

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter consist of five sub-chapter of the introduction. Presenting background of the study, statement of the problems, objectives of the study, significances of the study, also scope and limitation of the study. Those sub-chapter will describe this thesis generally.

#### **1.1. Background of the Study**

If History is a moon then Literature is the stars, both of them always decorating the night skies. Literature can never be separated from human life, it will continue to be inherent in the joints of social life. Therefore, many says that Literature is a reflection of human life itself. As well as history, history is a part of human life that we have never been able to let go of. Every human being has its own history, the world where we live in also have its own history. Lies far in the past, history affects human life in the future, for example, the history of modern human civilization on the land between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, the history of Thomas Alva Edison which discover the light bulb, to the history of the independence of nations in the world tens of even hundreds of years ago which until now felt by humans and much more. In the end, it is literature that records history itself.

History, (Greek : Historia), means inquiry knowledge acquired by investigation. According to W.H Walsh History is a narrative of past actions arranged in such way that we see not only what happened, but also why (1960:22), he also argues that History is, in some sense is a study from the past. History begins to interested in the past when human being first appear in it. Its essential concern is human experiences and actions (1960:30). John Jacob Anderson state that "History is a narration of the events which have happened among mankind, including an account of the rise and fall of nations, as well as of other great changes which have affected the political and social condition of the human race." (1874:3) From several explanation above, we know that history is a study of the humankind recorded from the past as it is described in written documents which affected the life of human in future.

There is so much history that mankind has carved out in the world, the bright history or the dark history was happened long time ago. Both of them give effect to the world until today. The Bright history of human inventions in steam powered machine that leads to modern transportation or even the darkest histories of humankind, the history of first and second world war. This bitter experience was felt by the nations included to the world war itself, many things happened during that time for example, the massacre of Jews by Nazi (2012:5), assault of the Pearl Harbor by Japanese kamikaze and also the fall of the atomic bomb “Fat man” and “Little boy” at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Over 62.000.000 people over the world died because of war, one of the country which suffer the impact of world war is the Soviet Union, which lost many of its citizens' lives in the wake of

the food crisis. The incident took place in the city of Leningrad which surrounded by the German armed forces for about 3 years. Through new historicism, history carved by humans can be re-studied through a literary point of view, by reading literary works from the specific era and knowing the background of creation of the literary works itself. New historicism risen to offer a new perspective in the study of the Renaissance, namely by emphasizing the relationship of literary texts with various social, economic, and political forces that surround them. This research analyze the historical element inside of the novel by David Benioff *City of thieves*” with the theory of new historicism by John Brannigan.

It is Lev Beniof, a 17-year-old civilian teenager who lives in an apartment called Kirov apartment in the center of Leningrad, living alone in a siege because his mother and sister are displaced to safer places and his father, a writer whose whereabouts are unknown after taken by the NKVD (*Naródney Komissariát Vnútrennikh Del*). At the night during the siege, a corpse of German soldier fall from the sky. Together with his roommate, he looted the corpse of a German soldier who fell near their apartment. On that charge, he was arrested and thrown into prison and he met with Kolya, a member of the red forces who were suspected of being deserters. Instead of being executed, they were both given a task by a colonel that was almost impossible to do, the task could be considered ridiculous, but they had to bet their lives to complete it. The colonel asked them to look for a dozen eggs for his daughter's marriage. In the midst of a food crisis, they were forced to look for rare items, and finally their adventure began.

*City of Thieves* is a historical novel which depicts the condition of the city of Leningrad during the siege in 1941. Where millions of people suffer from hunger and die because they are unable to survive in winter. That is the reason why the researcher use the term of New Historicism theory, this novel is full of historical elements and issue related to world war which suitable to analyzed and New Historicism theory can be applied. New historicism is a method based on the parallel reading of literary and non literary texts from the same historical period. According to John Brannigan (1998:6) New historicism is a mode of critical interpretations which privileges power relations as the most important context for texts of all kinds, he explains how new historicism understand the stories of the past as society's way of constructing a narrative which unconsciously fits its own interests. He makes the case, that new historicism is not as new, as it appears.

The previous studies which use the same theory, perspective or source of data are *The Genocide of Rwanda in Terry George Hotel Rwanda : A new historicism study* by Rizky Ardian (2011), *New Historicism* by Matt Hickling (2018), *A New Historicist Reading of Williams Golding's Lord of the Flies* by Mohammad Shaaban Ahmad Deyab (2016), and *Beginning Theory : Second Edition* a book by Peter Barry (2002). And *City of Thieves* by David Benioff (2008) as the source of data, the concept which will be used are the new historicism by John Brannigan and related theorist.

### **1.2. Research Problems**

Based on the background of the study written above, this study will discuss according to the following research question:

1. How does the novel depict the social, economical and political condition of Leningrad during the siege ?
2. How is the condition of Leningrad citizens portrayed in *City of Thieves* novel ?

### **1.3. Objective of Study**

Based on the statement of problems above, this study is intended:

1. To reveal the history of Leningrad and its socio, economic and political during the siege through a literary work.
2. To align the history of Leningrad siege with the situation which portrayed by the novel.

### **1.4. Significances of Study**

The findings from this research will be a contribution for English department from Faculty of social and cultural sciences of University of Trunojoyo Madura. This study is expected to give the benefits in two aspects, theoretical and practical:

Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich knowledge, information and

better understanding to the historical novel analysis, especially for the students of English Study Program who take literature as their concentration of study. Practically, this study hopefully will increase the interest in reading and understanding history through literature.

### **1.5. Scope and Limitations**

To avoid the vagueness, it is necessary to make a clear limitation into a narrow scope. Then, the analysis can be clearly interpreted and understood. The scope of the study is New Historicism study. Using the novel of David Benioff *City of Thieves* as the main objects of the analysis. To concentrate on the main point which is analyzed, this study is limited on the author's narrations and also character's utterances which are taken from *City of Thieves* novel that depict the situation of Leningrad city during the siege in the second world war.