

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study will analyze one of fairy tale movie *Ella Enchanted*. The writer will observe the opposing idea of traditional gender roles depicted through the main character in this movie, Ella. For that reason, feminist criticism theory is applied in doing the analysis. Indeed, the writer will elaborate the analysis into two main forms which are narrative form and non-narrative form to show the opposing idea of traditional gender roles in the movie. Thus, there will be three main sub-chapters in this chapter which are feminist criticism, narrative form and non-narrative form.

2.1.1 Feminist Criticism

Before the 19th century, the society was extremely patriarchal. They believed that men and women had different position in the social stratification, where men were placed in the higher place than women. As a result of this, men dominated the public sphere while women were confined to the domestic one. Women's life was only about raising and taking care of their children, cooking, sewing, knitting and other domestic work. Moreover, women did not have any

right to enjoy education and were forbidden to have a job (Jenainati and Grove 5,6).

Feminist criticism believes that the inferior position long occupied by women in patriarchal society has been culturally, not biologically, produced (Tyson 84). Patriarchal society indeed has a really big role in women's oppression because it believes that women are naturally inferior to men and has been promoting these unequal gender roles for a long time. Actually, feminists do not deny the biological differences between men and women because they are biologically different. However, feminists do not agree that those biological differences between men and women become the justification of men's superiority. Therefore they oppose the patriarchal idea that they believe, is the root of women oppression. Feminists assume that women are oppressed by patriarchy economically, politically, socially and psychologically: patriarchal ideology is the primary means by which they are kept so (Tyson 90).

Furthermore, patriarchal society defines the term of 'Traditional Gender Roles' which is established by patriarchal society. Traditional gender roles casts men as a rational, strong, protective, and decisive; they cast women as emotional (irrational), weak, nurturing, and submissive. In patriarchal society women should be passive, powerless and tolerant, while men should be powerful, active and dominate. Women are always associated with weakness, emotional, and submission, while men are related to rational, strong, protectiveness and decisiveness (Tyson 83). This view defines about what women should be and what men should be. Even the patriarchy divides women into two categories;

'good girl' and 'bad girl', the woman who is considered as 'good girl' is the one who obeys the rule of patriarchal and 'bad girl' is a woman who does not obey the rules. Tyson states that there are two identities which can be had by woman. The identities are 'good girls' and 'bad girls'. If a woman accepts her traditional gender roles and obeys the patriarchal rules, she is a 'good girl' but she does not, she is a 'bad girl' (88).

Furthermore, fairy tales is one literary works that shares patriarchal ideas. Fairy tales are sites for the construction of appropriate gendered behavior. It constitutes a kind of "script" for acceptable forms of feminine and masculine behavior (Parsons 136). *Cinderella* is a very famous fairy tale that portrays the values of traditional gender roles. Feminists have long been aware that the role of Cinderella, which patriarchy imposes upon the imagination of young girls, is a destructive role because it equates femininity with submission, encouraging women to tolerate familial abuse wait patiently to be rescued by a man, and view marriage as the only desirable reward for "right" conduct (Tyson 87).

Feminist is recognized as a movement purposing to against the patriarchal ideology. Charles E Bressler in his book *Literary Criticism* shows the patriarchal point view about women, woman is not man; she has become the other, the not-male. Man is the subject, the one who defines meaning; woman is the object, having her existence defined and determined by the male. The man is therefore the significant figure in the male or female relationship and the women is subordinate (182). Because of inequality treatment for women in all aspects, including literary work, feminists believe that men are dominating literary work

and their works are taken as literary canon. However, feminists also believe that there is a strong male gaze in all literary works that are written by men, especially in the way a male author portrays the male and female character. It cannot be denied that men's literary work promote traditional gender roles and contain strong patriarchal values.

Before the 1970s, the established canon of 'great works' was almost exclusively male-authored, with a few notable exceptions such as Jane Austin, whose work had been considered gender-neutral. It was assumed that there existed a fair and objective means of judging the quality and worth of literature, and that the canon was an unbiased representation of the best work being produced. It was implied that if few women managed to attain the highest standards of literary production, it was because they rarely wrote, and when they did, they simply did not write as well as men. The first task of feminist criticism was to disprove this assumption by offering an alternative, plausible reason for the absence of women from literature (Tollan 325-326).

From the statement above, it can be assumed that feminists want to change this assumption by rewriting, remaking and retelling literary text through a feminist point of view. They believe that there are very significant differences in literary works that are written by men and by women.

Related to the above statement, the idea is reflected in one famous Disney's fairy tale written by Charles Perrault, titled *Cinderella Story*.

embodies patriarchal values. This version of Cinderella sees woman as submissiveness, dependence, and beauty are embedded in this version of the tale. Cinderella submits modestly to her servitude (Parsons 144). However, Gail Carson Lavine's *Ella Enchanted* comes with a different description of the main female character which aware of herself problem and struggle to solve it. This fact supports the different description of women from the point of man author and woman author.

2.1.2 Narrative

Narrative form in film studies is not differing with literary studies which can be analyzed by seeing the dialogue and setting that organize the story. According to Hayward, narrative or narration has a function to describe the story. Narrative involves the recounting of real or fictitious events. Narrative cinema's function is story telling not description, which is, supposedly a part function of the documentary. Narrative refers to the strategies, codes, and conventions employed to organize a story. Primarily, narrative cinema is one that uses these strategies as a means of reproducing the 'real' world, one which the spectator can either identify with or consider being within the realms of possibility. Where film is concerned narrative would refer them to film as a narrative statement, to its function as a narrative text (Hayward 256).

Narrative is a chain of events in cause-effect relationship occurring in time and space. A narrative is thus what people usually mean by the term of story. A narrative begins with one situations, continue with a series changes occurs

according to a pattern of cause and effect, and then finally change with a new situation arises that brings about the end of the movie (Bordwell 89). A film's narration not only manipulates degree of knowledge, it manipulates the depth of our knowledge (Bordwell 66). Manipulating the depth of knowledge can have many functions and effects. Plunging to the depths of mental subjectivity can increase moviegoers' identification with a character and can cue stable expectations about what the characters will later say or do. One final point about the depth of knowledge is that the narration presents subjective moment into an overall framework of objective (Bordwell 67).

The number of possible narratives is unlimited. Historically, the cinema has tended to be dominated by a single mode of narrative form. The conception of narrative depends on the assumption that the action will spring primarily from individual characters as casual agents. Natural causes or societal causes may serve as catalysts or preconditions for the action, but the narrative invariably centers on personal psychological causes such as decisions, choices and traits of character (Bordwell 70).

In the classical Hollywood narrative mode is the chain of actions that results from predominantly psychological causes tends to motivate most or all other narrative events. Time is subordinated to the cause-effect chain in a host of ways. The plot will omit significant durations in order to show only events of casual importance. The plot will order story chronology so as to present the cause-effect chain most strikingly. Thus if a character acts peculiarly, moviegoer may get a flashback to reveal the cause of the odd behavior (Bordwell 71).

2.1.3 Non-narrative

Non-narrative also important to analyze the film, Bordwell states in his book that non-narrative is the others types of film form that is also important in the film analysis. There are four broad types of non-narrative form; categorical, rhetorical, abstract and associational (Bordwell 89). Categorical divides a subject into parts or categories. Categories may provide a basis for organizing the film's form. It usually chooses conventional one that exist in society and already widely recognizable. The formal organization of a categorical film will often be simple, since it is based upon repetition of the general category, followed by a series of segments, each devoted to one or more examples of the category. Because categorical form tends to develop in fairly simple ways, it presents potential problems for keeping the spectator interested. To make the categories more interesting, the filmmaker may try to introduce the variations in order can make moviegoers keep adjusting their expectation (Bordwell 92).

Rhetorical form presents a persuasive argument. The goal is to make the audience hold an opinion about the subject matter and perhaps to act upon that opinion. It tries to convince the viewer of some quality about the subject. Rhetorical form in film can define to four basic attributes. The first is address the viewer, the second is the subject of the film will usually not be an issue of scientific truth but a matter of opinion, third is filmmaker often appeals to moviegoers emotions rather than presenting only factual evidence, and the last is the film will often attempt to persuade the viewer to make a choice that will have an effect on their everyday or practical life (Bordwell 99). One standard

description of rhetorical form suggests that it begins with an introduction of the situation, goes on to a discussion of the relevant facts, then presents proofs that a given solution fits those facts, and ends an epilogue that summarizes what has come before (Bordwell 101).

Abstract films are often organized in a way what people might call theme and variations. The term is usually applied to music, where a melody or other type of motif is introduced, and then a series of different versions of that same melody follow. An abstract film's form may work in a similar fashion. An introductory section will typically show moviegoers in a relatively simple way, and then other segments will go on to present similar kinds of relationship but with changes (Bordwell 105).

Associational as the last broad types suggest expensive qualities and concepts by juxtaposing series of seemingly unlike things. In this case, it will not present an argument. The process is somewhat comparable to the technique in the poetry lyric, which is metaphors and other imageries are used (Bordwell 113). Although the associational film may use striking, original, even puzzling, juxtapositions, it will usually elicit a fairly simple and familiar emotion or idea. It offers a handy way for filmmakers to convey their own subjective fantasies and states of mind through imagery (Bordwell 115).

There is also mise-en-scene as one of important techniques in the film analysis and it becomes one of non-narrative film forms. Mise-en-scene means staging and action. It was first applied to the practice of directing place. Mise-en-scene explains how the visual materials are staged, framed, and photographed

(Gennite 44). It can be such figures the power to express feelings and thoughts and it also can dynamize them to create various kinetic pattern (Bordwell 137). Several elements of mise-en-scene are setting, costume, lighting, figure expression, and movement. Mise-en-scene contains a host of purely spatial and temporal factors to guide moviegoers expectations and hence their viewing of the image. As a whole, mise-en-scene helps composing the film shot in space and time, setting, lighting, costume, and figure behavior interact to create patterns of foreground and background, line and shape, light and dark, and movements. These patterns are developing systems that not only guide our perception from frame to frame but also help create form of the film (Bordwell 141).

2.2 Review of Related Studies

There are several studies about feminism and fairy tales. First in Airlangga University, there is a thesis by Anisa Farida which is entitled “Deconstructing the Portrayal of Female Antagonists in Classic Fairy Tales. The thesis talks about Disney’s “My Side of the Story”. “My Side of the Story” is Disney’s rewriting version of five fairy tales: *Cinderella*, *Snow White*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Little Mermaid* and *Beauty and the Beast*. But, in her thesis, Annissa only analyzed three of them; *Cinderella*, *Sleeping Beauty* and *Snow White*. In analyzing the fairy tales, Annissa applies feminist criticism and theory of revisioning as the fundamental theories. However, the theory used and the focus of the thesis are different. First different is Annissa tries to deconstruct the patriarchal believes in *My Side Story* by using the third person’s story (the step mother), while in this

thesis, the writer gives clear description about the opposing image of traditional gender roles reflected through the main character in *Ella Enchanted*. Second is Annissa focuses her thesis on how the female antagonists in classic fairy tales defends themselves and give a new perspective that antagonist characters are not always evil and cruel. Meanwhile, in this thesis, the writer focuses on how the character of Ella in *Ella Enchanted* is opposing the beliefs in classical fairy tales.

Another study on Disney's *Cinderella* is the one which was written by Ellen Pandolfo which is titled "Feminist Critique of Walt Disney's *Cinderella*". In her essay, Pandolfo first tracks back the history of classic American *Cinderella* and compare them to the Disney's version. Cinderella is one of ancient fairy tales that applies the values of traditional gender roles while my thesis criticizes about how the classical fairy tales is made to serve the traditional gender roles. Pandolfo also relates that with American cultural history and states that American society used to be really patriarchal. The last one is an academic essay by Shawn Jarvis, titled "Feminism and fairy tales" she argues that feminist criticism nowadays has failed to keep pace with contemporary feminists' fairy tales. She states:

Historically, the feminist theoretical response to fairy tales is a product of the Women's Movement in the United States and Europe and grew out of attacks on patriarchy in the late 1960s by feminists like Simone de Beauvoir, Adrienne Rich, and Betty Friedan. This debate spawned a broad discussion about literary practices and their effects on the socializing process. In the popular press, texts like Madonna Kolbenschlag's [*Kiss Sleeping Beauty Goodbye: Breaking the Spell of Feminine Myths and Models*](#) (1979), Colette Dowling's 1981 best-seller [*The*](#)

Cinderella Complex: Women's Hidden Fear of Independence explored these issues, while within the academy, folklorists and literary critics developed critiques informed by the debate. (Jarvis *Feminism and Fairy Tales*).

A short essay which is written by Becky Powell and is published online entitled “Dancing Backward; Feminist Critique of Literature” compared traditional fairy tales and their re-writing modern version including *Cinderella* and *Ella Enchanted*. She analyzes them using feminist criticism. However she also writes a brief paragraph from general point of view focusing on how *Ella Enchanted* and *Cinderella* are different from each other.

There have been a lot of short comments, essays and academic writing about Classic Fairy tales mainly on *Ella Enchanted*, however those works have different focus of analysis with this study. For that reason, possibly, there are no other studies that focus on the opposing image of traditional gender roles of the main female character mainly in fairy tale movie.