

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Movie or film is a story conveyed with moving images. It is produced by recording photographic images with cameras, or by creating images using animation techniques or visual effects. The process of filmmaking has developed into an art form and industry. Films are cultural artifacts created by specific cultures, which reflect those cultures, and, in turn, affect them. The visual elements of cinema give motion pictures a universal power of communication. Some films have become popular worldwide attractions by using dubbing or subtitles that translate the dialogue into the language of the viewer. It shows that the movie is great and has values for viewer. The values of a movie depend on the ability of the director to take a theme for his movie. One of the greatest directors is Zack Snyder.

Zack Snyder was born in March 1, 1966 in Green Bay, Wisconsin, and was raised in Greenwich, Connecticut. His father was an executive recruiter and his mother was a painter and a photography teacher at Daycroft School, which Snyder later attended. Zack attended Camp Owatonna in Harrison, Maine during the summer months as a child. Snyder's mother inspired him to study nude paintings a year after high school at Heatherley School of Fine Art in England, although he had already begun filmmaking. Afterward, Snyder attended the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California.

Snyder is an American film director, screenwriter and producer. After making his feature film debut with the 2004 remake *Dawn of the Dead*, he gained wide recognition with the 2007 box office hit *300*, adapted from writer-artist Frank Miller's Dark Horse Comics miniseries of the same name, and later went on to direct the 2009 superhero film *Watchmen*, an adaptation of the comic book of the same name. He is the co-founder of Cruel and Unusual Films, a production company he established in 2004, alongside his wife Deborah Snyder and producing partner Wesley Coller. His most recent film was the 2010 animated family adventure film *Legend of the Guardians: The Owls of Ga'Hoole*, based on the first three books of the series by Kathryn Lasky. His next film will be the fantasy-action epic *Sucker Punch*, which he has directed and co-written. He has also been hired by Warner Bros. to direct the next installment in the *Superman* film series.

The one of the greatest Snyder's movie is *300*. *300* is American film in 2007, Snyder adapted from a graphic novel of the same name by Frank Miller, a fictionalized retelling of the Battle of Thermopylae. The film was directed by Zack Snyder, while Miller served as executive producer and consultant. It was filmed mostly with a super-imposition chroma key technique, to help replicate the imagery of the original comic book. The plot revolves around King Leonidas (Gerard Butler), who leads 300 Spartans into battle against Persian "god-King" Xerxes (Rodrigo Santoro) and his army of more than one million soldiers. As the battle rages, Queen Gorgo (Lena Headey) attempts to rally support in Sparta for her husband. The story is

framed by a voice-over narrative by the Spartan soldier Dilios (David Wenham). Through this narrative technique, various fantastical creatures are introduced, placing *300* within the genre of historical fantasy.

The story is begun when Dilios, a Spartan soldier, narrates the story of Leonidas, from boyhood to the throne of Sparta. Years later, a Persian messenger arrives at the gates of Sparta demanding the submission of Sparta to King Xerxes. In response to this demand, Leonidas and his guards kick the messenger into the "Pit of Death". Knowing this will prompt a Persian attack, Leonidas visits the Ephors—ancient, leprosy-ridden priests whose blessing he needs before the Spartan council will authorize going to war. He proposes they repel the numerically superior Persians by using the terrain of Thermopylae (the Hot Gates), and funnel the Persians into a narrow pass between the rocks and the sea. The Ephors consult the Oracle Pythia, who decrees that Sparta must not go to war during their religious festival. As Leonidas departs two agents of Xerxes appear (one of them - Theron - a Spartan) who bribe the Ephors with concubines and money.

Leonidas follows his plan anyway, setting out with only 300 soldiers, whom he calls his personal guard to avoid needing the council's permission. Though he regards the mission as certain suicide, he hopes the sacrifice will spur the council to unite against Persia. On the way to Thermopylae, Arcadians and other Greeks join the Spartans. At Thermopylae they construct a wall to contain the approaching Persian advance. As construction goes on, Leonidas meets Ephialtes of Trachis, a

hunchbacked Spartan in exile whose parents fled Sparta to spare him certain infanticide. Wanting to redeem his father's name, Ephialtes asks to join the fight; he warns Leonidas of a secret path the Persians could use to outflank and surround them. Though Leonidas sympathizes with Ephialtes' will to fight, he turns him down, as Ephialtes cannot properly hold a shield: this would compromise the Spartans' phalanx formation.

Before the battle, the Persians demand that the Spartans lay down their weapons. Leonidas refuses, and with their tightly knit phalanx formation the Spartans use the narrow terrain to repeatedly rebuff the advancing Persian army. Xerxes personally parleys with Leonidas, offering him wealth and power in exchange for his loyalty and surrender. Leonidas declines and Xerxes sends his elite guard, the feared Immortals, to attack them, but the Spartans successfully dispatch them although they suffer a few casualties of their own. Xerxes then sends a number of exotic weapons at the Spartans, including black powder bombs and giant war beasts, but all of these attacks fail. Angered by Leonidas' rejection, Ephialtes defects to the Persians and informs them of the secret path. When they realize Ephialtes' treachery, the Arcadians retreat, Leonidas orders Dilios to return to Sparta to tell the Council of their sacrifice. Though Dilios had recently lost his left eye in combat, he is still fit for battle, but Leonidas decides to use Dilios' gift for storytelling to appeal to the Spartan council. Though reluctant to leave his brothers behind, Dilios leaves with the Arcadians.

In Sparta, Theron blackmails Gorgo, Queen of Sparta (Leonidas' wife) into having sex with him in exchange for his help in persuading the Spartan council to send reinforcements to Leonidas. However, following her address to the Council, Theron publicly betrays the Queen by accusing her of adultery, prompting the councilmen to cry out in outrage and Gorgo to kill him in a fit of anger. The dagger that Gorgo uses to kill Theron pierces his purse, spilling Persian coins from his robe, revealing his role as traitor, and the Council agrees to unite against Persia.

At Thermopylae, the Persians use the goat path to surround the Spartans. Xerxes' general demands their surrender, again offering Leonidas titles and prestige. Leonidas seemingly bows in submission, allowing one of his men to leap over him and kill the general instead. Furious, Xerxes orders his troops to attack. Leonidas rises and hurls his spear at Xerxes, cutting the King on the cheek, thus fulfilling an earlier promise to make "the 'god'-King bleed." Visibly disturbed by this reminder of his own mortality, Xerxes watches as all the Spartans are slaughtered by a massive barrage of arrows. Moments before his death, Leonidas pledges his undying love to Gorgo.

Concluding his tale before an audience of Spartans on the edge of the battlefield a year after Thermopylae, Dilios relates how the Persian army is depleted by desertions, out of fear, and the heavy casualties they suffered at the hands of a mere 300 Spartans. Word of their valiant resistance spread across Greece, inspiring the different city-states to unite against the Persians. Now the Persians face 10,000

Spartans leading 30,000 free Greeks. Although still outnumbered three to one, Dilius declares that the Greeks shall be victorious, and praises the 300's sacrifice. He then leads the Greeks in a charge against the Persian army, beginning the Battle of Plataea.

The writer chooses to analyze the spirit of Leonidas in *300* movie because several reasons. First, *300* is famous movie and got many awards, for examples at the MTV Movie Awards 2007, *300* was nominated for Best Movie, Best Performance for Gerard Butler, Best Breakthrough Performance for Lena Headey, Best Villain for Rodrigo Santoro, and Best Fight for Leonidas battling "the Über Immortal." It eventually won the award for Best Fight. *300* won both the Best Dramatic Film and Best Action Film honors in the 2006-2007 Golden Icon Awards presented by Travolta Family Entertainment. In December 2007, *300* won IGN's Movie of the Year 2007, along with Best Comic Book Adaptation and King Leonidas as Favorite Character. The movie received 10 nominations for the 2008 Saturn Awards, winning the awards for Best Director and Best Action/Adventure/ Thriller Film. In 2009, National Review magazine ranked *300* number 5 on its 25 Best Conservative Movies of the Last 25 Years list so it is great movie and good for watched.

Second, it is dramatic movie and gives real effect for watcher. Where the movie tells the sacrifice of a king and queen, they want to do everything to protect and to hold their country. Leonidas brings *300* armies, who has good skill in battle, to face thousands enemies. Moreover, the king is dead in battle that makes the movie more interesting.

The last, the movie learns the audiences about honor. An honor of a king that is believed by his wife and his people to hold Sparta. Leonidas has to save his people, his wife, and his son from threat of another country that wants to conquer his land and make his people be slaves and may be worse. The writer hopes the result will be useful to motivate the watchers. Based on the above statements, the writer uses sociology theory as an approach to analyze the movie. Then, the writer conducted the title of his study is *The Influence of Society on Leonidas to face Xerxes' armies in Zack Snyder 300 movie (2007); A Sociological Approach.*

B. Literature Review

The study on 300 movie has already been conducted in UMS. After looking for several literary reviews, the writer has found two researches about 300 movie done by the other writers in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. The first researcher is An-Nuur Fitriana (2008) *THE STRUGGLE FOR LIFE REFLECTED BY LEONIDAS IN ZACK SNYDER'S 300 MOVIE: AN INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH.*

Second researcher is Hangga Nur Pradhipa (2011) *ANXIETY OF QUEEN GORGO IN SNEYDER'S 300 MOVIE (2007): A PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH.*

Different from previous researches, this research focuses on The Influence of Spartans on Leonidas to Face Xerxes' Armies in Zack Snyder's 300 movie (2007); A Sociological Approach.

C. Problem Statement

Understanding that the problem is the most important part of research, the writer proposes the problem “How is the influence of Spartans on Leonidas to face Xerxes’ armies reflected in Zack Snyder’s *300* movie (2007)?”

D. Limitation of the Study

The writer focuses this research in analyzing the people who influence Leonidas to face Xerxes’ armies in Zack Snyder *300* movie (2007)”

E. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are mentioned as follow:

1. To analyze *300* movie based on the structural elements of the movie.
2. To analyze the influence of Spartans on Leonidas to face Xerxes’ armies based on sociological approach.

F. Benefit of the Study

The benefits of the study are:

1. Theoretical Benefit

The study is hoped to give a new contribution and information to the larger body of knowledge, particularly the literary studies on *300* movie.

2. Practical Benefit

The study is hoped to enrich knowledge and experience of the writer and another students of Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta or another Universities who have interest with literary study on the movie.

G. Research Method

1. Object of the Study

The object of this study is *300* movie adapted from a graphic novel by Frank Miller, a fictionalized retelling of the Battle of Thermopylae. The film was directed by Zack Snyder, while Miller served as executive producer and consultant

2. Type of the Study

In this research, the writer uses a qualitative research. It is a library research while data sources are using literary data. It purposes to analyze the movie using a socological approach.

3. Type of the Data and the Data Source

Type of data in this research is movie, which the form of movie is dialogue between the characters. While types of data are divided into two types, namely primary and secondary data, they are:

- a. Primary data source is taken from *300* movie that was directed by Zack Snyder.
- b. Secondary data sources are taken from other sources such as the director's bibliography, information about the movie, and other relevant information that support the analysis.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

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

- a. Watching *300* movie several times.

- b. Identifying the problem and find the data.
- c. Taking notes of important parts in both primary and secondary data.
- d. Classifying and determining the relevant data.
- e. Collecting some supporting data from other references that are related to the topic.

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

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

H. Research Paper Organization

The writer organizes this research into six chapters. Chapter I is Introduction. It covers the background of the study, problem statement, literature review, limitation of the study, objectives of the study, benefit of the study, research method and research paper organization. Chapter II presents underlying theory. It deals with the notion of sociological of literature, major principles of sociological of literature, and structure elements of the movie. Chapter III determines the historical background of the country in the movie. It includes the social, culture, politics, and economy in the country when the movie is happened. Chapter IV is the analysis of the movie. It includes structural elements of the movie. Chapter V is sociological analysis deals with the problem in the movie. Chapter VI consists of conclusion and suggestion.