

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Background of the Study**

Drama, prose, and poetry are kinds of literary products. Literature is a principal element of culture. Although it is a kind of fiction, a literature is an imitation of life. As an imitation of life, a literature can be seen as a mirror of life. It contains the record of a people's values, thoughts, problems and conflicts in short, the people's whole way of life. Whether transmitted through the spoken or the written word, literature may fairly be regarded as the chief art of mankind. Through this art each generation tries to pass on to the next "the best which has been thought and said (Arnold, 1966: 54).

Literature can be defined as a creative work of art, an object that an artist makes (Grace, 1965: 55). Several of literary products offer pleasure and benefit to the readers. Such as, novel, poem, short story, etc. by reading these literary products, the readers can take some lessons because usually the authors put a message in their works. Otherwise, through reading a literary work, the readers will have more knowledge about the essence of life. If the readers understood the meaning of the message in the works deeply they would be wiser in their life. The author of literature expresses human problems and human lives through the literature. The author tries to describe human sufferings, love, peace, struggle, hates, passions, and all other experience in life. Literature is interpreted as a creative form of an artistic process with human being as its object. Thus, a literary

work can be regarded as a portrayal of human actions in life that integrates with nature and society.

*The Mill on the Floss* was first published by George Eliot in 1860. It is a masterpiece of ambiguity in which moral choice is subjected to the hypocrisy of the Victorian age. One characteristic of Victorian age literature, especially prose, is the high moral purpose. The Victorian age was an age of progress, but it was also an age of doubt. There was too much poverty, injustice, ugliness, and too little certainly about faith or morals. George Eliot, the pen-name adopted by Mary Anne Evans, is one of the greatest realists of Victorian age. She used the pen name of George Eliot because society at that time thought it was not correct for women to be authors, and she wanted her books read on their own merits. In this book we read Maggie Tulliver who was intelligent, imaginative, idealistic and ambitious like George Eliot (Mary Anne) herself.

As Maggie Tulliver approaches adulthood, her spirited temperament brings her into conflict with her family, her community, and her much-loved brother Tom. Still more painfully, she finds her own nature divided between the claims of moral responsibility and her passionate hunger for self-fulfillment. It is an autobiographical novel, because the major characteristics Maggie Tulliver are based on the real life of Mary Anne Evans. Set in early 19<sup>th</sup> century England- St. Ogg's, Lincolnshire to be exact this is the tale of gifted, free-spirited Maggie Tulliver and her selfish spoiled brother Tom, who were born and raised at Dorlcote Mill on the River Floss. Eliot's portrayal of sibling relationships is terribly poignant and plays a major part in the novel, as does the longstanding rivalry between two local families- the Tullivers and the Wakems. Like all of

Eliot's major novels, it is a masterpiece of form, developing from a pastoral about childhood into a brooding love story concerning five young people who are motivated by a complex web of emotions involving pity, loyalty, and spite.

Literary work can be analyzed from many aspects because in writing process the author uses many sources. From the phenomena of social life in this society, there is one of the life problems that become the source of literary works which is the position of women in society, since there are still many questions arising because of the unfair treatment toward women. Maggie Tulliver's character is a representation of women in Victorian age. In this period, a woman should be good, decorous, and feminine. She should be obedient and faithful to her spouse and her family.

In accordance with the explanation above, the researcher is eager in conducting a study on the struggle of the major character Maggie Tulliver to get gender equality based on feminism approach in *The Mill on the Floss*.

## **B. Literature Review**

There are two research papers in English Department of Sebelas Maret University Surakarta which take *The Mill on the Floss*. The first research paper entitled "Motivasi Incest Dalam Hubungan Tom and Maggie Tulliver dalam Novel *The Mill on the Floss*, Suatu Pendekatan Psikologis". This research paper focused on incest relationship between Tom and Maggie Tulliver.

The second research paper uses psychological approach conducted by Yuniarti Dwi Arini. This research paper entitled "Individuation of Maggie Tulliver's Personality in George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*".

As far as the researcher knows, there is no particular study on a feminist approach on *The Mill on the Floss*.

### **C. Problem Statement**

The major problem of the study is “How is Maggie Tulliver’s struggle to get gender equality with man?”

### **D. Limitation of the Study**

To avoid deviation in this research, the researcher limits the research paper to the analysis and interpretation of the novel *The Mill on the Floss* on the aspects that deal with the main character’s experiences and her struggle to get gender equality and the setting of the novel.

### **E. Objective of the Study**

Dealing with the problem statement above, this research is aimed at finding the answer to the problem statements:

1. Analyzing the structural elements of the novel *The Mill on the Floss*.
2. Analyzing the novel based on the Liberal Feminist Approach.

### **F. Benefit of the Study**

#### **1. Practical Benefit**

The researcher hopes that this study is able to give some contributions knowledge, particularly the application of feminism approach in literary study.

## **2. Theoretical Benefit**

To give information and explanation about *The Mill on the Floss* or Eliot's works in general.

## **G. Theoretical Approach**

The approach used in this research is feminism. The word "feminist" was popular in the 1890's as a way to give identification for individuals who give support only or even struggle for women's right and role in public sphere (Mandell, 1995:4). Feminism is a struggle to correct laws and practices that prevent women from achieving full equality with men in all aspects of domestic and public life. The spirit of women's right movement actually was pioneered by the birth of feminism in 1960's in American society. Since that day, the struggle for women's right in American society extended.

In its further development, liberal feminists as one category of feminist, has its own perspective that basically every person has individual liberty and freedom to choose whatever she or he wants whether in domestic or public needs. In principle, every person was to be given equal opportunities and civil rights (Anderson in Mandel, 1995:5). Day to day, the theory of feminism is changing to be more complex one, which finally influences feminism movements (Mandell, 1995:4).

Talking about feminism, one must deal with the action done by many feminists to get the equality. The development of women's thinking forces them to struggle to get this equality. Women became aware of their rights to be the

same as man. Seminars, discussions, books, novels and many things deal with gender and the equality have been spread out to reach the purpose.

## **H. Research Method**

### **1. Type of the Research**

The method used in this research is descriptive library research. The researcher applies the library research because the researcher uses books and other writings as the materials. The descriptive technique is to describe the information about correlation characteristic especially in *The Mill on the Floss*.

### **2. Type of the Data and the Data Sources**

The data are classified into two categories: primary data source and secondary data source.

#### **a. Primary Data Source**

The primary data are taken from George Eliot's novel *The Mill on the Floss*, published in 1999 by Wordsworth Editions

#### **b. Secondary of Data Source**

The secondary data are taken from comments and criticisms about the novel *The Mill on the Floss*, the social and cultural background of the novel *The Mill on the Floss* and the biography of George Eliot.

### **3. Technique of the Data Collection**

First, to obtain both of the data, the researchers will read the source of data repeatedly and underline the important words, phrases, and sentences. The researcher will put a sign in every page where there is word,

phrase, clause, sentence or paragraph to quote. The next step is to make a note of important facts related to the problem to analyze in this research.

#### **4. Technique of the Data Analysis**

There are four steps of the data analysis, they are:

- a. Firstly, the data will be classified based on the problems and they are edited.
- b. Secondly, the researcher will analyze the data. The theory which is the basic of the research will be employed in this step. The researcher will apply liberal feminism approach upon the available data.
- c. Thirdly, the researcher will draw a conclusion.
- d. Last, the researcher will report the result of the research.

#### **I. Research Paper Organization**

The research consists of six chapters and each of them is subdivided into subsequent division. The first chapter is Background of the Study, Literature Review, Problem Statement, Objective of the Study, Limitation of the Study, Benefit of the Study, Theoretical Approach, Research Method, and Paper Organization.

The second chapter is Notion of Feminism, Liberal Feminism, Major Issues in Liberal Feminism and Biography of George Eliot. The third chapter is The Woman Social Condition in the Victorian Age. The fourth chapter is The Structural Analysis of George Eliot novel *The Mill on the Floss*. The fifth chapter

is The Analysis of the problem using the feminist approach. The sixth chapter is The Conclusion and Suggestion.



## **CHAPTER II**

### **UNDERLYING THEORY**

This chapter presents the underlying theory that is employed in this study, namely Feminist Approach. The chapter consists of three parts: The Notion of Feminism, Major Issues in Liberal Feminism, Biography of George Eliot and Theoretical Application.

#### **A. Notion of Feminism**

##### **1. Theory of Feminist**

Feminism is a methodology, a more complex way of thinking about and acting upon the condition of our live (Rich in Mandell, 1995:124). Feminist as a word gained widespread usage in the western world in the 1890s. It emerged at this time as away to identify individuals who supported not merely an increased public role for women but also women's right to define themselves as autonomous beings (Mandell, 1995: 4).

In reality, women generally have had fewer legal rights and careers opportunities than men. Wifhood and motherhood were still regarded as women's most significant professions. It is considerable evidence that particularly in the family; women have been targeted for victimization.

Actually, the spirit of women's right movement was pioneered by the birth of feminism in 1960s in American society. Since that day, the struggle for women's right in American society extended.