

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

The first chapter is divided by some matters, in this chapter the researcher explains about the background of problem, statement of problem, research objective, research significant, and definition of key term.

### 1.1 Background

Man and woman are created with a different portion, woman are dominant with feeling while man are given more reasonable. The terms of responsibilities and roles of man and woman is different and cannot be forced together. In this case, the act is not sex, but gender. Butler (11), “Defines gender as social and cultural productions that produce the illusory effect of being natural.” It means woman, in this case will be focus of freedom, because woman are always restrained by the patriarchal system. Woman, from the first are to be people who are always trying to get equality with man, whether in the field of education, social, or political. According to June Hannam in her book *Feminism: A Short History of a Big Idea*, feminism history began in the end of 18th century coincided with the raise of enlightenment era in Europe. It firstly appeared in 1785 which was pioneered by Lady Mary Wortley and Marquis den Condorcet who fight for women equality in having education like men. Generally feminist struggle divided into three parts, the first wave of feminism lasted from 18<sup>th</sup> century until pre-1960, the second wave begin after 1960 and followed by the third wave or post feminism (Hannam, 8).

Feminism is a body of social theory and political movement primaliry based on and motivated by the experiences of woman. While generally providing a critique

of social relations, many proponents of feminism also focus on analyzing gender inequality and the promotion of woman's rights, interest, and issues. Elam (29) said that, "Feminism has focused on the problem of woman as objects; it has not always paid sufficient attention to the problem of woman as subjects. In fact, feminism has tended to see woman's attainment of the position of the subjects as a cause for celebration." It means the woman cannot sufficient attention but they want freedom. According to Christina Hughes, in her book entitled *Key Concepts in Feminist Theory and Research*, there are six point that adheres in women related to feminism, namely equality, difference, choice, care, time, experience. Here the equality of woman with man, woman wants same with man. Every woman wish freedom and they won't always stay at home, like in this research about woman oppression.

*The Awakening* is one of interesting novels which is reflected the social condition of the author, Kate Chopin. *The Awakening* was a controversy when it was published in 1899; the novel is talking about female character's struggle to find place, love, and independence. *The Awakening* opens while Edna Pontellier and her family are vacationing on Grand Isle which is located in the Gulf of Mexico. This is the place where Edna's "awakening" begins. In Grand Isle she learns to swim, rediscovers her passion for painting, and falls in love with a young, single man, Robert Lebrun. While at Grand Isle, she is introduced to a dense network of female community, which also contributes to her awakening. She forges close bond with two women, Madame Ratinoglle and Mademoiselle Reisz, which continues after her return home. Shortly after she returns to her New Orleans home, she stops observing social conventions such as calling on other women of her class and accepting callers. She continues her painting, which makes her independence financially. Edna also begins to participate in gambling at the race track which, in turn, affords her more control over decisions

about money. This newfound financial independence allows her to purchase a house of her own, and allows her to leave her husband. Edna's desire for further freedom leads her to send her children to her mother-in-law's house, pursue an affair with another man, and reunite with Lebrun (who ultimately leaves her). In the end, she realizes that despite the female community in which she participates, she is denied the agency she desires. As a result, she returns to Grand Isle and swims to her death. This novel takes setting on the Victorian age which is women or wife treated as the property, and they didn't have any chances like man.

The reason why the researcher chooses this novel is because this novel is interesting either to read or to analyze, this novel also can be categorized as good classic novel since the author, Kate Chopin is considered as one of the feminist writer in the 20th century. In addition, this novel contains many meaningful symbols that make the reader curious to know what the meaning of those symbols is. Although this novel was considered as one of controversial novel because of Chopin's description about women's sexuality, but this novel was wrote in beautiful way and used imaginative and metaphor words so it still can be accepted even by the conventional readers who are not usual with the description of sexuality vulgarly. The other reason, the researcher expects this research can give a great contribution to the feminism research in current issues of literature; also, it may be help the following studies of feminist criticism in literary field.

Actually, the issue of women or feminism has been discussed much, but the problem is growing from day to day and will never run out and tried to be discussed. There are some previous studies that have been found by the researcher before conduct this research. Mostly those studies are similar in theory or focus with this research. The journals are very interesting which has relevance to my research such as

*Betty Friedan and the Radical Past of Liberal Feminism* by Joanne Boucher (2003)

Meanwhile, in UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, feminism is a topic which has been analyzed much, such as by Syamsudin (2004) *Feminism spirit in G.B Shaws candida and You Never Can Tell, structural analysis and woman character to get equality*. He said, the analysis is discussion on the traits of feminism in two plays by G.B Shaw, the most outstanding english playwright during the early twentieth century. Fitriyani (2007) analyzed about *analyzing two female characters on Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse as implementation of feminism*, Hayati (2008) had investigated the way of woman in changing the patriarchal culture in Betty Burton's *Jude*, he said woman can change the the patriachal culture. The last study is conducted by Singgih Daru Kuncara a student of Gajah Mada University (2008), he wrote a thesis entitles "*Frustration as Seen in Edna Pontellier, the Main Character in Kate Chopin's The Awakening: A Psychological Approach*". His study focused on the psychological side from the main character. This study is interesting because the researcher uses psychological approach to analyze *The Awakening* novel, which is usually analyzed with the feminism theory.

Based on the studies above the researcher decides to use feminism approach and descriptive method, because it is to describe the feminism side of this novel, especially about the main character's oppression. The reason why the researcher uses feminism to analyze this novel because the researcher sees that in *The Awakening* novel the author, Kate Chopin show us women's oppression that appeared in Victorian era, especially in creole society, the society where Edna Pentellier lives.

The common sense' of ordinary people's traditional conceptions of the world, although this term needs some qualification. While the complex and highly theoretical debates which ensued need not concern us here, the fact that different

women take for granted different cultural assumptions about, for example, freedom, sexual expression, kinship obligations, and personal autonomy is an issue for feminism as an international movement (Ramazanoglu:140).

Here, the researcher tries to explore the woman oppression, the researcher tries to explore the issues of feminism, especially marxist feminism, which is built by the woman oppression in *The Awakening* novel. Kate Chopin seemed to invite the woman out of their routines, so far, she has a lot of sacrifices for her husband and family, stay at home until having to leave their jobs or activities. Kate Chopin presented the novel with the story tells domestic life with a different culture, American culture (Edna) and French descent "Creole" (Pontallier) by dishonesty story, and hypocrisy. The researcher chose *The Awakening* novel because this novel refer the woman oppression.

## 1.2 Statement of Problems

The problem of this research is a clearly defined in term of woman oppression especially of the main character in Kate chopin's *The Awakening*. The researcher takes some of problem in this novel. Therefore, the problem can be formulated as follows.

- 1.2.1 What are the factors of the changing of the main character in relation to the effect of woman oppression in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* ?
- 1.2.2 What are the effects of woman oppression in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* ?
- 1.2.3 What are the effects of rebellion relation to the effect of woman oppression in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*?

### **1.3 Research Objective**

According to Kothari (2), “research objective is to discover answers to questions through the application of scientific.” Through the research questions above, the researcher wants:

- 1.3.1 To describe the effects of woman oppression in kate chopin’s *The Awakening*.
- 1.3.2 To describe the the changing of the main character in relation to the effects of woman oppression in kate chopin’s *The Awakening*.
- 1.3.3 To find out the effect of rebellion relation to the effect of woman oppression in Kate Chopin’s *The Awakening*.

### **1.4 Research Significance**

Theoritically, this research directed to develop the research in the study of feminism, by analyzing of marxist feminism. Then, it is expected to increase the repertoire of literary research in feminist perspectives. For students and the people who are interested in this reseach, it is expected to reference for those who want to enrich the literary knowledge, especially about feminism. Practically, it is intended for those who are interested and understanding the context of feminist which in the midst of society.

### **1.5 Definition of Key Terms**

To avoid any misunderstanding, especially for the readers, in this section will be presented some key terms which contained in this research. These terms may have

different meaning or understanding. So, it will give a brief explanation in order to emphasize the meaning of the terms in literature. The definitions in this research are:

- 1.5.1 Woman Oppression:** The cruel or unfair treatment of a group of people and not giving them the same freedom, right. In this research about woman oppression.
- 1.5.2 Patriarchal system:** A patriarchal society, family, or system is one in which the men have all or most of the power and importance. In this research is the effect of woman oppression in patriarchal system.
- 1.5.3 Factor:** is one of the things that affects an event, decision, or situation
- 1.5.4 Relation:** Relations between people, groups, or countries are contacts between them and the way in which they behave towards each other.”
- 1.5.5 Characterization:** The character of a person or place consists of all the qualities they have that make them distinct from other people or places.
- 1.5.6 Feminism:** feminism that the belief and aim that women should have the same rights, power, and opportunities as men.
- 1.5.7 Feminist Literary Criticism:** Feminist literary criticism is a theory which critiques a literary work from its feminist side with feminist paradigm and point of view.