

## **CHAPTER II**

### **THEORY AND METHOD**

#### **2.1. Theoretical Framework**

In order to describe how Gilbert is characterised as well as how Gilbert endeavours so as to become a literary critic, the writer adopts McDonald's concept of feminist film theory and Showalter's concept of feminist critics, which is contained in Newton's twentieth-century literary theory.

##### **2.1.1 Feminist Film Theory**

Feminist film theory critically assesses gender representation, challenges stereotypes, and contributes to a more inclusive cinematic landscape. In addition to its direct impact on film as a scholarly field, McDonald writes that "feminist film theory was important because of its ties to feminism as a broader social and political movement" (135). Feminist film theory carefully examines how movies depict gender roles, questions harmful stereotypes, and actively promotes a more diverse and inclusive film environment. Beyond its influence on film studies, it's significant because it's closely connected to the broader social and political movement of feminism.

Feminist film theory drew inspiration from a rich tapestry of influences. One of the pioneering feminist thinkers is Simone de Beauvoir. The theory holds the premise that women are relegated to a subservient position within most narrative

cinema. For McDonald this adheres to De Beauvoir's general premise that "woman is other, meaning that she is consigned to secondary social status and considered subordinate to man's privileged place as the universal subject" (136). Women are perceived as the other, which implies their secondary social standing compared to men, who are often seen as the universal subject.

Furthermore, a woman's appearance as an object of visual display sets up the male protagonist as the one who looks. McDonalds writes that the protagonist is "the "bearer of the look," which entails additional power in the sense that he serves as a point of identification for the viewer (137)". When a woman is portrayed as an object of visual attention in a film, it positions the male protagonist as the primary observer. He becomes the "bearer of the look," which grants him additional influence because viewers often identify with him.

### **2.1.2. Feminist Literary Theory**

The feminist literary theory in the study of this undergraduate thesis is inferred from K.M Newton's twentieth-century literary theory. Newton notes that over the past few decades, feminist criticism has become a significant development in literary studies. It operates at both the theoretical and practical levels. Initially, Newton resumes, feminist criticism aligned with feminist ideology by evaluating authors and texts based on their compatibility with feminist principles (210). The images of women school of feminist critics focuses on how female characters are portrayed in literature.

Donovan emphasises that aesthetic and moral aspects of literary texts cannot be separated in feminist criticism. Newton comments that even works central to Western civilization (like *Homer's Odyssey*, *Dante's Divine Comedy*, and *Goethe's Faust*) should be critically assessed (210). Newton continues by saying that Elaine Showalter advocates gynocriticism, which centres on the concerns of women as writers (210). She criticises the woman as a reader approach for focusing too much on male perspectives. Newton also notes that some feminist critics attempt to reconcile Marxian or post-structuralist concepts with feminist theory (211). Elizabeth A. Meese suggests using ideas from post-structuralist thinkers like Foucault and French feminist theorists like Luce Irigaray to challenge the ideology underlying male-dominated interpretive communities. Last but not least, Newton writes that Helene Cixous, a prominent French feminist theorist, emphasises language as a crucial area of concern (211). She believes that women must find their own linguistic expression to resist the phallogentrism inherent in culture. In summary, Newton writes, feminist criticism engages with literature, representation, and ideology, advocating for a more inclusive and diverse literary landscape (211).

## **2.2. Research Method**

### **2.2.1. Data and data source**

The data was mainly taken from the movie entitled *Eat, Pray, Love*, based on a novel of the same name in 2006 by Elizabeth Gilbert. The movie was released in 2010 and became a big hit. The data was primarily taken from the dialogue of the main character, Liz Gilbert, and her interaction with the other supporting

characters. In addition, some secondary data was taken from library research by enriching the researcher's point of view such as articles, journals, and reviews about the movie.

### **2.2.2. Method of Collecting Data**

As the primary data was solely taken from the conversations among the characters in the movie, the data was collected in several steps. First, the conversation in the movie was transcribed into written form. Then, the written dialogue was divided into two: the dialogue by the main character and the dialogue by other characters without the main character. Then, the data was used to find the signs of Emancipatory Feminism, the effects on the main character, and the effects on the other characters in the movie.

### **2.2.3. Method of Analysing Data**

As the study is library research, the analysis is primarily based on the written dialogues and the theory of Emancipatory Feminism. There are several steps in analysing the data to answer the research questions. First, the data is transcribed into a written form to make it easier to analyse. Second, the data is divided into two: the dialogues that show Emancipatory Feminism and the dialogues that don't find the sign of Emancipatory Feminism. Moreover, the study uses the feminist approach. According to Guerin, a feminist approach is an approach that is concerned with the marginalisation of all women: that is in relation to their being relegated to a secondary position (2005:196). Therefore, the research questions are able to be answered thoroughly.