

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of Research

Social life is an institution which differentiates people with other creatures such as animal. In this institution people begins to learn about his relation with others. Human's need in socializing will slowly push people to make a social group called society. In this society people interacts one another. The social interaction will build a social relationship among many different people who finally decided that they have the same intention, to interact and live side by side. The kind of this relation will sharpen human's special characteristic which basically is fond of living in social environment to reach the highest level of his moral characteristic (Adeng Mukhtar, 2004: 9).

The more people socialize with the other fellow, the more they involve their sense of humanity in the social interaction. The sense of humanity which is fully planted in the human's soul will push people to make rules and social values to role social problem which might be exist in the future. Rules and social values including religion, ideology, spiritual, art, and the other unsure as the result of human's soul expression as a part of the society (Soerjono Soekanto, 1982:167). In this phase, people begin to form their own culture, because religion, ideology, spiritual value and art are some of cultural unsure. Culture itself is a complex involves knowledge, faith, art, moral, law, customs, and the other customs which people got as a member of society (Taylor in Soerjono Soekanto, 1982: 166).

When social interactions begin to form its role then the individuals of the society begin to do self identification with his environment. Identification itself is individual desires to be the same with the other. Identification also could be said as the process of personality formation in one's life (Soekanto, 1982: 57). This identification will drive people to determine their other identity beside self identity, it is cultural identity.

Barker (2005: 263) states that cultural and national identity is a construction which is built over the symbol and ritual which is related to the area category and administrative. In anthropology term, identity is characteristic which specially explain about self consciousness, group, community and country. In this term, identity is not only limited to individual but also to a community (Adeng Mukhtar, 2004:1). Based on the theory which is previously explained, it means that in dealing with questions of identity formation one is dealing with process that is located in the core of the individual and yet also in the core of his communal culture (Erikson, 1971: 7). In the other hand, all of us must have an identity as an individual and also as a member of society. Even as an individual we have many differences, but when we decide to be united in one unity named culture means that we have created our own identity because cultural identity is a context which represent the differences as the unity (Hall, 1992: 297).

Based on its supporting factors, identity both personal and communal, is divided into two; physical identity and non-physical identity. Physical identity is identity which is bounded by the physical similarity such as culture, religion, and language. Mean while, non-physical identity is the similarity which is bounded

based on the aim, willing, and idea (Adeng Mukhtar, 2004: 2). These two kinds of identity are usually side by side in our social life. These two factors are like two coin edges that could not be separated. An identity is strengthened by those two factors. When one of them is being denied then an identity will be unstable and slowly find its end.

About cultural identity, Barker states that identity is all about ethnicity, race, and nationality. It becomes our reference in identifying our selves. But however, as a systematic way to discuss about our selves, identity is not arbitrary because it is being stabled for a certain time by social practice (Barker, 2005: 260).

According to Epstein (1978: 45), identity formation, then, intimately bound up with the social context within which the person grows up and matures. From this point of view the coming of the whites to Africa had profound implications, because once a population comes under alien rule opportunities for the display of autonomy in customary ways may be changed radically. In this condition, the interaction of the two different cultures (indigenous culture and the white's) will bare an absurdity of the cultural identity formation sources. This very condition will slowly drive one culture, which is being inferior, to the crisis.

Crisis means a time of great difficulty or danger or when an important decision must be made (*Oxford Advanced*, 2000: 277). Crisis may be occur in many sectors such as; economy, health, food, and even identity. According to Erikson, an identity crisis is a time of intensive analysis and exploration of different ways of looking at oneself. Erikson also coined the term *identity crisis*

and believed that it was one of the most important conflicts people face in development (Erikson, E.H, 1970).

Talking about identity crisis, Huntington (2003: 147) argues that identity crisis is a condition in which people begin to doubt about his own culture's ability to satisfy his human's need and try to find a solution by figuring out the other culture's success both in economy sector and politic and also military. It is just because if one culture is admitted as a success culture, then the success will attract the other culture to follow its cultural patterns. Cultural progress in military and economy sectors will bring about self-confidence and a faith of culture superiority. In the colonial country this situation will place inequality between one culture and the other.

In the novel *Arrow of God* Achebe described how the Igbo society run their daily life under British colonialism. In dealing with imperial culture, Igbo's traditional customs once become a special characteristic which differentiate the indigenous people from the colonizers. Traditional Pagan who believe in masks as the shapes of ancestors' spirits culturally become their physical identity. A highest worship to the spiritual power carried out a traditional norm which is morally really implicated into Igbo's social life.

The relation between two different cultures results an unbalance communication which place the British colonial as the dominant and the indigenous people as dominated. This fact, in turn, drives the two cultures into a superiority – and – inferiority model of power.

In its most basic forms *Arrow of God* has concentrated on the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day and has emphasized the losses of identity, language, and culture, which post-colonial peoples have suffered during the period of colonization. Aschroft suggest that post – colonial theory involves discussion about experience of various kinds: migration, slavery, suppression, resistance, representation, difference, race, gender, place, and response to the influential master discourses of imperial Europe such as history, philosophy, and linguistics, and the fundamental experiences of speaking and writing by which all these come into being.

Finally by fixing the theory about cultural identity and the phenomena of the novel, the researcher is interested in analyzing the Nigerian cultural identity in Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*, and entitled this graduating paper as "**Identity Crisis in Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God***".

## **B. Statement of Problem**

*Arrow of God* is a novel tells about Igbo society and its cultural identity. It is described that Nigerian people are a kind of nation which has a rich culture. In this novel Achebe also describes the Nigerian people who are being in tribal conflict and a dilemma about the purity of their culture. The intervention of the British colonizers brought about a serious effect toward the Nigerian people. The success of the colonizers in the economy and military sector make some of the Nigerian enslave their selves under the colonizer's power. Those people began to forget their sacred ritual and denied their identity as an ethnic Igbo society. Unconfidence of Igbo society about their culture's ability comparing with the

imperial culture is the beginning of cultural alienation which drives the indigenous people are identitically in crisis. The crisis becomes a common condition among their society which once fought for rearticulating their traditional customs.

For this reason, the researcher tries to identify the social problem, which is previously explained, based on Achebe's *Arrow of God*. The identity which becomes a center problem in this research will be analyzed based on the "Theory of Identity". Identity is divided into two: first; physical identity is identity which is bounded based on physical similarity involves culture, religion, and language. Second; non-physical identity, is identity which is bounded based on the similarity in aim, willing, and idea.

Therefore, the problem in this research concern cultural issues that are focused on the identity crisis related to Nigerian ethnicity and cultural practices in their society based on Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*.

To make the problem more specific, the researcher carried out the following questions as identification of the research. The questions are formulated as follows:

1. How the Nigerian people view their identity related to traditional culture based on Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*?
2. How many cultural aspects are involved into the Nigerian identity formation?
3. What factors those make the Nigerian cultural identity being in crisis?

### C. Purpose and Significance of Research

In analyzing the post – colonial term as the theory of this research, the researcher considers aspects of the novel as the object. The choosing subject of this research of course hopefully can represent the purpose of the researcher and may this research significant for others in appreciating literary in daily life. Both of purpose and the significance will be displayed in the following below:

#### 1. Purpose of Research

- a. To know how the Nigerian people view their identity related to their own culture based on Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God*.
- b. To know what kind of cultural aspects those are involved into the Nigerian identity formation.
- c. To know what factors those drive the Nigerian identity into a crisis.
- d. To know in how many sector the identity crisis occurs and what are the causes.

#### 2. Significance of Research

- a. To the researcher this research is significant to improving the literary comprehension especially in its relation with social discourse.
- b. This research is significant to give information about how culture related to an identity and its importance in the identity formation.
- c. This research is significant to be a valuable resource for the students who also discuss the same discourse and interested in Achebe's novel.

## **D. Organization of Writing**

### **1. Introduction**

This chapter deals with background of research, statement of problem, research questions, purpose and significances of research, and organization of writing.

### **2. Theoretical Review**

This chapter explaining the theories discussing and supporting this research including: a) identity crisis in postcolonial theory, b) the concept of crisis, c) the description of *Arrow of God* including; biographical sketch of Chinua Achebe, about *Arrow of God*, and synopsis of *Arrow of God*.

### **3. Methodology**

This chapter elaborates methodology of this research. It is begun by the method of research, the data, sources of data, and the technique of collecting data and ended with the technique of analyzing data.

### **4. Identity Crisis in Chinua Achebe's *Arrow of God***

This chapter provides the representative data which is discussed in this research based on postcolonial theory.

### **5. Conclusion and Suggestion**

This is the last chapter which provides the conclusion of the whole analysis and suggestion for better understanding.





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