

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Research

Literature can be viewed as an expression of life that is combined with the author's imagination and creation which is supported by her or his experience and observation of life (Djoyosuroto, 2000: 2). Literature consists of poetry, drama, essays, fiction, and particularly novel. Novel is a modern literary work. Its emphasis is on knowledge and experience. Novel is dynamic genre; therefore it can reflect the story to be more essentially, deeper, and sensitive. In the other hand, the novel will be in the progress from time to time. This progressing is in how to describe and convey the story. This is relevant with Bakhtin's statement which is quoted in Hazard Adams (1965:841). Bakhtin says:

“The novel is a precisely plotted and dynamic genre (although there also exist novels that push to its literary limits the art of pure description); the novel is complicated genre (although novels are mass produced as pure and frivolous entertainment like no other genre); the novel is a love story (although the greatest examples of the European novel are utterly devoid of the love element); the novel is a prose genre (although there exist excellent novel in verse). One could of course mention a large number of additional “generic characteristics” for the novel similar to those given above”.

However, the novel cannot be defined clearly as other fictions. Even, an English novelist, E. M Forster, in *The Novel in English: an Introduction by Ian Milligan* (1983:14), only can say that novel should be more than 50,000 words in length. But he clarified that the length of the novel itself was not much help to define it; it was only the way when we want to distinguish the difference between novel and other kind of fiction.

Novel, as a genre of literature tells a story and portrays people in the society. The term 'novel' is now applied to great variety of writings that have in common only the attribute of being extended works of fiction written in prose (Abrams, 1999: 190). Novel itself has elements which arrange it; they are intrinsic elements and extrinsic elements. One of the intrinsic elements of novel is theme. William Kenney (1966: 88) states that "to put the matter simply, theme is the meaning of the story". Meanwhile, according to Abrams (1999: 23) "theme is ingredient of a literary work which gives the work unity." Usually, theme talks about love, war, adventure, culture, religion, etc. The theme can be called as the reason for the author to write the novel. Thus, theme has the important position in the work especially in the novel because the theme in the novel is such the keys to understand the novel. Besides, all of the literary works have a theme because it is the intrinsic element which always exists in the story, not only in literary work that is written but also the story which is delivered by oral tradition.

African Americans have been through a difficult life since they arrived in America as slaves. Slavery and discrimination, for instance, have brought severe miseries to Afro Americans such as being treated as animals, losing their human rights, and subjecting to violence. African-American women as part of African-American society were not free from the miseries. Even, they had to face double sufferings as blacks and as women. As women, they had to face discrimination from the whites and domestic oppression from the African-American men's patriarchal mind. African Americans as a part of Southern society in the nineteenth and early- twentieth century faced binary oppositions between wealthy and poor, male and female, superior and subordinate, etc.

These binary oppositions carried simultaneously power and powerlessness of each. In African-American society itself, for example, the most obvious example of that binary opposition is the relationship between men and women. Men take the role in every single field. They are considered to be the head of the family who do the majority of the farm work and take care of the family finances, while women are expected to concern for the children, organize family meals, wash clothes, clean house, chop wood, and carry water. As stated by Abott cited by Widyastuti (2005: par. 7): “Women were often said to be biologically inferior, weaker, less intelligent, as well as fearful and frivolous. They supposedly were not smart enough to handle money and they were too emotional to hold positions requiring decision-making powers.” It means that women are only the subordination to men. They had no authority to decide anything not even for themselves. They always had to be submissive to men as men had the control and power. Men were considered to have the dominant position while women’s position was under the domination of men or the subordinate of men. “It is usually called by patriarchy; men are the dominant one. The term ‘Patriarchy’ is often used to mean ‘male domination’.” (Tuttle, 1987: 242 cited by Widyastuti, 2005: par. 6).

African-American women faced the heavy life although they are in their own home. Even, they often bore children every year, leaving them weaker and more vulnerable to illness. In another hand, men take the superiority among their women. They often abused their women by giving them the responsibility for assisting the household running such as cooking, washing, etc. As described in *“History of Afro America”*:

Southern society in the nineteenth and early-twentieth century was divided in many ways: wealthy and poor, black and white, male and female. This created incredible tension at every level of society. The South's population was primarily rural. Extended families had to stay together since a lot of work was required to keep any household running. The family structure was patriarchal; it means that men were considered to be the heads of the household. Men did the majority of the farm work, took care of family finances, the building of the family home, and defending the family property, if necessary. The women were expected to care for the children, prepare family meals, wash clothes, clean house, chop wood, and carry water. Women often bore children every year, leaving them weaker and more vulnerable to illness. Women often died in childbirth; a man would frequently marry twice or three times, because a woman was needed to care for his children. Large families were valued because the mortality rate was high. Many children did not survive to adulthood, so couples had as many children as they were able to. If family members survived to old age, they were kept as part of the extended family, helping to care for young children and assisting with running the household (n.d: par. 3).

In addition, African-American family faces additional pressures. During slavery, they are separated from their own family. After slavery was abolished, freed slaves reunited their families. In this phase, men have to reassert their expected place as a head of the family, while women are forced to concern the family matters. As stated in "*History of Afro-America*":

African-American families in the South had additional pressures. During slavery, families were often not allowed to be together; slave owners separated husbands from wives, and parents from children. Slaves in a household would form their own family units; often these units were headed by the women of the group. After slavery was abolished, freed slaves reunited their families. The strain of living under slavery took its payment on both men and women: men had to reassert their expected place as head of the family, while women were forced to give up their say in family matters. This was not true of all families, but it was a common situation among those trying to adjust to a new way of living (n.d: par. 4).

The miserable condition of Afro-American women have been depicted by Afro-American women writers such as Tony Morison's *Beloved*, Harriet Jacob's narrative (2001) *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Zora Neale

Hurston's *The Eyes Watching God* (1937), Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* and many others. Those literary works mostly depict sufferings faced by Afro-American women in American society. Therefore, in this study I choose Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* to portray the condition of Afro-American women in American society. The novel has obtained many comments concerning with its interwoven theme; feminism, religion, racial issues, and also the African experiences.

Static myth assumes that the women are the weak creatures who always use the feeling to face everything without thinking and women also do not have good work in the outer of household Therefore they do not have the important role in the society or social life. The static myth happened in the novel of *Jude*. But Jude tries to rebel the culture in her environment. Therefore, in this paper, the researcher gives the title

This research focuses on the main woman character, Celie, in particular her struggles to free herself from the oppressions done by men characters especially her Pa and her husband. Her sufferings and her struggles to be free from it are interesting to be analyzed because they reflect the condition of African Americans in the United States. As I deal with woman's struggle against oppressors, feminist approach is the appropriate tool to analyze this novel.

B. Statement of Problem

Based on the explanation background of research above, the researcher's questions are:

1. What discrimination does appear in the novel?
2. How does Celie struggle to gain her independence?

C. Purpose and Significance of Research

1. Purpose of research

Purposes of this research are:

- a. To know Celie's struggle to gain independence in her capacity as a woman.
- b. To know Celie's struggle to gain independence in her capacity as an African-American. And she can get his equality as a woman.
- c. The researcher perhaps can stimulate every woman in the world. Especially in this university and, commonly in the outside of this university.

2. Significance of research

The significances of research are:

- a. For researcher's, this research is expected to be significant as additional reference in conducting a related research.
- b. For common readers, this researcher's is expected to give a contribution in enriching the reader's insights, especially in feminism discussion.

D. Conceptual Framework

Literature is the work of creative and reflective person's struggle against daily reality that is realized through the medium of language. Novel, as a literary work is an exploration or a chronicle of life that has a variety of elements, one of which is the characters and characterizations. The structure of a story depends on the determination of the main character follows characterization or personal depiction of the characters. Based on the background of the problem and formulation of the problem, the authors tried to use the theory of feminism.

According to Nurgiyantoro, Characterization is one of fiction buildings get it learned and analyzed the relation between other building elements. If the fiction is success work, characterization surely connects as harmony and fulfill between one and another, like plot and theme element, setting element, point of view, message, etc. Literary works like poem or fiction, based on structuralism is the totality which is built coherently by several elements. In one side, literary works structure mean as a system, objection and imaginative of all material and a part which becomes a component as gather together and formed for good circle. Nurgiyantoro (2007: 68-165).

The writer uses feminism theory, because the writers convinced that this novel is about racism and discrimination of women. Celie as African - American woman was subordinated to man. By using this theory feminism and gynocritic as a part from feminism, the writer wants to every woman gain his independence life. Although, she was from black race or white race. Black feminism that argues that sexism class oppression, and racism. Inextricably bound together. Feminism struggle to overcome sexism and class oppression but ignore race can discriminate against many people, including women, racial bias.

Feminism is “*Gerakan kaum wanita untuk menolak segala sesuatu yang dimarginalisasikan, disubordinasikan, dan direndahkan oleh kebudayaan dominan, baik dalam bidang politik dan ekonomi maupun kehidupan sosial pada umumnya*” (Ratna, 2006:184). In the other hand, feminism is the women’s movement to get the equality with men.

In gynocritic, women can place themselves to be a good writer. When they are as writers, they will write the writing about women’s realm because they will produce textual meaning with the history, theme, genres, and structure of literature by women. In this type, women will describe that women also have the same quality with men in many aspect of life such as in education, social, economy, culture, politic, and so on. They will show their creativity and against the rule of patriarchal that harm them. In addition, Showalter’s theory gives the inspiration to the woman that by writing and reading, the woman can destruct the culture in the social life that always place *woman* as inferior, especially the hierarchy of patriarchal.

Gynocritic itself can be defined as literary criticism by women. Elaine Showalter calls gynocriticism that is, a criticism which concerns itself with developing a specifically female framework for dealing with works written by women, in all aspect of their production, motivation, analysis, and interpretation, and in all literary forms, including journals and letters.

According to Abrams (1985:236), there are three concerns of gynocritics:

There are three concerns of gynocritics:

1. One concern of gynocritics is to identify what are taken to be the distinctively feminine subject matters in literature that is written by women such as the world of domesticity or the special experiences of gestation, giving birth, and nurturing.
2. Another gynocritics' concern is to uncover the literary history of female tradition that is expressed by a sub community of women writers, and who were aware of, emulated, and found support in earlier women writers and who in turn provide models and emotional support to their own readers and successors
3. A third undertaking is to show that there is a distinctive feminine mode of experience, or 'subjectivity', in thinking, feeling, valuing, and perceiving oneself and the outer world.

E. Procedure of Research

1. Method of research

This research applied of descriptive method and qualitative approach. According to Descriptive research is not meant to test a certain hypothesis, but describing about the variable itself, situation or symptom (Arikunto, 2002: 10-11). As the methodology of this research that used in this research. The main instrument is the research and the data is the sources that must be organize, analyze. So perhaps I use the data in the below.

2. Data

Data are the facts or information used in discussing and analyzing research. Some of the research data are showed in the column below.

No	Sentence	Page
1	<p>Dear God,</p> <p>I'm fourteen years old. I have always been a good girl. May be you can give me a sign letting me know what is happening to me.</p> <p>Last spring after little Lucious come I heard them fussing. He was pulling on her arm. She say it too soon, Fonso, I ain't well. Finally he leaves her alone. Weeks go by, he pulling on her arm again. She say Now, I ain't go to. Can't you see I'm already half dead, an all of these children.</p> <p>She went to visit her sister doctor over Macon. Let me to see after the others. He never had a kind word to say to me. Just say you do what your mammy wouldn't. First he put his thing up against my hip and sort of wiggles it around. Then he grab hold my titles. Then he pushes his thing inside my pussy. When that hurt, I cry. He starts to choke me, saying you better shut up and used to it.</p>	11

No	Sentence	Page
	<p>But I don't ever git used to it. And now I feel sick every time I am the one to cook. My mama she fusses at me a look at me. She happy, cause she good to her now. But too sick to last long</p>	
2	<p>"But I don't know how to fight. All I know how to do is stay alive"</p>	26
3	<p>"I don't say anything. I stay where I'm told. But I am alive"</p>	29
4	<p>"It worse than that, I think. If I was buried, I wouldn't have to work. But I just say, Never mine, never mine, long as I can spell G-o-d I got somebody along."</p>	26
5	<p>"Mr. ___ Finally comes right out an ast for Nettie hand in marriage. But He won't let her go. He says she too young, no experience</p>	16
6	<p>"Mr. ___ Say, That cow still coming? He says, her cow</p>	20

3. Data Resource

The book is divided into two; the main book is the novel of Alice Walker the other books that is support the argument in analyzing the works.

4. Technique of Collecting Data

The technique of data collection of this research is library research, which is done through reading some sources that related to the research, such as books, articles, etc. It coherent with Bagdan and Taylor (in Moleong, 2004:282) who suggested: “reading the text smartly; making code, arranging based on the typology, and reading some books related to the research problem”.

5. Technique of Analyzing Data

This research has used contextualizing strategies as the technique of analyzing data, which is a technique that attempts to understand the data in context, using various methods to identify the relationship among the different element of the text (Maxwell, Joseph. 1996: 79):

1. Reading the color purple novel.
2. Identifying the sentences.
3. Categorizing the findings of symptom of feminism.
4. Making conclusions.

F. Procedure of Writing

1. The writing of this research is organized in five chapters. Chapter I consists of background of problem, statement of problem, purpose of research, significant of research, clarification of key terms, and organization of paper.
2. Chapter II consists of literature review related data of research. This chapter presents the explanation about Feminism, African-American

Women's Life, The .Background of the Novel, The Historical Background of *The Color Purple*, Author's literary career,

3. Chapter III consists of methodology of research detailing method that used in this research. This includes design of research, technique of collecting data, technique of analyzing data, and the presentation of main data.
4. Chapter IV consists of the analysis of the data which is divided into two parts (1) the discussion of the findings, and (2) the interpretation of the findings. The researcher presents the findings in the table which shows the result of analysis of feminism.
5. Chapter V consists of conclusion and suggestion. Conclusion reports on integrated understanding toward the entire result of the research. Suggestions are kinds of implication to anyone who considers this study important to them.