CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Literature has long served as a mirror reflecting the complexities of human experience, societal norms, and cultural values through systems of communication and behavior in the society (Arafah & Kaharuddin, 2019). Throughout history, it has provided a platform for diverse voices and perspectives, allowing individuals to explore and understand the world around them. Literature is a way of creating awareness associated with recent and past events and artistically transforming it into a written piece (Yudith et al., 2023). There are many forms of literature, some of which are novels, short stories, comic books, letters, and many more (Arafah et al., 2021). Literature does not merely serve as entertainment, but also functions as a reflection of the society, beliefs, and cultural conditions that exist at the time of its creation. As stated by Arafah et al (2022), literature is a written work that reflects the culture, belief, and condition of the society in which the author lives. Literature serves as a powerful reflection of human experiences, culture, and societal structures. Beyond its artistic merit, literary works often convey struggles, oppression, and resistance that exist within social realities (Fadillah et al., 2022).

The researcher believes that a literary work is a form of the writer's expression about their experiences, feelings, ideas, and thoughts. Therefore, it can be said that a literary work's cultural aspects revolve around what the writer as a part of the society had experienced and witnessed through their life (Arafah et al., 2021). This can be used to discover what kind of culture the writer had experienced, where and when they experienced that. As Arafah et al. (2020) state, *Literary works are not only a story that describes an imagination without value inside but also a reflection of real life which was written by the authors through their experience during certain periods in the past specifically.*

Among the myriad topics explored in literature, the concept of femininity stands out as particularly significant, as it encompasses the myriad ways in which gender identity and societal expectations intersect (Afiah et al., 2022). Femininity, traditionally associated with qualities deemed 'feminine' such as nurturing, empathy, and emotionality, has evolved over time, influenced by cultural, social, and political factors (Lestari et al., 2025). In literary discourse, femininity is not merely a static set of attributes but a construct that challenges and redefines itself in response to changing norms. This fluidity raises critical questions about how femininity is and understood in literary texts.

feminist literary criticism has been instrumental in analyzing the ways literature has perpetuated or challenged the narrative of male

domination, shedding light on the economic, social, political, and psychological forces that have shaped the portrayal of women in literary works (Eagleton, 2014). The problem of femininity today is characterized by the ongoing struggle against traditional gender norms and stereotypes that continue to shape societal expectations of women (Arafah et al., 2024). In contemporary society, femininity is often still defined by outdated ideals that emphasize traits such as passivity, nurturing, and subservience (Wangsa & Arafah, 2013). These stereotypes can limit women's roles and opportunities, leading to issues such as body image dissatisfaction, mental health challenges, and the perpetuation of gender inequality (Arafah et al., 2022).

Research by McRobbie (2009) highlights how media representations of femininity often promote unrealistic standards, which can negatively impact women's self-esteem and societal participation. The intersectionality of femininity complicates the discourse surrounding gender. Women from diverse backgrounds considering race, class, and sexuality face unique challenges that are often overlooked in mainstream discussions. Crenshaw (1989) emphasizes the importance of recognizing these intersecting identities to understand the multifaceted nature of oppression and privilege. This intersectionality is increasingly reflected in literature, where diverse female characters navigate complex social landscapes, showcasing the varied experiences of women today (Arafah et al., 2020). In many literary works, women are often portrayed within the boundaries of patriarchal expectations, emphasizing their dependence on men for security and social recognition. This portrayal reflects real-life conditions where, as stated by Asriyanti, Arafah, and Abbas (2022), in some cultures, women are still considered dependent on men for protection, economic stability, and social status, which limits their autonomy and reinforces traditional gender roles. In line with this, Arafah argues:

> Literature provides useful information on the most appropriate types of literature such as short stories, poems, novels, plays, as well as songs... literature is an author's expression during its period. By their imagination and social fact which was happening around them in a certain period, they write various stories and that story nowadays can be a satire for a certain people. (Arafah, 2018)

Despite these challenges, femininity remains a crucial aspect of contemporary discourse, as it plays a significant role in shaping identity and social dynamics. The importance of femininity today lies in its potential for _____ent and resistance against patriarchal norms. Feminist movements ____singly embraced diverse expressions of femininity, advocating for ____ understanding that includes various identities and experiences ____ et al., 2024). This shift is vital for promoting gender equality and ____ the restrictive norms that have historically defined femininity. ____rature, the exploration of femininity serves as a powerful tool for

social change. Authors often use their narratives to challenge traditional gender roles and highlight the complexities of female identity (Purwaningsih et al., 2020). For example, in works like Angela Carter's The Bloody Chamber, femininity is redefined through characters who assert their agency and confront patriarchal structures. Such literary representations can inspire readers to adjust their moral principles, in this case by reconsidering their understanding of femininity and its implications in both personal and societal contexts (Arafah, 2018).

Furthermore, the importance of femininity is underscored by its role in leadership and social influence (Arafah et al., 2021). Eagly and Carli (2007) argue that women in leadership positions who embrace their femininity can inspire others and foster environments that value collaboration and empathy. This is particularly relevant in literature, where female protagonists often embody these qualities, challenging the notion that leadership must conform to traditionally masculine traits. This aligns with Arafah & Hasyim (2019) who state, *The style of literature was influenced by the author's thoughts that changed as time passed following the development of an era*.

The portrayal of women by the society often emphasized traditional traits such as passivity, nurturing, and emotionality, reinforcing societal norms that confined women to limited roles and depicted them as subservient figures lacking agency (Nur et al., 2021). However, contemporary studies have redefined our understanding of femininity, revealing it as a source of power and resilience.

This evolution is particularly compelling in *The Phantom of the Opera*, where female characters navigate their identities with strength, illustrating how femininity can be a dynamic force that empowers women to assert their agency and challenge societal constraints. The reason the researcher chose *The Phantom of the Opera* as the object of this research is because of its global popularity, especially in English literary and cultural circles, despite the novel originally being written in French by Gaston Leroux in 1910. The novel became widely known after its English translation and its numerous adaptations in the English-speaking world, including films, television series, and literature. According to the analysis by Navarro-Remesal (2017), *The Phantom of the Opera* has transcended its French origins and become a staple of international popular culture, largely due to its English-language adaptations. Furthermore, its story, filled with complex characters, particularly female figures like Christine Daaé, continues to be relevant and discussed in academic circles, especially in the context of gender and literary studies (De M   ., 2018). This widespread recognition and cultural relevance make   n ideal object of study to explore how femininity and women's roles   ented in literature. Through a contemporary lens, femininity   outdated stereotypes, emerging as a powerful and transformative   haracter, highlighting the multifaceted nature of female identity and   ng that femininity can serve as a source of power, ultimately   to a broader understanding of women's experiences in literature.

In support of this, Arafah, Kaharuddin, & Hasyim (2020) explain, *The existence of literature cannot be separated from the social reality which occurs in society... the authors have to be more sensitive toward the social phenomena surrounding them*.

In this research, the writer intends to conduct a research about the power of femininity in female characters from the novel The Phantom of The Opera by Gaston Leroux. The writer will be analyzing women's roles from female characters that are seen in the novel.

1.2 Identification of Problem

Based on the background that the writer has provided above, the writer identifies some problem as follows:

1) Women's Role in the Story. The portrayal of Christine Daaé reflects traditional gender roles, highlighting the expectations and limitations placed on women in the context of love and ambition.

2) Women's Agency and Autonomy. The female characters, particularly Christine and Madame Giry, navigate a patriarchal society, showcasing their attempts to exercise agency and make independent choices that challenge societal norms.

3) Class and Social Hierarchy. The novel addresses issues of class and social hierarchy through the interactions between characters from different social backgrounds.

4) Power Dynamics in Relationships. The relationships between male and female characters reveal significant power dynamics.

5) Consequences of Social Isolation. Social class and isolation deeply impact the identities and emotional states of the characters, particularly the Phantom, highlighting how social status influences personal relationships and well-being.

1.3 Scope of Problem

From the identification of the problem, this research focuses on exploring the power of femininity through the women's roles in *The Phantom of the Opera* by Gaston Leroux. The analysis applies a qualitative descriptive method using a structuralism approach to examine the intrinsic elements of the novel, supported by Rosemarie Tong's theory of femininity to reveal how feminine traits such as care, empathy, and others feininity traits become power for the female characters.

ch Question

ed on the limitations of the problem, the writer formulated the roblems:

1) How are the female characters portrayed in the novel *The Phantom of the Opera*?
2) How are the power of femininity and women's roles portrayed through the selected female characters in *The Phantom of the Opera*?

1.5 Objective of the research

The objectives of conducting this research are the following:

1) To describe how the female characters are portrayed in *The Phantom of the Opera.*
2) To analyze the power of femininity and women's roles portrayed through the selected female characters in *The Phantom of the Opera*.

1.6 Significance of Study

Aligned with the objectives, the results of this research are anticipated to serve the following purposes:

1) This study provides valuable insights into the representation of women in literature, particularly in the context of societal norms. By analyzing the roles and strength of femininity in *The Phantom of the Opera*.
2) To offer valuable insights for readers and serve as a comprehensive reference for those who wish to conduct research on similar topics in the future. This study aims to enhance understanding and provide a solid foundation for further exploration in the field.

1.7 Sequence of Chapter

This thesis is structured into five chapters that build upon each other to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. The first chapter introduces the research by explaining the background, identifying the problems, defining the objectives, significance, and limitations of the study. The second chapter presents relevant previous studies, explains the theoretical framework, and elaborates on Rosemarie Tong's theory of femininity. Chapter three outlines the research methodology, describing the approach and methods used to collect and analyze the data. The fourth chapter discusses the findings of the research, where the intrinsic elements of the novel and the portrayal of femininity are analyzed in depth. Finally, the fifth cludes the research by summarizing the key findings and providing for future studies related to this topic.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Previous Studies

Past relevant researches are research that has the same or relevant topic with the research that is being conducted by the writer right now. In this research, the writer will be presenting four past relevant researches with the topic that was being researched relevant to the topic of this research, which is Femininity Power: Women's Roles in novel *The Phantom of The Opera* by Gaston Leroux. The writer has collected the past researches based on the similarities of the topic, research method, and the results of the research.

The first is according to Navarrina de Moura, C., Martinez, L. Y. de L., & Rebello, L. S. (2018) entitled *From The Damsel in Distress to The Female Hero: The Wanderings of Christine Daaé in Gaston Leroux's The Phantom of the Opera And Its Last Film Adaptation*. The research employ a qualitative analysis method grounded in feminist literary criticism. This approach focuses on the character development of Christine Daaé, examining her transition from a traditional damsel in distress to a more empowered female hero. The methodology includes close textual analysis of both the original novel and the 2004 film adaptation, allowing for a detailed exploration of key scenes and character interactions that illustrate this transformation. The result of this research is that as this gothic novel invites readers to unravel its layered narrative, centering on the intertwined supernatural events at the theater. The story explores love and obsession among Christine Daaé, Viscount Raoul de Chagny, and Érik is initially presented as the horrifying phantom, the narrative ultimately positions Christine as the female hero, subverting typical gothic conventions. Rather than merely escaping her confinement, she undergoes a profound transformation.

The second research by Raharto, R. D., & Permatasari, R. (2019) with titled *The Protagonist's Shadow and Persona as the Reflection of Anti-Hero in The Phantom of the Opera Novel Retold by Diane Namm* employs a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the character of the protagonist, specifically focusing on the concepts of persona and shadow as defined by Carl Gustav Jung's psychoanalytic theory. By situating the analysis within the broader context of literary studies, the research focuses on the anti-hero archetype, allowing for a deeper understanding of how Erik's character deviates from traditional heroic traits, embodying both villainous and qualities. *The Phantom of the Opera* presents Erik as both a st and a caring Angel of Music to Christine, masking his deformed duality leads to a breakdown of his persona when exposed, his darker side and driving him to commit serious crimes, including pursuit of Christine's love. As an anti-hero, his mischief and contrast with traditional heroism, yet readers often sympathize with

his tragic past. Ultimately, Erik's story reveals the struggle of identity and the complexities of love, suggesting that true kindness may require personal sacrifice for others' happiness.

The third research by Sugiarti and Fitri Anggun Lestari (2023) *Representation of Femininity in Indonesian Folklore*. This research uses is a feminist approach that focuses on the image of women and women's streotypes in literary works and qualitative method with a descriptive method. The data source of this research uses 13 Indonesian folktales for this research. This research about the role of femininity and how female characters in Indonesian folktales can embody the power of femininity. The findings indicate that the power of femininity in shaping a self-image as a dignified individual is expressed through an identity that effectively balances domestic and public roles. Domestic roles are illustrated by the attention given to family, accompanied by refined manners. Conversely, women demonstrate intelligence and creativity in strategizing when confronted with challenges. Furthermore, women exhibit independence and authority in interactions with the opposite sex, leading to greater respect for the female characters in the stories due to their strengths.

The fourth research by Kholoud AlGhamdi (2024) *Angela Carter and Recreating Feminity in The Bloody Chamber: A Semiotic Analysis*. The research employs a semiotic approach to explore the representation of femininity and power in Carter's work. This method involves a qualitative analysis that focuses on the signs and symbols within the text. The concept of feminine power is intricately examined in Carter's reimagining of traditional narratives. Carter challenges patriarchal structures by presenting female characters with agency, desire, and complexity, thus redefining femininity. Her protagonists embark on journeys of self-discovery and empowerment, using symbols like keys to represent knowledge and liberation as they confront societal constraints. Carter's narratives expose the violence and misogyny in traditional fairy tales, transforming them into platforms for female empowerment. By subverting gender roles, she critiques the limitations on women while celebrating their resilience. Ultimately, her work in *The Bloody Chamber* highlights the transformative potential of female characters who resist and redefine their roles, prompting a reevaluation of femininity in literature and society.

The connection among these studies lies in their examination of femininity and the representation of female characters across various literary contexts, each employing distinct methodologies to analyze the power _____ ssociated with femininity. The first study by Navarrina de Moura et _____ on Christine Daaé's evolution from a damsel in distress to a female _____ *e Phantom of the Opera*, utilizing feminist literary criticism to _____ r empowerment. In contrast, in the second study, the journal also _____ *The Phantom of the Opera*. Raharto and Permatasari's research _____ psychoanalytic approach to explore the complexities of Erik's _____ evealing how his duality reflects broader themes of anti-heroism

and societal expectations. Sugiarti and Lestari's analysis of Indonesian folklore adopts a feminist perspective to illustrate how female characters balance domestic and public roles, showcasing their intelligence and independence. Lastly, Kholoud AlGhamdi's semiotic analysis of Angela Carter's *The Bloody Chamber* examines how Carter's reimagining of traditional narratives empowers female characters, challenging patriarchal norms and celebrating their agency. Together, these studies underscore the multifaceted nature of femininity, illustrating how female characters navigate and redefine their identities within their respective narratives.

In this research, the researcher focuses on analyzing femininity power, women's roles in *The Phantom of the Opera* by Gaston Leroux using structuralism approach.

2.2 Structuralism Approach

The theoretical background is a requirement for a scientific work, because of its importance, it serves as a reference for the work. In addition, the work will be considered a scientific work if it contains clear concepts based on recognized theories and is regarded as and academic work. The writer analyzes *The Phantom of the Opera* novel by using a structuralism approach. This approach is the most used approaches to anaylzes some literary work. The researcher begins by identifying the subject of study and then conducts an in-depth examination of the literary work itself. This analysis starts with the text, recognizing that the various elements of literature are interconnected and interdependent. A literary work can be viewed as a cohesive entity, where each of its intrinsic component plays a vital role to further enhance the reader's experience (Sunardi et al., 2018). For example, characters rely on plots, and plots depend on settings, which together enhance the vibrancy and enjoyment of the narrative.

Structuralism is a theoretical approach that emerged in the early 20th century, primarily in the fields of linguistics, anthropology, and literary criticism. It focuses on understanding the underlying structures that govern human culture, language, and thought. The roots of structuralism can be traced back to the work of Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1916), who emphasized the importance of language as a system of signs. Saussure's ideas, particularly his concepts of the "signifier" and "signified," laid the groundwork for structuralist thought by highlighting how meaning is constructed through relationships within a system rather than through individual elements

erature, structuralism gained prominence through the works of ch as Roland Barthes and Claude Lévi-Strauss. Barthes (1967), in *The Death of the Author*, argued that the interpretation of texts s on the structures and codes within the text itself, rather than the f the author. Lévi-Strauss (1955) applied structuralist principles to ly, analyzing myths and cultural practices to reveal the universal f human thought.

Structuralism posits that all cultural phenomena, including literature, can be understood as systems of signs that operate according to specific rules and conventions. This approach emphasizes the importance of context and the relationships between elements within a system, leading to a deeper understanding of how meaning is generated. Despite these critiques, structuralism has significantly influenced various fields, including literary theory, cultural studies, and social sciences, by providing a framework for analyzing the complexities of human experience through the lens of underlying structures.

2.2.1. Character and Characterization

According to Nurgiyantoro (2013) explains that a character is a person who becomes an actor in a fictional story or drama. Nurgiyantoro also said that characters into several types: Based on the aspect of role, namely the main character and additional characters. Based on the function of the appearance of the character, namely the protagonist and antagonist. Based on the character, namely simple character and round character. Based on the development of character, there are static characters and developing characters. Based on the reflection of the character, the typical character and the neutral character. Moreover, characters may also provide varying values of education on its readers (Arafah et al., 2024). Also characters are actors in the story. They experienced the events in the story. Character consists of the protagonist and antagonist. Character affects all intrinsic elements of fiction, especially novels. The way of author shows how the character in story called characterization (Irmawati et al., 2020). Also the novel character represents the personality of the main character. (Floriani et al, 2020). Based on this understanding, it can be seen that the character is a person or actor who is in the story or event.

Additionally, Wicaksono (2014) defines characterization as a trait that is placed on the character, the depiction or depiction of the character of the story, both physically and mentally by an author.

2.2.2. Plot

Plot is the organized sequence of events that make up a narrative, serving as the framework that connects characters, settings, and conflicts to create a cohesive story. Since the characters in this novel are humans as social beings, they need each other to face various situations (Floriani et al., ... ording to Bordwell and Thompson (2010), "*the plot is the order of ...hey are presented in the narrative,*" emphasizing the importance of ... storytelling. Additionally, Foster (2005) notes that "*plot is the way ... arranges the events to create a story*" indicating that the author's ...structuring the plot significantly influence the reader's experience. ...nitions collectively underscore the critical role of plot in shaping

narratives and engaging audiences. According to Freytag (1863), a German writer, plot is divided into several parts. Those are Exposition, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, and Denouement.

1. **Exposition**

   The first phase in Freytag's pyramid is the exposition, which introduces the character, especially the main character. It shows how the character relate to another, their goals and motivations.

2. **Rising Action**

   Rising action is the second phase in Freytag's five-phase structures. it starts with a conflict. In this phase, the protagonist understands his or her goal and begins to work toward it.

3. **Climax**

   The climax is the highest point of the story. The protagonist make the single big decision that defines not only the outcome of the story, but also who they are as a person. Freytag (1984) defines the climax as the third of the five dramatic phases which occupies the middle of the story.

4. **Falling Action**

   According to Freytag (1863), the falling action phase consist of events that lead to the ending. The conflict of the story is getting diminished in this part or the main character gets solution to solve his problem.

5. **Resolution**

   The resolution also known as conclusion or moment of catastrophe is the end of the story. In this phase the protagonist and antagonist have solved their problems and either the protagonist or antagonist wins the conflict. The conflict officially ends, some stories show what happens to the character after the conflict ends, and they show what happens to the characters in the future.

2.2.3. Setting

Wellek and Werren (1982:131) is concerned with the places where story
e. When the reader reads a novel, they actually faced the world
een completed by the character and the events in the novel.
o Nurgiyantoro (2002:227-233), setting is divided into setting of
ng of time, and setting of social. The three are interrelated and
ich other:
Setting of Place, setting of a place can be defined as a place
where the action or the event happens. It can be a place with a

special name or even some places without clear names or clear descriptions

2) Setting of Time, setting of time refers to when the action or event takes place. The reader tries to understand and enjoy the story based on the period. The similar time is also used to make an impression to the reader that the story is real and happening.

3) Setting of Social, setting of social environment is related to the behavior of the social life in a place that is told in a work of fiction. A variety of social life community include habits, customs, traditions, beliefs, way of life, way of thinking and behaving.

2.2.4. Theme

According to Baldic (2001:258), theme is the main abstract idea found in a literary work or one that is repeatedly presented, either explicitly or implicitly, through the repetition of motifs. Theme is the central abstract idea in a literary work, which can be conveyed explicitly or implicitly through recurring motifs. It serves as the underlying message or concept that unifies the narrative and gives deeper meaning to the text.

2.3 Theory of Femininity by Rosemarie Tong

In Rosemarie Tong's *Feminist Thought* (2009), Femininity theory, as discussed by Rosemarie Tong, highlights how traditional "feminine" traits, such as compassion, nurturance, sensitivity, and gentleness can be sources of power, rather than signs of weakness. Rosemarie Tong classifies radical feminists into two distinct groups: Radical-Libertarian Feminists and Radical-Cultural Feminists.

The Radical-Libertarian Feminists advocate for androgyny, encouraging both men and women to express a full range of masculine and feminine traits. They believe that liberation is only possible when rigid gender roles are eliminated, and individuals are free to integrate qualities traditionally associated with both genders. As Tong explains, *No human being should be forbidden the sense of wholeness that comes from combining his or her masculine and feminine sides* (Tong, 2009, p. 2).

In contrast, Radical-Cultural Feminists reject the idea that androgyny is the key to liberation. Instead, they believe that the problem is not femininity itself, but rather the low value that patriarchal society assigns to feminine qualities. As Tong explicitly states:

he problem is not femininity in and of itself, but rather the low value at patriarchy assigns to feminine qualities such as 'gentleness, odesty, humility, supportiveness, empathy, compassionateness, nderness, nurturance, intuitiveness, sensitivity, unselfishness' ong, 2009, p. 3).

ing to Radical-Cultural Feminists, these traits are not signs of

inferiority or weakness, but rather essential forms of power that are necessary for creating just, compassionate, and sustainable communities. For example, gentleness and tenderness are understood as sources of emotional strength that promote peace and non-violence. Modesty and humility foster equality and mutual respect, ensuring that social interactions are free from arrogance or domination. Supportiveness builds solidarity, while empathy, described by Tong as indispensable for care-focused feminism, forms the emotional foundation for meaningful relationships: *Without empathy… people cannot truly care* (Tong, 2009, p. 165). Similarly, compassionateness, a trait celebrated by ecofeminists, extends care beyond interpersonal relationships to include the natural world, recognizing that compassion is vital for both human and ecological survival (Tong, 2009, p. 238). Nurturance, often associated with motherhood, is seen as a form of social power that strengthens families and communities, not as a limitation on women's autonomy (Tong, 2009, p. 165). Intuitiveness, frequently dismissed in patriarchal systems that privilege logic over emotion, is reclaimed as a legitimate form of knowledge by ecofeminists, who argue that *human capacities like intuition and compassion are as much a part of nature as the physical world itself* (Tong, 2009, p. 238). Sensitivity, defined as the ability to be emotionally attuned to others, is highlighted as a critical form of emotional intelligence essential for care and social connection (Tong, 2009, p. 165). Lastly, unselfishness, while often confined to the private sphere under patriarchy, is reimagined as a public virtue.

Tong, citing John Stuart Mill, warns that women's unselfishness becomes distorted when it is only applied to family life: *Women's unselfishness tended to take the form of extended egoism… they spared no effort to further the interests of their loved ones, but they showed scant regard for the common weal* (Tong, 2009, p. 19). Radical-Cultural Feminists thus argue that true feminine power comes not from abandoning these traits, but from reclaiming them as strengths in both private and public life. Rather than accepting the patriarchal devaluation of these qualities, women must redefine femininity on their own terms, independent of masculinity, transforming these traditionally feminine traits into tools for personal and collective empowerment.

Tong also highlights how femininity can be a real source of power. For example, some radical-cultural feminists see motherhood as a powerful ability to give life, rather than a burden. This includes the ability to choose when and how to have children and the strength found in raising the next generation. Overall, Tong shows that femininity theory does not seek to make women _____ men. Instead, it wants to redefine what strength means, showing ___ care, empathy, and emotional wisdom are just as powerful, and ___rtant, as logic or competition.