

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter contains background of the research, statement of the problem, purposes of the research, research significant, previous study and definition of key terms. The background of study explains the reason why researcher was interested in studying the tittle. The statement of the problem contain the problems or question which will be solved by the researcher. The research significant shows the aim of this research. The previous study contain the previous studies which related to this research. And the definition of key terms contains the key terms of this research.

1.1 Background of the Research

The nineteenth century was the time when women in United States especially black women speak up against slavery and supports black women's right (Madsen, 2000, pp. 1-2). They speak against race and gender oppression which black women have experienced at home, work, moreover the dominant culture as a whole. Along the history of black women movement in United States, black women were put on the last rank of social class, on the fourth after African American men since slavery time. Black women being discriminated against every aspect of life. According to (Myrdal, 1944, p. 60) not only struggling by the discrimination of the men, black women also struggled for racism. Black women in that era suffers double discrimination. One of the huge discrimination experienced by black women is the race discrimination.

The discrimination toward black women cannot be deleted in United States. Even after the declaration of United States. Black women have lower salary and the quality of life compared to men, white people and other race in United States. The discrimination towards black women is considered to be worse compared to the black men. Black women not only discriminated by their race or skin color. They also experienced gender discrimination, race discrimination and social class discrimination. Class, race, sexuality, gender, nationality, age, ethnicity are the target of discrimination which happened in United States.

While white women were able to work and succeed in a larger workplace. Black women continue their live under the slavery, which make black women continue to be at a disadvantage in many aspect of live. Black women worked as a house maid and uneducated work. They worked for white people especially in a field. While white women opened to the health care, black women has to suffer to get the same heath care. Because of the lower position of black people especially black women and lack of education make the white people discriminate them physically and ideologically. It was also experienced by Maya Angelou who was born as black woman. According to (Showalter, 2010, p. 202) Black American woman poet would have her literary identity formed by the dominant (white male) tradition, by muted women's culture and muted black culture. It means that black American woman poet would represent their literary identity because the formed of male tradition and forced them to be silent for their own rights as women.

Representation is reconstruction and displays the facts of an object so as to discover meanings related to the fields of literature. According to Hall representation is the production of meaning through language (Hall, 1997, p. 16). Representation here means that black American women poet would represent their own experience through the discrimination in that era. Black American women poet would represent their suffering to against black women oppression and discrimination in all aspect of life. It also represented by Maya Angelou which is one of the black American woman poet.

Maya Angelou who has been called as America's most visible black female writer, is a famous novelist and also a great poet. It can be seen when she was called by the president of America that year for reciting her poem at the inauguration of Bill Clinton in 1993. The poem that she recited is a poem titled "On the Pulse of Morning" which tells about desire for unity between peoples of United State. In 1971, her volume of poems "Give Me a Cool Drink of Water". Maya Angelou is a woman poet who has different style of writing with the other woman poet. Even though she is woman poet but she not use the style which usually used by woman poet. She does not only uses the fact of women or biological identity but she also uses the importance situation which occurs in that era especially a situation of women being. Ghani and Naz (2004, p. 99) states:

“Angelou is an exception because she not only points to dynamic moving and fluctuant condition of all conscious held biology identity but also the fact of her own specific being. She always lays great emphasis upon the importance of individual situation especially with reference to the individuality of woman”.

The other style of Maya Angelou’s poems is the sense of identity and strong presence of woman struggle which can be seen in “Phenomenal Woman”, “Still I Rise”, “Caged Bird”, “The Mothering Blackness”, “No No No No”, “Black Ode”, “My Guilt”, “Request”, “When I Think About Myself”, “Seven Women’s Blessed Assurance”, “Equality”, “To a Freedom Fighter”, “Poor Girl”, “A Good Woman Feeling Bad”, “Woman Work”, “Woman Me”, “Avec Merci, Mother”, “The Calling of Names”, “Africa” and “America”. “Still I Rise” is a poem that talks about a black woman who willing and suffering to rise in United States that seen black woman as nothing. “Phenomenal Woman” talks about a black woman who has a great confidence about her beauty more than white woman. And “Caged Bird” talks about woman who cannot doing anything because all of rule and men, woman is like caged bird which trying to sing about freedom. Those poem is about woman, how black woman try to rise and more confidence with her beauty, and a caged women who want freedom. Maya Angelou is the first black women poet who the researcher knows. And the story about Maya Angelou was interested. She is one of minor class in big society. She is one of black women poet who talks about women and speak up for women in a whole world to get their rights. Those are the reason why the writer choose Maya Angelou’s poem to analyze. The last reason that Maya Angelou is one of influential women poet who active to speak up around the world give a motivation for women around the world till she was dead. She uses her poem to motivate women around the world to not give up with the oppression and arouse.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the background of study stated above, the researcher will discuss about how the struggle of black women in Angelou’s poems. It can be formulated into two research question as follow:

1. How does Angelou’s poems describe about the struggles of black women?
2. What struggles faced by black women in Maya Angelou’s poems?

1.3 Purposes of the Research

Based on the statement of the problem above, the purposes of the research are:

1. To find out how Angelou's poems talks about black women struggle.
2. To find out the kinds of struggles in Angelou's poems.

1.4 Research Significant

The researcher expects that this research can give much new knowledge to increase the understanding about the representation of black woman struggle in Angelou's poems. This research hopefully will be one of a lot researches which can evolving the theory. The researcher expect to help the other researcher to analyze the representation of black women struggle in poetry. This research hopefully would make the other researcher who loves Maya Angelou's poems more understand about what is the poem about. Furthermore, this research hopefully can make the readers more understand about the life of women especially black women in United States in that era. This research hopefully will make the institution have more research that analyzing Maya Angelou's poem. Hopefully this research would make the institution have more research that analyze the representation of black women struggle in poetry.

1.5 Previous Study

Before writes this research, the researcher compares the other analysis which has relation with the discussion of the research. The first is a paper entitles "The Representation of Femininity in Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs and Enchanted Script" by Hadi Fauzi in 2012 which discuss about the cultural norms about the paradigms gender roles by female world view. It is about women stereotype and patriarchal ideologies. The research used descriptive method which describe the construction of femininity concept, also the researcher uses feminist criticism. The result of this research is the feminine beauty ideal was represented by their appearance. The differences between this research and Hadi's research are the object of the research while this research used Maya Angelou's poems and Hadi

used Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs and Enchanted Script. This research uses theory of gynocriticism by Elaine Showalter while Hadi's research uses theory of women stereotype and patriarchal ideologies. The similarity between this research and Hadi's research is both of the research discuss about the representation of women in a literary work which used feminist criticism theory as the approach of the research.

The second is a thesis entitles "The Struggle of Woman Character in Changing Her Social Status in Capitalist Society in George Bernard Shaw's Pygmalion" by Zietha Arlamanda Asri in 2016 which discuss about the social problems that occur in Capitalist society that portrayed in the play and the reaction of the main woman character in the changing social status used theory of Marxist Feminism to know the social problem which occur in that experienced by the main woman character and uses the social class theory to find out the struggle of the woman to changing his social status. The research has a result that the social problem in the play is how the figure of lower class, social equalities in the play, the upper suppress the lower class, discrimination to the lower class by a bad words. Because of that social problem the woman as main character in this play want to changes his social status from lower class to the high class. The similarity between this research and Zietha's research is both of the research are discuss about the struggle of women, and the differences are object of the research and the theory. While this research discuss about Angelou's poems and Zietha's research is discuss about Pygmalion play. This research uses gynocriticism theory by Elaine Showalter while Zietha uses Marxist feminism theory.

The third is a paper entitles "Woman Narration: A Gynocritic studies on Jane Austes's Northanger Abbey and Anne Bronte's Agnes Grey" by Ade Rohman in 2003 which discuss about women narration and tries to see the world with women's view. The view that women thinks about the oppression towards women by men, the view that women feeling discriminated by men. This paper used theory of gynocriticism from Elaine Showalter. Ade's research has a result that women narration can make women more free to express their thinks, their feels, and shows all of that to the world by writing. The similarity between this research with Ade's research is both of the research are uses the gynocriticism theory by Elaine

Showalter , and the differences are object of the research while this research discuss about Angelou's poems and Ade's research is discuss about Pygmalion play.

The fourth is a paper entitles "Reader Understanding of Metaphorical Meaning in Angelou's Just Give A Cool Drink of Water 'fore I Diiiie" by Risa Mayasari in 2012 which discuss about reader responses when read Angelou's poems. How the reader interpret the metaphorical word in Angelou's poems. Risa's research used theory of Metaphor by Roman Jakobson and the theory of reader response by Louise Rosenblatt. Roman Jakobson said that metaphor is substitute for another because it is similar to it, however Louise Rosenblatt said that reader response is both of reader and the text are related each other. The result of Risa's research are the meaning of metaphor in Angelou's poem tells about someone's love, about a strong and hard worker husband, about relation mother and daughter. The understanding of the reader to understand the metaphor are various, because different reader has different condition when the reader read the poems. The similarity between this research and Risa's research are the discussion. While this research discuss about the representation of Black women struggle, Risa's research discuss about reader respond and metaphorical meaning. Both of the research used Maya Angelou's poems as the object of the research. The differences is both of the research uses the different theory, this research uses theory feminist criticism especially gynocriticism theory by Elaine Showalter while Risa's research uses theory of reading responses and metaphor by Roman Jakobson.

The fifth is a thesis entitles "African American Women's Self-Esteem Reflected in Maya Angelou's *Phenomenal Woman*, *Woman Me*, and *Seven Women's Blessed Assurance*" by Hindhun Sri Yuli Kinasih in 2015 which discuss about the idea of African-American women self-esteem which is reflected in Maya Angelou's poems through figurative language and imagery. The result of Hindhun's research shows that Maya Angelou's poems reflect the condition of African-American women have positive self-esteem. The poems shows the confidence, the pride, and the positive self-evaluation of African-American women. The similarities between this research and Hindhun's research are both of the research uses Maya Angelou's poems as the object of the research, and both of the research uses figurative language and imagery to analyze the poems. The difference between

this research and Hindhun's research is the discussion of the research. This research discuss about the representation of black women struggle while Hindhun's research discuss about self-esteem of African-American women.

The last is an undergraduate thesis entitles "The Idea of Black Feminism in Maya Angelou's Still I Rise and Phenomenal Woman" by Gatot Hendy Febiyanto in 2010 which discuss about the idea of black feminism based on the review on black feminism in the United states used theory of black feminism by Deborah L Madsen. The result of the research shows that in "Still I Rise" there is a clash between black women versus people around (white man and white women) and also black men in that era. Black women suffers because of bad treatment of white people who consider them slaves. Because of that black women do anything which can make them arise from both of white people and also black men. In "Phenomenal Woman" there is a clash between white women and black women. In both of poem black women struggling against slavery and also racism. The similarity between this research and Gatot's research are both of the research uses Maya Angelou's poems as the object of the research. Both of the research use criticism feminist approach. The differences between this research and Gatot's research are the discussion and the theory. This research discuss about the representation of Black women struggle and Gatot's research discuss about the idea of Black feminism. Both of the research used different theory, while this research uses gynocriticism theory by Elaine Showalter and Gatot's research uses theory of black feminism by Deborah L Madsen.

A. Definition of Key Terms

1. Representation : Reconstruction and displays the facts of an object so as to discover meanings related to the fields of literature. The production of meaning through language.
2. Black Women : female who came from Africa to America which has black skin
3. Struggle : to proceed with difficulty or with great effort to reach something

Gynocriticism : A criticism which concerns with increasing, especially female structure for dealing with works written by women in all subjects, the subjects are history, style, themes, genres, and the structure of writing by woman.

