

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

*Herding the Wind* is an English version of a novel entitled *Anak Bajang Menggiring Angin* by Sindhunata in 1983. It was translated in 2015 by Joan Suyenaga (Maghfiroh & Andriyanti, 2021). It is a fascinating retelling of the Great Epic of Ramayana in the form of a literary story. This novel generally depicts the origin of the life story of Rama and Sinta. Princess Sinta is the beautiful daughter of King Janaka from the kingdom of Mantili (Sindhunata, 2015). She is married to Rama, a king from Ayodya because he has won the competition to get Sinta. However, because of the greediness of Queen Kekayi, the wife of Rama's father, Rama must sacrifice his throne. He is banished to the forest.

This is the time for Sinta to demonstrate whether she is a faithful wife or not. Sinta knows that as a wife, she has to be loyal to her husband so that her life will be harmonious. Thus, she follows the husband's hardship and lives in the forest willingly. As the day goes by, Sinta lives peacefully in the forest until the evil king of Alengka, Rahwana, is enamored with her beauty. Rahwana uses all of his power to kidnap Sinta and brings her to Alengka. Sinta is imprisoned for many years there. While waiting for Rama to rescue her, Sinta keeps her purity from Rahwana. She refuses to let Rahwana touch her or steal her virginity. Sadly, after everything Sinta has sacrificed, she must prove her purity because her husband does not believe in her (Sindhunata, 2015).

*Herding the Wind* novel is essential to be studied since it depicts a typical position of woman Hindu society. A woman is always shown as a minor figure, which regrettably mirrors a woman in reality. The idea that Sinta is a decent woman stems from the fact that she is not the major character. Therefore, Sindhunata does not really foreground the character. It is rather disheartening, considering Sinta's significance to the plot. However, Sindhunata's perspective on Sinta is still worth observing, since it may align with the common conception of what a woman should be, particularly in Hinduism. In Hinduism, the woman's idealized role is that of a wife. To be considered a good woman, she must be a devoted wife. The entirety of a woman's life must be devoted to her husband.

This research will identify how a Hindu woman is expected to be by examining Sinta's characters. Even though the depiction of Sinta as a good woman is a bit upsetting, it may be that Sinta's representation is a more common representation of women. Sinta in *Ramayana* epic comes from Indian literature that is adapted to Indonesian puppetry. Nurgiyantoro (2019) also stated that the traditional *wayang* stories become the basis for writing Indonesia modern literature. Even though *Ramayana* is adjusted in Indonesian stories, Sinta's character may still possess the Hindu women's characteristic. Thus, the depiction of Sinta in *Herding the Wind* novel will be a classic delineation of a good Hindu woman. The reason is that the characters in the puppetry are also the reflection of the human's characters in the real world (Ariani, 2016). Sinta's characterization in the story shows how women, especially Hindu women from Asia, are expected to be. Moreover,

women's characters that are described in literature will have to influence society to look at women as the literature describes them.

The objective of this study is to discover Sinta's characteristics in *Herding the Wind* novel and analyze what makes Sinta a good Hindu woman. The researcher used Mukherjee's theory of the image of women in Hinduism. Mukherjee (1983) introduced the idea of ideal women in Hinduism. Ideal women are expected to be dependent on their husbands. In addition, women should be virtuous. In her research, she identified various feminine qualities, including faithfulness, forgiveness, absence of dishonesty, spirituality, and honesty. In contrast, women should not be untidy, salacious, insolent, irritable, contentious, or gluttonous. Those feminine attributes may be indicative of Sinta's character as a good Hindu woman. Furthermore, since Sindhunata is an Indonesian writer, Sinta in *Herding the Wind* is heavily inspired by Indonesian culture. Thus, the writer will discover how Sinta in the Indonesian novel retains the image of a good woman as in the original India context.

To the researcher's knowledge, *Herding the Wind* novel has been discussed by other scholars. The first research is written by Maghfiroh & Andriyanti (2021) with the title *Exploring Metaphor Use: Its Categories and Translation Strategies within the Novel Anak Bajang Menggiring Angin by Sindhunata into Herding the Wind by Joan Suyenaga*. They investigated the categories of metaphor that are used in the novel and the strategies in translating the novel from Indonesian to English version. They found out that four out of six categories of metaphor are presented in the novel. The principal metaphor in the novel is called the dead metaphor. Besides,

the writer also uses ‘metaphor to metaphor’ as the common strategy in dealing with the translation (Maghfiroh & Andriyanti, 2021).

Another research comes from Rahman et al. (2019) entitled *An Intertextual Study of the Novel of Anak Bajang Menggiring Angin by Sindhunata and the Novel of Rahvayana by Sujiwo Tejo*. In this study, they identified the intertextuality by looking at the similarities and differences in the novel *Anak Bajang Menggiring Angin* by Sindhunata as the *hipogram* and *Rahvayana* by Sujiwo Tejo. They discovered that the novel *Rahvayana* has the intertextuality with the novel *Anak Bajang Menggiring Angin* from the similarities and differences. Moreover, the intrinsic elements in the novel also play a role in the expansion and modification of the novel (Rahman et al., 2019).

A study by Mukherjee (1983) titled *The Image of Woman in Hinduism* addressed the ideal wifhood that Hindus have preserved over the years. She discussed specifically about how mythical heroines like Sita, Savitri, and Pavatri remained obedient to their spouses till death. Her study revealed that the ideal woman image is still applicable to the majority of Hindu women today. Even though that research uses the same novel, this paper is different from the previous research. In this paper, the researcher talks specifically about the character Sinta as a good woman in the *Herding the Wind* novel.

## **1.2 Field of the Study**

The field of study is literature, especially novels.

### **1.3 Scope of the Study**

There are many characters in the *Herding the Wind* novel. However, the researcher focuses only on the character of Sinta who is the main woman character. Sinta's characters are examined by looking at her portrayal as an ideal character who is desired as an ideal one.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The research questions are

1. What are Sinta's characteristics in *Herding the Wind* novel?
2. What qualifies Sinta as a good Hindu woman?

### **1.5 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are

1. To discover Sinta's characteristics in the *Herding the Wind* novel.
2. To discover what qualifies Sinta as a good Hindu woman.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The researcher attempts to give the readers a deeper understanding of how Sinta is depicted as a good woman in the *Herding the Wind* novel. This study will contribute significantly to the notion that literature can be a powerful medium for portraying an Asian woman's image. For future researchers conducting similar studies, this study may serve as both a guide and a source of data. Furthermore, this research may represent Asian women especially in the concept of Hinduism which is not very favourable for the woman herself.

## 1.7 Definition of Term

In this research, there are two main terms;

### 1. *Herding the Wind*

*Herding the Wind* is an English Version of *Anak Bajang Menggiring Angin* novel written by Sindhunata. The translation version was published in 2015 (Maghfiroh & Andriyanti, 2021). This literary novel provides the story of the great epic of *Ramayana*.

### 2. A Good Woman according to Hinduism

A woman that is considered good is the one who is a chaste wife (Mukherjee, 1983). A woman that can bring happiness to her husband. In other words, a woman should behave appropriately according to her roles in society. An expected role for men and women in society is called gender role (Myrlinda, 2020). Women have a reproductive role, while men are considered protectors.