CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the general description of the research. It consists of five components, they are research background, statement of problem, objectives of the research, research significances, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Research Background

Women today are at an interesting point in social and cultural history. They have achieved significant progress in many areas, including education, employment and political rights. Women are increasingly involved in leadership, innovation and creativity around the world, demonstrating their capabilities and potential in various aspects of life. On the other hand, women still face significant challenges related to gender inequality and limiting stereotypes. This is reflected in various forms of discrimination, whether in the workplace, media or everyday life. In fact, some time ago there were many cases of gender-based crimes circulating on social media. Domestic violence, rapes, murders committed by a husband against his wife, and other cases that place women as the victim.

Apparently, even in today's modern society, gender-based issues are still a serious and pressing problem. Various forms of crime, violence, and discrimination against women continue to occur in various parts of the world, despite the development of awareness of the importance of gender equality. Data and reports from various international organizations show that women are still the main victims in cases of physical, sexual, and psychological violence. Gender-based violence not only reflects structural injustice, but also illustrates how women are often placed in a vulnerable and marginalized position in a patriarchal society.

In fact, many people still normalize the women trapped behind the bars of patriarchal culture. Patriarchy is a social system that makes men occupy the main authority central to social organization. The position of men is above women in

1

various fields of life, whether social, cultural, or economic. (Pinem, 2009: 42). Men's power and dominance over women is embedded in various aspects of social, political and economic life. In the social sphere, traditional norms often confine women to domestic roles, limiting their freedom of movement and requiring them to submit to men who are considered more authoritative in decision-making. In the political sphere, women often experience limited access to positions of power, with minimal representation in government institutions and in policy-making that affects their interests. Meanwhile, in the economic sphere, women face discrimination in the form of wage gaps, lack of access to leadership positions, and the marginalization of work that is often done by women, such as caregiving and housework, which is often undervalued or not properly valued. This dominance creates a structure of inequality that reinforces the position of men and continues to place women in a subordinate position in many areas of life. This has led women to realize that they must fight for their rights against an oppressive system. The movement known as feminism emerged long ago and is still active today to express, oppose and deconstruct unjust social structures and to empower women to have full control over their lives.

According to Sugihastuti and Suharto (2015: 61), feminism is a women's movement that demands full equality of rights between women and men. Feminism is a movement that fights against all forms of objectivity. Women and men are also believed to have differences in social consciousness and social control. Anwar (2010:129), feminism seeks to end norms that limit women's roles to the domestic sphere, reject harmful gender stereotypes, and fight for equality in education, employment, politics, and personal rights, including reproductive rights and freedom from violence. Thus, feminism is not only an effort to fight patriarchal injustice, but also a movement that promotes structural changes in society to create a more just and equal system for all genders.

People express the feminist movement in different ways, for example, a writer through his works. Many writers explicitly or implicitly express the values of feminism through literary works, especially in the form of novels. The novel as

a medium has the unique ability to explore the personal and inner lives of its characters, allowing writers to highlight women's experiences in a profound and realistic way. In many feminist novels, female characters are portrayed not only as complements, but as protagonists who face major conflicts in their lives, both from the social environment, culture, and personal relationships. Through these female characters, writers try to reflect the real experiences of women in society, which are often fraught with challenges due to gender inequality and stereotypes that limit their roles.

These feminist writers present it in a variety of ways, from showing how women face and fight discrimination, to depicting their inner conflicts in an attempt to overcome perceived normative boundaries, to exposing the injustices women face, but also how they struggle to achieve their independence and identity amidst patriarchal structures. Women characters are used as symbols of resistance, criticizing norms that limit women's roles to the domestic sphere or require them to conform to social expectations that restrict their freedom.

As such, these literary works are not just entertainment; they become a means of social awareness and advocacy. Through evocative stories, authors encourage readers to question the existing system and envision a more just world for all genders. In turn, these novels, with their feminist values, make a real contribution to broadening the horizons of readers and encouraging a change in mindset that supports the creation of a more inclusive and equal society.

However, not all writers convey their ideas about women by applying ideal feminist values such as equality or positive empowerment. There are also writers who portray women in more complex and ambiguous ways, not only as figures who strive to be equal to men, but also as figures who inspire fear in a patriarchal culture. These women often appear in roles that are powerful, cunning, or manipulative, sometimes even negative, such as the *femme fatale* character. Because of this ambiguity, this makes the character archetype *femme fatale* often debated its role in feminism.

But what exactly is the *femme fatale*? The concept of *femme fatale* was first revealed by Mario Praz (1933: 189-190), there always existed fatale women both in mythology and literature, since mythology and literature are imaginative reflections of various aspect of real life, and real life has always provided more or less complete examples of arrogant and cruel females characters and that her image is more numerous during times in which the springs of inspiration were troubled. According to Barthes' (1977:13) rather ambiguous definition, the *femme fatale* is "any irresistibly attractive woman, especially one who leads men into danger or disaster." In Bade's (1979:9) sketch in *Femme fatale*: Images of Evil and Fascinating Women, "she is malignant, threatening, destructive and fascinating". In The *Femme Fatale*: Erotic Icon, Allen (1983: Vii) states that "she is a woman who lures men into danger, destruction, even death by means of her overwhelmingly seductive charms". Khun (1990:154) explains that "the *femme fatale* is primarily defined by her desirable, but dangerous, sexualitywhich brings about the downfall of the male protagonist." While these analogous descriptions provide brief, if somewhat vague, explanations of what a *femme fatale* might be and possibly how to recognize her, they do not even point to the cultural, historical, political, social and ideological catalysts that might have produced, and continue to produce, such a character.

The *femme fatale* character exists as a representation of women who contradict the image of the ideal woman in patriarchal social norms. This character is no longer a victim or passive figure, but a threat to the male power structure. They use their intelligence, charm, and manipulative skills to achieve their goals, often fighting or controlling the men around them.

In a patriarchal culture, such women characters reflect a deep-seated fear of women who transcend traditional roles and challenge existing hierarchies. Although far removed from feminist values of solidarity and equality, these *femme fatale* characters provide a space for readers to question women's place in society, albeit through morally ambiguous imagery. As such, these female characters symbolize a silent resistance to gender boundaries and social injustice, albeit in a controversial

form. They open a discussion on how women's power is often misunderstood or even criminalized in patriarchal narratives, so that empowered female figures are suspected or even antagonized instead of respected.

From here, the representation of women in media and literature becomes very important to study. The *femme fatale* as one such archetype has long been a symbol of women who utilize beauty, intelligence, and sex appeal to achieve their goals, often in ways that are full of intrigue and manipulation. The *femme fatale* character is not only alluring and seductive, but is also able to control situations and those around her in her own cunning and intelligent way. One of the most prominent characteristics of this character archetype is her manipulative behavior.

Her manipulative behavior becomes a key tool for *femme fatale* characters to control the narrative and get what they want. This manipulation is often used as a response to patriarchal power structures that attempt to limit women's freedom and agency. Bowers (2003) offered a definition of manipulation that takes into account this broad array of behavior yet distills it so that it has some clarity: Manipulativity is activity that aims "to achieve a desired goal (perverse or normal, symbolic or real) using deception, coercion and trickery, without regard for the interests or needs of those used in the process". Gunderson (1984) defines manipulation as "those efforts by which covert means are used to control or gain support from significant others. Typical ways include somatic complaints, provocative actions, or misleading messages, as well as self-destructive acts". Other researchers classify manipulation as a type of covert or indirect aggression, where the aggression is disguised, and they define aggression as "a response, the intent of which is to injure another person" (Kaukianinen et al., 2001, p. 363). By utilizing emotional intelligence and psychological tactics, the *femme fatale* is able to create illusions and direct others according to her will. It shows how women can exercise their power in an environment that is often restrictive and oppressive. In many societies that are still dominated by patriarchal norms, women are often perceived as weak and passive. However, the *femme fatale* character reverses this narrative by

showing that women have the ability to control their own destiny, even if it means using manipulation to do so.

The manipulative behavior that is the main strength of the *femme fatale* character is very important to be discussed and researched further because it reflects the complexity of the relationship between power, gender, and social perceptions of women who refuse to submit to traditional roles. A *femme fatale* is a character who relies not only on her physical beauty or attractiveness, but also on her emotional intelligence and strategic ability to influence others and the situation around her. This manipulative power is often viewed negatively, perceived as a threat, and even criminalized, even though it is also a form of women's autonomy and agency in the face of structural constraints that shackle them.

Discussing the manipulative behavior of the *femme fatale* means looking at how women in this character use unconventional tactics to gain control and achieve their goals, despite having to go against normative social expectations. This reveals complex layers of power where women often have to resort to covert or devious means to gain freedom in a world that does not fully support them. Further research into the manipulative behavior of the *femme fatale* also provides insight into how empowered and intelligent women can inspire fear or awe, and how this affects the way society views and treats women who do not conform to norms.

In addition, this manipulative behavior raises discussions about social constructions that associate manipulative traits as negative when possessed by women, when in many ways this behavior can be seen as an adaptive response to structural injustice. By examining the *femme fatale* as a representation of women who use non-traditional means to gain power, researchers can better understand how society constructs and responds to different forms of power in women. This also opens up opportunities to explore how the *femme fatale* character can serve as a symbol of rebellion against patriarchal structures that may not align with mainstream feminist values, but still provide space for women to express their power and independence.

Nowadays, there are many literary works, films or other works that use the figure of a *femme fatale* to illustrate the power of women. In this context, the researcher uses a novel as the object of this study. The novel is an effective medium for conveying the author's thoughts on issues or phenomena that occur in the world, including this discussion of the manipulative behavior of a *femme fatale*. Through narrative and character development, authors have explored various aspects of women's experiences, power dynamics, and the injustices they face.

One novel that addresses the issue of feminism in a complex and interesting way is *Gone Girl* by American Writer Gillian Flynn. *Gone Girl* is a 2012 crime thriller novel that was published by Crown Publishing Group in June 2012. The novel was popular and made the New York Times Best Seller list. In this novel, Flynn explore themes of gender identity, marriage, and power, and illustrates how gender stereotypes can be constructed and critiqued through stories. *Gone Girl* offers more than just a crime story; it is a reflection of social tensions and dissatisfaction with traditional gender roles. The researcher used the novel *Gone Girl* as the object of research because this novel is very suitable and relevant to the topic of discussion related to *femme fatale* and her manipulative behavior.

In the novel, Flynn illustrates the concept of *femme fatale* through the character Amy Elliot Dunne, the main female character and antagonist of the story. Amy Dunne is a perfect example of a contemporary *femme fatale* character - a realistic *femme fatale* character of today. Amy represents the modern version of the *femme fatale* archetype, with all its complexity and unpredictability. Unlike the classic *femme fatale*, who may focus more on physical attractiveness, Amy combines intelligence, psychological manipulation, and a deep understanding of public perception to control the narrative around her. She not only uses sexual appeal, but also plays the role of the perfect victim and wife to gain sympathy and manipulate those around her.

As a contemporary *femme fatale*, Amy shows a sophisticated and strategically manipulative side that reflects the situation in modern society, where image, media, and public perception are powerful weapons to gain power. As a

character who is able to control situations through lies, psychological manipulation, and role-playing, Amy reflects how the modern *femme fatale* uses not only charm or sexual intrigue, but also perception and media to achieve her goals. In an increasingly complex modern world, Amy shows that the *femme fatale* remains relevant, perhaps even more dangerous, with more structured and unpredictable manipulation skills. *Gone Girl* dan karakter Amy memberikan gambaran yang nyata tentang bagaimana arketipe *femme fatale* berevolusi dan tetap menjadi simbol yang menarik dalam konteks kontemporer.

The importance of uncovering the dynamics of manipulation represented by the *femme fatale* character in a modern context is one of the reasons for the researcher to conduct this research. Amy Dunne in *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn is a very clear example of how a woman can use intelligence and cunning to control the narrative and the people around her. In today's society, where issues about gender and power are becoming increasingly complex, understanding the manipulative ways used by characters like Amy Dunne can provide valuable insights into how manipulation works in real life.

This research is relevant because manipulation is a frequent phenomenon and has a significant impact on individuals' mental and emotional health. By studying the character of Amy Dunne, the researcher wants to show how these manipulative behaviors not only affect the individuals directly involved but also reflect broader social issues of control, dominance, and gender injustice. In addition, uncovering the manipulative strategies used by Amy may help others recognize and deal with manipulation in their own lives, thereby improving the quality of their interpersonal relationships and mental health.

Furthermore, this research will make an important contribution to the field of feminism and literary studies by exploring how complex female characters like Amy Dunne can challenge and redefine traditional gender roles. In an ever-changing and evolving world, it is important that we continue to examine and understand the representation of women in media and literature, as well as its impact on our perception of gender. Therefore, this research not only contributes

academically but is also practically relevant in helping individuals and society understand and address the dynamics of manipulation in everyday life.

This research departs from the desire to show the strength and potential of women who in reality, are still often underestimated in a world that still normalizes this patriarchal culture. The *femme fatale* character portrayed in Amy in Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl* is a form of criticism from Flynn on the current phenomenon, where women are still underestimated. Through the character of Amy, Flynn highlights how women can use ingenuity and manipulation as tools to survive and gain power in a patriarchal society.

The previous research related to this study is *Perilaku Manipulatif Tokoh Utama Dalam Novel Antéchrista Karya Amélie Nothomb,* by Shaniaveedha Hanifaputri Aninda Ishar (2022) for bachelor degree. This research focused on the exploration of manipulative behaviors within the novel "Antéchrista" by Amélie Nothomb. This research aimed to identify the various types of manipulative behaviors exhibited by the main character, providing insights into character dynamics and thematic elements within the narrative. It was guided by the question: "What types of manipulative behaviors are exhibited by the main character in Amélie Nothomb's novel 'Antéchrista'?" This question served as a foundation for analyzing the character's actions and motivations throughout the story. The findings from this research are intended to serve as a reference for future studies that explore similar variables in literary works. It aims to provide a framework for understanding manipulative behavior in literature, which can be beneficial for scholars and students engaged in literary analysis. It also emphasizes the importance of enhancing readers' knowledge about French literature, particularly the works of Amélie Nothomb. By engaging with this research, readers can improve their analytical skills regarding literary texts, particularly in understanding structural analysis and character behavior. In conclusion, this previous study on manipulative behavior in "Antéchrista" not only sheds light on character analysis but also serves as a valuable resource for future research in literary studies, enhancing both

educational practices and scholarly understanding of complex human behaviors in literature.

In addition, *The Framing Analysis of Manipulative Behavior In The Tinder Swindler And Catch Me If You Can Film (Robert N. Entman Framing Analysis)* by Ardela Fajar Surdach (2023) is also still relevant to this research. This research presents a comprehensive analysis of framing concerning manipulative behavior depicted in the films "The Tinder Swindler" and "Catch Me If You Can." The study employs Robert N. Entman's framing theory to explore how these films portray romance scams and manipulative tactics, providing valuable insights for future research in this area. It reveals common manipulative behaviors such as lying, deception, and gaslighting, which are frequently encountered in the context of romance scams. The framing analysis focuses on the characters' dialogues and scenes, highlighting how these elements contribute to the audience's understanding of manipulative behavior.

A study entitled *The Image of Femme Fatale in Final Girl Film (2015): Feminism Approach* by Nur Havizzah Suana (2022) is also relevant to this research. It provides a comprehensive analysis of the *femme fatale* character within the context of the film "Final Girl." The research aims to describe the characteristics of the *femme fatale* as portrayed in the film. It utilizes theoretical frameworks from notable scholars such as Yvonne Tasker to define these characteristics. The results indicate that the main character in "Final Girl" uses her beauty and sexuality to manipulate and defeat male antagonists. This portrayal highlights the complexities of the *femme fatale* archetype, showcasing how femininity can be both a weapon and a means of empowerment.

The analysis of Amy's manipulative behavior in *Gone Girl* is also important because examining manipulative tactics can help understand power dynamics in interpersonal relationships, especially in a patriarchal context. Amy uses manipulation to balance or even reverse power in her relationship with her husband Nick. In addition, this analysis reveals how the *femme fatale* character can be used as a tool to critique gender stereotypes and traditional roles of women. Flynn,

through the character of Amy, highlights the strength and ingenuity that in real life can be a way to fight against norms that oppress women's rights. As such, this research not only offers insight into the manipulative behavior of Amy's character, but also provides a broader social critique of women's strengths and potentials, hopefully influencing society's treatment and perception of women in modern times.

1.2 Statement of Problem

According to (Williams, 2007), he stated that including a statement of problem helps researchers to focus the discussion from various aspects, one of which can be said to be perspective and can also help in choosing an approach that is appropriate to the main subject of the research. This research analyzes the manipulative behavior, especially some manipulative tactics reflected in the character of Amy Dunne as a *femme fatale* in Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl*. The research aims to address the following questions:

1. What are the characteristics of a *femme fatale* in the character of Amy Dunne in Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl*?
2. How is the manipulative behavior performed by Amy Dunne in Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl*?

1.3 Objectives of The Research

In a study there will be a reason why the research was carried out, or what problems will be discussed in the research. The problem will generate the subject of the research, its aims and objectives, and will indicate what type of data needs to be collected to investigate the problem raised and what type of analysis is suitable to enable you to come to conclusions that provide answers (Walliman, 2011). Based on the statement of problem above, the researcher has several aims to be reached, the aims of this research are

1. To find out the *femme fatale* archetype reflected in the character of Amy Dunne in Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl*.

2. To identify the manipulative behavior performed by Amy Dunne in Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl*.

1.4 Research Significances

The writing of this research has the significance that is expected to be conveyed properly, the purpose of writing this research includes:

Theoretically, this research makes an important contribution to the study of literature, feminism, and psychology. The analysis of Amy Dunne's manipulative behavior as a *femme fatale* in the novel *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn offers deep insight into how the concept of the *femme fatale* is used in contemporary literature to challenge and redefine traditional gender roles. By exploring the character of Amy Dunne, this research adds to our understanding of the psychological and moral complexities of female characters in literature, as well as how they can be agents of change in their own narratives. In addition, this research also contributes to the academic discussion regarding the manipulative behavior in interpersonal relationships, which is an important aspect in feminism and gender studies.

Practically, this research has important implications for understanding and addressing manipulative behavior in real life. By identifying and analyzing the manipulative strategies used by Amy Dunne, this study can help individuals recognize signs of manipulation in their own interpersonal relationships. This knowledge is particularly important in the context of mental and emotional health, as manipulation can have a significant impact on individual well-being. In addition, this research is also relevant for educators, counselors, and mental health professionals who work with individuals who may be involved in manipulative relationships, providing them with better insight into the dynamics of manipulative behavior.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

The use of definitions of key terms by researchers is very useful in presenting a concise and accurate explanation of the basic concepts used in the research. The inclusion of these definitions aims to ensure that the reader understands the researcher's intended meaning for each term used in the context of the study, while reducing the potential for ambiguity or misinterpretation.

1.5.1 Femme fatale

The concept of *femme fatale* was first revealed by Mario Praz (1933: 189-190), there always existed fatale women both in mythology and literature, since mythology and literature are imaginative reflections of various aspect of real life, and real life has always provided more or less complete examples of arrogant and cruel females characters and that her image is more numerous during times in which the springs of inspiration were troubled. According to Barthes' (1977:13) rather ambiguous definition, the *femme fatale* is "any irresistibly attractive woman, especially one who leads men into danger or disaster." In Bade's (1979:9) sketch in *femme fatale*: Images of Evil and Fascinating Women, "she is malignant, threatening, destructive and fascinating". Simply put, it is a female archetype that uses attractiveness, intelligence, and manipulation to achieve her goals, often in ways that violate social norms and threaten the position of men in patriarchal narratives.

1.5.2 Manipulative Behavior

According to (Badu & Djafri, 2017), human behavior is a function of the relationship between the human and the surrounding environment, therefore, each individual will behave differently in different circumstances. Of course, when he is in the work environment, he will behave or act communicatively, politely and respectfully so that the work goes smoothly.

Kolenda (2013) says, "The term 'manipulation' generally refers to a malicious attempt to influence another person through questionable or blatantly unethical tactics (e.g., lying and deception)." In this context, manipulation is always associated with someone's malicious actions to influence others by lying or deceiving. Sulistio (2020) says that manipulators can also place other burdens on victims, with methods ranging from victim exploitation to cunning, abusive, and deceptive misuse of psychological knowledge. This manipulation can be both very beneficial and very dangerous to someone who is easily brainwashed. The harm that comes from manipulative behavior is the deceit and malice of someone who is used to harm others, but benefits them.

It can be concluded that manipulative behavior in general is someone who has a great sense of desire to control or influence other people's perceptions of things.

1.5.3 Feminism

According to Sugihastuti and Suharto (2015: 61), feminism is a women's movement that demands full equality of rights between women and men. Feminism is a movement that fights against all forms of objectivity. Women and men are also believed to have differences in social consciousness and social control. Anwar (2010:129), feminism seeks to end norms that limit women's roles to the domestic sphere, reject harmful gender stereotypes, and fight for equality in education, employment, politics, and personal rights, including reproductive rights and freedom from violence.

1.5.4 Patriarchy

According to Alfian Rokhmansyah (2013) in his book entitled *Pengantar Gender dan Feminisme*, patriarchy comes from the word patriarchate, which means a structure that places the role of men as the sole, central, and all-encompassing ruler. The patriarchal system that dominates the culture of society causes gender inequalities and

injustices that affect various aspects of human activities. Men have a role as the main control in society, while women have little or no influence or rights in the common areas of society, economically, socially, politically, and psychologically, including the institution of marriage.

1.5.5 Archetype

According to Jung (1983: 16), archetypes are images of the past created from the collective unconscious. Archetypes have a biological basis, but are derived from the repeated experiences of ancestors. The four types of archetypes explored in this novel are persona, anima and animus, shadow, and self.