

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This part consists of five subchapters. Those are background of the study, statement of the research problem, objectives of the study, significances of the study, scope and limitation of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

The social phenomenon of armed conflict is clash between two or more organized parties with numerous causes, usually in disputes about authority and territory. Internal conflicts focus particularly on the ethnic, environmental, political, and economic factors (Smith, 2004). Hence, it affects the order of human life and leads to social complexities.

As the result of armed conflict, social complexities occur in various forms; such as economic and human rights crises, violent practices against women and children, destruction of social relations, physical and psychological damage, environmental harm, and etc. Those complexities attracted the attention of various elements of society, including artists who were interested to create a literary work related to the social issues.

One famous American artist or playwright who is interested in some social issues is Lynn Nottage. According to *The Guardian News & Media*, 2008 “her work covers a wide range of subjects of marginalized people, disposed of, and tends to be inspired by a research.” She wrote a lot of work and won some prestigious awards, such as her contemporary plays entitled “*Ruined*” in 2009 as the source of data for this study. This drama depicts the phenomenon of Congo

War that in history divides into two periods. The Congo War I in 1996-1997, and Congo War II or known as the great African War in 1998-2003 (Weiss, 2000). This drama took setting in a small mining town in Ituri Province, Congo. The main conflict which happened is a violent war over natural resources, land disputes, political and government chaos that caused of highest death and violent practice. According to the document of the *Internal Rescue Committee* (IRC) 2007, around 3.9 million people dead from 1998 until 2003. Therefore, this conflict was considered to be the most terrible after World War II. This condition is represented in *Ruined* in which Mama Nadi as the main character.

Lynn and Kate Whoriskey went to the bordering country of Uganda in 2004, to gain some inspiration for their new work and interviewed Congolese women who had crossed over the border to escape the violence (*Ruined*, 2009). According to *Reuters World News*, 2008 “Though, Congo’s war formally ended in 2003, the violence and poverty still ongoing.” Therefore, the Congolese Society should face the complexity and the ongoing effect as the result of armed conflict.

Not only present the complexity, Lynn also puts hidden narrative from Congolese women in histories which make this drama more fascinating to be analyzed. She portrays the contrasting life of Congolese society alongside from the history of Congo that often describes the chaos, violence, poverty, and AIDS crisis. She portrays the optimism, romanticism and tells how the marginalized people defend the pride, survive and rebuild a new life amid the chaos in Congo through her skill in composing paradox and epic narrative. The purpose of this work is to restore hope and give voice to the silent and unseen. As the result, this

work reflected literature and history merger with equal interpretation. Considering the story and its background, New Historicism is an appropriate theory to explore this study.

New historicism emerged in the late 1970s. Literary texts are cultural artifacts that can enlighten something about the interaction of discourse in the time and place in which the text was written (Tyson, 2006:291). The text (the literary work) and the context (the historical condition that produces it) emerge equally because they are mutually constitutive. Hence, literary texts shape and are shaped by their historical contexts (Tyson, 2006:292).

New historicism is a reflection of many histories that built by the marginal people who are not written in History, such as women, the poor, colored people, and so on. Related with Lynn's works entitled *Ruined*, which tells the hidden histories of women how they survive, rebuild a new life, and oppose the authority alongside the complexity and patriarchal regime in Congo through the character of mama Nadi. New Historicism tries to encourage the development of and gain attention for histories of marginalized people (Tyson, 2006: 288).

The writer conducts this study because Lynn emerged the contrasting elements of hidden history alongside the complexity in narrative equally. The writer should try to interpret the contrasting elements which wrote implicitly about the spirit of the society, especially the struggle of the character to survive in their own chaotic country through the character of Mama Nadi, her women and the business. The writer also tries to interpret the culture and history of armed conflict outcome; welfare, justice, and security still complex. It proves that human being is not

merely victims, but they can find a various way to rebuild live and oppose the authority. Therefore, through the play, we can see the movement of marginalized people and social formations among the complexity at various historical moments.

The novelty of this study is the writer uses contemporary play as a source of data and utterances as the primary data. The focus of this study is revealing how the playwright presents the hidden narrative alongside the familiar history of Congo as “Terrible Country”, it is about the way marginalized people oppose authority and face the chaotic country that was created on the basis of the true experience of Congolese women. While the previous study Rizky Ardian (2011) *The Genocide of Rwanda in Terry Georges Hotel Rwanda: A New Historicism Study*, using new historicism to explore how the film is presenting the conflict and history of Rwanda. The other previous study Carmen Mendez Garcia (2012) *This Is My Place, Mama Nadi's: Feminine Spaces and Identity in Lynn Nottage's Ruined*, concern in the aspect of feminism that constructs through the character of Mama Nadi. Therefore, the writer tries to explore the theory and source of data with different sight from the previous studies.

1.2 Statement of Research Questions

Based on the background of the study above, the writer tries to explore the complexity because of armed conflict and interpret the contrasting element of Lynn’s hidden narrative about the way marginalized people survive and face the chaotic country. The research questions which are proposed in the study are as follows:

1. What are the causes of social complexities found in the drama?

2. What are the effects of social complexities found in the drama?
3. How do the marginalized people struggle to oppose authority and rebuild life in the drama?

1.3 Objective of the Study

According to the statement of problems above, the objectives of this study are to find out:

- 1) The causes of complexities that occurs in the drama
- 2) The effects of complexities that occurs in the drama
- 3) How the marginalized people rebuild and survive in the chaotic region in the drama.

1.4 Significances of the Study

This study is expected to be significant theoretically and practically.

- 1) Theoretically, this study is to support the existence of the theory New Historicism perspective. Besides, this study is expected to explain how contemporary play interprets history through the New Historicism perspective.
- 2) Practically, this study is expected to give a better understanding of interpreting history and awareness that marginalized people also have power to oppose authority and survive. This study also expects to be a reference for the next student, especially the student of English Study Program who wants to conduct analysis using New Historicism.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

To keep the analysis in the expected field, the writer of this study limits the analysis based on the interpretation of the text and context that delivered through the character's utterances of the drama and history of Congo war especially about Ituri conflict. This limitation portrays the character's histories of their experiences and life sides that rarely told in history Congo. New Historicism by Stephen Greenblatt considered as appropriate theory to support this study. This study has some weaknesses. Therefore, the next study who wants to analyze this drama should be expand to a new historicism perspective with different sight or explore with other appropriate theories such traditional historicism, feminism, gynocriticism, postcolonialism, or etc. In the successive study hopefully, it will be compared with analyzing the other aspects such as the plot, character, setting, staging in *Ruined* play by Lynn Nottage.