

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

The United States has a considerable impact on its products in the AV (Audio Visual) industry that can be enjoyed by various communities around the world. American animated films often feature themes about world civilization in various countries such as China, Greece, England, Saudi Arabia and many more. The creators often look for sources of inspiration to be used as the plot from one of which is folklore from various countries and cultures, such as in *Aladdin* (1992), *Mulan* (1998), *King Arthur* (2004), *Kung Fu Panda* (2008), and *Robin Hood* (2010). This is one of the attractions to explore further about contacts between American cultures and other cultures (Tian & Xiong, 2013).

Literature is a theoretical idea by the creator and has many hidden meanings in the mind of the creator of the theoretical idea (Perumal, 2014). Writing is the attraction of someone who expresses ideas and then compile them as a story, fiction and so on. Literature can emerge from creative thoughts and data in a text (Dubey, 2013). Literature that describes a human life that can be enjoyed, understood and utilized by the community is an inventive literary work. The author creates consequences in compiling his creative mind and making it a scientific work (Cahyaningsih, 2017). Literature consists of various genres, namely short stories, novels, dramas, and poetry (Ramrao, 2016).

According to (Fadlilah et al., 2021), film is an example of the endless mass media. Given that the film is used as a medium of expression that aims to make the public get the messages contained in a scene from the film. Each scene can provide meaning values, norms and so on, which can influence people's mindsets about the films presented. Film functions as a medium of expression, empowering the wider community as well as developing ideas, arts, culture, education and entertainment. Moreover, it also functions as a source of current

information and a medium that conveys a message from the maker to the general public.

Literature is a form of expression of human thought where people can think of various ideas and ways to convey their experience in order to provide broad insight in making scenarios. Animated characters, visuals and scenarios are important frameworks in a literary work, and films are adaptations of literary works that have these elements (Ramrao, 2016). Films in particular are adaptations of literary works that contain elements such as characters, visual animation, and scenarios (Keles, 2015). One of the famous animated film productions is The Walt Disney (Salden, 2019). Disney animated films are suitable for children and adults because the types of genres are mostly live-action, musical animation, comedy, family, horror and many other types of genres that Disney can present to its viewers. Thus, Disney movies are suitable for all ages from children, teenagers, to adults at once (Moran, 2016). Walt Disney changed the concept of the main female character in the film to be more feminist, this is where they enter a new era in which a beautiful princess full of tenderness becomes a princess who is independent, strong and can make decisions to determine her own destiny (England et al., 2011).

Mulan (1998), Moana (2016), Beauty and The Beast (1991), Tangled (2010), Frozen (2013) and many more are Walt Disney films that raise the topic of feminism. Feminism is one of the ideas that can have a big impact on people's mindsets, so Walt Disney gave a genre change to one of his animated films and it becomes one of the biggest influences of feminism (Hays, 2019). Disney has changed the main female character in the film to be strong, brave and full of intelligence (Hays, 2019). Behind the main female character in Disney Princess who is masculine, strong and brave, she still gives a soft nature as a woman in the film (England et al., 2011). Walt Disney wanted to convey to all moviegoers that women are not weak and can be despised. Fa Mulan (1998) and Live-action Mulan (2020) are the examples of Disney films that show masculine and feminine traits in the main female character, which aim to break patriarchy in society (Listiani, 2020).

(Chen et al., 2021) Disney's Mulan movie was officially released in September 2020. "Mulan" is derived from the long narrative poem "Song of Mulan" in China's Northern Dynasty. It tells about the story of a girl named Mulan who wants to fight for women's rights so that they can choose the path they choose regardless of gender, she also disguises herself as a man and joins the army to save her ailing father to carry out the assigned task. She makes an unexpected feat on the battlefield and refuses the gifts bestowed by the emperor. It is because she only hopes to restore her family's great name and be able to reunite after the war is over. In this long narrative poem, the writer sees Mulan's kindness and courage. Furthermore, the writer highly praises her for defending her country and loving her homeland. Unlike most of the other poems that tell about war, this poem is full of descriptions of everyday life in ancient China, which have both value and literature in the story. At the same time, this poem is re-adapted internationally in which Chinese culture is a unique culture and has an interesting story in the poem that becomes its main feature. Over the years, overseas creators have adapted to different cultural backgrounds which are recognized all over the world. Mulan is a woman who comes from China and is finally able to be popular in the Chinese market. Disney's Mulan creative strategy started in 1998 in which the animated film of Mulan produced by Walt Disney was officially released by a director and writer who had modified the scenario from the basic structure of the original story to some extent. In the end of the animated film "Mulan", its amazing production and moving plot won awards all over the world. Besides, it also got the highest ratings from audiences on major movie review websites. It has a rating of 86% (out of a total of 100%) on US review website Rotten Tomatoes and 7.9 out of 10 on Chinese review website Douban.com. With Chinese audience's help and recognition of their own culture, Disney successfully enters the Chinese market with this film and at the same time, brings Chinese culture to audiences around the world. Mulan's 1998 animated film has grossed \$304 million globally (Qingli & Ying, 2020).

It is interesting to see the film from a feminist perspective using liberal feminist theory. The researcher is interested in researching the Mulan film because of its unique story and moral message that is very inspiring and can motivate researchers, especially the efforts made by the main character to fight for women to have the same rights as men without thinking about the various risks, that she will bear it all herself. Therefore, the researcher intends to analyze the feminism that occurs to the main character in Mulan movie. Hence, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled "The Representation of Feminism of The Main Character in Mulan Movie as Seen through Liberal Feminism Approach".

B. Research Question

To help analyze Mulan movie, the researcher formulates several questions:

1. What is the representation of liberal feminism shown in the "Mulan" movie?
2. How is the representation of Mulan's effort to fight for women's rights in the "Mulan" movie?
3. Why does Niki Caro, as the director, support representation of feminism of Mulan in the "Mulan" movie?

C. Objectives of the Study

Based on the problem formulation, the objectives of research are:

1. To find out forms of women discrimination in Mulan movie
2. To find out Mulan's effort to fight for women's rights in the film
3. To reveal that Niki Caro, as the director, supports representation of feminism of Mulan in the "Mulan" movie

D. Advantages of the Study

The benefit of the study can be theoretically and practically, which are as follows:

1. Theoretical

The researcher hopes to contribute and wants to introduce readers to feminism and provide new information about liberal feminism as a current hot topic in films, especially in Disney. From this study, readers can learn how the character of liberal feminism is represented well by Mulan.

2. Practical

The researcher wants to show that women also have the freedom to make their choices and live with high creativity, without thinking about the risks they bear to make it happen.

E. Research Paper Organization

This paper is divided into three chapters. The first chapter is an introduction that explains the background of the research, research question, objectives of the research, Advantages of research and organization of research papers. The second chapter is a literature review that describes the previous research, recent research and the theory that underlies it. The third chapter is a research method that explains the Types of Research, Types of Data and Data Sources, Research Objects, Data Collection Techniques, and Data Analysis Techniques.