

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of The Study

Literature is a canon which consists of those works in language by which a community defines itself through the course of its history. It includes works primarily artistic and also those whose aesthetic qualities are only secondary. The self-defining activity of the community is conducted in the light of the works, as its members have come to read them (McFadden 1978:56). Based on David, literature is an art form, like painting, sculpture, music, drama, and the dance. Literature is distinguished from other arts form by the medium in which it works language (David, 1971:139). In other words, literature is the art of written or it can be assumed that literature as a creative art that uses humans and all kinds of aspects of life can be used as a medium to convey ideas, theories, or systems of human thinking.

The development of literature in Indonesia is currently quite rapid. That was evident from many literary works that appeared, both in the form of poetry, short stories, prose and drama. All of the literary work is created by the author (the creator). The author itself in producing a literary work is a considerable form of progress in the development of the world of literature in Indonesia. This progress is evidence that in Indonesia today there are many lovers of literature. Literature is the imaginative work that pictures human life in society which can be enjoyed, understandable, and used by the society as well. The author will write the result of this imagination in a form of literary works, such as drama, prose, short story and novel. The literary work has its own definition taken from each different

literature expert. According to Pradopo (1994: 26) the literary work is as the picture of the world and human life, the main criteria that are posted on the literary work is truth, or everything that wants to be pictured by the author. Through that process, the reader of the literary work will be able to catch the characteristic of the author relating to the surrounding world.

Moody (1984: 5) said that literary works have four functions, they are:

1. to train four language skills, they are listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
2. to add knowledge about human life experiences such as customs, religion, culture, and so on. It develops the character buildings to the readers or audience.
3. to develop creation and feeling.
4. to support character building.

Literary works talk about human in many sides, bad and good. Through the reading activity, the readers will describe the characters in the story. The readers will find human's complex nature which can be an alternative way to face the real life. Based on the four functions of literary work, it can develop human value; enrich experience through the life background of the characters in the story with various cultures, religions, races, and social status.

Literary criticism in a feminist approach helps the writer look at literature in a different light. It applies the philosophies and perspectives of feminism to the literature. There are many different kinds of feminist literary theory. Some theorists examine the language and symbols that are used and how that language and use of symbols is "gendered." Others remind that men and women write differently and analyze at how the gender of the author affects how literature is

written. Many feminist critics look at how the characters, especially the female characters, are portrayed and ask us to consider how the portrayal of female characters “reinforces or undermines sexual stereotypes” (Lynn: 2013).

Film, also called movie or motion picture, is a visual art used to simulate experiences that communicate ideas, stories, perceptions, feelings, beauty or atmosphere by the means of recorded or programmed moving images along with other sensory stimulations. The word "cinema", short for cinematography, is often used to refer to film making and the film industry, and to the art form that is the result of it. Film catches people attention through the visualization of the story and the sound effects. Film also can deliver the message to the viewer's more easily. Furthermore, people need less effort to watch a movie than to read a novel because they only need one or two hours to watch it. Film and literature are two different things with a similar goal to create sublimity in human imagination and understanding. Both film and literature work hand in hand to boost the progress of human civilization. They are the complimentary in nature and one is no substitute to the other, like letters and sounds in human communication. Film and literature inspire and enrich each other. They also enable human mind through action, images, words and replicating life of human beings. Adaptation of literary genres for filming is not a recent phenomenon but an oldone.

According to Barnes (2002), there are two broad categories which must be considered about film and literature. Barnes argued that when comparing the two media, emphasis should be laid on the material similarities and dissimilarities and the technical similarities and dissimilarities. Barnes goes on to define both the material and the technical. He defines the material as: “the simple visible features that form the whole essence and production of the literary text as well as the

visual text (film) in their unique form which becomes clearer to the reader and the viewer in form of contrast.

Gender roles are based on the different expectations that individuals, groups, and societies have of individuals based on their sex and based on each society's values and beliefs about gender. Appropriate gender roles are defined the term sex refers to the biological, hormonal, and chromosomal differences that determine if a person is male or female (Lindsey, 1997).

In other words, gender is a concept that humans create socially, through their interactions with one another and their environments, it relies heavily upon biological differences between males and females. Because humans create the concept of gender socially, gender is referred to as a social construction. The social construction of gender is demonstrated by the fact that individuals, groups, and societies ascribe particular traits, statuses, or values to individuals purely because of their sex, these ascriptions differ across societies and cultures, and over time within the same society.

Feminism is a phenomenon in the society. In discussing feminism, people will talk about women. Feminism is an ideology of women's liberation, because that is inherent in all of its approach is the belief that women suffer injustice because of their gender (Humm, 2002). Women are important in the society. Every woman has her own job or duty in this modern society in which men are still the strongest gender, commonly it is stated that women's life is a lot more complicated than a man's life. A woman has to take care of her personal life and if she is a mother, she has to take care also about her children's life and her husband too. Married women have lots of worries and believe it or not, they carry out a

more stress life than marriedmen.

The film of Erin Brockovich's is one of the famous films which present women's spirit. This film has been published in 2000 which was directed by Steven Soderbergh and the script writer of this film is Susannah Grant and is revised by Richard La Gravenese. This film is based on a true story which was played by Julia Robert that takes the character of Erin Brockovich as the main character of this film. The film is a dramatization of the true story of Erin Brockovich, portrayed by Julia Roberts, who fought against the energy corporation Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). The film was a box office success, and critical reaction was positive. Erin Brockovich is a single mother of three and a former Miss Wichita, defies expectations by convincing hundreds of families to sue the \$28 billion company Pacific Gas and Electric, who has poisoned the water supply of Hinkley, California with Hexavalent Chromium, and she succeeds to win the largest settlement ever pays in a direct action lawsuit, she fights against the American West Coast Energy Giant Pacific Gas and Electric Company is known as PG&E. Erin Brockovich film tells about a woman who have three children, and she must take care of her young children even though she works in the lawsuit office. She has no high education, no skill, but she has a spirit and hope she struggles to make her life better.

There are several reasons why the researcher is interested in analyzes the film, including (1) the film is based on the true story, (2) the film which was starred Julia Robert succeeded as the winner of some categories such as Academy Awards, Golden Globe, Screen Actors Guild Award and BAFTA for category as the Best Actress and other nominations, (3) the film tells about a single mother with three children who fight for her life and her children to get the better life, (4)

without degree or diploma, the character from the film provides motivation and lesson that work hard will always pay off. While in reality we see that women are given more responsibilities than men in household and that happens until now. The fact that Erin can handle both is interesting to analyze. Erin in the film itself has some characteristics such as independent, ambitious, hard worker, motherhood, and smart. Therefore, the writer is interested in analyzing this film through a feminist approach.

### **B. The Problem of the Study**

The problems of the study are formulated as the follow:

1. What are the types of feminism in Erin Brockovich?
2. How are the principles of feminism realized in Erin Brockovich?

### **C. The Objective of the Study**

In this research, the researcher has some purposes to answer the problems of the study, they are:

1. To find out the types of feminism in Erin Brockovich
2. To describe the principles of feminism realized in Erin Brockovich.

### **D. The Scope of the Study**

This research discusses the types of feminism and the principles of feminism which are realized in Erin Brockovich. The researcher focuses on analyzing how Erin as the main character of the film fights for her career to get the better life for herself and her children.

### **E. The Significance of the Study**

1. Academic Significance

Academically, this research can be used as additional sources for Feminism research, especially in the movement of gender issues depending on the place and time.

## 2. Practical Significance

For other readers this research can give some information about women struggles references and suggestions to other researcher of Literary Criticism of Feminism.

