

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of the background of research, statements of the problem, objective of research, significance of research and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background

The Holy Grail is a mythical object or symbol in Christian associated with Mary Magdalene. In early Grail literature, it was described as the dish, plate, or cup used by Jesus at the Last Supper, and was said to possess miraculous powers. Miraculous in its powers could provide food and healing. However, it would be revealed only to the pure Knights, and the Holy Grail Quest appears in different stories. Holy Grail appeared in pre-medieval literature, it appears variously as a chalice, a cup, or a dish and sometimes as a stone, it was identified by Christians as the chalice of the Last Supper brought to England by St. Joseph of Arimathea.

The Holy Grail quest makes up an important segment of the Arthurian cycle, appearing first in works by Chrétien de Troyes. The early Grail romances centered on Percival and were woven into the more general Arthurian fabric, in which other knights such as Sir Galahad played a prominent role. It was connected with Joseph of Arimathea in the writing of Robert de Boron in the late-twelfth century, in which Joseph receives the Grail from an apparition of Jesus and sends it to

Great Britain. Building upon this theme, later writers recounted how Joseph used the Grail to catch Christ's blood, and still later theorists have suggested that the Grail is actually a symbol for Jesus own blood-line, with Mary Magdalene as the initial "vessel" symbolized by the Grail. (Baigent 1983)

Then in 1470, the theme of the Holy Grail was used again by Sir Thomas Malory in his famous work, *Le Morte D'Arthur* (the death of Arthur). A famous story in western culture ever since. This book is inaccessible to literary works as a whole it contains a documenter fact about the Holy Grail being highly trusted by certain members of the nationalist-socialist ranks in Germany. In Malory's time, the Holy Grail had assumed the same mysterious identity as the present.

The Holy Grail has been used as a theme in fantasy and science fiction. These works of fiction have inspired a number of works of popular fiction. The best known is Dan Brown's bestselling novel *The Da Vinci Code*, which, like *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, is based on the idea that the real Grail is not a cup but the womb and later the earthly remains of Mary Magdalene, though which Jesus descendants live on. In Brown's novel, it is hinted that the Grail was long buried beneath Rosslyn Chapel in Scotland, but that in recent decades its guardians had it relocated to a secret chamber embedded in the floor beneath the Inverted Pyramid near the Louvre Museum in Paris.

Nowadays, there are two kinds of literature; those are high literature and popular literature. Popular fiction is part of popular literature discourse which begins in the 20th century and grows with the modernization and also popular

fiction as a part of popular culture emphasizes on the creative process, the important thing in popular culture is how and why consumers or audiences can accept the products. About the popular fiction there are study of literary formula, in popular literature novel is one of literary works that can be analyze by the study of literary formula. One of the roles that make the works popular is the pattern of the story or the formula which used in literary works. Cawelty argues that formula is the contribution of genre's success. One of genre in popular literature is the mystery genre. The main formula of the mystery story is the investigation and discovery of hidden secrets.

Levi-Strauss, with the theory of structuralism try to understand the reason or the human subconscious mind in life. While the media that can be used to understand the reason is a myth, because myth is the most appropriate medium to understand human reason because myth is the place of human expression most free. Levi-Strauss (Ahimsa-Putra, 2013) explains the notion of myth in structuralism is not the same as the mythical notion commonly used in the study of mythology, the myth in Levi-Strauss's view should not be contradicted by reality because today's myth is increasingly problematic. Stories that are considered sacred by one group are not necessarily considered sacred by another group. Therefore, the myth in the context of Levi-Strauss structuralism is nothing but a fairy tale.

The Da Vinci Code is a novel by American author Dan Brown, originally published in 2003 by Random House. Immediately after it's publication became exceedingly popular, millions of copies of the novel were sold and the book has

been labelled as one of the most-read but also one of the most controversial novels of our time. The Da Vinci Code tells the story of Harvard professor of symbology Robert Langdon, who is woke up late at night by the police whilst on a business trip in Paris, because the man with whom he had an appointment earlier that day has been murdered. This man is Jacques Saunière, the curator of the Louvre, whose body has been found lying in an unnatural position inside the Louvre. Near the body the police have also found a mysterious code. Together with Saunière's granddaughter, Sophie Neveu, Langdon tries to uncover the secrets surrounding Saunière's life and death. In doing so he gets involved with the mysteries of the Priory of Sion, a European secret society, with the Catholic sect Opus Dei, and with finding the location of the Holy Grail. The Da Vinci Code has been labelled controversial because it suggests Mary Magdalene was married to Jesus Christ and had children with him. It is further suggested that the descendants of Jesus Christ and Mary Magdalene emigrated to what is now France and became the Merovingian dynasty, a well-known royal family in France.

Furthermore, there are some previous studies that have the same object to analyze but different study. They are *Sacred Feminine Symbol Describe in Dan Brown's The Da Vinci Code* by Hartono. In that research he tried to know how sacred feminine symbol in the novel helps Sophie Neveu to solve her problem and reveal her grandfather last message through riddles that her grandfather makes before he died. Another research about *Symbol of Holiness in Dan Brown's The Da Vinci Code* by Haerizal. That research aims to know what the symbol of holiness are portrayed in novel *The Da Vinci Code*. The next previous study is

about *Mystery Elements in The Oval Potrait and The Cask of Amontillado Seen Through Figurative Language and Imagery* by Laili. That research aims to find out which figurative language and imagery that really work and mostly applicable to show mystery story's elements in each short story. Although the previous studies show the same novel and topic about mystery, this present study is different. Those previous ones did not study on literary formula construction of which it is covered in this current study. This research focused on study of literary formula as the theoretical underpinning.

Researcher choose this novel because in the novel contains many mythical elements that connected with mystery fiction so it can be analyzed by the study of literary formula and structuralism. So researcher think it's seem interest to be analyzed and found what is the problem that can be analyzed. The methods are applied in this research are library research method and structuralism method. Library research method was used to get the primary source of this research and references that related to the object of analysis. While the structuralism method used in this research is the theory of structuralism. Structuralism theory was used to analyze how the myth constructed in the novel.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Based on descriptions in the background, *The Da Vinci Code* is a popular fiction in which there are myths created by authors as the consumption of society aimed at nothing but entertaining. In the novel contains many myths that have been influenced by the popular culture. The myth in popular culture is different

from the ancient myth that is considered traditional. The problems to be solved in this research are:

1. How are mystery formula constructed in Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code*?
2. How does the myth of Holy Grail construct mystery formula in Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code*?

1.3 Research Objective

Based on the research questions above, the research objective are:

1. To understand the way of construction mystery formula in Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code*.
2. To find out the myth of Holy Grail that constructed mystery formula in Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code*.

1.4 Research Significance

The significance of this research is the theoretical and practical. This research is directed to students whose studies in English Literature Department to be references about the research in the same problem. Practically, this research is directed to the literary society and other people as a whole want to understands and explore the novel's content and who are interested to add knowledge about popular culture and popular fiction.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding about the terms that are used in this research, here the definition of the terms as following:

Popular culture: is the entirety of attitudes, ideas, images, perspectives, and other phenomena within the mainstream of a given culture.

Popular fiction: is plot-driven fictional works written with the intent of fitting into a specific literary genre, in order to appeal to readers and fans already familiar with that genre.

Mystery fiction: is a genre of fiction usually involving a mysterious death or a crime to be solved. In a closed circle of suspects, each suspect must have a credible motive and a reasonable opportunity for committing the crime.

Myth : myth stems from a secret or big existential riddle of human experience, which essentially presents unresolved problems.