

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Literature and society are closely related because some conflicts told in literary works are a representation of what happened in society.

According to Sapardi (1978: 1) literature is a social institution that uses language as a media. The language itself is a social creation. Literature presents a picture of life, and life itself is a social reality. Literary men express what they see and do, and they often convey social conditions in literary works. As many writers are inspired by social conditions, literature can be said as a portrait of life. As a portrait of life, literary works can also picture the existence of oppression toward workers in workplace, especially in the fashion journalism.

According to Nurulia Fitri (2016), fashion journalism is not newly born lately, but it has grown since the beginning of the 20th century. Its main purpose is to report current trends, or instead create new trends through news articles, columns, photos or fashion spreads, even critics. Suzy Menkes, a fashion critic from *International Herald Tribune* said that writing journalism about fashion should have a clear and interesting subject. The making is complemented by extensive research and information retrieval, and always implements a good journalistic standard.

Growth of fashion was increase rapidly when the non-print media such as television to the internet developed and raised the topic of fashion.

The production of fashion media incorporates not only fashion writers, fashion critics or fashion reporters but also other positions supporting their work. As in many other industries, the ones who own the capital will try to make profit as much as possible which in turn leads to oppression on the part of the workers.

Even popular culture also adapts fashion journalism to novel form and to big screen through films such as *The Devil Wears Prada*.

The Devil Wears Prada novel written by Lauren Weisberger in 2003. The novel has interesting conflict about boss and worker that can make the reader interested. Which starts with all about the world of fashion and beautiful models to where a conflict between characters take place. *The Devil Wears Prada* became best seller and gained popularity among their readers and got nominations in Academy Award. The success of both of them brought the attention of the global audience to the power and glamour of fashion magazine.

From Lauren's novel, it is also known that magazine becomes the most important media in promoting products and delivering ideas of glamorous style. Runaway is not only used to promote products of new fashion or new style but also to give the image of modern women and glamorous life. In *The Devil Wears Prada*, Miranda is used to represent the power of woman in fashion magazine. Miranda is described as a woman who always dominates her worker especially Andrea Sachs. Andrea Sachs represent a down to earth girl from a small city. She represent the condition of woman who concern more about intelligence and freedom. However, as a boss, Miranda tries to overcome Andrea and her workers with Miranda's ideology. Miranda also changes Andrea's personal life and makes

Andrea's life is like in hell. The domination of Miranda to the life of her workers bring me the idea of oppression which is done by the power in workplace.

Readers can see the portrait of life between characters in *The Devil Wears Prada* novel. *The Devil Wears Prada* depicts the lives of two different female characters. This novel story about a young woman (Andrea Sach) who looks for a career status in a fashion magazine. She struggle to be a good assitant for Miranda Priestly. A million women will kill to get Andrea's job and it makes Andrea feels lucky to have this job. The story runs in her activities and impossible missions from her boss. This also happened in other workers such a Emily Charlton. They must be ready whenever and wherever if Miranda need them. Although it is not in workers working hours. Miranda asks them to do anything that she wants even that is impossible to do.

By looking at the phenomenon that appears in *The Devil Wears Prada's* novel, the writer can see that the picked society is people who have high position in Runway fashion magazine, one of the most influential magazines in America. The society portrays how money takes control. We can see that the high position in workplace can determine others' live is described throughout the novel. Staff are mostly subject to their boss and they are oppressed to meet their boss' demands. Such a relationship between staff's and their boss is conveyed by the relationship between Andrea Sach and Miranda Priestly.

The relationship between Runaway workers and Miranda Prietly is a relationship that is not generally seen as a boss and employees. Even though being a employee

of Miranda Priestly is a dream of girls all over the world in the novel. It seems that being a worker in a fashion magazine that is famous with the world of glamorous and life style that fashionable is a perfect job. They think that they can have a beautiful and perfect life if they join in Runaway magazine. In fact, a beautiful life that they dream was not felt by Andrea Sach. It is happened because the world of fashion has changed the minds of young girls in the world, including workers in Runaway magazine. The world that traps young girls by offering a life that is fashionable, glamorous and also luxurious will make their life beautiful. That makes them ambitious to race to get a job in the fashion world, Runaway magazine. Actually they do not realize that there is something excessive that the boss does to her workers.

The emergences of this phenomenon in *The Devil Wears Prada* novel make the writer interested analyze the novel. This novel is interesting to analyze because it talks about new genre in women's literature. It is also contains new topic about career women, and fashion, instead of love and marriage. It also contains oppression in work place which becomes the main issue in this research. The writer see there is a symptom that unwittingly shows an oppression of workers done by a Miranda Priestly in the novel. The author also wants to publish that what happens in an actual novel is the representation of what is happening in the society in the real life. In this study, the writer interested in proving that behind the glamour of the company there are parties who are oppressed which happen in *The Devil Wears Prada* novel.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the background of the study that has been explained in this research. The thesis will serve analysis inside the novel, focuses on: How is oppression towards workers portrayed in *The Devil Wears Prada* novel?

1.3 Research Objective

As explained above, the novel shows indications that oppression happen in the Runaway workers of the novel. To explore more about them, the research has purpose to reveal oppression toward workers occur in *The Devil Wears Prada* novel.

1.4 The Use of Study

In doing this research, the writer does expect that the case of *The Devil Wears Prada* novel. The uses of this research are :

1.4.1 Theoretical Use

This study is expected to give a better understanding to other researcher in another research with the same context such as theme, theory or object of studying literary works especially in the novel of *The Devil Wears Prada*.

This study also is expected that in the future can be one of source references in analyzing literary works about social problem and condition.

1.4.2 Practical Use

This study is expected to be such an inspiration for academic practice especially for analyze the social problem happen in the society through

literary work. This study also expected to support and give contribution for the readers who are interested in analyzing novel by using sociological concept . Hopefully student will consider more about the values of literary works.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The subject of the study will focus on workers of Runaway magazine who exist in *The Devil Wears Prada* novel such as Andrea Sach and Emily Charlton. Especially Andrea Sach who is one of main character in the novel which makes the story develop. Not only Andrea Sach, all of workers also involved in this analysis to prove what Miranda done is the oppression toward workers. This study use sociological approach and Irish Young theory of oppression to find five faces of oppression in *The Devil Wears Prada*.