

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

To perform the analysis better, the step firstly taken is to search for theories, articles, and other data related to the analysis itself. This chapter particularly present all of the literary and non-literary theories required, as well as comments on the novel concerned.

#### *2.1 Theory of Character and Characterizations*

Talking about fictions, it automatically involves some elements of a story, such as the plot, setting, conflicts and characterizations, since without them there will be no story. Each element is important in a story, yet in the analysis, the researcher goes through characterization as his tools to analyze the novel. So, it is worth looking at several theories related to the character itself and the characterization as well.

A character means an extended representation of human being who can determine thought, speech and behavior. In talking about character, the consideration is not only about the physical description, but also the mental (Scholes, 11). It means that the character is closely related to his or her intellectual, emotional and moral qualities. The character can be seen from his or her saying and deeds or also from the comment of others on the character (Scholes, 11). So, by describing the character, the readers can know what sort of a

person he or she is, and then they can understand about he or she himself or herself well.

Carl, Jerome and Paul explain if there is action there must be someone to act, a character. In its most common usage with reference to literature, character simply means a person who acts, appear or is referred to in work. In the aggregate the characters that appear in a work are called the *dramatis personae*, but most discussion of characters naturally concentrates on the “leading” characters.

According to Perrine, there are two methods used by the authors in presenting their characters. They are the direct and indirect presentation which is the authors tells us straight out, by exposition or analysis, what the characters are like. In indirect presentation, the author shows us the character in action; we infer what they are like from what they think or do (1959:84).

Furthermore, Perrine suggests all fictional characters may be classified as static or developing. The static character is the same sort of person at the end of the story as he or she was at the beginning. The developing (or dynamic) character undergoes a permanent change in some aspect of his or her character, personality or outlook. The change may be a large or a small one; it may be for the better or for the worse; but it is something important and basic; it is more than a change in condition or a minor change in opinion (1959:87).

Character is distinguished from characterization. Character is any person, personal, identity, or entity that exists and plays role in the story. In the other side, characterization is the process of conveying information about the character itself. A character in a novel may be entirely fictional or based on real life; it also can be

human, supernatural creature, animal, etc. however, in the way describing it, Brooks and Warren (1959) stated that every character in fiction must resemble ourselves; it must be recognized as human as even as we are as human.

## **2.2 Male Gaze in Literature**

Since the 1960s the term *male gaze* has migrated beyond academe and become a common place in work of fictions, art exhibits, and movie reviews (Bloom:2017). While Mulvey introduces the idea of the *male gaze* in the context of films. The effect of the *male gaze* is evident in literature as well. Current analysis of the gaze in literature is rather limited, but both Beth Newman and Patricia Johnson have explored the *male gaze* as applied to specific literary texts (by Emily Bronte, Henry James and George Eliot) (Grate: 2015).

Mulvey lays out “three different looks associated with cinema: that of the camera as it records the pro-filmic events, that of the audience as it watches the final product, and that of the characters at each other,” positions that are easily transported to literature with the narrator as the camera, the reader as the audience, and characters (Mulvey 26). In this research, the last form which focuses on characters at each other will be used to overcome the problems in this research.

Remembering the concern and the development of *male gaze* in literature which is mostly appearing from the male writers in their works than the women writers, it makes this research worth and interesting to conduct to see how the

female writer in this discussion, Han Kang, depicts the *male gaze* in her novel that get many critics and acclamations from around the world.

*Male gaze* is the main point of this discussion because it relates to the narrators in the story who are male. By using the theory of *male gaze* from Laura Mulvey, the researcher will find the depiction of *male gaze* in the novel *The Vegetarian* by Han Kang.

### **2.3 Male Gaze**

The concept of the *male gaze* in the visual arts was developed by Laura Mulvey, the feminist film critic in her essay “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” who posited that Hollywood films depict women from a male point of view -in other words the *male gaze* is a sexualized way of looking that objectifies the women. Their roles in the cinema were basically to create striking images intended for erotic impact.

In her book *Visual and Other Pleasures*, when women are presented as objects of visual enjoyment, Mulvey (1989) explains that women are continuously transformed into displays, objects to be seen, viewed, and gazed by men. Women are not presented qua women. They are provided with no space to be themselves. Such practice, in which women are positioned as mere objects of sexual pleasure and male gaze, have existed for centuries.

Originally, Mulvey’s theory of male gaze tended to criticize film media, where she begins with states that film give many pleasures, one of them is the pleasure of gazing which called as “scopophilia”. Further, she divided the

pleasure of gazing into two. That are men as the active (doing gaze) while women as the passive (Mulvey, 1989). The passive women become sexual object of male gaze from heterosexual men, who have enjoyments from those gaze. Even though, Mulvey's theory of male gaze originally tended to film, the researcher believes that this theory still relevant to this research, remembering the previous findings and the fact that film is considered as human's work that has message same like literary works.

Further, Mulvey links to Foucault's theory that the gaze is connected to power and surveillance, giving the person who gazes power over the person who is the object of the gaze. She argues that the look, pleasurable in form can be threatening in content, and it is women as image that crystallises this paradox. In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active (male) and passive (female). The determining male gaze projects its fantasy on to the female figure. ( Mulvey, 1975 ). Men project their fantasies on women through male gaze. They are show as visual objects, like displays that have a visual and erotic effect on male. Women are presented as sexual objects with erotic motifs to be seen rather than heard (Boyle, 2015)

Women are reduced to image that embody male desire. Mulvey concludes that while men take active pleasure while gazing towards women, the women are limited to a passive response. She continues the male gaze as having the power to actively change the female form because of the dominant influence of the male perspective in patriarchal society. She argues that in patriarchal society, the gazer in direct scopophilic contact with the female form displayed for his enjoyment

(male fantasy) gain control and possession of the women. The control and possession includes the ability to transform the women by asserting his fantasy upon her through his gaze. Further, she continuous that the actual image of woman as passive raw material the for the active gaze of a man can produce an illusion cut to the measure of desire (Mulvey in Grate, 2015).

Mulvey's theory of *male gaze* which was inspired by the psychoanalytical theory of the Gaze based on Lacan's concept of the Mirror Stage, argues that the act of looking has traditionally been associated with men, while women have been assigned to be the ones who are looked at and Freud's theories of psychoanalysis, *Three Essays on Sexuality*, where he related "scopophilia" with taking other people as objects, subjecting them to a curious and controlling gaze. She notes that the cinema developed scopophilia in its voyeuristic and narsistic forms. Voyeuristic refers to erotic curiosity and controlling gaze of the other, while narsistic refers to self-esteem through identification with the image seen. When a man confronts a female body, the absence of phallus constantly creates tension in his psyche. This void the male viewer interprets as otherness and therefore chooses to fetishize the female to assuage his apprehension of castration (or losing phallic superiority) as well as asserts dominion over the female (Freud:1905).

Two forms of the male gaze are based upon the Freudian concept of scopophilia, "the pleasure that is linked to sexual attraction and the scopophilic pleasure that is linked to narsissistic identification", which show how women have been forced to view from the perspectives (sexual, aesthetic, cultural) of the male gaze.

Simultaneously, the *male gaze* is used to create visual pleasure and offer men a proxy for satisfying their sexual desire. Women are objects of male's sexual imaginations. Female characters are presented as expressions of men's subconscious fears and desires and do not represent women qua women. In such works, women are unconsciously used to perpetuate the patriarchy and its phallogentric worldview.

In a patriarchal society, women are framed as the signifiers of men, as bearing meaning rather than creating it (Mulvey: 1989). Women, thus, exist within a symbolic framework, in which men may use language to realize their fantasies and obsessions while simultaneously silencing women. This produces a culture (including literature, cinemas and other arts) which are permeated by sexual and gender inequality, with visual pleasure being divided between active subjects (men) and passive objects (women).

These days, the development of the media and technology gives a lot of space for the practice of *male gaze*. In films, advertisements, photography, they present women as objects not as a human entity as a whole. Often, to satisfy male sexual fantasies, they depict women and her bodies are easy to be exploited. Those circumstances become the reason for Laura Mulvey to convey her critics through her thoughts and writings about *male gaze*. It is not only found in the films but also in some literary works such as drama, novels, poetry and etc.

One literary work that frames women as object of *male gaze* is Han Kang's novel *The Vegetarian* which was first published in 2007 and then translated by Deborah Smith into English in 2015. It follows the story of a woman named

Yeong-hye, a part-time graphic artist and home-maker whose decision to stop eating meat after a bloody, nightmarish dream and how she defends her principles in the patriarchal society. The story tells about it from the first multiple narrators including her husband and her brother-in-law. Her brother-in-law is also taking advantage of the mentally-ill woman (Yeong-hye) who was irrespective of the fact that she consented to be his model. There is undoubtedly an underlying imbalance of power.

Although written to analyze the gaze in the cinematic narrative and to show how a film simulates the pleasure of looking, Mulvey's theory can be applied to other forms of media, like literary text. And since the male gaze in *The vegetarian* is so pronounced, the researcher finds that Mulvey's theory may be relevant to the analysis of the novel.

#### **2.4 Forms of Male Gaze**

Mulvey argues that men availed with such avenues are used to escape *castration anxiety* when women become objects and displayed for the gaze and enjoyment of men. The active controllers of the look always threatens to evoke the anxiety that originally signified. They are *voyeurism* and *fethistic scopophilia*, both of which have been touched on above (Mulvey, 1989).

#### **1. Scopophilia**

It refers to the pleasure involved in looking at other people's bodies as objects, particularly as erotic objects. It shapes *fethistic scopophilia*,



involves the substitution of a fetish object or turning the represented figure itself into a fetish so that it becomes reassuring rather than dangerous. This builds up the physical beauty of the object, transforming it into something satisfying in itself. In *fethistic scopophilia* cases, women are presented by the author as powerless, and therefore easily exploited by men.

## 2. Voyeurism

It is the practice of gaining sexual pleasure from watching others when they are naked or engaged in sexual activity. Mulvey argues that this has associations with *sadism* like punishment or demystification whose pleasure lies in ascertaining guilt, asserting control and subjecting the guilty person through punishment or forgiveness.

As stated previously, Mulvey's theory of *male gaze* is based on Lacan's concept that the act of looking has traditionally been associated with men. Then, Freud explained the concept of *male gaze* in terms of *voyeurism* and *fetishism*. According to Freud, women mystify men due to their lack of a penis. A man, in turn, may either "investigate and demystify" women by giving into voyeurism, finding pleasure in looking without being seen, which gives him power to control over the object or turn women into a fetish.

Berger (1972) argued that looking is a natural activity but carries indications of power, access, and control. The dynamics of power are set to play in who is able to look and who is positioned as the object of the look. In this case,

it reflects the idea that men are the active subjects holding the gaze, while women simply appear in the term “men look at women” and “women watch themselves being looked at” (Berger in Wandland, 2011).

## **2.5 Self-Objectification**

According to objectification theory, the implicit and explicit sexual objectification (in this case male gaze) of female body produces a multitude of negative consequences for women (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). The primary psychological consequences of sexual objectification is development of an unnatural perspective on the self known as self-objectification. Women who self-objectify have internalized observer’s perspectives on their bodies and chronically monitor themselves in anticipation of how others will judge their appearance, and subsequently women and demonstrated a variety of detrimental effects associated with self-objectification including increase body shame, appearance anxiety, disorder eating, self-surveillance, and diminished mental performance and capacity to achieve peak motivational state (Tiggemann & Slater, 2001).

Self-objectification is the psychological consequences to emerge among girls and women as a result of living in a sexually objectifying cultural milieu (Fredrickson and Roberts, 1997). Most women will experience some degree of state of self-objectification in situations where attention has been called to their bodies, such as receiving catcalls, catching someone staring at their breasts, or where their gender becomes a silent feature of the immediate social context

(Calogero, 2012). For some women, however, this objectified lens becomes engaged virtually all of the time, whether they find themselves in public or private settings.

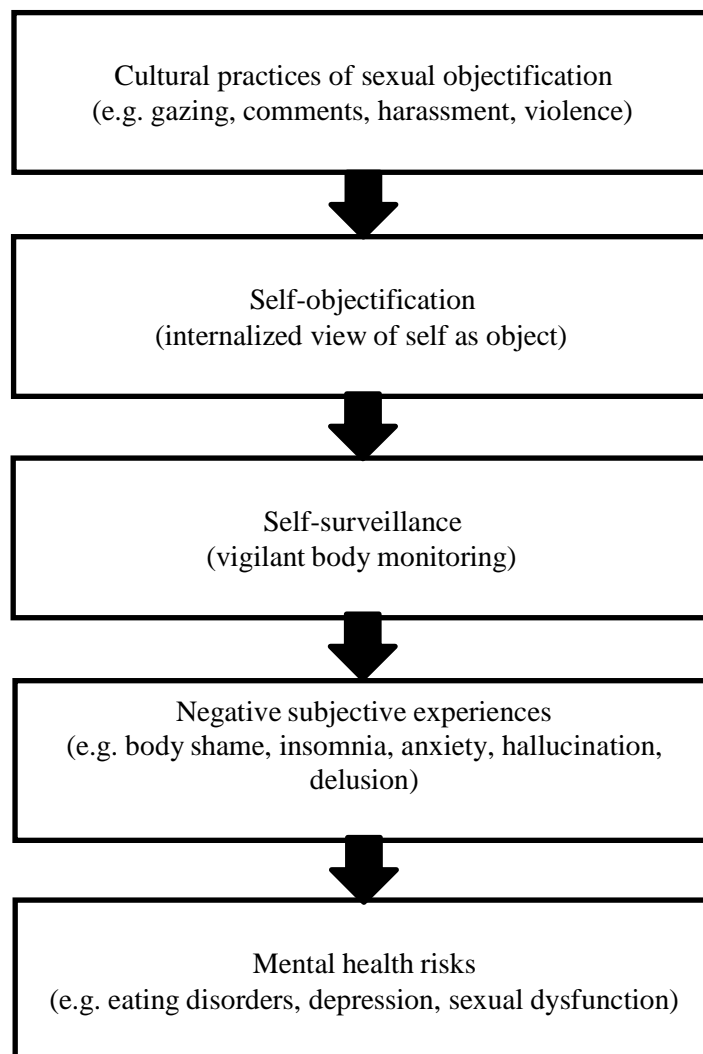
In the objectification theory framework, self-objectification is the primary psychological mechanism that accounts for the link between women's experiences of sexual objectification at the cultural level and their bodily and subjective well-being at the individual level. It is important to point out that self-objectification is not an indication of narcissism, or vanity or body dissatisfaction but more accurately reflects a psychological strategy that allows women to anticipate, and thus exert some control over, how they will be viewed and treated by others.

A research by Calogero has shown that the *male gaze* can have detrimental effects on women's self-esteem and self-objectification, leading to increased negative subjective experiences.

Objectification theory (Fredrickson and Roberts, 1997) postulates that many women are sexually objectified and treated as object to be evaluated for its use by others. Sexual objectification occurs when a women body parts are singled out and separated from her as a person and she is viewed primarily as physical object of male sexual desire (Bartky, 1990). Objectification theory posits that sexual objectification of females is likely to contribute to mental health problems that is disproportionately affect woman (i.e. eating disorder, depression, and sexual dysfunction) via two paths. The first path is direct and overt and involves sexual objectification experiences. The second path is indirect and subtle and

involves women's internalization of sexual objectification (Fredrickson and Roberts, 1997).

Objectification theory also posits a mediation model that may explain how self-objectification leading women's mental health risks via negative subjective experiences.



**Figure 1** A model of objectification theory by Fredrickson and Roberts (1997)

## **2.6 Subjective Experiences and Mental Health**

Self-objectification is proposed to lead directly to several psychological or experiential consequences that are known to occur at a disproportionately higher rate among women like appearance and safety anxiety and flow experiences on mental and physical tasks. This of negative subjective experiences is proposed to accumulate and lead directly to a subject of mental health risks such as unipolar depression, sexual dysfunction and eating disorders (Calogero, 2012).

According to objectification theory, having a female body in a hypersexual that chronically male gazing the female body has consequences for women's emotional experiences. Body monitoring habit as result of male gaze may induce body shame and appearance anxiety, which represent psychological states related with negative subjective experiences, self-objectification also reduce opportunities to experience pleasure feeling of helplessness associated with worry and lack control of this critical areas may contribute to feeling of depression among women.

As with eating disorders and depression, women experience more sexual dissatisfaction and sexual dysfunction than do men. The subjective experiences associated sexual and self-objectification arguably interferes with achieving orgasm (Calogero, 2012). More dehumanizing forms of objectification can reduce the enjoyment of sex.

## 2.7 Previous Study

The researcher does not find any researches that apply the same object of analysis, but the researcher has found researches that apply the same theory. The first is the paper “Male Gaze in Movie the Handmaiden” by Ilham Mubaraok, a student of Diponegoro University (2013), “The Holy Male Gaze in Martin Ling’s “Muhammad: His Life Based on The Earliest Sources Novel” by Arina Hasbana, a student of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta (2019), and the last is an essay entitled “We Felt the Imprisonment of Being a Girl: Uncanny Male Gaze in The Virgin Suicides” by Sarah Grace Fiore from the University of Rhode Island. It focuses to illustrate the way in which the uncanny experience function to reveal latent fantasies and even deeper fears of the male narrators in question. The result, which showed that the boys’ perception of Lisbon’s situation as uncanny or surreal, serves to bear insight of only the boys’ own repressed functioning instead of truly comprehending the suffering of the Lisbon girls.

The first research which is from Ilham Mubaraok concerns to describe the discourse of the body, sexuality, and character development of lesbian women in the movie. The result of the study showed that *male gaze* was found in the movie but not as a dominant ideology. The second research is from Arina Hasbana whose focus of her study is to find how the character of Aisha is narrated by the male author in the story. The result concludes that the *male gaze* is powerful and Aisha is powerless. The last research is Sarah Grace Fiore’s essay that focuses to illustrate the way in which the uncanny experience function to reveal latent fantasies and even deeper fears of the male narrators in question. The result,

which showed that the boys' perception of Lisbon's situation as uncanny or surreal, serves to bear insight of only the boys' own repressed functioning instead of truly comprehending the suffering of the Lisbon girls.

All the previous related studies have similarity with the current study which put *Male Gaze* as the theme of the research. While the differences come up with the object of the data are compared to the researcher's.

