THE INFLUENCE OF WAR ON THE FUTURE GENERATION
REFLECTED IN NATHALIE ABI- EZZI’S A GIRL MADE OF DUST (2008): A
SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

This study is about the impact of war on the future generation in West Asia at the early twenty first century in A Girl Made of Dust novel using sociological approach. The objectives of this study to identify the structural elements of the novel and analyze the novel based on the sociological approach. This study is qualitative research. There are two data resources: primary and secondary. The primary data source is A Girl Made of Dust novel by Nathalie Abi- Ezzi released in 2008. The secondary data sources are other sources taken from such as: Swingewood’s theory, Nathalie Abi-Ezzi’s biography, internet and the other data related to the research. In analyzing the data, she employs and applies some approaches. Structural analysis approach is used to analyze the elements of the novel. The Sociological approach is used to analyze the relation between the structural elements of the novel and the social condition of West Asia society in the early twenty first century, later continued by applying sociological approach. The result of study comes to the following conclusions. Firstly, based on the structure analysis, A Girl Made Of Dust tell about a little girl 8 years, get a lot of bad experiences because of civil war, that does not occur with his old. Secondly, based on sociological analysis, there is a close relationship between the story of the novel and reality condition of West Asia society in the early twenty first century, in which at the time the social condition is not good.
A. Introduction

*A Girl Made of Dust* by Nathalie Abi-Ezzi was published by Grove Press in USA in July 2009. This novel has 240 pages and 17 chapters and the genre is historical coming of age fiction. The author of this novel is Nathalie Abi-Ezzi. She was born in 1972 in the Metn region of Lebanon. An author used her childhood experiences of living on a war torn Middle East country to produce her first novel. She choose this setting as the background for her book, which follows 8 years old Ruba and her struggle to discover what has happened to her withdrawn father. Set in the early 1980s in Ein Dauwra, a fictional mountain village outside Beirut, the story features generations of a family living through the violence of the civil war years. Nathalie is the author of *The Double in the Fiction of RL Stevenson, Wilkie Collins and Daphne du Maurier* (2003) and has co-edited various books for Usborne.

*A Girl Made of Dust* novel writes when the conflict between Lebanon and Israel and Palestine in early 1998. At the moment the condition is very frighten, there are bombs and grenade everywhere and everyday without paused. Ruba Khouri was 8 years old not really understand with relation between Lebanon political and war, but she can feel of impact on the war involved emotion in herself. The impact of this war made Khouri get a lot of bad experienced that’s no occur with child who 8 years old. The war more frighten everyday and it make broke their economic family, because her mother cannot open her shop. Ruba also must lose her beautiful life, she just stay in home, because all her
friends moved to save themselves on another country. Not only Ruba and family
whose getting bad impact from the war, but also happened in Lebanon self. All
of things there was broke, that is forest, ocean and economic.

This novel gets positive review because this novel is written from the
viewpoint of a very young girl. This book is by no means a children’s fiction
book, but a look at conflict in Lebanon through the eyes of an innocent. Another
reason is because the writing style is simple and straightforward. The readers are
also happy with the real characters there and sensitively drawn and their
experiences poignant. This novel also get some awards, they are The Wavertoon
Good Read Award 2009, The Desmond Elliot Prize 2009, Longlisted for the
International IMPAC Dublin Litterary Award 2010.

The study on A Girl Made of Dust novel (2008) is first being conducted in
the research paper due its latest publication that is in 2008. The reseacher has
researched through local and digital libraries and did not find it. Library of UMS,
UNS, UGM until international libraries have reported no one research on A Girl
Made of Dust. So that the researcher cannot compare this research with other
research because there is no study about A Girl Made of Dust.

The researcher analysis this novel using sociological theory which is
considered as the appropriate approach. The sociology of literature is a study
based on the sociological perspective to comprehend social phenomena in a
certain period of time that are described by the author in his or her literary work.
Damono (1984: 2) confirms that, ”the sociology of literature is an approach to
literature that considers the social aspects of human being”. It means that literature is studied and analyzed based on the sociological perspective. Sociology studies the real life of the human beings in relation to their social life, whereas literature is created based on phenomena as social life. Literary work particularly novel can be seen not only as an art with it’s aesthetic qualities, but also as social manifestation. It is a document that reflects the social condition in a society or a product of these conditions. According to Burns and Burns (1973: 31) states, “art should be a reflection of life, we’re advised pot a distortionas it has all to frequently been”. There are three major principles of sociology of literature: literary works as the social document, literary works deals with the social situation of the author and literary work as a manifestation from the historical moment (Swingewood and Laurenson, 1972: 13-21).

B. Research Method

This study belongs to qualitative method. There are two types of data source, namely primary and secondary data source. The primary data source is the novel The White Queen, meanwhile the secondary data sources are other materials related to the study. Both data are collected through library research. In collecting data, the writer takes some steps as follow: Reading the novel for several times to get deep understanding, determining the main issue of the novel, determining the characters that will be analyzed, reading some related books to find out the theory, data and information needed, taking note of important thing both primary and secondary data sources, classifying and determining the
relevant data, classifying the material that has been selected to support in analyzing the novel.

In analyzing the novel, the writer analyzes the data based on Sociological perspective. Focus will be on how impact of war on the children reflected in *A Girl Made Of Dust* novel and in West Asia society in early twenty first century.

C. Research Findings and Discussion

After analyzing *A Girl Made Of Dust*, the researcher gets some findings have some cases to be discussed. All the components will become unity in the discussion.

1. Findings

   After analyzing *A Girl Made Of Dust* novel, the researcher gets some findings. They are the impact of war on the children and the impact of war on the human social life.

   a. The Impact of War on the Children

      In a war situation, children's lives become abnormal, at their age that full of joy turned into weeping and sorrow. It experienced by Ruba Khouri, 8 years old girl. Should Ruba and her friends go to school but had to quit because they have to flee and hide. When the children in the country can play happily and peacefully, they have to play hide and seek because of the invasion of bullets or grenades. In their physical and mental weakness that still are in need of protection, but the fact that time
they were allowed to grow and close to the feelings of fear, anxiety, suspicion, and hatred.

Not a few children got various kinds of exploitation and abuse, either physical or mental and even sexual exploitation. Though the children were in the neutral zone, they are not part of a member of the war. Supposedly, the security and protection from all parties become a major priority for children.

“.......a child comes up to him, a little girl carrying a bottle. And in the bottle is an ear, a pickled ear. ‘They cut pieces off the people they killed and gave them to the children to sell. You could buy someone’s finger or nose or ear, a woman’s, a man’s, maybe one that had belonged to your friend.’” (p.157)

Ruba does not really understand of situations that was going on around him, but she was forced to watch the slaughter and the death of family, neighbors, and other people nearby. In fact, every time she can also feel threatened in her life.

“I grabbed a man’s hand and pulled. ‘My brother!!’ i yelled in his ear. ‘They’ve shot him!! Up there!! They’ve shot him and now he’s dead!!.’” (p. 168)

In this war automatically make violence into normal something. This impact can be seen clearly when children start adulthood. Where some of the children will be more willing to take the risks breaking the boundaries of his own safety. This event is described by Naji Khouri, Ruba’s brother. Naji has a hobby collecting bullets remainder of the war.
Every day he goes forest a very dangerous place because there is one central of war. Until finally, Naji make a friend with an Israeli military’s son, which they also often follow war with carrying sharp weapons like their parents, although they are still too young to do it all.

“A rumble of shelling was coming from where as Naji emptied his pockets to see if there was anything precious to add to the box. There was a long piece of string with knots tied in it, his old penknife, a little block of wood with a hole bored through it, a round of caps and some more marbels” (p.6).

“They weren’t being mean on purpose. Those two older ones are already in the militia. They’re grown up enough to fight, and soon I will be as well” (p.120).

At that time, the condition of psychological and social conditions experienced by Ruba very poor. Compared with just physical damage, for example damage to infrastructure which can be rebuilt 1-2 years later. However, if the damaged is mental and social conditions in children, it cannot be recovered even during his entire life.

b. The impact of War on the Human Social Life

The war will cause a negative effect on human social life, both physically and psychologically. Physically can be seen from the infrastructure can make damaged and destroyed. For humans or other living creatures, war can cause death and lifelong disability. Psychologically war could result in psychological trauma which can affect a person's psychological and mental disorders.
In *A Girl Made Of Dust* Nathallie describe more about the impact of war on human social life and economic aspects. For victims of the war are still very imprint. They are of course still remember the events of war that happened. Injuries and sadness is still very remembered. Like Teta, Ruba’s grandmother. She always dreamed about the death. Every day Teta always crying and frightened if there is one of family member who had been killed.

The war also destroyed all jobs. So, people who have become unemployed because their jobs and work are lose. This is illustrated in Ruba’s family. The civil war also made the economic situation of Ruba’s family be messy. His father had to stop working because of the war daily increasing gripped. All companies and shops were closed.

“Mami was pleading with him to open the shop the next day. ‘School’s starting soon and we need money. I haven’t much left. ‘You haven’t opened for a week now. Must I go up there again?’” (p.20).

“‘No-no! I don’t understand how you thin we’re going to live. Time is passing, the children are growing up, and stil. . .’ How are the children going to learn with no books and how are they to go to school with no clothes or bags or pen?’ ‘’ (p.21).

But some effects of war also brings advantages. One is the science and technology is developing rapidly. They are used as a defense. In *A Girl Made Of Dust* written at the early twenty first century in which science and technology have also been growing very rapidly. Members of
the Israeli and Palestinian military war fight each other by using modern tools, such as rifles, grenades, missiles, tanks etc.

The impact of other war are also evident in this novel is the destruction of the economy in Lebanon. Civil war caused all of Lebanon's infrastructure destroyed. It obviously makes a big disadvantage, because the infrastructure in Lebanon is one aspect to attract the attention of foreign tourists.

“‘Fools without brains!’ He heaved a big breath. ‘They’re digging up forests all over Lebanon, Ruba, not only here, wiping out our land. They’re even quarrying the caves in Nahr el Kal, destroying treasures of archeology that will never come again. Using the caves at J’eeta as ammunition stores- caves that if they were abroad would be protected night and day for their beauty. And now our officials take bribes from foreign countries so they can bury their poisonous waste in our land or dump in our sea. Do you think anyone cares about nature, about the future? . . . . . . . .’” (p.108).

2. Discussion

In this novel Nathalie Abi-Ezzi wants to tell the events of the Civil war in Lebanon in 1998. The war resulted in many adverse effects. Actually the war made the social human life destroyed. Here the author would like to tell more specific direction about the adverse effects that occur in children whose name is Ruba Khouri. Eight years old girl should lose a wonderful childhood. Many conflicts make social life into a disorder. Nathalie more telling adverse impact of war on children, because she wants to show to
everyone that the war can made great destruction in the social life and mental of children. *A Girl Made Of Dust* Nathalie convey the message that the protection and security is a major priority for our future generation.

War made human social life to be damaged. One of them is very clearly visible in the economic aspect. Unemployment and poverty are clear evidence that the war has damaged human social conditions. It all closely matches the social condition of West Asia society in the early twenty first century, which there is no good social conditions at the time.

D. Conclusion

After analyzing *A Girl Made Of Dust* novel, the writer draws some conclusions. The story of the novel reflects the influence of war on the children happened when the civil war between Israel and Palestine in Lebanon in the 1980s. As a major character, Ruba Khouri was 8 years old not really understand with relation between Lebanon political and war, but she can feel of impact on the war involved emotion in herself. The impact of this war made Khouri get a lot of bad experienced that’s no occur with child who 8 years old.

Based on the Sociological analysis of *A Girl Made Of Dust* novel above, the researcher concludes that Nathallie Abi- Ezzi as the author of this novel underlines the social condition in West Asia at the time. She explains the social reality in the early twenty first century. There are not good social condition at the time, it causes of big war.
Nathallie Abi- Ezzi criticizes the social reality in West Asia through the theme, plot and characterization in *A Girl Made Of Dust*. The theme of the story is “bad impact on the children sosial life because of war”. It is reflected in the plot of the novel. People are getting poverty, attacked and violence in society.
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