

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents some subchapters, namely background of the study, statement of the research problems, objectives of the study, significances of the study, and scope and limitation of the study. Those are important to be explained because they will describe this study generally.

1.1. Background of the Study

Every literary work is a statement made by the author and a statement about the author at the same time. An analysis about literary work cannot be separated from the analysis of the author's social, temporal, and politic circumstances. An author background of life has an important role in producing literary work. In producing a work, authors face many creative processes. Mostly, the authors often express what their feeling and what their thought of their life.

Regarding to the statement above, one of the author who expresses her feeling and her thought into her works is Irshad Manji. The choice of Irshad Manji is based on the thought which is portrayed in the book. That thought often causes many social conflicts. Thus, it is necessary to reveal the truth of authors' understanding. The controversial in the book make several societies infuriating and fidgeting. She also convey about her critic and her Ideology about Islam in her book. As a short background, Manji was born in Uganda in 1968. Her father was from India and her mother from Egypt. On 1971-1973, the ruler of Uganda, General Idi Amin, expelled the White from his nation. Manji and her family

moved to Canada. As a child, she studied in *madrassah* to get good education about Islam religion. As a critical student, she often asks to her *madrassah*'s teachers, and her teacher's gave an ultimatum to Manji in order to accept their teaching or out of the *madrassah*. Manji opted out of the *madrassah*, and continued to sail about Islam from various sources. Manji also learned Arabic, which helped him to understand the Qur'an in its original language.

Irshad Manji is an intellectual Canadian woman who is known as the Director of the Moral Courage Project in New York University. She wrote best seller's book entitled "*The Trouble with Islam Today: A wake up call for Honesty and change*". *The New York Time* had called Manji "Osama bin Laden's worst nightmare" because she received an international appreciation and inspired Manji's Emmy-nominated PBS/NFB film *Faith without Fair*. She is a columnist of *A Globe and Mail*. She is also popular as a scholar with the European foundation for democracy (Manji, 2011:658).

Based on her achievement, even *The Jakarta Post* in Indonesia also identifies Irshad Manji as one of three women who created positive change in contemporary Islam. Perhaps there are many Indonesian people who do not know who Irshad Manji is, but she has been popular by her very liberal feminism thought. Her name has been slowly familiar to our ears after a few days appearing in printed and online media. It is because of some Islamic organizations and the police disperse Irshad Manji's book review entitled "*Allah, Liberty & Love*", which was held by Salihara community on Friday, May 4th 2012 at Jakarta. There

is a quotation in her book entitled "Open Letter" from the opening of the paper Irshad Manji in his book entitled "*The Trouble with Islam Today*:"

"I have to be honest with you all. My relationship with Islam is less fun. My life depends on the fatwa issued by people who claim to be God's representative. When my meditation all the fatwas that were raised by thinkers of our religion, I feel so embarrassed."

This thought invites many responses from some quarters, because the teaching of Islam in general is very consideration of interpretation from previous scholars or *Ulama*. After the coming of Manji was cancelled in UGM, through *Compasiana* the director of Graduated Program UGM stated that

"UGM canceled Irshad Manji discussion with consideration of the values held by UGM and its impact on society". He also affirmed in Javanese language "*mudhorote kakehan, kurang barokah, dadine ora apik*". That activity is not a lot of benefits but even has dangerous impact."

(Compasiana, June, 25th 2015).

According to director of Graduated Program UGM's statement above, he thought that when Manji come to a discussion in UGM there a lot of bad and dangerous impact that will be happened in UGM. So he must cancel Manji's discussion.

"*Allah, Liberty & Love*" is the second of Manji's book that was published by Random House, Canada, 2011. This book was already translated into another language, one of them is Indonesian. "*Allah, Liberty & Love*" is the unique book, because this book is not pure about lesson or theory book and it is also not pure about fiction. "*Allah Liberty & Love*" is a book that tells about Manji's point of view about Islam. Manji wrote *Allah, Liberty & Love* book after got emails from several Moslem in the world. This book tells also about the motivation that is

given for women to produce a masterwork and not to be afraid to fight for their right.

Regarding to its title, Irshad Manji accommodates the idea to mix up faith in God, love, and freedom of thought. For Manji, the important message of Islam is love. God is depicted as the One who is full of love. Religious communities must develop a love for fellow human beings. Love encourages people to respect other human beings. With love, the freedom of thought, dissent, and fostering dialogue without fear can be appreciated. Manji believes in love of our fellow human beings can make a peace. Peace is built on freedom of thought and opinion, without imposing a particular religious interpretation. Love can also be displayed as a beautiful face in the middle of the image of Islam that is often associated with terrorism, radicalism, conservatism.

Some interesting cases to be analyzed in “*Allah Liberty & Love*” is controversial sentences were not in line with the teachings of Islam in general. Like an example she tried to ‘logicalize’ that *wahyu* or revelation the Prophet without any authentic resources with the following statement;

Came the "Satanic verses." That is, surah of the Qur'an that the Prophet, with his reasoning ability as a fallible human being, recognizing it as a divine revelation.

(Manji, 2011: 200).

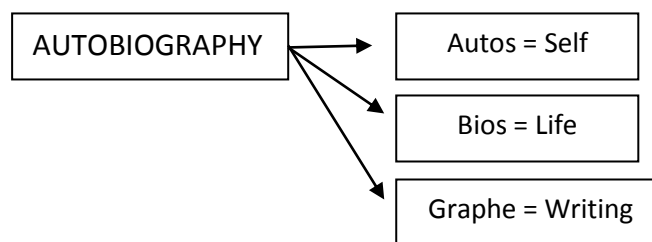
As already known generally in Islam, the Prophet is never wrong in expressing revelation of God. Revelation was written in the behavior of the Prophet and narrated by his friends (*Khulafa'ur rosyidin*). On the other hand, there are indications of Manji which cross the flow of classical Moslem understanding and she interprets *Al Quran* on her own which she called as *Ijtihad*;

Only we can deliver an alternative interpretation of Islam that carrying the vision of security, progress and equality. So, today let's promise for faith, country, and ourselves.

(Manji, 2011: 91).

That is the reason why the writer wants to explore deeper about the extent of Manji's controversial. To analyze deeper related to the controversial thought of Manji, the writer applies "interpreting life narrative" theory by Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson. The focus of the analysis by emphasized on the author is life narrative.

The meaning of Autobiography, in Greek:



In line with the previous paragraph, (The word denote "self-life-writing". Smith & Watson cited in Stephen spender, a British poet-critic, the dictionary definition of autobiography as "the story of one's life written by himself" but notes its inadequacy to the "world that each is to himself" (2001: 115). Reading Autobiography is reading the story of writer's life that is written in the book. Meaning in history, autobiographies the highest and most instructive form in which the understanding of life comes before us (Dilthey in Smith 2001:9). It means that when analysed about autobiography writer will get the highest knowledge because writer can learn and understand about life. According to Smith and Watson in their book, they classified five elements of Reading

Autobiography; they are Memory, Experience, Identity, Embodiment, and Agency.

Autobiographical theory can support to determine the construction of Manji's thought through her background of life. Background of a person's life becomes a very important thing because people write based on the events of his past, and by his past he scrawled various realities to create on paper.

Furthermore, certainly there are writers which have been analyzed the book entitled "*Allah, Liberty & Love*". One of them is Anwar Masduki (2012), his study entitled "The Spirit of Liberation Theology in Irshad Manji's Book *Allah, Liberty & Love*". In this study, Anwar scrutinizes the spirit of liberation theology in the life of Irshad Manji, a Canadian Muslim feminist who proclaimed herself as a lesbian. He focuses only to study Manji's book of *Allah, Liberty and Love*. The previous study is different with this study, because in this study the writer will analyze about the author life narrative so that the writer does not just focus on the book but also in the background of life of the author, and the reading interpretation about the book.

1.2. Statement of Research Question

Based on the background of the study above, this study discusses about Reading Autobiography: a guide for interpreting life narrative by Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson. Furthermore, the problems which are formulated as following questions:

1. What are the elements of interpreting life narrative that exist in Irshad Manji's book *Allah, Liberty & Love*?

2. What is the intention of Irshad Manji in writing and publishing *Allah, Liberty & Love*?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

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

1. To explain the elements of interpreting life narrative that exists in Irshad Manji's book *Allah, Liberty & Love*.
2. To explain the intention of Irshad Manji in writing and publishing *Allah, Liberty & Love*.

1.4 Significances of the Study

Theoretically, this study is expected to give better understanding about a Reading Autobiography that is reflected in the literary work. Then, this study is also expected to give more information and knowledge related to Reading Autobiography or interpreting life narrative. Practically, this study will give inspirations to reader to care, keep, and spread Islam more, because there are a lot of people who thinks that Islam is bad religion.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of this study is about the concept of Reading Autobiography theory according to Smith & Watson. In addition, this study focuses on the interpretation life narrative sides of the book *Allah, Liberty & Love* which written by Irshad Manji. Furthermore, the limitation of this study is the author's narration

and the characters' utterance in the original work by Irshad Manji's *Allah, Liberty & Love* which are related to the research problems.