

## AN ANALYSIS OF THE MAIN CHARACTER THROUGH FEMINISM APPROACH IN THE DA VINCI CODE NOVEL

**Eni Suwandarsih**

Universitas Hasyim Asy'ari, Tebuireng Jombang  
[ennysuwandarsih04513@gmail.com](mailto:ennysuwandarsih04513@gmail.com)

**Ria Kamilah Agustin**

Universitas Hasyim Asy'ari, Tebuireng Jombang

### ABSTRACT

The study aimed to analyze the main character by using feminism approach in the novel *The Da Vinci Code*. The study concerns to find out the feminism theory based on Julia Kristeva's. This study applied descriptive qualitative method in the data collected by library techniques namely document and analyzing the data used data reduction, data display, and data verification. The findings showed that characteristic of the main character is an educated women, a brave woman and a powerful women. The findings shows the 3 types of feminism, liberal, radical, and cultural. The findings show that *The Holy Grail* symbolizes the quest to retrieve the time-honored "Feminism Worship" and to promote the self-consciousness of women.

**Keywords:** Main character, Feminism approach, The Da Vinci Code

### INTRODUCTION

Literary works are created by people. People use literary works as media to express their ideas, feelings, or the descriptions of someone or something. Literary works have significant influences in the society. Literary works can be used as an intellectual movement, entertainment, art symbol of traditions or beliefs. One of the literary works is a novel. In this work, researcher attempt to analyze the *Da Vinci Code*, one of Dan Brown's novels. This book is internationally popular and literature is one of the cultural elements of Indonesia. The book was brought to an era when Leonardo da Vinci was still in existence and was invited to explore the message of feminism in *Mona Lisa's* paintings, which are very popular with art lovers (Anggawasita, 2010).

According to Engel (2014) argues that a shape of social coverage for girls is wanted to acquire independence while not having to sacrifice their reproductive function and a few are engaged in campaigns approximately girls' suffrage. This state of affairs then gave upward push to the following flow, particularly Marxist feminism. This feminism makes specialty of problems of manufacturing and duplicatione, that there may be an unfair gender department of labor, and girls are taken into consideration as moms who perform social duplicate which isn't visible as paintings whilst guys paintings in places of work and feature the proper to be knowledgeable greater than girls. Then there may be radical Feminism that is stimulated with the aid of using dissatisfaction with Marxist feminist

evaluation due to the fact in keeping with girls' oppression takes place due to girls's bodies. And they need to abolish the patriarchal device that existed in society at that (Sholikhati 2021).

The researcher chooses the novel because the novel because the main character is very interesting. It can be analyzed through feminism approach if the literary work is related to a woman as one of the character in the story or talked about women and to know the character of woman in this novel. Differences in biological or sexual aspects have no basis for justifying the distinction in aspects of gender roles. Therefore, women should have the same rights and access to life as men. Awareness of this is the most strategic mechanism for changing the way society views the relationship between men and women. This is what feminist activists have recently been passionately socializing and fighting for in terms of achieving and realizing the ideals of human justice as a whole.

In the theory of main character and feminism, usually many taken three ways or theories to provide and consider the main character and feminism theory. The first researcher is Anggawasita (2010), this research aims to know the characteristic of Lucia Sartori is described as the main character and how Lucia as a main character represent feminism values. The second researcher is Desmawati (2018), the aims of the research are elaborate types of feminism and their reflection on feminism in novel *Little Woman*. In this study. The last researcher is Zhao (2020), The research aims that *The Da Vinci Code* is a Pseudo-feminist text, which embodies repression and manipulation of the self-consciousness of women.

The conclusion that can be drawn from here is the similarity between the previous research and the current one is the book that will be used in this study, and the difference is the use of the main character if the previous researcher used Mary Magdalene as the main character then here the researcher uses Sophia Neveu as the main character.

## **DATA SOURCE**

In the study the researcher used two data namely, main and secondary data sources. The main data sources is take from words, phrases, sentences from dialogue, or monologue that comprises records approximately the principal person true the feminist method on *The Da Vinci Code* with the aid of using Dan Brown. It suggests the feminist method of the main character in line with the idea of Julia Kristeva. The secondary data is a data source that support the main data source. Data sources take from article, journal, and e-book related.

## **METHODS**

The data for this study were derived from that dialog or monolog with the main character in the novel the da vinci code. This novel was chosen because there are some kind of characterization of the main character. When this research used feminism approach to analyze of the main character. This study used qualitative descriptive method to collect data with some steps as follow: firstly, the researcher read as well as investigated the words, phrases, sentences, and utterances of the dialogue, monologue, and narration, secondly, selected words, phrases, sentences, and utterances, and the all data obtained re-read to see whether they have reflected the target of the main character and self-

representation or not. This study used the theory from Julia Kristeva's to find out of characterization of the main character in this novel.

## **THEORETICAL REVIEW**

### **1. Character**

In a story or novel, surely we know the term main character, this main character is the determinant of the course of a story, therefore experts define the main character in various opinions, one of which is from Corey (1987) A man or woman is a person in literary paintings who has a few varieties of identification and identification is manufactured from appearance, conversation, and action.

Based on the function, a man or woman in literary paintings may be divided into two: they're the primary man or woman and the minor man or woman. The fundamental man or woman has the best involvement withinside the story (Okyere 2011)

#### **a. Main Character**

According to Anggawasita (2010), the most important person has a critical function and the very best depth of involvement withinside the tale. The important determine in a tale is likewise known as the important person. The person performs the most important function withinside the tale. The most important person is the important person of a tale; it refers back to the folks that participate in a maximum of the events.

#### **b. Minor Character**

The individual helps the principal individual in constructing the tale however they have got much less role than the principal individual (Anggawasita, 2010).

### **2. Feminism**

#### **A. Feminism in English Literature**

Feminism is a perception that men and women are inherent of identical worth. Because maximum societies privilege guys as a group, social movements are crucial to attaining equality among men and women, with the records that gender continuously intersects with one-of-a-type social hierarchies (Abdul Karim, 2019).

#### **B. Kind of Feminism**

##### **a. Liberal Feminism**

According to puspitasari (2016) in their book "Beyond the Big Three", Liberal feminism moreover called mainstream feminism is the precept branch of feminism defined with the resource of the use of its hobby on reaching gender super thru political and jail reform withinside the framework of liberal democracy.

##### **b. Radical Feminism**

According to Sandford (2010), Radical feminism is an angle inside feminism that requires an intensive re-ordering of society wherein male supremacy is removed in all

social and financial contexts even as spotting its woman's reports also are suffering from different social divisions which include ace, class, and sexual orientation.

**c. Cultural Feminism**

According to Prasetya (2017), Cultural feminism is an entire lot of feminism that emphasizes critical versions amongst men and women, based definitely in reality truly mostly on natural versions in reproductive capacity.

**3. Julia Kristeva's Theory of Feminism**

One of Kristeva's most important contributions is that signification is composed of two elements, the symbolic and the *semiotic*, the latter being distinct from the discipline of semiotics founded by Ferdinand de Saussure. According to Birgit Schippers, the semiotic is a realm associated with the musical, the poetic, the rhythmic, and that which lacks structure and meaning. It is closely tied to the "feminine", and represents the undifferentiated state of the pre-Mirror Stage infant. Kristeva describes the symbolic as the space in which the development of language allows the child to become a "speaking subject," and to develop a sense of identity separate from the mother.

Julia Kristeva's theory of chora feminine and Maternity is the right answer in peeling off symbols that represent feminine elements. With its intertextuality, he reminds that each individual experience is a uniqueness that other subjects will not understand. It is precisely by interrelating with each other that the understanding of the subject will become diverse. To be able to develop a meaning, the subject's desires also play a very important role.

Kristeva has always wanted to elevate things that are posmoic, that are forgotten. Because it is precisely by lifting the forgotten, the richness of meaning will be more diverse and absolutes will disappear. This history is an uplift to the marginal, which is usually always forgotten.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Results**

**1. Sophie as a Female Main Character**

Here some character by Sophie:

**a. Sophie as an Educated Women**

The researcher can find the main character of the novel is an educated woman, as already known in tradition society, women are proposed only to be good wives and mothers who stay in the private and domestic sphere to take care of the household.

Even though women have the opportunity for having higher education, it is only for supporting their part as wives and mothers. In this case, Sophie has been given an opportunity for having higher education. She is able to reach a cryptographic, she could prove her good qualities and after finishing this cryptographic school, she can get a good job in a big department in French.

*“Sophie Neveu was one of DCPJ’s biggest mistakes. A young Parisian déchiffreuse who had studied cryptography in England at the Royal Holloway, Sophie Neveu had been foisted on Fache two years ago as part of the ministry’s attempt to incorporate more women into the police force.*

*(Brown, 2003: 55)*

From the quote above we know that Sophie once went to school in England majoring in cryptography and after Sophie graduated from that school she worked in a well-known company in France. The job Sophie does is to crack a code requested by Sophie's clients, her love for codes began when Sophie was a child where her grandfather taught her a game through code, so she was very familiar with code.

#### **b. Sophie as a brave woman**

Based on this definition, Sophie can be called as a bravery woman in every aspect, such as bravery in mentally. It can be seen from her dialog and acts in the novel.

*Thinking. “Sophie, there’s no way I’m jump--- ““Take out the tracking dot.”*

*(Brown, 2003:92).*

After being accused of being a palin person suspected by the police Langdon felt dismayed at seeing this all and he asked permission to go to the bathroom and there it turned out that Sophie went to catch up with him and told Langdon that he was being closely watched by the police and behind Langdon's jacket pocket it turned out that there was a GPS tracking spot that was deliberately told there to keep Langdon under their supervision. But if Langdon throws it in the trash at that point then the GPS spots will stop and Langdon will become stuck. Therefore, Sophie asked Langdon to remain calm so as not to be discovered.

#### **c. Sophie as a powerful woman**

In patriarchal society, women have no excuses to decide what they want, because everything is controlled by men and only men who have authority. In other word, women are subordinate through men’s greater power. But it doesn’t work for Sophie.

*“I told you,” Sophie said, “We had nothing to do with my grandfather’s death!”*

*(Brown, 2003: 227)*

After successfully escaping from captain Fache's pursuit, the two of them again deceived the captain by booking a train ticket even though they left in a Smart car and they went to the next destination, which is the bank where his grandfather kept something so valuable. When they got there they were greeted by the owner of the bank, Vernet as soon as he called him, vernet seemed to doubt the two people because some time before

there was news that there were two people who were being fugitives from the police, but Vernet immediately dismissed his thoughts.

## 2. Feminist Values of the Main Character

All four are obtained from the way the author describes the character and the sentences spoken by the character or her attitude towards the problems faced and the action taken.

### a. Liberal Feminism in Sophie

The basis of liberal feminism is a good life, where citizens have dignity and personal freedom as decision-makers and can develop themselves. This kind of feminism can be seen on when Langdon stood in front of his students and explained about Leonardo Da Vinci's most famous painting, the Mona Lisa, Langdon explained what was implied in the painting, namely the balance between men and women.

*“Actually, Da Vinci was tune with the **balance** between male and female.  
(Brown, 2003:129)*

### b. Radical Feminism in Sophie

Radical feminism is feminism that holds that oppression of women is caused by a patriarchal system. In the case of this novel, the researcher finds this feminism happened When Sophie and Langdon met Teabing who was Langdon's friend, there Sophie learned a lot that she didn't know before about a holy grail. Before Teabing explained the Holy Grail, Sophie saw the painting of the Last Supper which is the legendary painting of Da Vinci on the walls of Santa Maria Delle Milan

*“Not what it is,” Teabing whispered. “But rather who it is. The Holy Grail is not a thing. It is, in fact ... a **person**.”  
(Brown, 2003: 256)*

### c. Cultural Feminism in Sophie

The theory of cultural feminism believes that knowing the potential of women in society will increase a healthier source of strength than if the society only focused on androcentric culture. In this case of this novel, the researcher finds that this feminism happened when Mary Magdalene was married by Jesus, for thus a mighty offspring was created through both.

*“By marrying into the powerful House of Benjamin, Jesus fused two royal bloodlines”  
(Brown, 2003:270)*

## 3. Sophie Neveu as Main Female Character Viewed from Julia Kristeva's Theory

From the explanation of Sophie Neveu above, the researcher tries to relate her character and feminism. Feminism is a women's movement demanding full equality between women and men, equality rights that cover all aspects of life, both in the political, economic,

social, and cultural. A woman is included as a subordinate one, in the patriarchy, who has been born to be a servant of men as the number of the ruling class.

Kristeva in *Feminist thought* explains that feminine chora and maternity is the right answer in peeling the symbols that represent feminine elements. She reminds us that every individual experience is a uniqueness that no other subject will understand. One of Kristeva's most important contributions is that signification is composed of two elements, the symbolic and the semiotic, the latter being distinct from the discipline of semiotics founded by Ferdinand de Saussure, Furthermore, according to Chandler (2002) the semiotic is a realm associated with the musical, the poetic, the rhythmic, and that which lacks structure and meaning. It is closely tied to the "feminine" and represents the undifferentiated state of the pre-Mirror Stage infant.

*“The blade and chalice, Fused as one. The Star of David....the perfect union of male and female”*

From the information above we know that the monologue above is the last page or the ending of the story this corroborates the theory from Julia Kristeva about peeling off feminism through symbols, the monologue above tells the end of the novel *The Da Vinci Code* which ends the search for the holy grail that has been sought after by many people and it turns out that the holy grail is located according to the instructions left by the Grand Master Priory of Sion last time, and the wife of the Grand Master was still alive and in seclusion away from her husband for the salvation of their religion and their family.

## **Discussion**

The researcher discussed some findings related to main character and feminism theory. *“The Da Vinci Code”* is a novel that the researcher discussed mainly the two main characters that show the existence of feminism action. According to Anggawasita (2010) main character is the central character of a story, it refers to the people who take part in most of the events. The main character has the highest involvement in the story. In this novel the researcher discussed about the female main character, Sophie is described in the novel as an educated, bravery and powerful figure. Because from a small age with her grandfather who really liked everything about code, therefore Sophie when she had a career of choosing cryptology in her life as for her bravery and powerful nature appeared out of thin air in her, raised by a great grandfather, so it did not rule out Sophie to be assertive like that.

According to Sofia (2009) the reason behind the attitude of women to reject men's power are none other than education, understanding of the law, and the people around them. Feminist theories, as a tool for women to fight for their rights, are closely related to class and racial conflicts, especially gender conflicts. Feminist reject injustice as a result of patriarchal society, rejects history and philosophy as male-centered disciplines, subject as ego-centric (using thought), and women as hetero-centric (others). According to feminist groups, the influence of men on the language is very strong, and the arbitrary nature of language is used to the fullest by patriarchal culture.

The three feminism discussed above are interrelated, where her fight for her lives and rights as human beings. Even though they are different. Even though they are different genders her sill wants to get the same rights even though they cannot all the same. At least women are not always weak creatures who cannot do anything and always depend on me. And men have always have always been unrivaled powerful beings and always on top like a king. Because reality women can be the head of the household, for example in today's times they are single parents. Where a woman becomes mother and father at the same time. Even though they can't meet the needs of their children to receive a father's love, women can do it. And this is related to the novel where women in their day were still with domestic violence, so they had the right to choose. Just as Mary Magdalene when Church threw away all his history and seemed to make it non-existent in this world.

According to the researcher, the novel "*The Da Vinci Code*" does at least describe the actions of feminism starting from the conversation and attitudes and behavior of each character and the most prominent is Sophie's character. So the issue of feminism can be seen from the way the author describes and explains her attitude and action of the character. And also the portrayal of strong characters from writers like Sophie, who tends to be stubborn but has a telenta in decoding. So it was with Mary Magdalene who was a very preacher.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings in the previous discussion, the result of the study can be formulated: 1. Sophie Neveu is the main character in this story, she can prove that she can be as equal to other people can, she is able to have a good education and get a great job. Finally, the researcher found out that Sophie Neveu is a character who represents feminist values by being, an educated, brave, and powerful woman. 2. There are three types of feminism, namely: Liberal, Radical, and Cultural. By reading the contents of the novel, the researcher will be able to find out the existence of feminist issues contained in the novel. As seen from the dialogue between the male main character and the female main character. 3. The Holy Grail symbolizes the quest to retrieve the time-honored "Feminism Worship" and to promote the self-consciousness of women. The message of gender equality which is displayed through three angels who work as detective agents and can show and do the same things as men. both physically and intellectually (Kusumaningtyas 2019).



## REFERENCES

- Atiqah Anggawasita, Nur. (2010). "An Analysis of the Main Character Through Feminism Approach in the Novel Lucia , Lucia By Adriana Trigiani." 1–32.
- Chandler, Daniel. 2002. "The Basics Semiotics Daniel Chandler." *The Basics Semiotics Daniel Chandler* 1–326.
- Kusumaningtyas, V. N. (2022). Representative Feminism in Charlie's Angel 2019 Film. *Apollo Project: Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Sastra Inggris* 11 (2), 111-116.
- Mardiyani, R. & Tawami, T. (2022). Gender Inequality and Feminism in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*. *MAHADAYA: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra, dan Budaya*, 2(2), 165-174.
- Mohd Hafiz Bin Abdul Karim, Ariff Aizuddin Azlan. (2019). "Modernism and Postmodernism in Feminism: A Conceptual Study on the Developments of Its Definition, Waves and School of Thought." *Msocialsciences.Com* 4(1):1–14.
- Puspitasari, D. A. (2016). "Liberal Feminism Values Seen Through the Main Female Character in Kinberg'S Mr. and Mrs. Smith."
- Sandford, Stella. (2010). "Further Adventures of the Dialectic of Sex." *Further Adventures of the Dialectic of Sex* (February).
- Sofia, Adib. (2009). "Aplikasi Kritik Sastra Feminisme" *Perempuan Dalam Karya-Karya Kuntowijoyo*". 13.
- Sholikhati, Aprillia Annisa. (2021). "An Analysis Of The Main Character In The Little Women Novel By Louisa May Alcott; A Feminist Approach."

