

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Literature in its many appearances or structures reproduces and articulates the social condition of the society and life of the author. An author is a member of a society that he or she is influenced by his or her society. Literature is an expression of society (Wellek and Werren, 1942:83). A writer of a literary work produces an artwork via occurrence and taking apart in a social circumstance that he or she will use as the foundation of the work material or inspiration of the work he or she creates. For this reason, the work he or she made is the work that is the result of the interaction between the writer and the life of the writer.

Violence is an act of aggression (as one against a person who resists); "he may accomplish by craft in the long run what he cannot do by force and violence in the short one"([www. Thefreedictionary.com/violence](http://www.thefreedictionary.com/violence)). This movie tells about conflict between christian and jews, because christians think that jews is false religion.

Alejandro Amenabar *is* the son of a Spanish mother and a Chilean father. His family moved back to Spain when he was 1 year old, and he grew up and studied in Madrid. He wrote, produced and directed his first short film *La cabeza* at the age of 19, and he was 23 when he directed his feature debut *Tesis* (1996). His film *Abre los ojos* (1997) was a huge success in Spain and was distributed worldwide. It was remade in Hollywood by Cameron Crowe as *Vanilla Sky* (2001), starring Tom Cruise, Penelope Cruz (also the star of the original version) and Cameron Diaz. *The others* (2001) is Amenábar's first English language film.

Amenábar was born in Santiago Chile, on the eve of Pinochet's 1973 coup-de-état, such that his mother, who had already gone through the Spanish Civil War, uprooted the whole family and fled back to Spain. He grew up in Madrid and entered the Sciences Information Faculty at Madrid's Complutense University, where he was not exactly a brilliant pupil, and after numerous scholastic failures he decided to give up studying cinema -- which was not what he wanted -- and started to make cinema -- which definitely was. Since his perhaps best-known early short-film "Himenóptero" in 1992, in which he directed, produced, acted and wrote the script and the music, Amenábar progressed and reached his first commercial success in 1996 with "Thesis", a film which undoubtedly showed that a major new director had arrived on the scene. Later "Abre Los Ojos" and "Los Otros" (The Others) confirmed his arrival in the cinematographic world. In all his films he also writes the script and the music, as well as composing the music for other films, most notably "La Lengua de las Mariposas" (1999). He differs from most other Spanish directors inasmuch that he does not ingratiate himself on pet themes such as national foibles or recent past history, but ventures out into other spheres and has no fears about embarking into the phantasmagorical, psychological or even quasi-surrealist. Not yet thirty, this young man holds great promise for the next few years.

His favorite directors are Steven Spielberg, James Cameron and Stanley Kubrick. *Abre los ojos* (1997) is his "remake" of *Vertigo* (1958), by Hitchcock. In fact, when the character of Sofia appears after hitting Cesar with a jar, it's the same shot of Kim Novak in *Vertigo* when she appears from the bathroom in the hotel - with green lights. He's a great collector of soundtracks.

He did not finish his university studies due to one 4th grade subject, "Film writing". The last name of the professor who kept failing him is Castro, and that also the last name of the evil professor in his first long movie, *Tesis* (1996). Amenábar claims he used the last

name inadvertently at first, it was the university people who noticed the coincidence and asked him to change it. In the end he decided not to, although in the scripts he did write a different name, Gálvez. Incidentally, he has done the script writing in all of his movies so far. His name appears in *Tesis* (1996), on a computer screen. When the main character checks the names of the buyers of the cameras, Amenábar is one of them. Invited to join AMPAS in 2005. After his film *Mar adentro* (2004/I), he received a congratulation's letter from Steven Spielberg, one of Amenabar's favorites directors.

Agora was screened out of competition at the 2009 Cannes Film Festival in May, and opened in Spain on October 9, 2009 becoming the highest grossing film of the year for that country. Although the film had difficulty finding distribution, it was released country by country throughout late 2009 and early 2010. The film received a 53% overall approval rating from Rotten Tomatoes, but has been criticized by some reviewers for its historical inaccuracies and use of artistic license, despite being presented as an accurate portrayal of history. *Agora* received seven Goya Awards in Spain, including Best Original Screenplay, and it was awarded the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Feature Film Prize at the Hamptons International Film Festival.

Agora is a 2009 Spanish historical drama film directed by Alejandro Amenábar and written by Amenábar and Mateo Gil. The biopic stars Rachel Weisz as Hypatia, a female mathematician, philosopher and astronomer in 4th century Roman Egypt who investigates the flaws of the geocentric Ptolemaic system and the heliocentric model that challenges it. Surrounded by religious turmoil and social unrest, Hypatia struggles to save the knowledge of classical antiquity from destruction. Max Minghella co-stars as Davus, Hypatia's slave, and Oscar Isaac as Hypatia's student Orestes, prefect of Alexandria.

The story uses historical fiction to promote a "conflict thesis" interpretation of the relationship between religion and science amidst the decline of Greco-Roman polytheism and

the Christianization of the Roman empire. The title of the film takes its name from the *agora*, a gathering place in ancient Greece, similar to the Roman *forum*. The film was produced by Fernando Bovaira and shot on the island of Malta from March to June 2008. Justin Pollard, co-author of *The Rise and Fall of Alexandria* (2007), was the historical advisor for the film.

The historical basis for the myth is that circa 391 a mob of Christians destroyed the Serapeum of Alexandria, the pagan temple of Serapis. Such violence, as *Agora* dramatizes, was tragically not uncommon in Alexandria, and Christians, pagans and Jews were all guilty of it, though even *Agora* acknowledges that the persecution of the Christians by pagan Rome preceded any Christian violence. (To that extent, *Agora*'s version of events is at least better than the *Da Vinci Code* movie, which first floats the outrageous claim that the Christians started the violence before agnostically concluding, "We can't be sure who began the atrocities.").

There is evidence that the Serapeum once housed a "daughter library" but also evidence that by 391 that library was no longer extant. In actual accounts, pagan as well as Christian, of the destruction of the Serapeum, there is no indication of a library or of scrolls. *Agora*, by contrast, speaks constantly of "the library," and dramatically displays the gleeful plundering of an immense collection of thousands of scrolls (as well as Hypatia's frantic efforts to save as many as possible).

Agora is an interesting movie ; there are four aspects that make this movie really interesting. The first is *Agora* has the uncommon story, this is an historical film about conflicts between two religions. That story is not only presentation about the aspects of religion but also about the society of christians and jews, and in that movie also shows up about the struggle of the slave to depends his religion. Alejandro Amenabar makes audience amazed when the egoist or violence of christian attack the jews.

The second aspect is the visualization and the cast of the movie. Alejandro Amenabar makes the audience feel enthusiastic with this epic drama movie. Even when the movie shows about the violence or war between christian and the jews, that appears like the real moment or event and not drama, because the angel of taking picture and shooting is perfect. So when people watch this movie without reading the script, they will understand about the content of it.

The third is the humanity feeling that appears in this movie. Davus is a christian but he is a slave in the jews, because he is falling in love to heypatian the son of jews director (theon). *Agora* is an uplifting of human spirit to struggle for the truth that is their religion.

The last is the violence in *Agora's* movie is one of appealing aspects that is interesting to be studied. Amenabar, the director wants to present about the conflict between the christians and the jews, because they have different ethnic or culture. The christians have the god that is jesus and the jews do not believe it, because the jews also have the god that is serapis. So the case can be studied in a sociological term which studies the social life of human.

Based on the reason the writer will observe *Agora's* movie by using a sociological theory by Swingewood and Laurensen. So the writer constructs the title **VIOLENCE IN AGORA'S MOVIE (2009) DIRECTED BY ALEJANDRO AMENABAR: A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH.**

B. Literary Review

There is no previous studies related to violence in *agora's* movie among university in center java such as : Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, Gajah Mada University, Sebelas Maret University and Muhammadiyah University of Yogyakarta.

C. Problem Statement

Knowing that problem is the most important part of research, the writer proposes the problem “ How is violence reflected in *Agora*’s movie?”

D. Limitation of the Study

The writer focuses this research in analyzing violence in *Agora*’s movie based on a sociological approach.

E. Objective the Study

The objective of the study is as follow:

1. To analyze *Agora*’s movie based on structural elements of the movie.
2. To describe the violence in *Agora*’s movie based on a sociological approach.

F. Benefit of the Study

The study is expected to give benefits as follow:

1. Theoretical Benefit

To give positive contribution to the development of the large of knowledge, particularly the literary study *Agora*’s movie and novel.

2. Practical Benefits

To study is hoped to enrich knowledge and experience of the writer and another students of Muhammdiyah University of Surakarta or another Universities who have interest with literary study on the movie from sociological approach.

G. Research Method

1. Type of the Study

In this research, the writer uses a qualitative research. It is library research while data source is using literature data. It purposes to analyze the movie using sociological approach. The steps to conduct this research are (1) determining the type of the study, (2) determining the object of the study (3) determining data and data

source, (4) determining technique of data collection and (5) determining technique of data analysis.

2. Object of the Study

The object of the study is *Agora movie* directed by Alejandro Amenabar and published in 2009. It is analyzed by using a sociological approach.

3. Data and Data Source

There are two data sources that are needed to do this research.

a. Primary Data source

The primary data source of the study is *Agora movie* directed by Alejandro Amenabar.

b. Secondary data source

The secondary data sources are books and other sources that support the analysis.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

The technique of data collection is library research, the steps are :

- a. Watching movie in several times
- b. Reading movie script
- c. Determining the character that will be analyzed
- d. Taking notes from the material and some other resources related to the movie

e. Technique of the Data Analysis

The technique used in analyzing the data is descriptive analysis. It concerns with the structural elements of the movie and a sociological approach.

H. Paper Organization

The research paper organization of “*violence in Agora’s movie : a Sociological approach* “ as follow chapter 1 is introduction ; it consists of Background of the study, Literature Review, Problem Statement, Limitation of the Study, Objective of the Study, Benefit of the Study, Research Method, and Paper Organization, Chapter II is theoretical Approach ; it deals withof Sociological of Literature, The Basic Assumption of Sociological, Structural Element Movie and Theoretical Application. Chapter III is Social background of Spain in the early fourth century which covers social aspect, political aspect, economic aspect, religious aspect and ciltural aspect. Chapter IV is Structural Analysis of *Agora’s movie* ; (1) The structural Element of *Agora* movie, it present of Character and Characterization, Casting Plot, Technical Elemant of the Movie, Point of View and Theme (2) Discussion. Chapter V is Sociological Analysis of *Agora Movie*, it consists of social aspect, political aspect, economic aspect, religious aspect and ciltural aspect. Chapter VI Conclusion and Dicussion.

