CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a general description of this research. It covers background of study, research question, goal and objectives, significance to knowledge and framework of theories.

1.1 Background of the study

Fourteen centuries ago, Allah has sent Muhammad as adherence for mankind. As the last Prophet who brought the last religion, Islam. He has changed Arab's life condition by giving spirit to Muslims, so that in a short time, the prophet changed backward nation to great nation. After the death of the Prophet, the leadership was continued by Rashidun, Umayyad, Abbasid and Ottoman period, in Abbasid period brought a triumph Islam, more than entirely world controlled by Islam. Abbasid period is called "The Golden Age". Islam experienced, the great victory for Crusade, it is a war between Western and Islam which was lead by Salahuddin al-ayyubi.

After the Ottoman destroyed in March 3 1924, the power of Islam decreased. However, Islam is still the second largest religion in the world. Today, Islam is considered as a "extremist", "terrorist", or "fundamental" religion.

The greatness of Islam has made me interested to raise about Islam's history. One of the authors about Islam history is Karen Armstrong.

Actually, Karen Armstrong is the author of numerous works on comparative religion, she also wrote many essays about Islam**.** One of her books is *Islam : A Short History*, in the essay is written that Islam one of the greatest of the world religions through the 1500 years of its existence. Moreover, she also emphasizes her work on the clash between Islam and Western, such us Western considered all Muslims are fundamentalist, extremist, as a militant Islam, Fatalism of Islam. Certainly, it has discredited Islam**.** Further, based on Armstrong's books reader group which is taken from Indonesian blogger, there is view that Armstrong is neutral person especially to religion, however she had experienced as a Roman Catholic nun for seven years.

This makes me interested to know Karen Armstrong's point of view toward Islam and to find out her reason in raising the topic of Islam VS Western as the dominant topic in her essay.

In conclusion, I make *skripsi* entitled ***"Karen Armstrong's Point of view about Islam VS Western's clash in Essay Islam: A Short History".***

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background mentioned above, the problems to be investigated in this study can be formulated into the following questions:

1. Why is Islam VS Western dominant topic raised by Karen Armstrong in essay *Islam : A Short History*?

2. What is Karen Armstrong's Point of view to Islam in her Essay *Islam : A Short History*?

1.3 Goals and Objectives

There are two major purposes and I expect to find out as the answer for the problem mentioned in the research questions in this study as follows:

1. Find out why Islam and Western dominant topic is raised by Karen Armstrong in essay *Islam : A Short History*
2. Find out the Karen Armstrong's point of view to Islam in essay *Islam: A Short History.*

1.4 Significance to Knowledge

This analysis is expected to contribute to Faculty of Letters in Indonesia University of Computer. Then, it is also expected to be a reference or a source of information for the next student of English department. Personally, the analysis of Karen Armstrong's point of view in her essay is useful for me that I should be careful to talk or describe of words, because everyone has own perception. In addition, the research is expected to give comparator information about discourse to Islam. Today, the discourse is more negative disposed to Islam. It is influenced by dominant discourse and eventually it has discredited Islam. Therefore, I expect this research give information that Islam .

1.5 Framework of the Theories

This research attempts to analyze Karen Armstrong's point of view as the data from the essay *Islam: A Short History*.

Hence, I use Michael Foucault theories. Firstly, I will begin with the concept of discourse. In Foucault's perspective discourse is not as a series of words or propositions in the text, but something that produces something else, there are produce knowledge, power and truth. In addition, in his concept asserts that the discourse is divided into: dominant discourse and marginalized discourse.

Secondly, according to Foucault, knowledge and power are intimately linked together through discourse *"discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power… Discourse transmits and produces power"* (Foucault, 1990, 101).

At the same time discourse produces power. Then, discourses produce new knowledge and ways of thinking. And finally, according to Foucault power will produce the truth. Certainly right or wrong is determined by power. In addition, to find out the Karen Armstrong's point of view, I analyze with biographical approach by Wellek & Warren. They stated that:

> *"Biographical approach is a systematic study of the process of creativity. Subject creator considered the origin of literature, the meaning of a literary work is thus relatively similar to the purpose, intent, message, and even certain goals the author"(* Wellek & Warren ,1962: 75)

Regarding to the quotation above, Wellek & Warren emphasize that biographical approach is a systematical study of the author creative process, for making origin literary work, it means as author purpose