

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Literary work is a fictional world structure, meaning that the reality in literary works is a fictional reality that is not the same as the real-world reality (Noor, 2009). Wellek and Warren in Noor (2009) say that literary work is a community institution with the medium of language, language itself is the creation of society. Therefore, most elements in literary works are social, namely the norms that grow in society. Literary works also represent life and life is a social reality. In writing, every literary work contains structural elements, which are a design framework that unites various film elements and presents the filmmaker's way of thinking. Structure exists in all forms of art. In the film, he binds actions and ideas into a unified whole (Shintiani, 2011).

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, it is impossible to neglect film as a semi-textual genre both influenced by and exerting influence on literature and literary criticism. Film is predetermined by literary techniques; conversely, literary practice developed particular features under the impact of film (Klarer, 2004). Film's distinctive modes of presentation, such as camera angle, editing, montage, and slow and fast motion, frequently parallel aspects of literary texts or are capable of being explained within the context of a textual framework. It is possible to conduct an analysis of film by drawing on the methods of literary criticism. This is because film criticism is closely related to the traditional approaches of textual studies. Despite the fact that film has its own characteristics and terminology.

Literary works besides novels, poetry, short stories, and dramas are also films. Film is a form of mass communication in which the delivery of messages is transferred from visual elements and audio elements. These two elements are combined into a medium to convey entertainment, social, educational, and commercial information. Because of that, films have creative abilities on describing the existing reality with imaginary images that can provide entertainment, reflection, and reflection for the audience or the people who witness it (Sumarno, 1996).

The phenomenon of rapid film development occurs not only in countries with large film industries, whose film industries are already global. but also in countries that are just starting their film industry. The rapid development of the film industry in America has succeeded in making many quality films, one of which is the film entitled *Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn)*.

The film tells the story of a woman named Harley Quinn (Margot Robbie) who recently broke up with her boyfriend, Joker. Quinn, who previously had power because she was beside the Joker, is now wanted by many criminals. Offering a uniquely female perspective on the genre, Cathy Yan's film takes its inspiration from the "*Birds of Prey*" comic series, which assembles a super group of characters from around the DC Comics universe. This film depicts Harley Quinn, who is the Joker's ex-girlfriend and joins a group of women superheroines consisting of Black Canary, Huntress, Renee Montoya and Cassandra Cain and trying to fight for women's emancipation in Gotham City. This superhero group has the same mission, which is to defeat Black Mask, a crime lord in Gotham City who threatened the safety of a little girl from the group, Cassandra Cain. The form of emancipation that is being fought for can be seen from the conflict resolution carried out by the main character who is treated unfairly and belittled.

Birds of Prey (And One Harley Quinn's Fantabulous Emancipation) is the film's full title. The issue of women's emancipation narrated in this film from the beginning to the end of the film is shown especially by the Birds of Prey women's group. Therefore, the researcher analyzes the characterization of the Birds of Prey women's group, which consists of Harley Quinn, Black Canary, Huntress, Renee Montoya, and a girl being chased by Black Mask named Cassandra Cain, and how they show emancipation.

The character in the film must have its own appeal to the audience. The uniqueness of the traits and characteristics distinguishes it from ordinary people. In this case, the film *Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn)* features an unusual character. Panuti added that characters are fictional individuals who experience events or treatments in various story events (Panuti,

1988). The main character acts as a person who is outside his character. The main character is the character whose story is prioritized. According to Burhan (2002), he is the one who is told the most, both as the perpetrator of the incident and as the subject of the incident.

Determining the main character in a film's story can be found in those who are often involved in the scene. The character most related to other characters. As well as these characters who often appear in storytelling, or are even talked about by other characters. They are very influential in developing the plot of the story. Character or disposition according to Asmara (1979) is the overall appearance of the characteristics or soul of a character in the story of the play. This character is created by the playwright, which is manifested in his appearance by the actor or actress who plays these characters.

The main character in a film can be more than one person. Each character always has the characteristics or characteristics of each. These traits or characteristics are what make each character unique. Therefore, the depiction of the character's character indirectly the audience can describe themselves. The characterization in the film cannot be separated from the script writer who tries to make the characters play roles according to the theme.

Character is a depiction or storytelling of characters who are depicted through their behavior. Character can also be seen from the depiction of the character by the author, who describes the character through speech and appearance of the character. The characters analyzed in this study are the characterizations of the Birds of Prey women's group members in the film *Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn)*.

The struggle of feminists for gender equality, certainly does not lead to the justification that women are allowed to carry out physical violence. This then caused a polemic because it gave a different picture of the female character in a film. If so far many women have been depicted as victims of harassment, violence, and various other injustices, then the image of strong, brave, and possessive female characters in this film gives a different color, so this film is interesting to research.

In this research, researcher will discuss the characterization of each member of the Birds of Prey women's group and how emancipation is shown in the film *Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn)*. To analyze this, the researcher will explain the background of the problems faced by each member of the Birds of Prey women's group. This is necessary because an overview of the background of the problem will be very helpful in knowing how a group of women is formed in the film. The impact of social problems also has a social influence that has an impact on individuals (Faujiah et al., 2021). So, social problems in a film can affect the characterization of the characters in it.

Wellek and Warren in their book entitled *Theory of Literature* (1976) to understand how the actions and attitudes of the characters change or develop. According to this theory, static characterization leaves no significant changes. While characterization is developing, it is having permanent changes in some aspects of the character.

In this research, the researcher states several previous studies to facilitate the research process in this study. Sources used include thesis and journals. The researcher refers to previous studies that have a topic similar to this research. The first previous study is a journal titled *Pesan Emansipasi Wanita dalam Film (Analisis Semiotika pada Film Birds of Prey)* by Ratna Meynur Rahmawati from Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya (UNTAG). Similarities in this paper are the same object *Film Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn)*. In this paper, it is told about Harley Quinn's life struggle as the main connotation. Not satisfied with the justice system in her city, Montoya and his friends form their own group to combat crime. Myths Women can be powerful beings who seek justice for equality. They are belittled, Detective Montoya who is disrespected in his office, Black Canary who is restrained by his boss, and Huntress who seeks justice for past wounds. In the end they can prove their independence.

The second previous study is a journal titled *Analysis of The Meaning of Masculinity in Birds of Prey* by Naomi S Hutabarat, Flori Mardiani Lubis, and Oky Oxygentri from Universitas Singaperbangsa Karawang. This journal has a common object, the film *Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One*

Harley Quinn). Based on the discussion stipulated by the researcher using Roland Barthes's semiotic theory in the previous chapter on the representation of the value of Harley's masculinity in the film *Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn)* can be concluded that a masculine.

The third previous study is entitled *The Application of Girl Power Through Third-Wave Feminism in Birds of Prey* by Angelica L. Setianto from Universitas Kristen Petra. The film *Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn)* represents Girl Power as a part of third-wave feminism. The highlighted qualities that represent Girl Power in each of the main characters are about how they embrace their identity, uniqueness, and differences.

The fourth previous study titled *Representasi Pos Feminisme dalam Film Suicide Squad* by Dodo Septian Harrimas, Gatut Priyowidodo, and Ido Prijana Hadi from Universitas Kristen Petra. *Suicide Squad* film has a postfeminist content. In this research, the researcher analyzed John Fiske's semiotic codes which were divided into Reality Level, Representation, and Ideology Level. At the level of reality, the social codes found in the *Suicide Squad* film are appearance, costume, makeup, environment, behavior, movement, dialogue, and expression. At the representation level, the social codes found are camera, music and lighting. Meanwhile, at the ideological level, the social code found is postfeminist ideology.

This fact becomes the thoughts of researcher to analyze the characterization of members of the *Birds of Prey* women's group and how to show their feminism. Based on what has been described, the researcher created the title *The Impact of Social Problems on The Characterization of Birds of Prey Women's Group Members in Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn) (2020)*. This research differs from previous research in that it provides a characterization of each member of the *Birds of Prey* women's group, besides the heritage of the problems they are having. Because of these problems, the members of the group work together as a team of fighting injustice, however it is considered to be a form of feminism.

1.2 Research Questions

The main problem in this research is about the characterization and emancipation shown of Birds of Prey women's group members in the film *Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn)*, the questions can be summed up as follows:

- 1) How is characterization in the members of the Birds of Prey women's group?
- 2) How do the members of the Birds of Prey women's group show their emancipation?

1.3 Research Objective

In this research, the characterization analysis of Harley Quinn's Birds of Prey women's group in *Birds of Prey* have several purposes, namely:

- 1) To describe the characterization of the characters from Harley Quinn's Birds of Prey women's group who appeared in the film *Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn)*
- 2) To describe the emancipation shown by the members of the women's group in the film *Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn)*

1.4 Research Significance

The author considers that this research can be useful theoretically and practically.

Theoretically, this research can provide enrichment of linguistic knowledge, especially in the field of characterization of a group in the film *Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn)*.

Practically, the writer hopes that this research will be an additional reference for readers who are interested in characterization. Also, this research is expected to provide practical benefits for English Literature students, especially those who are interested in literary studies.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

Social Problem : According to Soerjono Soekanto that social problems are a discrepancy between elements of culture or society, which endangers the life of social groups.

Characterizations : According to Syd Field that characters are an essential internal basis of a scenario. Characters are the mainstay, sharing the scenario's heart, soul, and nervous system.

Emancipation : Joanne Hollows explained that emancipation is a symbol of strength for every woman to be free from oppression, confinement, backwardness, and the lack of dignity that binds women.

Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn) : Cathy Yan's film takes its inspiration from the "*Birds of Prey*" comic series, which assembles a super group of characters from around the DC Comics universe

