# THE CHANGES OF WOMEN'S IMAGE
# REPRESENTED BY SNOW WHITE CHARACTER
# IN *MIRROR MIRROR* MOVIE

## JURNAL

**BY**
**KATRIZA ANDIKA PUTRI**
**NIM 0811110049**

**STUDY PROGRAM OF ENGLISH**
**DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE**
**FACULTY OF CULTURAL STUDIES**
**UNIVERSITAS BRAWIJAYA**
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**LEMBAR PENGESAHAN**
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**Atau**

**PERUBAHAN PENGGAMBARAN PEREMPUAN YANG DITUNJUKKAN OLEH**
**KARAKTER SNOW WHIHTE DALAM FILM *MIRROR MIRROR***

Nama                                  : Katriza Andika Putri
NIM                                    : 0811110049
Program Studi                   : Sastra Inggris
Alamat Tempat Tinggal   : Perumahan IKIP Tegalgondo Im no 4, Malang
No. Telepon                      : 087859156344
Alamat E-mail                  : katriza_andika@yahoo.co.id

Menyetujui

Dosen pembimbing I                                          Dosen pembimbing II

M. Andhy Nurmansyah , M.Hum                    Fariska Pujiyanti, SS, M.Hum
NIP 19771016 200501 1 002                           NIP………………………..

Ketua Program Studi

Syariful Muttaqin, M.A.
NIP 19751101  200312 1 001

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Katriza Andika Putri

## ABSTRACT

Nowadays, movie becomes one of favorite entertainments among people. Not only for entertainment, movie can be the media to explore idea, opinion, and knowledge. There are a lot of genres in movie, for example drama, thriller, action, etc. Some of the exist movie, there is a fairytale or fiction story. Fairy tale stories usually tells about prince and princess. Nevertheless, modern fairytale portrayed female domination in the story. The writer conducts a study about the changes of gender role as reflected in the movie *Mirror Mirror*. There is a problem to be solved, which is how Snow White as the main character in the movie changes the women image and gender role. As a comparative, the writer uses *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* movie.

This study uses qualitative approach in relation to analyze the object material.To figure out the research question, the writer uses Gender Studies which employs three concepts, they are Traditional Gender Role, Patriarchal, and Gender Equalit

This study uncovers Snow White experience in the changing of gender role and the image of woman. The result shows that there is a changing of women image represent by Snow White in *Mirror Mirror* movie. Women in *Mirror Mirror* are no longer images as weak character. They now images as strong and brave character.

It is recommended to do a further research in order to acquire new knowledge from this movie. The suggestion for the next researchers is that they can use Marxist theory from the capitalist point of view in analyzing this movie. It is to analyze how the power of authority can involve the gender function in society.

Keywords : gender role, women image

There are many ways for human to express their ideas, thoughts, and opinions. One of those ways is in the form of literature. Literature is a reflection of human life that is commonly presented in writing or written language. It describes events that happen in society.

There are a lot of stories inspire the authors in making a literary works. According to Wellek and Warren (1965, p.212) "literature must stand in recognizable relation to life in such a way that is in any case a selection from life". In other words, literature must indeed be true to human's life. Furthermore, Leavis (1948, p.23) says "as part of minority culture, literature had a profoundly moral role in helping to combat the destructive forces of mass civilization."

Nowadays there are a lot of movie genres that exist in the society. According to Robert McKee, (2000, p. 80-86) movies are distinguished into fourteen big genres such as action, adventure, animation, comedy, crime, drama, documentary, erotica, horror, fantasy, romance, thriller, family, and war. The genre that will be discussed further is fantasy genre. Fantasy genre, based on Jane in her journal "Medievalism and the Fantasy Heroine" (2006), could be described as something that contains unrealistic rudiments, such as magical powers, talking animals, etc. Fantasy is often characterized by a departure from the accepted rules by which individuals perceive the world around them; it represents something impossible (unexplained) and outside the parameters of our known, reality. Fantasy genre is commonly related with fairy tales story.

A movie that adapts a common fairy tale could be telling the story that is similar to what the society believes. To make the story more interesting the movie maker can make some addition and omission to the fairy tales. The plot or the ending of the fairy tale movies can be different from the common fairy tale it is intended to make the movie more fascinating. Hence the viewer's prefer watching new version of common fairy tale. Making a fairy tale movie can

become so serious. A lot of things are needed to prepare, because some fairy tales are common enough in the society, and surely the society know well how the movie will be presented.

*Mirror Mirror* is one of the Snow White fairy tale movies that bring another Snow White story version. Tarsem Singh the director of this fairy tale movie still adopted the story from Brothers Grimm's novel entitled Snow White. The main idea of this movie was also the same with Grimm's but there are some addition and reduction in this version. If the old Snow White story told that Snow White was only a very beauty, poor and weak daughter that always obey the queen, *Mirror Mirror* tries to show a little different plot. Either Snow White or the Queen has to struggle to get and hold their crown on and the characterizations of both characters are quite different.

This version also shows different ending that gives the viewer a new view. Not only shows a weakness of a queen or a princess, but this version also attempts to give another side of woman. *Mirror Mirror* shows the opposite characterization from the common Snow White fairy tales. If in the old version Snow White was figured as a very weak girl, in *Mirror Mirror*s now White is figured as a very brave and strong girl. The prince that came to save Snow White in the old version was also changed to be a victim who saved by Snow White. This version prove that women especially Snow White as the main character of this movie, not only stand as the weak side but also as the hero of herself and her society.

It is shown in *Mirror Mirror* movie that a woman becomes new female character who is able to fix her own problem and her society. Snow White is figured as a strong girl who doesn't need a prince to save her life.  Based on this reason, the writer decides to analyze the change of women image that represented by the main character  in *Mirror Mirror* movie. To analyze this

movie, the writer uses the concept of gender studies which is relevant with the phenomena in *Mirror Mirror* movie.

## 2.1 Gender

Gender refers to the roles constructed in the society which are attributed to females and males. These roles distinguish what it is to be feminine or masculine. For instead, females and males will do something that appropriate with their roles in society. A female will do things that let people know her gender identity as female, and a male also will express himself as a male.

Women's position is different from men's, since there is a gender issue between them. The theories of men and women become the interesting things to be discussed. Oakley in his book Sex, Gender, and Society (1992) says about the different between gender and sex as follows:

> On the whole western society is organized around the assumption that the differences between the sexes are more important than any qualities they have in common. When people try to justify this assumption in terms of "natural" differences, two separate processes become confused; the tendency to differentiate in a society, but the second is not, and its constancy marks the division between "sex" and "gender". Sex differences may be "natural" but gender differences have their source in culture, not in nature.
> It can be concluded that gender differences are created by society.

## 2.2 Character and Characterization

Character is one of the important elements that builds a story. Even the quality of the story depends on the ability of the author to make the character alive. Character is a person that participates in the events that happen in the story. Each character in a certain story made different with another; either that character is dominant and strong, or event in contrast, ressive and weak. According to Kenney (1966, p.28), a character is devided into two general descriptions concerning his representation in a certain fiction, which are simple or flat character

and complex or round character. A character known as a simple character or a flat if the viewer can only see one side of the character. The author only gives a few details about these character. A simple character in fact, is not too represents the true human personalities as a manifestation of a single attitude or obsession in character. In contrast, complex character is viewable from all sides and have a lot of details given from the author. Every literary works, movie or drama commonly uses character to show the messages of the story.

Based on the role, character in a fiction can be classified into major and minor character. A main character is a character that can influence the plot of a story. The main character is formed as an individual who is capable of providing complex motivations and reactions to change in response to crisis or conflict in a way that makes them looks like a real person (Hirschberg & Hirschberg, 2004, p.55). Then a minor character, is a character that does not have a big role in changing the plot of a story and serves only as a complementary character. Of course, the minor character is one of the character represented in the story , but they do not role as the main one.

## 2.3   Comparative Movie Studies

The study of movie is a viable and interesting approach to gaining insights into the workings of contemporary culture and the effects of media. Writing a paper comparing two movies allows the writer to analyze and highlight the similarities and differences between the two. Comparative research, is the act of comparing two or more things with a view to discovering something about one or all of the things being compared. This technique often utilizes multiple disciplines in one study. When it comes to method, the majority agreement is that there is no methodology peculiar to comparative research (Heclo & Adams 1983, p. 505).

In this case the writer is going to compare the difference character and characterization of some characters between *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* movie from Brother Grimm and *Mirror Mirror* movie directed by Tarsem Sigh.

To compare both movies the writer is going to use genders studies approach in solve the problem of the study. The uses approach is important in finding the changes of gender role between *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* movie and *Mirror Mirror* movie. The writer focuses only in the changes of some character and their characterization in both movies. This occurs to limit the area of the research and find the objective of the study.

To support the finding, the writer uses *mise-en-scene* to analyze the pictures from the movies. *Mise-en-scène* refers to everything that appears before the camera and its arrangement— composition, sets, props, actors, costumes, sounds, and lighting (Kristin, 2003 p. 18)

**3.1    Character and Characterization in *Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs* Movie**

a.  Mirror

The mirror in this movie is a magic mirror owned by the Queen, it is reflects a man face which can answer the Queen's questions. Beside the face the mirror also has voice which sounds like an old man. Therefore the writer concludes that the mirror represents a man. Almost every day, the Queen asks her mirror about who is the fairest of them all, the magic mirror always says the queen is the fairest of them all. The magic mirror never tell lies, it always says what the truth that's why Queen always believe what the mirror says.

In this scene, man domination to give standardization about beautiful lady which is represented by the man's face reflected in the mirror makes the queen to do everything to keep her position as the fairest lady of them all. A man inside the mirror which can involve the queen condition brings the story fascinating. The patriarchal role in this scene is clearly shown.

According to Walby (1990, 80) patriarchy is a system of social structures and practices, in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women. Those mean that a judge about beauty from men is an important thing for women. Jane and Imelda in their book Fifty Key Concepts (2004, 6) of Gender Studies wrote that:

> "The body has occupied a key position in a wide range of debates, including: men's control of women's bodies as a key means of subordination, critiques of dichotomous thinking, and in debates about essentialism and the theorizing of difference and diversity."

b. Prince

The prince character in this movie is figured as a perfect man, but he has no name. The prince is a tall young man, wears royal suits and rides a white horse. He is a good singer too, he can sing with Snow White in some scenes. He loves Snow White from their first sight. The prince character in this movie has a perfect characterization, he is figured as a handsome, brave and respectable man.

The society will take women with an obsession in something stands in bad position and call them as bad women. So that there is a paradigm women will be acceptable in society if they can be the best or even the worst one.

c. Snow White

Snow White is a very beautiful 14 years old princess with short hair "as black as ebony", full lips "as red as the rose", pure skin "as white as snow", and brown eyes. Snow White is a kind, gentle, sweet, cheerful and she also shows great attitude (*The Top Disney Heroes & Heroines Countdown*, p. 3). In first scene, Snow White is wearing a tattered tan skirt, a white blouse, wooden clogs and a blue hair ribbon. When she is dropped in the forest, she wears a gown with blue bodice, a yellow skirt, short red and blue slashed sleeves, and a high white collar, along with tan dress shoes, a red cape, and a red hair ribbon.

Snow White in this version becomes the example of woman image which is characterized as a weak gir she is just easily receiving the destiny. Actually Snow White knows if the kingdom should belong to her, but she let the Queen to take all she has. She does nothing to stop the queen. In her singing, snow white wishes that someday a prince will come to save her.

From the explanation it can be seen that the women characters in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* movie are influenced by men position in their society. Their gender makes their activities and position limited by society's arguments.

## 3.2    Character and Characterization in *Mirror Mirror* Movie

a.   Seven Petite Men

The first character in *Mirror Mirror* movie is the seven petite men. They are Butcher, Chuckles, Grimm, Grub, Napoleon, Half-pint, and Wolf. Different from the old version, the seven petite men is the part of society. They are not dwarfs as told in the old Snow White version. Those men actually are part of the society before they were expelled by the queen. The men then live in the woods. They live together in the woods and become a thief

In this case it can be inferred that if society gives a chance for women to learn in changing the women role, the paradigm which places women in weak position will be changed. The seven petite men in this movie is the evidence that although they are men but they cannot get their right back. Trisakti and Sugiharti states

> "konsep gender adalah pembagian laki-laki dan perempuan yang dikostruksikan secara social maupun kultural. Misalnya perempuan dianggap lemah lembut, emosional, keibuan, dan lain sebagainya. Sedangkan laki-laki dianggap kuat, rasional, perkasa, dan lain sebagainya. Sifat-sifat tersebut bukanlah kodrat, karena tidak abadi dan dapat dipertukarkan. Artinya ada lelaki yang emosional, lemah lembut dan keibuan,ada pula perempuan yang kuat, rasional dan lebih kuat dari lelaki."

In other word, gender concept is socially and culturally constructed. For example women reputed as weak, emotional, motherly, and etc. Meanwhile men are reputed as strong, rational, robust and etc. Those characteristics are not perennial and can be changed. Meaning that there is weak, emotional, motherly man, and there is a woman who is rational, robust, and stronger than man.

b. Snow White

Snow White is an eighteen years old girl who has long black hair, bright skin, red lips and very beautiful. On the first scene Snow White wears a peach gown she opens the window and let a bird come to take her apple. Snow White is a kind girl, she also respect Queen Clementianna as well. She never thinks that the kingdom should have to be hers.

Different from the old Snow White, this movie version Snow White does not figured out as a weak character. She is strong and can make a step to make her dreams come true. Snow White is the main character in both movies. Her characterization as shown in old version makes an image of Snow White character. As an old fairy tale character, people will always think that Snow White is a weak character. Because of that fact the changing of woman image represented by Snow White in *Mirror Mirror* movie become interesting topic to discuss. Snow White in the old version becomes the example of a women image which is characterized as a 14 years old weak girl, she just easily receiving the destiny. The fact that actually Snow White know if the kingdom should belongs to her lead, but she let the Queen to take all she has. She does nothing to stop the queen. In her singing, snow white wish that someday will come a prince who can save her. It can be inferred that Snow White character needs a man to solve her problem.

It was different with Snow White's characteristic in *Mirror Mirror* movie. The different character of Snow White also can be seen from the image of Snow White. Snow White in *Mirror*

*Mirror* is not doing household jobs. She wears a beautiful gown and act like a princess. She watches her walks, her voice, and her attitude. It can be concluded that the new Snow White image

Another difference shown by Snow White is Snow White is a strong and brave character. In this movie Snow White changes her image from the weak one become a strong girl. Snow White can make a decision to solve her own problem and fix her society problems. She wants to repair the condition of the kingdom.

c.  Queen Clementianna

Queen Clementianna is a beautiful lady and obsessed to get all she wants. She has magic skill and also owns a mirror which can help her solve her problems. She leads the kingdom, after throwing the king. She leads the kingdom only for herself, she never thinks about how the people condition on the land. Queen Clementianna also hates Snow White, she never allow Snow to walk out of her room.

Although there is a differences concern between the old Queen in the old version and Queen Clementianna in *Mirror Mirror* version, hence there is one thing that unchanged. Both characters in both movies are figured as an evil. Women who are obsessed in something will take in bad position in society, and will call as bad women. There is a paradigm that cannot be changed easily even the society keep the paradigm exists. To get society sympathy women has to be as good as they can or even they have to be as worst as they can.

 d.  Prince Alcott

Prince Alcott is a handsome, young, kind, and brave man, he comes from wealth kingdom Valencia. Prince Alcott is a respect character, as a prince, he

watches his performance, attitude and his utterance. He has a sword also to support his performance as brave men.

Hence in this movie, Prince Alcott is also characterized as a weak and improper character, it is shown when he is defeated by the seven petite men. Prince Alcott's other weakness is shown when he is trapped and casted by Queen Clementianna. Queen Clementianna casts Prince Alcott and makes he loves the Queen very much.

In this case, there is a changing of gender image represented by Prince Alcott character. Since he doesn't become the stronger one and needs Snow White to help him. Trisakti and Handayani in their book "Konsepdan Teknik Penelitian Gender" (2001,4) states that

> "Konsep gender merupakan hal yang melekat pada kaum laki-laki dan perempuan yang dibentuk oleh faktor-faktor sosial maupun budaya, sehingga lahir beberapa anggapan tentang peran social dan budaya antara laki-laki dan perempuan. Bentukan social atas laki-laki dan perempuan itu antara lain: kalau perempuan dikenal sebagai makhluk yang lemah lembut, cantik, dan keibuan. Sedangkan laki-laki dianggap kuat, rasional, jantan, dan perkasa. Sifat-sifat diatas dapat dipertukarkan dan berubah dar iwaktu kewaktu."

In other word, gender concept is the common thing for women and men who are shaped by social and cultural construction so there are some stereotypes about men and women role in social and culture such as: women are known as weak, beautiful and motherly. Meanwhile men are reputed as strong, rational and robust. Those characteristics can be changed. From the quotation above it can be concluded that although society construct that men and women have their own role in society, they can change their own characteristic and role.

e. Mirror

The existing of magic mirror in *Mirror Mirror* movie is important. The magic mirror can give some considerations to help Queen Clementianna decide something. Hence there are some differences between the magic mirror *in Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* movie and the magic

mirror in *Mirror Mirror* movie. If in the old version the mirror shows a man face that make a standard of beauty, in *Mirror Mirror*, the magic mirror reflects a woman's reflection, Queen Clementianna's reflection. The mirror not only can tell the queen who is the fairest lady of the land, but she can also give some advises to the queen. The women mirror can give not only a magic, but also a consideration and can be a friend for Queen Clementianna.

a. Snow White with The Queen

Snow White is a 14 years old princess with short hair "as black as ebony", full lips "as red as the rose", pure skin "as white as snow", and brown eyes. Snow White is a kind, gentle, sweet, and she also shows great attitude, (The Top Disney Heroes & Heroines countdown, p. 3). From those descriptions, it can be inferred that Snow White is a very beautiful girl.

The main conflict between Snow White and the Queen comes when the mirror says that Snow White is the fairest lady of the land. The Queen's madness begins when she get's so much jealous with Snow White's beauty, she then asks a huntsman to kill Snow White and take her lungs into a case as the evidence. Because the huntsman has no heart to kill Snow White he let she runs away into the forest and he does not full the queen's order. Snow White runs away into the forest, she is then saved by seven dwarfs.

From the explanation above it can be concluded that the Queen is jealous with Snow's beauty and she wants to kill Snow. The Queen wishes to be the fairest of them all. Because the mirror says that Snow White is more beautiful than the Queen, she makes a poisoned apple to kill Snow White. In this case it can be inferred that an assessment of beauty is based on the patriarchal point of views which is represent by the magic mirror becomes the most important think in Queen's live. She wants the mirror to say that she is the fairest lady of the land, and no one can defeat her beauty. That means a woman should reach a standardization of beauty in society. Both

women and men actually grouped by their own sex from God, commonly called as body as nature.

b. Snow White with the Seven Dwarfs

Snow White meets the seven dwarfs when she is let by the huntsman to run away into the woods. As explained before, the huntsman let Snow White runs into the forest and never come back. Snow White then is found by seven dwarfs, they are Bashful, Doc, Dopey, Grumpy, Happy, Sleepy, and Sneezy. They let Snow White to live in their house.

The dwarfs work as diamond miner they work outside the house from early morning until afternoon. Their job makes them have no time to take care the house. All of the seven dwarfs have to work and no one from them to take care of their own house. This fact shows that men in society leaving their house to work outside the house. PilcherandWhelehan (2004, 31) states that

> A traditional domestic division of labor is that in which men have primaryresponsibility for the necessary financial provision of their family household. Via laboring/working outside the home in exchange for a wage.

From the quotation above it can be concluded that men in society have to go outside their house to get work and earn money for their family. They have no duty in taking care the house and children. Society groups men not to do the domestic jobs, and let women to handle it. Snow White arrivals in the dwarfs' house give those advantages, because she can help them in takes care their house.

c. Snow White with the Prince

Snow White in her entire life wishes that someday a prince will come to save her live happily ever after. Snow White character in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* version images as a passive character. Although she knows that the kingdom should belong to her, she just let the

greedy Queen to have it all. Snow White also wishes that someday a prince will found her and save her live, but Snow White just do nothing to make her wish come true.

The prince is characterized as a young, handsome, tiny and respect man. While he on the way to hunts into the woods, he found Snow

White singing behind the well. He found Snow White wears her tattered tan.

### 3.3.1. *Mirror Mirror* Movie

Different from the old version, the conflicts in this movie will be classified in three categories first Snow White with Queen, Snow White with Seven Dwarfs, and the last Snow White with Prince. This classified is needed to make the explanation about the women image is clear.

a. Snow White with the Queen

In this movie Snow White is an 18 years old girl, it's the first difference from the old version. In her 18 years old birthday, Snow White is told by Margaret, the kingdom's baker, that Snow White should lead the kingdom. Margaret also suggests Snow White to see the people's condition by her. Margaret gives Snow's father's dagger, the dagger that can make Snow believe that someday she can repair the condition and lead the kingdom. Snow White then escapes to the village to see the people's condition. She brings her father's dagger with her. From this case, it can be seen that the dagger which is commonly used by men, become Snow White's weapon. This fact can be an evidence that women image represented by Snow White in *Mirror Mirror* movie is changed from the weak character become the braver one.

The conflict between Snow White and Queen Clementianna happens when Snow White decides to look the people in the land. She thinks that Queen Clementianna never gives attention to the people. That is why she wishes to return the kingdom condition. Knowing that Snow White grows up beautifully, Queen Clementianna realizes that Snow White will be a threat for her

authority. So that the Queen asks Brighton, her servant, to kill Snow White and she can keeps her authority.

b.  Snow White with the Seven Petite Men

As explained before, Brighton has to kill Snow White and brings her lungs as the evidence. Hence Brighton lets Snow White run into the woods, she is then saved by seven petite men. They are Butcher, Chuckles, Grimm, Grub, Napoleon, Half-pint, and Wolf. That way is different from the old version, the seven petite men actually was the part of society. They are not dwarfs as told in the old Snow White version. Those men actually were part of the society before they were expelled by the queen. The men then live in the woods. They live together in the woods and become thieves. They steal goods, money, and food from anybody who travel in the woods.

Firstly the seven petite men do not allow Snow White to live in their house, because they realize that Snow White is a threat for them, however, they teach Snow White to be ready for Queen Clementianna's attack. Snow White has to learn from the petite men how to fight if she wants to live in their house. Snow White changes her performance and trains her ability to fight against Queen ClementiannaJane and Imelda (2004, p. 167) wrote that "a stereotype is a method of understanding, which works through classifying individual people into a group of category."Mean that "the works" are classified to be in men or women group. Some works are not appropriate to be done by men and the other work only allowed to be done by women. Furthermore, Enteman (1996, p. 10) wrote as follow

> A gender stereotype can be defined as a standardized and often pejorative idea or image held about an individual on the basis of their gender. At a general level, the effect of stereotyping can mean that, rather than treating people as individual, 'we treat them instead as artificial persons which means as an extension of the category we have constructed'.

In other words, stereotype that happens in society makes a gap between men and women. There is also pejorative, i.e., what women can do in society is only to hold their own household jobs, they have no place in society. The existing of gender approach indeed influences the changing of women image. Snow white as the common character which is commonly weak and passive have changed in *Mirror Mirror* movie. Therefore, Snow White tries to breaks the stereotype by learn to be as strong as man.

c.  Snow White and Prince Alcott

The Prince in both movies is an important character. The changing of gender position shows from the different prince character in both movies. In *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* movie, the prince is characterized as the helper for Snow White, he kisses Snow to break the Queen's cast.

Prince Alcott the prince character in *Mirror Mirror* movie has different characterization thought. Snow White saves the Prince with her kiss. Stereotypes that take women as the subject of society make a hierarchy that women only can do appropriate job as women. Sugiharti stated that "Faktor yang menyebabkan ketidakseimbangan atau ketidakadilan gender adalah akibat dari adanya gender yang dikonstruksikan secara sosial dan budaya. Beberapa anggapan yang memojokkan kaum perempuan dalam konteks sosial ini menyebabkan sejumlah persoalan"(2001, p.10). In other words, social construction given by society makes women position marginalized

quotation it can be concluded that the characteristic of women or men can be changed. It is does not only depend on their sex, their societies, cultures, and condition that give them contribution in their changing. Snow White in *Mirrror Mirror* movie is the evidence on how the

image of women which is commonly characterized as weak character is constructed into strong character.

### 4. Conclusion and suggestion

Based on the analysis conducted in chapter three, the writer concludes that there is a changing of women image represent by Snow White in Mirror Mirror movie. Women in *Mirror Mirror* are no longer images as weak character. They now images as strong and brave character. They can make a decision and be the leader. The women don't need men role to solve their problem.

Snow White breaks the stereotype that what women can do only in domestic household job. Snow White is proof that a woman can be as strong as they want and make a change in her society.The changing of each character and characterization from the old Snow White story shows the evidence of the changing women image which is represent by Snow White in *Mirror Mirror* movie.

Besides there is a changing of women image, there is a society paradigm which is still exist until today. Woman who is obsessed in something will take in bad position and will call as bad women. There is a hierarchy that to get society sympathy women has to be as good as they can or even as bad as they can. These fact are reflected in bad queen character whether in both movie the character of the queen always characterized as an evil character.  It is recommended to do a further research in order to acquire new knowledge from this movie. The suggestion for the next researchersis that they can use Marxist theory from the capitalist point of view in analyzing this movie for further research. It is to analyze how the power of  power can involve the gender in society.

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