



Men's domination cause many women become subordinated and tortured. It causes discrimination towards Arab women happening in this period. They cannot get the same rights as men such as education, job, political participation, public transportation, they cannot move freely, do not have freedom to choose what they want such as choosing life partner, continuing their study, and choosing clothing style as they intend to and so on. In addition they often get sexual and physical violence done by men. Thus, most of Arabs especially Arab women prefer to refuse men's domination which become the most powerful culture. Many women struggle to voice their rights to get the equality. They can do everything trying to change the ways of treating women in order to remove injustices. Hence, women inferiority is the result of male-dominated culture.

Actually, in pre-Islamic era, women also were regarded as the disaster caused by historical practices. They would be buried in the dirt alive since their birth in this world. In this era, Al Sheha said in his book *Women in Islam & Refutation of some Common Misconceptions* that fathers commonly became extremely angry and disgraced with the birth of a female child into their family (14). They were regarded as difficulties in life. It was also caused by most pre-Islamic religions in the Middle East; Judaism, Zoroastrianism, and Christianity. Those religions supported male-dominant attitudes and practices (Keddie 15). That case is stated in Al-qur'an Surah An-Nahl verse 59, "He hides himself from the people because of the ill of which he has been informed. Should he keep it in humiliation or bury it in the ground?"

Unquestionably, evil is what they decide”. If fathers wanted to let them alive, they would not get enough daily needs including inheritance and affection because they prefer protecting men to protecting women (Ghoffar “Jilid 5” 71-72). It was one of the sign of dishonoring women in *Jahiliyah* era (pre-Islamic era). Thus, the birth of baby girl became the case that was not expected.

Although the practice of burying baby girl alive does not exist anymore nowadays, but there are other ways to dishonor women. The case can be deeply seen through violence towards women happened in the Middle East countries such as Pakistan and Iran. Spencer and Chesler said in their book *The Violent Oppression of Women in Islam* that daughter and wife beating are routine done by Pakistani men. Over 90 percent of Pakistani wives have been struck, beaten, or abused sexually. It happens because the wives, for example, cannot cook delicious meal or cannot bear baby boy. While, in Iran, the legal age for women to marriage is nine years old. The UN (United Nations) Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Iran said that at least 48,580 girls between 10 and 14 years of age were married in 2011. This case makes the girls cannot get their rights as the children such as playing and getting good education. (5-6). Those ways become some cases of dishonoring women nowadays.

In Islam, the case of dishonoring women as stated above is not permitted. It is because Islam uses Al-Qur’an containing Allah’s commands. It is given to Prophet Muhammad pbuh (peace be upon him) to spread Islamic teachings as the guidance of

human's life. This holy book is the most perfect teaching for everyone's life because there are no doubts inside it. Allah says in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 1 "This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those conscious of Allah". The guidance is for godfearing people who obey all of Allah's instructions and avoid the forbidden deeds (Ghoffar "Jilid 1" 44-46). It is the sign that Allah gives the right paths for obedient people. Shafi also said that there is complete guidance on a single text of Qur'an (1). It means that every verse of Al-qur'an contains the good command which results the good effects for the believers. Shihab said that there are five major themes in Al-qur'an related to human's life affairs; the faith, the main needs of life, the human and society, the aspects of human's life, and the spiritual deeds (1-2). It indicates that Al-qur'an contains all teachings for human's whole life. Thus, Al-qur'an is the most appropriate source for human beings based on Allah's commands.

One of Allah's commands is the obligation towards men to protect women. As Allah says in Surah An-Nisa' verse 34, "Men are in charge of women by [right of] what Allah has given one over the other...". This verse explains that men are the leaders of women to teach them the good deeds based on Allah's instructions. They have a big responsibility to aim them to do the better things. In addition, Allah also gives more skills and strength to men, so they are proper to give a protection towards women (Ghoffar "Jilid 2" 297-300). The examples can be seen through Prophet Muhammad's ways in treating women. When the Prophet fell from his horse and some of the women also fell from their mounts, he said to his Companion: "Don't

bother about me, go and help the women" (Ahmad 227). It means that he addressed Muslims to help women first. They must be treated with kindness and consideration. He also emphasized if men have daughters, they must treat them well and must not hurt them. Allah will also save the men from the torment of Hell. Hence, Allah commands the men to treat women well by giving protection in every single situation.

Men's obligation to protect women has the clear reasons in Islamic teachings. It is because women are the noble creatures that must be honored. Al-Sheha said in his book *Women in the Shade of Islam* that Islam manages how to honor women as the wives and mothers (44). Firstly, Islam cares for the woman as a wife. Islam grants her certain rights such as accepting dowry, getting justice, getting expenditure from her husband. Secondly, Islam cares for the woman as a mother. Prophet Muhammad declared that, "Paradise is under the mother's feet". This is a symbolic representation of the fact that the pleasure, caring, respecting, and serving the mother will definitely lead us to attain Allah's pleasure and paradise (58). A mother deserves kindness, caring, good treatment, best care and service from her children. It is because mother becomes pregnant, bears, and breast feeds to them. Thus, it becomes a big glory for her to bear new generations who make the better future. Thus, women must be honored and treated well because they are the noble creatures.

Fortunately, the study of women including Muslim women has exploded nowadays. The social science literature on Muslim women is now voluminous and growing (Offenhauer 4). The literature can be used to convey certain messages of the

author; to voice women's rights. It can be the work of telling the truths and uncover something secret that must be known by all people in the world. As we know that literature can be defined as the body of writing that exists because of inherent imaginative artistic qualities (Luken 3). It means that literature has imaginative substance written by the author. However, it cannot be separated from the culture at the time that also influences literary works. Wellek said in his book *Theory of Literature* that literature is a social institution, using as its medium language, a social creation (89). The literary works also cover all parts of human life which portray the society, culture, and situation in reality. It can be seen through Jean Sasson's literary works that reveal the oppression towards women from the culture where they live regarded as Islamic teachings. Thus, the practices of women injustices can be known and understood through literary works.

Jean Sasson is one of American writer whose work mainly centers on women in the Middle East. She was born in 1950 in Troy, Alabama, United States. Most of her works are non-fiction such as *The Rape of Kuwait*, *Ester's Child*, *Mayada: Daughter of Iraq*, *Love in a Torn Land*, *Growing Up bin Laden* and so on. One of her most popular work is *The Princess Trilogy; Princess Sultana, Princess Sultana's Daughters, and Princess Sultana's Circle*. All of them are novel biography which is famous in America at the time ([ww.jeansasson.com](http://www.jeansasson.com)). Actually, the trilogy is a biography written in the voice of Princess Sultana as main character. She is the royal princess of Saudi Arabia. Sultana is not her real name. She does not use her real name

to protect her identity. She and Jean Sasson are good friends. They met when Jean was visiting Arab, so she asked her to write the novel about her life in Arab. She does not write it by herself because of her fear to her royal family. In addition, Sultana lives under the oppression of patriarchal system, so she gives a voice in getting women's rights (Sasson 9). Hence, Jean Sasson created novel biography which focused on women violence done by men's domination.

Each of novel biography *The Princess Trilogy; Princess Sultana, Princess Sultana's Daughters, and Princess Sultana's Circle* has its own concept in describing women's position in male-dominated culture, so it is interesting to analyze. Firstly, *Princess Sultana* tells us about her childhood which full of injustices rights. Her father prefers to give more affection to her only brother. Secondly, *Princess Sultana's Daughters* tells us about violence towards women when Sultana has owned three children. The harshness is faced by her friends, sisters, neighbors and female servants. It is more interesting to analyze. Thirdly, *Princess Sultana's Circle* tells us about her consistent efforts to voice women's rights in her age which is not young anymore. Then, the writer prefers to choose the second trilogy to analyze because Sultana has two focuses problems; her children and violence towards women.

The second trilogy; *Princess Sultana's Daughters* was written in 2001. It tells about the way Sultana in taking care of her children; two daughters (Maha and Amani) and one son (Abdullah). It is caused by the influences of women violence happened in Arab. On the other hand, Sultana always tries to defend women who get physical

violence or internal oppression. There are many stories about injustices of women told by her. One of them is women circumcision who attain the age of puberty. Its practice is regarded as Islamic teachings, whereas it tortures women. If it is one of Islamic teachings, they will not face the violence. In this case, the writer is interested in finding out whether the ways in treating Arab women are based on Islamic teachings or culture influences as told by Sultana through her stories. Then, the writer uses some suitable theories to make good analysis. They are cultural studies to find the background of Arabian culture in treating women, feminist critique theory to find some factors making Arab women disagree with their culture and their struggle to get the justice, and Islamic teachings through Al-qur'an and Hadits to give clarification how to treat women well. Based on the literary background stated above, the writer is really interested to analyze cultural studies in treating Arab women seen through Islamic teachings in Jean Sasson's *Princess Sultana's Daughters*.

## 1.2. Statement of Problems

Based on the background of the study explained above, I am interested in analyzing the problems, which are formulated as follows:

1. How is the background of Arabian culture in Jean Sasson's *Princess Sultana's Daughters*?
2. How does Arabian culture treat women as seen through Islamic teachings in Jean Sasson's *Princess Sultana's Daughters*?



### 1.3. Objectives of the Study

In accordance with the statement of the problem stated above, this study has two objectives that can be stated as follows:

1. To describe the background of Arabian culture in Jean Sasson's *Princess Sultana's Daughters*
2. To find out whether the implementation in treating Arab women in Jean Sasson's *Princess Sultana's Daughters* based on Islamic teachings or cultural practices.

### 1.4. Scope and Limitation

In order to prevent non-relevant problems, the study is limited to the novel of *Princess Sultana's Daughters*. The study focuses on the ways of treating Arab women reputed as Islamic teachings, but it makes them subordinated. To answer statement of problem stated above, the culture and the implementation of Islamic values become the most important points to analyze. The scope of this study is upon the stories about women in Arab told by Sultana.

### 1.5. Significance of the Study

There is some significance that will be gained through this analysis, especially in literary field. This research will help the readers in understanding the ways of treating Arab women reputed as Islamic teachings which make women subordinated described in the novel Jean Sasson's *Princess Sultana's Daughters*. In addition, this

research can be as a reference especially for students who interested in literature to understand how the culture influences literary works through cultural ideas. Other significances are going to motivate individuals interest in literature to do further analysis. Then, the readers or audience can easily understand which ways of treating women reputed as Islamic teachings or culture whether happened in the novel or the reality.

### **1.6. Method of the Study**

In this research, the writer uses qualitative method in which tries to describe and reveal whether the ways of treating Arab women are based on Islamic teachings or culture in Jean Sasson's *Princess Sultana's Daughters*. In this case, the explanation cultural ideas are necessary to explain because there are some facts reflected in the novel that need to analyze using that ideas. The writer also uses feminism as supporting theory to reveal the factors of avoiding the rules of treating women.

This research is library base. Therefore I make good use of some books including the novel itself as the primary sources and reads information of some internet sources and other sources such as magazines and journals that support this study to improve the knowledge. In presenting the analysis, I use some steps based on qualitative methods:

1. Reading the novel to get the complete and well understanding on the whole story

