

Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 Background of Study

Literature usually define as something that never real, fiction, unusual word¹. Literature in its existence is related to the condition of one place, culture and the stigma that refers an action of discrediting than other science or other's knowledge. Terry Eagleton in his essay "Introduction: What is Literature?" said that literature has distinction from any other subject, major in human science, the distinct between fact and fiction are vague and debatable as long as human live². This image is discriminated literature than news for example. News which has rigor method than literature can serve the fact without reduce the substance itself.

Meanwhile, roman that retelling history in the past from live to death with the author perspective is categorized as false truth. Beside, someone who researched about the past like condition, social value, what was important thing in the past outside literary boundaries such as wrote a history World War as today is called a "fact" rather than "fiction". In addition it can not be said that it was an uncreative and unimaginative writing.

Although, there are various definition about (L)iterature and (l)iterature also between factual or fictional to define—it contain between (L)iterature with L capital or without capital—have implication which are transforms and intensifies ordinary laguage, deviates systematically from everyday speech (texture, rythm, resonance, and delivering meaning), and creative,

¹ Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: an introduction*. Blackwell Publishing: UK, 1983.

² According to Eagleton, in English late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, they made the distinction between fact and fiction. Such as Gibbon who written the historical truth, or even the authors of Genesis. Perhaps, for some people it can be categorized as 'fact' and the other's as fiction.

imaginative³. In consequence Literature can not be defined as one as proper definition like natural science which using rigor methodology, observation, assumption and burden of proof.

In same essay, John M. Ellis has argued that the term literature is operating in the opposite for any kind of writing in every individual has different type of “values”. Literature also can associate as “empty” sort of definition”. It has privilege studies area, and it is unusual explanation comparing to another science; the object itself can not determine. Literature in Western as short general sense is everything that is written, and practicing language in writing⁴.

Furthermore, it appears the problem if someone trying to give ‘definition’. He said that there were many thinkers who want to give the only definition but there were people who denied it⁵. The reason why they denied everytime the thinkers want to give his argument is because there was no distinction between descriptive definition about literature and also evaluative definition—searching for an ontology (essence) for general people—not rarely they combined between the standarization while forgetting the condition of reader(s). Sometimes what is categorized as ‘literature’ for some places can not be said as universal truth, because it is also effected by the political-culture’s one nation and its legitimate.

However, literature is the condition of its situation, condition, and the part of culture at that time. Luxemburg said because literature is not a noun like a stuff, object—it is the condition of giving a ‘name’ to the thing in the part of culture. Because literature born in one of culture every human—it also can not be said that every text is ‘literature’—furthermore the character of literature is not only the text or even communicative language at temporal moment. Furthermore,

³ See. Ibid., page. 2

⁴ Teeuw, A. 1984. *Sastra dan Ilmu Sastra*. Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya. Page. 21.

⁵ Jan van Luxemburg, Mieke Bal, Willem G. Westeijin. 1992. *Pengantar Ilmu Sastra*. Jakarta: PT Gramedia. Page. 3—4.

literature is complex symptom of life which demand respect toward a meaning whose can not be defined merely physics object and has no value between social condition in real and the condition in literary works. It contains the process of judging, creationing character fictionality in its text whether it is such a radical movement to loss the systems of language, even its equivalence⁶.

In addition, literature is an element of creating, producing accordance to Luxemburg and also depends on each reader(s) whether after reading literature which is not specifically written about -- sometimes it can arouse the consciousness in real life. Literature lies between possibility and wisdom to notice *other(s)-world*. Regarding to literature can make ourselves become more wisdom to perceive the world—every characters, plot, theme, can make a relation between *the-other* and I as a reader(s). Even, Germany's philosophers, Immanuel Kant emphasized that every experience (aesthetics) must be reconstructed—and its effect is to explain untold story about *world*—to spread the benefit of someone who reading literature to the society⁷.

From explanation above, literature also has genres consist of legend, drama, poem, short-stories, novel/roman are closer with our daily life and also with its (fictional) possibility of real world. In this case, the writer takes prose in the form of novel as the object of thesis *The Picture of Dorian Gray* written by Oscar Wilde⁸ — a fictional narrative prose that contain sequence of events and variety of reading or interpretation this work. In addition, *Oxford Learner's Pocket Dictionars* explains that novel is an adjective as new and unusual (idea), and also as a noun that it is long written story⁹.

⁶ Translated. *Pengantar Ilmu Sastra*, Jan van Luxemburg, Mieke Bal, and Willem G. Weststeijn (1992: 9—12).

⁷ See. *Ibid.* Page 9—13.

⁸ See. Oscar Wilde. *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. HarperCollinsPublishers: London, 2010.

⁹ See. Oxford Team. Oxford University Press: London, 2008

Meanwhile, in “Dunia, Teks, dan (Sang) Kritikus”, Edward Said explained that modern literature conceived a few of author that consciously appears to insert explicit situation that suppose to be real, even the description situation. Such as Gerard Manley Hopkins, Oscar Wilde, and Joseph Conrad¹⁰.

The whole novel is not merely about the beauty in used vocabulary that will gain support by an aesthetic people usually for those who affirm art is for art’s sake as representative of English in that day. It’s time to autocritic toward what occurs even to Father itself. According to Masuoka, Wilde’s project is an offer to the structure of rigid classes and also middle classes English romanticism¹¹, (but also showing *differance* the whole novel as *traces*.

It means, there is no such a final meaning (closure) as the full presence (metaphysics transcendental). It is not only can define with one final reading—literary work has double meaning based on horizon of readers¹². Meanwhile Simon Critchley gives the steps of what is the important in deconstructive ‘method’. Critchley underlined the named of ‘deconstruction’ closer with *double meaning* or *polysemy*. In the one hand, it is double reading that will give a patient, rigorous—knowing the corpus of the author as a whole and being acquainted with its original context and its dominant context of reception. On the other hand it is a moment of a double reading that normally think of as an interpretation—in a space between commentary and

¹⁰ Edward Said. *Dunia, Teks, dan [sang] Kritikus*. Translated by Sunaryono Basuki Ks. 2012. Page 48

¹¹ See. Mitsuoharu Matsuoka. 2003. *Aestheticism and Social Anxiety in The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Page. 81.

¹² See. John D. Caputo. 1999. “An Exorbitant Method” in *Deconstruction In A Nutshell*. Page. 79—81. Caputo said the possibility to do deconstruction is passing through the classical discipline, always distance between what the author intends or means to say and what the author does not commands. Thus, reading in term of Derrida must produce text. Derrida according to Caputo said that won’t give a chance for the reader in their first reading become the last word. On the contrary, reading musth in the opposite way, removing any borders to trespass.

interpretation—brought to ‘blind spots’ that author ambiguity as a movement of contradiction with intending claim and meaning¹³.

The writer chooses Oscar Wilde’s novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* is because as we can see above it is his greatest work that published in 1890 and also variety of experience within characters this novel. The writers attempt in this researchers is trying to re-reading novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and won’t to return to the totalization of conclusion like the previous researchers had done. It will open to the new meaning and can give another knowledge that meaning will always the-Other.

This prose since from the first time attempting the writer to finish not quite long-paged novel. It began from the first time Basil met Dorian and asking him to become someone to get painted, after Basil made his arts, he refused his desire to attend the art exhibition. Because, he won’t all over the world know who is the man that painted by Basil. After that, his great friend(s), Lord Henry came to visit his friend’s house and wondered why Basil did not attend that event.

“Not send it to anywhere? My dear fellow, why? Have you any reasons? What odd chaps you painters are! You do anything in the world to gain a reputation. [...] A portrait like this would set you far above all the young men in England, and make the old men quite jealous, if old men are ever capable of any emotion.” Said Lord Henry to Basil (2010: 2)

Thus, Basil tell the truth about his relationship with Dorian, he thought he has something that can not be explained while painted Dorian Gray and he can not absence to see whether

¹³ See. Simon Critchley, Derrida: *the reader* in Derrida legacies: literature and philosophy (Routledge, 2008). For further movement look at Derrida’s reading ‘supplement’ on Rousseau, ‘*pharmakon*’ on Plato, and ‘*Geist*’ on Heidegger.

Dorian in real life or even in his arts. According to Basil, he gave his soul to Dorian's picture and Dorian itself affected his new way of making arts, and offering new mode of style.

There are several researcher that had done in exploring or analyzing *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. One of researches is Mitsuaru Matsuoka (2003) from University of Nagoya who analyzed social anxiety in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. In her argument said that Oscar Wilde is a man who appreciate aestheticism and his work associated into the movement of "art for art's sake". Furthermore, the aesthetic movement said Mitsuaru is a movement that against toward Victorian or revolution industry that has the same of form in art and it is such a movement to rebel toward ugly products manufactured by machines in the Industrial Revolution and reduced the concept of "beauty"¹⁴.

This argument also appears in *indoprogress* journal that published on 5 July 2013 and strengthen the reading of Wilde's works. Iqra Anugrah said in social aspect Wilde's criticized moral value of middle class-upper class, and about false optimist and sexual preference. In that time where Victorian Era has forbid the homosexuality and those who dont obey will be judged by the government and get prisoned.

Aisya Rizka (2015) University of Dipenegoro had researched *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. She focused on the psychology of characters Dorian Gray, Basil Hallward, Lord Henry Wotton. In a result Aisya said that there is factor from the outside that can affect the sexual orientation in this novel. She argued that there is pshychological condition that has impact of the role of characters, following The Id that only looking for pleasure and does not care about morality, Ego is the reality of society in this novel after Dorian remains young but he violates the

¹⁴ See. Mitshuaru Masuoka. 2003. *Aestheticism and Social Anxiety in The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Page 77—78.

rules and society take such an inrespect toward Dorian. Meanwhile, superego is represent a moral aspect such as people surrounding Dorian and constructed idea of beauty that comes from Basil who pictured him and Henry who always interrupts Dorian's mind.

These are the stability of text and containing authority and repress every presence of metaphysics. Otherwise stability of concept can not present about the truth within the legitimate of author and some of researcher. Because the death of author refers to the position of subject with an opening system of interpretation.¹⁵

Beside, topic of this novel is talking about man and man, man and woman, and the position of which one is dominated other(s) (binary opposition). Thus, following these representative of idea's the position to dominant interpretation which are talking about moralism, each characters affected themselves. It will lead us--if only once reading affected to our interpretation about this novel--except using another theory to analyse it will be showing of what can not be shown. After using derridean analyse, the common sense of *The Picture Of Dorian Gray* will loss because of the way of reading in deconstruction that to show binary opposition which one is in status quo while the other is being violent or repressed and it is important to open a new way of reading in literary works *The Picture Of Dorian Gray*.

The writer chooses theory of Deconstruction which come from a phenomenal philosophers in 20th. Derrida's works is known as (inter)textuality, about text which gives a contra argument for those modern thinker, especially in his modern era. Derrida is a France philosophers who argue that statement in the name of Author of literary works that reading must always aim at a certain relationship, unperceived by the writer, between what he commands and

¹⁵ Roland Barthes. 1997. *Image Music Text*. London: Fontana Press. Page 146--148

what he does not command of the patterns of the language he uses—this is not quantitative distribution of weakness or of force, but a signifying structure that critical reading should produce¹⁶.

Regarding text above, a (literary) text in perspective of Derrida would be presented with variety meaning and the text become so complex. Meaning (interpretation) is merely not final but openly to the outside. Therefore, interpretation of meaning is not final but on process. Deconstruction affirms ambiguity, and defy the possibility. And gave an argument toward rationalism which had an ambition that everything is possible to be known.

According to *Of Grammatology*¹⁷ Derrida gave us the movements of deconstruction that don't destroy structures from the outside. If deconstruction came from the outside it will not work out, or reaching out the problem of totalization—except inhabiting those structures and operating from the inside, borrowing strategic and economic resources of subversion from the old structure [...] deconstruction always in a certain way falls prey to its own work.

Gayatri Spivak has also same statement while she did a long written-preface related to *Of Grammatology*. She was the one who deliver the readers briefly to the full-written of Derrida. His works is to find the structure and relate to the writing. Beside, writing in narrow sense can conceive: author over interpreter. Writing is not merely “writing” but rather wider definition to an entire structure of investigation—it has no the general structure of ‘writing’ because it is the absence of the author—but his absence in general sense in this kind of “writing” is refers to presence—the thing itself always escapes.

¹⁶ See. Derrida. 1976. *Of Grammatology*. Translated by Gayatri C. Spivak. Page 158.

¹⁷ Ibid., page 24.

“It is this longing for a center, an authorizing pressure, that spawns hierarchized oppositions. The superior term belongs to presence and the logos; the inferior serves to define its status and mark a fall.”¹⁸

Based on that summarize story, the writer want to analyze with deconstructive method in reading text *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. This approach is kind to investigate the text into different interpretative. Deconstruction will withdraw the interpretation (for example the moral of characters based on socio-condition, hedonism as its appears in each characters and refers to the act of author Oscar Wilde itself)--gives the effect to the subject (characters) related to the social condition and bring to the radicalization about subjectivity in modern ages and patriarchy about the-Self.

The writer's assume that every character is interconnected each other(s) to the system of order, politic, etc. It can be seen wherever there is someone who dominate other—superior and sometime bring the good condition or bad condition because of the assumption that superior than other and the other has no place and regulated, followed the systems.

1.2 Identification Of Problem

The topic of literature is complex and there many kind of definition about it, literature is an empty definition, it also depends on condition of one place, but it also accepted as unusual word than the daily activities and can bring the aestheticism. Besides, it can associate to other discourse like politic, social science, philosophy. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* in novel is chosen because there are many interpretation in reading of this novel, for example, this novel tells about

¹⁸ Ibid., page lxix

the condition of politic in England, how important to reach the beauty in condition that forces to work hard, or even the psychology of each character that can affect the sexuality. However, there are a lot of possibility to find another meaning in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, the reader can investigate from the approach by the superior character to doctrine a perspective the other character, or even to classification which good character and bad character because the text is not final like the stuff or thing at the hand.

In this study, the writer analyses deconstruction on binary opposition of character in that novel. Novel is important for readers, because novel can bring to the other places, can activate the imagination, and novel will teach the readers a moral messages. Moreover, conversation in the novel or the narration can affect the psychology of reader and can give the reader a new vocabulary so the reader will gain a knowledge from the uncommon word that remains in their memory.

However, the problem in some readers when they are reading some novel, for example *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, they will depends on who is talking that novel and unconsciously they will accept that meaning. Besides, one thing to ensure the reader to find out the meaning is not depends on someone, because meaning are associating with the reader's knowledge. Thus, meaning must be accepted as the way a reader in perceive the novel.

1.3 Limitation Of The Study

To produce an optimal research, the authors limit the issues to be discussed only in the literary works and the theory of deconstruction related with binary opposition with few concept supplement, the definition of subject.

1.4 Research Question

According to the background of the study, the writer tries to identify the problem as follows:

1. How are the plot, and characters in novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*?
2. How does deconstructive binary opposition of those characteristic and plot in novel *The picture of Dorian Gray*?

1.5 Objective of the Study

Based on statements problem above, the objective of the study can be derived as follows:

1. To describe few concept of deconstruction's idea
2. To deliver how is subject being constructed by social agreement (arbitrer) and also had impact to its subject.
3. To describe deconstruction characters on the novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Generally, the significances of the study are to expand the knowledge of the readers. From statement above, the writer thought that significances are important to improve its works. Then there are some significances of the study as follows:

1. For The Reader

This paper can give knowledge about theory deconstruction itself and deconstruction characters of novel *The Picture Of Dorian Gray* By Oscar Wilde for English Department Pasundan University students and can give motivation, experiences, for someone who wants

continue to produce a new discourse for their research. This only an introduction for amount of possibilty in the future and not the final discourse.

2. For the next Researcher

The writer's hope to this paper for reader is that we can see many things with different angle, can be read as a *text* that surrounds us. This paper also can be used at library collection, guidance, reference for English Department Pasundan University students, for material assesment or similar research for comparasion, give an ease reading to some students who interest in this literary topic and can help them to understands in short way.