Background of Study describes the main reason of this research. Second, the Problem of the Study contains the social problem experienced by the coolie in India as presented in the novel *Coolie*. Third, the Objective of the Study presents the purposes of this scientific study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Novel is the product of arts that has been used by many writers to capture the crucial moment they have experienced, heard, or known before. Many people have used it as the object of their analysis on a certain aspect in society. Politics, economy, religion, and social phenomenon in a certain era can be presented in a novel through the point of view of a writer. It presents many types of stories and events which are happening, happened or about to happen in the society. Bennett & Royle (1999) stated that there are four types on how people identified the relation between literatures with reality. One of the type as they identify is “literary works can help us to understand the time in which they are set: realist texts in particular provide imaginative representations of specific historical moments, events or period.” (1999, p.110).

Many social phenomenon have been presented in novel since hundred years ago. One of the most highlighted phenomenon in a society often presented in novel is human exploitation. Since long before the era of colonization happened,

happening, and even long after the era of colonization ended, human exploitation happens anywhere and anytime. The exploitation is usually committed by the superior to the inferior level in society, from the majority to minority. According to Stuart and Hirschberg (2003) minorities usually don't have any influences in political context or a higher educational background, they only get the position to do the menial jobs and earn smaller income.

The treatment towards someone in a society is usually influenced by its race, gender and class. The exploitations based on race, gender and class in society happen almost everywhere. Many of them are presented in a form of novel in order to share the similar situation faced by the oppressed and also to criticize the discrimination and exploitation happened in a society. For example, in Toni Morrison's *Beloved* the depiction of racial discrimination towards the black people can be identified easily in the context of slavery. In *A Walk Across the Sun* by Corban Addison, gender discrimination and inferiority of women in social life presented through the story of abduction and sexual exploitation in India, while in *Coolie* by Mulk Raj Anand, the depiction of human exploitation based on social class can be easily found in the story of a working class in India.

1.1.1 Mulk Raj Anand's *Coolie*

The novel *Coolie* is written by an Indian writer named Mulk Raj Anand and was first published in 1936. The main character is a fourteen years old orphan boy named Munoo who lives in Kangra Hills. The social phenomenon presented in the novel is the life of laborer in India called as coolie who worked on menial jobs. Coolie only received small wages and often treated badly by the people with higher

status in its society. The setting of time of this novel is in the 20th century of India, in the pre partition era when India was still colonized by the British. *Coolie* consist of 5 parts. Each parts presents the journey of Munoo who moves from one place to another place and experiences different jobs on each of them.

Part one presents the situation of Munoo's life in Kangra Hills. As a young boy who lives with his aunt in a village, Munoo still gets the opportunity to go to school and only need to help his aunt to take care of their buffaloes and cow. In part two Munoo moves to Shampur, where his uncle works. He is hired as a servant in Babu Nathoo Ram's house, his uncle superior in Imperial Bank. Munoo is discriminated, the Babu forbids Munoo to play with his daughter. One day, Munoo decides to run away because he was punished as he accidentally hurt the face of Babu's daughter.

In part three he gets on a train and accidentally meets two men named Prabha and Ganpat whom because of pity decided to take Munoo to their place in Daulatpur. Prabha and his wife are considering to adopt Munoo as their son, they treat Munoo nicely and let Munoo lives with them in their house. Munoo helps the work with other young labor in Prabha and Ganpat's factory until one day Ganpat takes all the money away and leads the factory into bankruptcy. Prabha falls sick and chooses to go to Pathankot, lets Munoo and some of the children workers stay in Daulatpur.

In part four with the help of an elephant driver Munoo gets the chance to get on a train to go to Bombay. He meets Hari and his family, they decided to go to the Sirjabite factory where Hari used to work to get some jobs. In the factory Munoo experiences the live of coolie who works in a big factory; the low payment, bad

treatment, bad accommodation, etc., Munoo almost participates in a laborer movement leads by the Trade Union Executive Committee when suddenly the fight between Hindus and Muhammadan happens. In part five, he successfully survives from the fight and is taken by an Anglo-Indian woman named Mrs. Mainwaring to her house in Simla. He becomes a servant there and a rickshaw driver for a moment then died because of hemorrhage.

1.1.2 British Colonization in India

The setting of time used in the novel *Coolie* is in the early 20th century of India. It was when British still colonized the Indian. British, just like other European countries went into a voyage to find a place where they could settle their power and dominate its natural resources. In 17th century, British came and started to settle their power through the economy sector in India. It dominated India with its trading company British East India Company in the 18th century. Its fast development led them to the full control over the society in India. It widened its power from economy into the political system in India. The British colonizer is called as “*British Raj*”, the British that rules over the land in India. Hundred years they ruled the land and gave a lot of influences toward many important elements in Indian society. The stereotype, social strata, standard of education, and even workplaces changed along as the British started to influence Indians’ point of view towards life. Marshall (2011, para. 3) pointed out that:

Towards the end of the 17th century India became the focal point of the Company's trade. Cotton cloth woven by Indian weavers was being imported into Britain in huge quantities to supply a worldwide demand for cheap, washable, lightweight fabrics for dresses and furnishings. The Company's main settlements, Bombay, Madras and Calcutta were established in the Indian provinces where cotton textiles for export were

most readily available. These settlements had evolved from 'factories' or trading posts into major commercial towns under British jurisdiction, as Indian merchants and artisans moved in to do business with the Company and with the British inhabitants who lived there.

The high demand of trading products and the power of British people in India caused the construction of many factories especially in big cities such as Bombay and Calcutta moved really fast. Mumbai or known as Bombay in the past, was one of the most important meeting points of trading activities in India. It has a gate called "The Gate of India" that was used to welcome the arrival of European people in India. British big involvements in Indian economy system did gave a lot of advantages towards the Indian especially the upper class who works as a merchants but contradictorily towards the lower class. The bad practices done by the upper class such as discrimination and exploitation in social life and workplaces have caused a great misery for the lower class people at that time.

1.1.3 The Significance of the Study

The miserable life of workers in India is presented evidently in the novel *Coolie*. It is very crucial to discuss further about the ill-treatment of the upper class towards the working class people in India. Since the length of British colonization era in India is more than a hundred years, there are many prominent influences and indirect impacts of that colonization which affect Indian society's life. Therefore, the findings of this research hopefully can be useful for the reader as a reminder of how profound the influences and impacts of colonization in many colonized countries around the world.

1.2 Problem of the Study

Based on The Background of the Study discussed above, the indirect impacts of British colonization era in India experienced by coolie as depicted in the novel *Coolie*, becomes the main problem that is discussed in this study.

1.3 Objective of the Study

Regarding with the problem presented in the Problem of the Study section, the aims of this research covers: (1) the analysis on the influences of British colonizer in India as presented in the novel *Coolie*, (2) the analysis on indirect impacts of British Colonization's in India as depicted in the novel *Coolie*, and (3) the interpretation from the result of those analysis.