

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study.

In globalization era, popular media such as movie, television, magazine, and newspaper contribute in constructing new ideologies. Those ideologies can influence people's thoughts and actions. According to Said, television, movie, and all media's resources have forced information into more and more standardized molds (26). Everyone can watch a movie from every stage of age, from child to adult. Movies are written, produced, and released to the world and create ideas toward the audience. According to Manfred John in his book entitled *A Guide to Narratological Film Analysis*, movie is multimedia narrative form based on a physical record of sounds and moving pictures. Movie is a narrative genre which is almost similar to drama since it presents a story (86). Moreover, in society, there is an assumption that watching a movie is a collective public experience and a social occasion. John states that movie is created in a process of collective and collaborative production, movie involves writers, producers, directors, actors, cinematographers, editors, and a lot more (90).

There are different types of movie such as; fairy tale, animation, action, drama, comedy, musical, and etcetera. Among these different categories of movie, fairy tale can be considered as part of our childhood life. Fairy tale is a fanciful tale of legendary deeds and creatures, usually intended for children; a fictitious, highly fanciful story or explanation, can be considered as a myth

<<http://www.websters-online-dictionary.org/definition/fairy+tales>>. Fairy tale has been rewritten, retold, and remade in some versions. Although a lot of versions of fairy tales have been made, they still have one thing in common; represent the main female character as the heroine one which is formless, passive, instable, confined, pious, spiritual, irrational and compliance (Moi 34). In addition, the audiences tend to identify themselves with the main character, the protagonist, not only because the protagonist character look nice and beautiful but also because they are the ones who live “happily ever after” in the end of the story. The heroines (good women) are always described in a positive image; always patient, behave in a good manner, tolerate domestic abuse from the villains and passively waiting for “the prince charming” to save her. It can be seen in almost every classic fairy tale such as *Cinderella*, *Sleeping Beauty*, and *Snow White*.

These tales which glorify passivity, dependency, and self-sacrifice as heroine’s cardinal virtues suggests that cultures’ very survival depends up on a woman’s acceptance of rules which relegate her to motherhood and domesticity (Rowe 348).

Unfortunately, the audiences do not realize yet that those typical protagonists are used to serve patriarchal society. Thus, the audiences are exposed to the idea that an “ideal” woman is submissive, passive, formless and kind. Woman is not likely to be aggressive and struggling for what they really want because it can be considered against the “natural” character of a woman. Aggressive and struggling belong to the type of “unnatural” woman, and they are usually described as the “villain” or the “evil” ones in classic fairy tales that

oppose the image of the heroic ones. For examples “Cinderella vs. the stepmother”, “Snow White vs. the evil queen”, “Sleeping Beauty vs. the Witch and etc (Moi 39). Thereby fairy tales have succeeded in building a stereotype of women based on the traditional gender roles. Further, Mary Ellmann in *Thinking About Women*, which is cited in Toril Moi’s book *Sexual/Textual Politics*, states that the image of the heroines in classic fairy tales is purposely created to serve the ruling patriarchal ideology (38). Molly Haskell supports this statement by saying big lie perpetrated on Western society is the idea of women’s inferiority, a lie so deeply ingrained in our social behavior....In the movie business we have had an industry dedicated for the most part to reinforcing the lie (Karlin *From Cinderella to Spiderman*). From these statements, it can be assumed that movie, especially fairy tales can be a tool to impose certain perspectives to the audience.

As stated previously, movie gives significant influence towards the audience, and fairy tale is one of movie genre that mostly describe about a princess that is saved by a prince charming then end with happy ending story. However, there is also certain fairy tale movie that portrays such character in a different point of view especially on the main female character. *Mulan* is one example of animation fairy tale movie that pictures the strenght of female character. If *Mulan* is produced in animation picture, *Ella Enchanted* comes with a different concept of fairy tale movie genre.

*Ella Enchanted* was released on 9 April 2004 and it was directed by Tommy O’Haver. The script of the movie is written by Laurie Craig, Karen McCullah Lutz, Kirsten Smith, Jennier Heath and Michelle J. Wolf. This movie

starring Anna Hathaway as Ella of Frell. This movie tells about Ella, a beautiful baby that is born in a city called Frell. In that city, it is a tradition that a newborn is given a gift by a fairy. Unfortunately, the fairy that insists to give a gift to Ella is Lucinda, a selfish, narcissistic and self-centered fairy. Ella's mother tries to hide her baby but she fails. Lucinda then gives Ella "obedience" as her gift. Later on, Ella finds out that the gift is merely a curse because she cannot say no for any orders, no matter how silly or dangerous the order. Ella gets a lot of problems because of the spell; being accused of stealing, losing her best friend and etc. So Ella starts a journey to find Lucinda and asks her to redo the curse. On her journey to find Lucinda, Ella faces a lot of dangerous creatures: giants, mean elves and also a mean uncle of the prince. In the course of facing the dangers, Ella shows courage and bravery, she solves every problem she faces by her own – without the help of a fairy, in fact a fairy makes her face a lot of troubles.

Hence, there are several different depictions of the female character, Ella, from that of Cinderella or Snow white. In fact, *Ella Enchanted* story has similarity in the term of conception from that of Cinderella, but still, Ella portrays the non-patriarchal woman character. In the movie, Ella is portrayed as a tough, educated and independent. In the end of the story, she is the one who saves the male character from the evil and the prince is the price for her effort.

Further, *Ella Enchanted* is a movie adaptation from the novel with the same title by Gail Carson Lavine. It can be said that *Ella Enchanted* movie and novel try to reconstruct the beliefs of women in patriarchal ideology. In addition, *Ella Enchanted* raises the issue of equality between men and women in society. Sarah

Karlin in “From Cinderella to Spiderman” argues that media, especially television and movie industries, play a huge role in supporting women’s oppression (Karlin 2009). Therefore, *Ella Enchanted* movie is chosen to be analyzed further and the writer argues that it will be necessary for people to see and view women in a different perception along with the hope that it will reconstruct what-so-called the image of an ideal women in society.

The writer will analyze the main character, Ella, by using the feminist criticism theory. In recent decades, there have been many works about feminism as the awareness of gender equality is also increasing among society. Feminism is a social theory and political activism which criticizes the social relation between men and women, and the inequality of position between both genders within a patriarchal society (Jenainati and Groves 5). For that reason, feminist criticism theory is the most appropriate theory in analyzing this movie.

Moreover, since the study is using a movie as the main source, this analysis will be focused on narrative and non-narrative form. As Bordwell said in *Film Art: An Introduction*, the prevalence of stories of stories in our lives is one reason that we need to take a close look at how films may embody narrative form (5). Moreover, Bordwell explains that non-narrative is the other type of film form that also important in the film analysis (89). Since the non-narrative reveals the ideology behind every element in a movie.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problems**

Based on the background of the study above, the writer comes up with the following questions:

1. How does narrative form of Ella's character construction oppose the traditional gender roles?
2. How does non-narrative form of Ella's character construction oppose the traditional gender roles?

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

Regarding the statement of the problem, there are several objectives to achieve. The objective of the study is as follows:

1. To describe narrative form of Ella's character construction in *Ella Enchanted* movie that opposes the traditional gender roles.
2. To describe non-narrative form of Ella's character construction in *Ella Enchanted* that opposes the traditional gender roles.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to give clear depiction about the opposing image of traditional women's gender roles through the analysis of narrative and non-narrative forms in the movie, *Ella Enchanted*. Further, this study aims to raise people's awareness, particularly women, that women and men should have equal rights. In fact, almost every classical fairy tales has constructed particular characters of women as "ideal" woman based on patriarchal society. However, *Ella Enchanted* movie shows that the main character tries to reconstruct the

beliefs against of an “ideal” woman. The last but not least, the writer hopes that this study also gives contribution to the study of literature in the English Department of Airlangga University.

### **1.5 Scope and Limitation**

Before starting to analyze the movie, it is important to give the limitation to keep the analysis in the expected field. Therefore, the writer limits the study on the main character in *Ella Enchanted* movie which is Ella, and other characters to support the analysis. Besides, the writer will analyze the narrative and non-narrative forms that illustrate Ella’s characteristic and relate it to the traditional gender roles and patriarchy values. The limitation on the analysis is expected not to narrow the analysis, but gain a deeper analysis.

### **1.6 Theoretical Background**

To answer the problems and to provide the explanation in the analysis, the writer will use feminist criticism as the main theory. Feminist criticism theory examines the ways in which literature (and other cultural productions) reinforce or undermine the economic, political, social, and psychological oppression of women (Tyson 81). Before the suffrage movement in the early 1960, women were placed in the lower level, they were considered as secondary sex. The writer believes that feminist criticism is the most suitable literary theory to analyze the movie. The further explanation of feminist criticism theory will be provided in chapter two.

Since the object of the study is a movie, the writer will use narrative and non-narrative forms to show how narrative and non-narrative forms of the Ella's character reconstructs the traditional gender roles. Narrative is a chain of events in cause-effect relationship occurring in time and space. A narrative is thus what people usually meant by the term of the story. A narrative begins with one situation, continues with a series of changes occurred according to a pattern of cause and effect, and the finally change with a new situation arises that bring about the end of the narrative (Bordwell 89). While, Non-narrative form is explain about how the film constructed for and create viewing subject by camera movement, lighting, editing, and all the available techniques of film making (Miltry 35).

### **1.7 Method of the Study**

The main object of this study is the movie, and the writer will observe the movie in detail. In order to support the analysis, the writer collects all materials related to the movies. Therefore, the writer gathers information from libraries- both conventional and digital, various books, articles and other related materials. Data collecting is obtained from library and various sources such as: literary books, essays critics, dictionaries, encyclopedia and online libraries. Some relevant theoretical books are used to support the understanding about the literary theories used, especially feminist criticism, which is used as the basic theory to analyze the movies and also narrative and non narrative form as well.

In analyzing the data, the writer also uses descriptive analysis as the methods of analysis. This method is considered suitable to be applied in the analysis because it supports properly the description of the topic that is going to be analyzed. Finally, the next step after making the analysis is drawing the conclusion, so that the study is complete based on the research requirement.

### **1.8 Definition of Key Terms**

In this study, there are several important terms, thus this definition of key terms section is provided as the dictionary compiled by the writers to help the readers in understanding the analysis in this thesis.

*Traditional Gender Roles* : The distinction of man and woman role in society which defines man as a strong, active, heroic and woman as a passive and fragile character.

*Patriarchy* : A belief that casts men are more superior to women.

*Heroines* : The protagonist character in a story

*Narrative* : Concerned with how stories get told

*Non-narrative* : Explain about how the film constructed for and create viewing subject by camera movement, lighting, editing, and all the available techniques of film making