

Chapter I

Introduction

This chapter consists of five subchapters: background of the study, research question, objective of the study, significance of the study, and scope and limitation of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

Identity, a multifaceted concept comprising various aspects of an individual's sense of self, is a fundamental component of human existence, influencing how people perceive themselves and interact with the world around them. According to Lawler (2014, p. 18–19), identity is a complex idea that encompasses individual self-concept, being socially constructed rather than an inherent or fixed aspect of an individual's being. It is shaped by social processes, norms, and narratives. "Socially constructed" means that these identities are not naturally occurring but are rather shaped by social constructs – categories that are made real by collective agreement (Searle, 1997, p. 3-8). Examples of such constructs include gender, norms, and beliefs that are shared among members of society. In today's society, the issue of identity has become increasingly complex and ever-changing, as globalization, information technology, and rapid social dynamics present individuals with new challenges in expressing their identities.

The term 'identity' finds its etymological roots in the Latin word *idem*, meaning "same," from which "identical" is also derived. This linguistic connection highlights the fundamental notion that individuals not only maintain consistency within themselves throughout their lives but also share common identities with others. Simultaneously, the concept of identity encompasses another dimension—one that underscores the uniqueness and distinctiveness of each individual (Lawler, 2014, p. 10). This suggests that while individuals share common identities, such as being men, women, American, Indonesian, etc., there are also aspects of individuals that are unique and different from others. phenomenon that evolves with experiences and contexts. Identity, therefore, is both a shared social construct and a deeply

personal phenomenon. In the realm of literature, the complexity of identity is often explored through fictional characters. One such character is Kvothe, the protagonist in Patrick Rothfuss's *The Name of the Wind*. Known by many different identities to various people, Kvothe exemplifies the fluid and multifaceted nature of identity. His character, shaped by numerous roles and perceptions, makes him an ideal subject for analyzing the construction of identity in literary studies. the construction of identity is a complex process; each individual is both unique and similar to others (de Valverde et al., 2017, p. 99)

The Name of the Wind is a high fantasy novel written by Patrick Rothfuss. High fantasy, or epic fantasy, is a subgenre of fantasy in which the story unfolds in a setting vastly different from Earth or in secondary worlds (Stableford, 2009, p. 198). Within these fantastical landscapes, authors wield creative freedom to introduce elements of magic, mythical creatures, and extraordinary environments that transcend the confines of familiar reality. This creative subgenre provides an opportunity to move away from the ordinary, constructing immersive worlds where natural laws are set aside. First published in 2007, the book is the initial installment of *The Kingkiller Chronicle*, which is intended to be a trilogy. Set within a beautifully crafted and immersive fantasy world, the novel introduces readers to mesmerizing tales of magic, music, and the journey of a young protagonist seeking to unveil the truth behind his extraordinary life.

The story in *The Name of the Wind* revolves around Kvothe, a remarkably gifted musician, arcanist, and storyteller. Kvothe's character embodies depth and a multifaceted nature, making him an intriguing subject for the study of identity. One key aspect of this complexity becomes evident through Kvothe's own reflection on the significance of names. In the novel, he states, "*My name is Kvothe, pronounced as Quothe. Names are important as they tell a great deal about a person. I've had more names than anyone has a right to*" (Rothfuss P, 2007, p. 76) This complexity is further highlighted by the fact that he possesses "*more names than anyone has a right to*" (Rothfuss, 2007, p. 76), suggesting that his identity is ever-evolving, shaped by the various roles he takes on throughout the story. Kvothe's character,

with his multitude of names and talents, becomes a captivating exploration of the dynamic nature of identity.

One important aspect of the novel *The Name of the Wind* is its exploration of narrative, which also plays a crucial role in shaping identity. Narratives serve as a fundamental tool for individuals to make sense of their experiences, crafting them into coherent stories. This narrative process enables people to establish connections between the past, present, and future, fostering a sense of continuity and identity (Lawler, 2014, p. 26). In the novel, the story unfolds through two parallel narratives, alternating between Kvothe's present life as an innkeeper known as Kote and his past as the legendary figure of Kvothe. Rothfuss employs a flashback narrative technique to recount Kvothe's journey toward becoming a legend (Mansi & Ghoraibi, 2018, p. 86-87). These flashbacks are narrated by Kvothe himself as he persuades a scribe named Chronicler to document his life story. Through Kvothe's narration, readers witness the events that shape his various identities. When narrating a story, individuals structure occurrences into episodes that form the storyline. While engaged in this process, they rely on their recollections, interpreting their memories as they recount them (Lawler, 2014, p.30).

Apart from Kvothe's personal narrative, *The Name of the Wind* incorporates rich stories, including myths and legends, effectively creating a story within a story (Mansi & Ghoraibi, 2018, p. 82-87). These myths and legends are not mere embellishments; rather, they are intricately connected to the overarching narrative, guiding Kvothe's character development and actions. The myths, legends, and numerous narratives in the novel represent forms of culture, and culture can significantly influence the construction of one's identity. As stated by Hall (1990, p. 223), cultural identity is a collective essence shared among the members of a particular group.

The Name of the Wind has been the subject of several academic studies. Among these, Mansi and Ghoraibi (2018), in their study titled *The Narrative Techniques Used by Patrick Rothfuss in The Name of the Wind, analyzed the narrative techniques employed by Patrick Rothfuss in the novel. Similarly, Jiří et*

al. (2018) examined the significance of names within the story in their study titled *Implications of Names in The Name of the Wind*. Additionally, several academic studies analyze the topic of identity. One such study is *Black Skin White Mask: Hybrid Identity of the Main Character as Depicted in Tagore's The Home and the World* (2020) by Mertania and Amelia. This research explores the impact of British colonialism on Indian society, with a specific emphasis on the emergence of hybrid identity across various dimensions. Another study, *Addressing Social Discrimination in R.J. Palacio's Wonder* (2020) by Meilyana and Apriliyanti, examines the social identity of the main character, August Pullman, as he experiences discrimination.

These studies provide a deeper understanding of the novel *The Name of the Wind* and offer further insights into the topic of identity. However, none of them specifically analyze the construction of Kvothe's identity, nor do they explore how identity construction is influenced by various factors such as narrative and culture. This study aims to address this gap by delving deeply into the main character, Kvothe, and his identity construction using Steph Lawler's sociological perspective on identity and the concept of cultural identity. The choice of Steph Lawler's perspective and cultural identity as theoretical frameworks is due to their suitability for analyzing Kvothe's identity within the narrative of *The Name of the Wind*. Lawler's sociological perspective provides a versatile foundation for examining how individuals shape and express their identities within complex social contexts. It considers the interplay of personal narratives, social structures, and external influences, making it particularly relevant when analyzing a character as multifaceted as Kvothe. Additionally, cultural identity serves as an essential framework to analyze how cultural factors contribute to shaping Kvothe's identity.

1.2 Research Questions

1. How do aspects of identity shape Kvothe's social identity in *The Name of the Wind* by Patrick Rothfuss?
2. How do aspects of identity shape Kvothe's Cultural identity in *The Name of the Wind* by Patrick Rothfuss?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The study's objectives revolve around a comprehensive analysis of how identity is shaped within Patrick Rothfuss's *The Name of the Wind*. Firstly, it aims to examine how various factors, such as social constructs, personal experiences, power dynamics, and others, collectively shape the identity of the protagonist, Kvothe, utilizing Steph Lawler's sociological perspective on identity as an analytical framework. Secondly, the study seeks to investigate the specific role of myths, legends, and narratives within the world-building of the novel, as they are forms of culture that contribute to the development of Kvothe's complex identities, using Cultural Identity Theory.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Theoretically, this study provides deep insight into how a character in a literary work can shape their identity through various processes, using Steph Lawler's sociological perspective on identity and cultural identity. This study delves into how characters—in this specific context, Kvothe—confront various social, cultural, and personal influences in the journey of their identity.

On a practical level, the study holds substantial value. By delving into the character of Kvothe and his evolving identity, the study may offer readers a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics involved in shaping one's sense of self. This comprehension can resonate with real-life experiences, fostering a heightened awareness of how individuals construct and navigate their identities within the complexities of society.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study examines the construction of Kvothe's identity. The scope of this study includes Steph Lawler's sociological perspective on identity and Stuart Hall's concept of cultural identity. The study is limited to the first book of *The Kingkiller Chronicle* series, which is intended to be a trilogy, *The Name of the Wind*. It focuses its analysis on utterances, character interactions, and narrative elements that relate to the construction of Kvothe's identity.