

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of background of the study, statements of research question, objective of the study, significances of the study, scope and limitation of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

History is one of the big event in the world. Every country has the history in the past. The WorldWar II was the big history in the world and never forgotten. The war involved 2 sides between German and Russian. Usually, the war give the bad impact for the country, especially society. In other hand, the big history also inspires the author to write the story about history in the literature and become the amazing history fiction which interpreted from the real condition at that time in the other version.

Literary work is not always telling about love or experiences but there are a lot of literary work tell about the representation of the real history. “Like literature, literary theory is always the product or effect of historical condition.” (Castle, 2007:10). It means that literary work is the mirror of historical condition that describe the real situation at that time in literary work and it can be analyzed by the literature theory.

The history about World War II is one of the example to be the theme of literary work by the author. The latest novel which tells about world war is *Salt*

to the Sea, a novel written by Lithuanian-American writer named Ruta Sepetys in 2016. According to her biography in the website author organization by the title *Ruta Sepetys*, she is an International writer about historical fiction and #1 New York Times bestseller, international bestseller, and winner of the Carnegie Medal. Her awards include the Carnegie Medal (2017), Goodreads Choice Award for Best Young (2016), Golden Kite Award for Fiction (2012, 2017), Audie Award for Young Adult (2017). Her first novel under the title *Between Shades of Gray* (2011). The other novel of Ruta Sepetys are *Out of the Easy* (2013), and *Salt to the Sea* (2016). Her novel *Between Shades of Gray* and *Salt to the Sea* have been adapted into a film.

The *Salt to the Sea* is her latest novel that accept four awards, such as: Goodreads Choice Awards Best Young Adult, Carnegie Medal, and Golden Kite Award for Fiction, and Audie Award for Young Adult. This novel gives the information about Nazi's hidden disaster *Wilhelm Gustloff* at 1945. The war explains the condition of the society under the power of Nazi and Stalin. It makes the reader understand the feeling of the main characters in the novel. The conflicts about disaster, family, friend, secret, love, and the real condition of society in the era of World War II. Although, this novel is not being written in the World War II era, but the story is well-arranged, amazing, and interesting plot. The author has researched and interviewed some of people who live in the war's era about the story that has been hidden by Nazi.

The *Salt to the Sea* is the latest of historical fiction by Ruta Sepetys which takes the background of World War II. It tells about how the main characters

try to survive and get freedom from the war by using the big ship namely *Wilhelm Gustloff*. A Story take a setting on the road in the German winter 1945. Additionally, the story is the interpretation of the big hidden disaster at Wilhem Gustloff in 1945. In the other hand, the story describes the distress condition of society when they survive to go to the *Wilhelm Gustloff's* ship. The novel tends to talk about four main characters, such as: Joana, Florian, Emilia, and Alfred. Joana Vilkas is one of the main character and she take a roll of the story. She is a Lithuanian's nurse and refugee who was allowed to resettle in Germany since (1941), Florian Beck is a former art from Prussia who has secret about stolen from the Nazi's, Emilia is a pregnant teenager from Poland. Alfred is a Nazi's soldier who love Nazi and Hitler.

The novel *Salt to the Sea* is chosen by the writer as source of data, because it tells about the real condition in Nazi's hidden disaster 1945 and interesting to be analyzed. Additionally, i have searched in google that this novel has not been analyzed yet for thesis and journal by using New Historicism theory. Literary work inspired from real history should be analyzed between literary text and non-literary text (history text). Furthermore, the ideology existed in the novel is also to be interpreted. New Historicism believe that history is subjective. It depends on who create the history. This novel published in 2016, while the story about World War II in the novel that happened in 1945. It is the big question about the reason of the author to write the story about the real condition World War II in the fiction version.

The appropriate theory that should be applied is a theory that will not omit the aspect of the real history in the novel. The theory to be used in analyzing *Salt to the Sea* is New Historicism approach. New Historicists “all events... Are *shaped by and shape* the culture in which they emerge,” or are mutually constitutive (Tyson, 284). In other hand, there are two previous studies use New Historicism. The first is from Airlangga University, Rizky Ardian with the title “*The Genocide of Rwanda in Terry George’s Hotel Rwanda: A New Historicism Study.*” And the second is thesis from Middle East University Amman, Jordan, Hisham Thany Rahman, with the title “*A Study from a New Historicism Approach of Arthur Miller’s Death of a Salesman.*” Additionally, this novel has not been analyzed yet for research like thesis or journal.

1.2 Research Question

In this research question is formulated as the following:

1. How is the social-political condition of World War II represented in the novel?
2. How is the author’s ideology about Nazi interpreted in the novel?
3. How is the ideology of Nazi interpreted in the novel creating new discourse?

1.3 Objective of the Study

This study is intended to find out:

1. The social-political condition of World War II that represented in the novel.

2. The author's ideology that is implied in the novel.
3. The ideology of Nazi that is interpreted in the novel creating new discourse.

1.4 Significant of the Study

This study is expected to be able to provide the theoretical and practical benefits, it is expected that the result will contribute to the development of New Historicism approach especially the interpretation of the real history into the story fiction. Meanwhile practically, the result of the study hopefully will make the society more understand about New Historicism and it can contribute to the student become further researcher in the next research to the future.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This study focuses on the borderline of New Historicism theory about new discourse of ideology of Nazi and social-political condition that interpreted in the novel. It aims to find out the new discourse that is influenced by the author's thought in the novel. The story is taken from a novel *Salt to the Sea* by Ruta Sepetys through the theory of New Historicism. The limitation of this study is analyze the main characters in the novel *Salt to the Sea*.