

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of The Research

Women, before the twentieth century, were not able to express themselves to break the patriarchal system and there was no kind of appreciation and acknowledgement for their works and everything they had done. In the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, women issues such as the reform of education for women, made them stand and started a movement against injustice. However, there is still an issue that is controversial in many eras, which is an issue about classification between men and women that assumes men as more superior than women. Based on that classification, it puts women under the shadow of the superiority of men. It makes the status of men and women unequal. The ideological system of social relationship that puts both genders in unequal positions is known as patriarchy.

Women who live in the nineteenth century were only allowed to take care of their family and had to serve their male family members and obey the entire rule of the family. They were also asked to prepare their sons to be heirs of the estate. Moreover, the low and middle class wives were busy to help their husbands. Instead, rich wives were obligated to organize and supervise the servants. In the sixteenth century, the reformation in Europe had allowed women to speak up and to voice their aspirations (History.com Editors 2009).

A woman in the early twentieth century in Europe was portrayed as a person who knew what they wanted and what they needed compared with women in the previous centuries. They dared to show the society what they had been dreaming of. It can be said that women in the early twentieth century were more independent than the ones in the previous century. For instance, a woman who was dreaming to be an actress was able to try hard to explore her potential in acting by joining a theatre academy. She could decide to join a theatre academy because she knew that she had enough potential in acting and she believed her dream would come true.

The portrait of European women in the early twentieth century can be seen in a historical fiction novel entitled *The Spy* (2016) written by Paulo Coelho. This novel was taken from the true story about Mata Hari. Mata Hari was a professional dancer and was a mistress who became a spy for France during World War I. Suspected of being a double agent, she was executed in 1917. In the novel *The Spy*, Mata Hari, as the main character, during her lifetime, was known as a dancer that shocked and delighted her audience. As a female confidante and prostitute, she bewitched the era where it was mostly authorized by men. She was courageous to break the treaty of her time. Turned out, she paid for it.

Paulo Coelho, the author of *The Spy*, is considered as one of the most influential authors of all time. His books have been sold for more than 165 million copies worldwide, have been released in 170 countries and have been translated into 80 languages. He was born in Rio de Janeiro in 1947, he soon discovered his talent and

dedicated himself as a writer. Moreover, he worked as a director, theater actor, songwriter and journalist.

The author of this novel represents the portrait of an independent woman through the main character, Mata Hari. Mata Hari has an ambition, power and desire for the things that she wants. From the movements that Mata Hari shows in the novel, it is interesting to analyze the obstacles she confronts in order to be an independent woman. This issue can be connected to the woman empowerment as people can see nowadays. Therefore, this research is entitled **Woman Empowerment as Portrayed in the Novel *The Spy* by Paolo Coelho.**

### **1.2 Identification of the Problem**

In the novel, Mata Hari is described to have a tragic life. People who know about the story of Mata Hari say her only sin is that she is trying to be an independent woman. She lives in a very difficult time. She has an abusive husband. After leaving her husband, she decides to move to France and works for herself. The obstacles to be an independent woman that she confronts are interesting to be discussed because it is related to how women empowerment started and how woman empowerment works nowadays.

### **1.3 Scope of the Research**

This research is narrowed to find out patriarchal oppression experienced by Mata Hari as the main character in *The Spy* and to elaborate the way she solves the problem in order to be an independent woman. Her experience as an oppressed woman

covers those while she is living in France and Indonesia. This research is going to be mimetic research which means, it is supported by the historical data.

#### 1.4 Research Questions

The focus of this research is divided into the following questions:

1. What are the patriarchal oppressions experienced by Mata Hari as a woman living in a patriarchal society as reflected in the novel *The Spy* by Paolo Coelho?
2. What are Mata Hari's efforts to fight against those patriarchal oppressions?

#### 1.5 Objective of the Research

Generally, the objective of this research is to describe the patriarchal oppression experienced by Mata Hari as a woman living in a patriarchal society as portrayed in the novel. The objective of this research is specified to show how Mata Hari fights against the patriarchal society and to explain the image of a woman that Mata Hari shows from her efforts to fight against the patriarchal system that she confronts.

#### 1.6 Review of Related Studies

In presenting the research of *The Spy*, there are some researchers that have used the same theory in different works. It is helpful to compare the topics in this research. The writer reads four related studies, two theses and two articles to find a different point of view.

The first one is a thesis written by Hutari Rafika entitled "A Portrait of Two Modern Women: A Feminism Approach on Barbara Taylor Bradford's *Power of a*

*Woman and The Triumph of Katie Byrne*” (2011). In this thesis, Rafika gives her opinion about women in modern era that are more dynamic, optimistic, smart and ambitious to make their dream come true. Women must get the equality with men; they must get the equal rights as in job, education and protection. She also mentions that in the modern era the women movement has been more significant than before. Rafika also says that women in literature of the feminist nature are always featured as the women who are decided by society. They are ready to make their own decisions, to express the choices of personal decision-making, and to deal with the consequences of these choices, actions, and decisions. This thesis is related to the obstacles of the women that will be analyzed in this research. This research also discusses about characterization which is the image of independent women that can be a reference for the writer to write about the efforts that Mata Hari has done to become an independent women in *The Spy* novel.

The second one is a master thesis presented history written by Elske Tjepkema entitled *The Image of Mata Hari Remains* (2016). In this thesis, Tjepkema explains the way Mata Hari is represented in various media which shows the image she receives in the media in Netherlands and how it impacts the national and regional canonical history overview. From research that Tjepkema conducted, there are three representations of Mata Hari which are Mata Hari in the espionage and the context of war, Mata Hari in motherhood and femininity and Mata Hari in the orientalism and exotic curiosity. This thesis that Tjepkema has written can be the source for the writer because it does not only explain about feminist perspective, but also explains about the history perception.

The third related study is an article from *Jurnal Perempuan* that is written by Anita Dhewy, entitled “Female Subjectivity in Oka Rusmini’s *Tempurung* (2010): Female Identity in Marriages, Pregnancy and Motherhood” (Volume 4, Number 1, March 2016). This article discusses how women’s subjectivity in the novel *Tempurung* is described. Dhewy, in her article, analyzes woman’s subjectivity based on the feminist literary criticism approach. The novel *Tempurung* that is written by Oka Rusmini has so many interesting issues especially about women and their struggle in trying to get what they want. This article describes about the main character’s perception towards her body and autonomy in the form of woman’s subjectivity. Dhewy also says that woman’s subjectivity is not her own project but a form of dialogue with other elements including her relationship with her husband, children, body and social culture construction which surround her. She also mentions that the author of the novel *Tempurung*, Oka Rusmini, brought up the marginalized narratives back to the centre by writing about the problems faced by women especially in relation to her body, such as pregnancy, blood, concerns, misery, poverty, as well as violence. The problems that have explained in the novel by the author are the obstacles of the women to live their lives. This can be a reference for the writer to analyze this research.

The fourth related study is a thesis by Eka Surli Sudarni, entitled “Struggle of Woman in the Novel *Sing Me to Sleep* by Angela Morrison (The Analysis of Feminism)” (2017). This article discusses about the struggle of a woman in the novel *Sing Me to Sleep* by Angela Morrison (2013). The author of this thesis found that there are three kinds of women’s struggle. The first one is the struggle to accept the facts of

life. Secondly, it is the struggle to achieve a dream, and finally the struggle in the form of affection and struggle to get her love. The implication of this article is to give more information, description and comprehension about struggle of a woman. Therefore, the writer chooses this article as one of the references to write about the obstacles of the women that shows in the novel *The Spy* by Paulo Coelho because this thesis also explains women's struggles in patriarchal system.

### **1.7 Theoretical Frameworks**

In conducting this research, the writer uses theory and also approach related to the topic and the theory. The theory that is applied in this research is a feminist literary criticism. Since the novel *The Spy* deals with the patriarchal oppression and the obstacles of women to be independent. This research also tells about the meaning of patriarchy. In analyzing the literary work by using the feminist literary criticism, the writer uses the basic theory that is mimetic theory. Mimetic theory according to Abrams in his book *The Mirror and The Lamp; Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* mentions that: "the mimetic orientation the explanation of art as essentially an imitation of aspects of the universe" (1985:8). It means that mimetic approach views the literary works as the mirror of the world or as the mirror of reality where every story has an essence of truth. In this research the writer applies mimetic approach because the female character's condition is based on the real event.

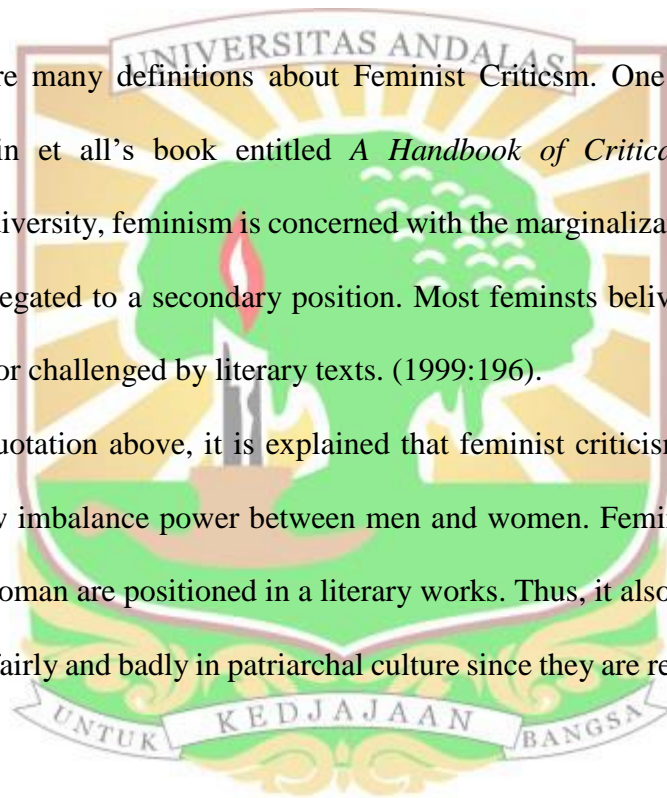
Men to be the leaders who have power over women's life, both in civil or domestic life, is what patriarchy has intended. However, it makes men easily oppress women's life. Kate Millet in Selden's book entitled *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary*

*Literary Theory* says, “patriarchy subordinates the female to the male threats the female, as an inferior male, and this power is exerted, directly or indirectly, in vil and domestic life to constrain women” (1986:214). From the quotation above, it is illustrated that women are oppressed by patriarchal society. Most of all aspects of women’s life are dominated and controlled by men in order to get advantages from the women.

There are many definitions about Feminist Criticism. One of the definition stated in Guerin et al’s book entitled *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature* is diversity, feminism is concerned with the marginalization of all women, that is being relegated to a secondary position. Most feminists believe that our culture are reflected in or challenged by literary texts. (1999:196).

In the quotation above, it is explained that feminist criticism concerns to the works that show imbalance power between men and women. Feminist criticism sees how man and woman are positioned in a literary works. Thus, it also criticizes women to be treated unfairly and badly in patriarchal culture since they are regarded as a minor in society.

Woman in literature is always featured as the protagonist who is often not ready to accept the fact that traditional rules tie up a woman to be a real woman to become a mother, a daughter, a sister or a wife instead of asking for equality. It is not relationships, roles, or stereotypes that picture female characters in literature but their own identity. Their identity is defined by their choices and their beliefs which are then associated with her relationship, roles, and stereotypes.





A theory that the writer uses for this research is feminist literary criticism that is proposed by Kate Millet. Millet analyzes patriarchal oppression by using Kate Millet's concept about sexual politics. The patriarchal oppression cannot be separated from sexual politics. Sexual politics regarding to Millet are divided into three parts:

1. Sexual politics, it deals with the nature's power relationship between the sexes
2. Historical background. It surveys the fate of feminist struggles in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
3. The literary reflection. It sets out to show how the sexual power politics that is described in the literary works. (Moi 199:24)

Dealing with this research, the writer decides to apply the first part of Kate Millet's feminist literary theory, sexual politics. Sexual politics based on Millet's expression view about patriarchy. Based on the explanation above, the writer sees sexual politics which is proposed by Kate Millet is a suitable theory in analyzing patriarchal oppression toward women. It claims that men actually use patriarchal system to control and to keep women oppressed.

*The Spy*, a novel by Paulo Coelho talks about a woman that has a desire to determine her life by her own self. The self-determination that the woman character shows in that novel is Liberal Feminism character. The liberal feminists claimed that women should enjoy their personal autonomy. They are free to choose what kind of life they want to live. MacKenzie and Stoljar in their book *Relational Autonomy: Feminist Perspectives on Autonomy, Agency and the Social Self* (1999) discusses some

offer “procedural” accounts of personal autonomy (MacKenzie and Stoljar 1999:13–19). Liberal feminism is the feminist movement that gives attention to gender inequality. Liberal feminism wants women to be liberated from the gender roles that control it. It is the roles that place women in a lowest place even give them no choice to have a place in everything.

In the first wave, feminism focused on the political gap. This early flow of feminism began in 1792 through 1960 which started from the writings of philosopher and feminist in eighteenth century, Mary Wollstonecraft. In her work, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, Mary Wollstonecraft inspired the movement and women's struggles that continued until the twentieth century in which women had had political rights. In her book, Wollstonecraft also wrote that women were naturally not lower than men, people that had an opinion like that simply because woman had not received education as men had. She also brought that men and women were supposed to be equal in every dimension of life, especially in terms of social and politics.

Helen Cixous in her book *Sorties: Out and Out: Attacks/Ways Out/Forays* (1997) revealed that language that she calls patriarchal binary thought is defined as seeing the world in terms of polar opposites. One of them is considered superior to others. Examples of binary opposition according to Cixous is: culture is opposite with nature and activity is opposite with passivity. Patriarchal thoughts believe that women are born to be passive and men are born to be active. If women are not passive, they are not woman. Furthermore it also says that women should be submissive to men, because men are natural leaders.

Cixous' theory about binary oppositions was influenced by Jacques Derida works that is entitled *Of Grammatology* (1976). Jacques Derida was one of the philosophers from French that introduced the idea of binary oppositions. According to Cixous, binary oppositions involved the patriarchal value system. Each opposition can be analyzed as a hierarchy where the feminine is always seen as instance as the negative and powerless. She also said that series of hierarchical binary oppositions always come back to the male and female oppositions (Moi 1989:124-125).

One of Cixous's most accessible ideas was her analysis of what one might be called patriarchal binary thought. In her book heading "where is she?" she made the following list of binary oppositions (Eagleton 1996:147).

Activity → Passivity

Sun → Moon

Culture → Nature

Day → Night

However, in nineteenth century, women were still be minorities and should be submissive to men. Women did not really accept this thought are tried to fight against it through the movement that called women empowerment. Empowerment is a process from being un-empowered to become empowered. From a feminist perspective, interpreting women's empowerment brings the understanding of the dynamics of oppression and internalized oppressing. Batliwala in her book *The Meaning of Women's Empowerment: New Concepts from Action* (1994) said that "the goals of women's empowerment are to challenge patriarchal ideology; to transform the

structures and institutions that reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and social inequality; ... and to enable poor women to gain access to, and control of, both material and informational resources” (Batliwala 1994:130). From Batliwala’s research, it can be concluded that women’s empowerment is a process of women to develop and to recreate what they can do and settle in a case that women previously were denied.

### **1.8. Methods of the Research**

This research uses a qualitative research method. It deals with non numerical data taken from books, articles and essays.

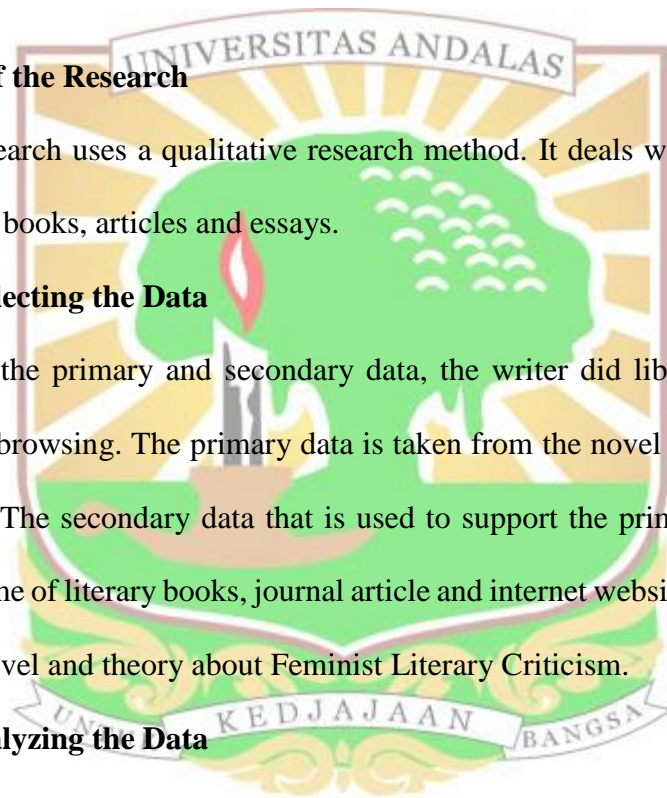
#### **a. Collecting the Data**

To find the primary and secondary data, the writer did library research and internet browsing. The primary data is taken from the novel *The Spy* by Paulo Coelho. The secondary data that is used to support the primary data is taken from some of literary books, journal article and internet websites that are related to the novel and theory about Feminist Literary Criticism.

#### **b. Analyzing the Data**

In analyzing the data, the writer applies Feminist literary criticism that is proposed by Kate Millet. In analyzing the data, the writer classifies the data into two groups. The first is the data about patriarchal oppression experienced by Mata Hari. The second is the data about how she fights against the patriarchal oppression in order to be independent woman.

#### **c. Presenting the Data**



The last step is presenting the result of the research. The result of this research is presented descriptively based on feminist theory. In this case, the writer explains about the obstacles that are confronted by Mata Hari as a main character in the novel *The Spy* shows in the novel until she becomes an independent woman.

