

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Research Background

*Jojo Rabbit* tells the story of Johannes “Jojo” Betzler (Roman Griffin Davis), a 10-year-old boy in Germany during World War II. Jojo is a fanatical member of the Hitler Youth who has an imaginary friend, a goofy and childish version of Adolf Hitler (played by Taika Waititi). His life takes a drastic turn when he discovers that his mother, Rosie (Scarlett Johansson), is hiding a Jewish girl named Elsa (Thomasin McKenzie) in their house’s attic.

Through his interactions with Elsa, Jojo slowly begins to question the Nazi indoctrination he has always believed in. His allegiance to Nazism starts to shift as Jojo reveals himself to be an innocent and impressionable child. The film combines elements of dark comedy and drama to explore themes of fanaticism, hatred, tolerance, and the power of love.

The film is adapted from the novel *Caging Skies* (2008) by Christine Leunens. The story combines tragic and comedic elements and offers a unique perspective on World War II, which attracted Taika Waititi to the project. A year after his mother described *Caging Skies*, Waititi wrote the screenplay in 2011. Waititi wrote the script with a satirical and humorous approach despite the seriousness of the subject matter. He described the film as “anti-hate”.

In 2018, a casting schedule was held with Roman Griffin Davis as Jojo, Thomasin McKenzie as Elsa, Scarlett Johansson as Rosie, and Taika Waititi as an imaginary Adolf Hitler. The supporting cast includes Sam Rockwell, Rebel Wilson, and Stephen Merchant. The film was shot in the Czech Republic and Germany, and the locations were designed to recreate the atmosphere of Germany during World War II.

On September 8, 2019, *Jojo Rabbit* premiered at the 44th Toronto International Film Festival, where it won the Grolsch People’s Choice Award.

The film was then released in U.S. theaters on October 18, 2019. It was selected as one of the ten best films of the year by the National Board of Review and the American Film Institute. About 14 awards have been won by the *Jojo Rabbit* movie and its cast and crew, including the Academy Award (Oscar) for Best Adapted Screenplay (2020). The film has also been nominated in various categories at the Golden Globes, BAFTA and Critics' Choice Awards.

Visually, *Jojo Rabbit* has a bright and colorful aesthetic that contrasts with the bleak historical background. The music in the film is a combination of World War II-era songs and a modern soundtrack. The music in the film combines World War II-era songs with a modern soundtrack, including David Bowie's "Heroes," which is used to emphasize themes of heroism and humanity. The film entertains and thought-provokes audiences while using a dark comedic tone to address serious issues such as fascism, the Holocaust and war. Despite its war-centric theme, *Jojo Rabbit* attempts to show how a person's bigotry is often the result of the indoctrination they receive from their social environment as they grow up.

In one scene, Miss Rahm (hilariously played by Rebel Wilson), a counselor at a Hitler Youth meeting, passionately explains to Jojo and his friends about the Jews, using absurd and ridiculous descriptions. Although cloaked in humor, what Fraulein Rahm is doing is an illustration of the indoctrination process to foster fanaticism in children. While emphasizing the importance of empathy and compassion in the face of hatred, the film uses satire to criticize Nazi ideology and the dangers of fanaticism.

As a satirical work and an in-depth analysis of how propaganda and indoctrination work, *Jojo Rabbit* is relevant to the study of the role of media and art in providing socio-political critique. The film is not only entertaining, but also makes you think and reflect on history and human values, making this a provocative and meaningful work.

Thus, the movie depicts the Nazi ideology of fascism through the eyes of a 10-year-old child and depicts Nazi propaganda and indoctrination of German youth to hate other races. The film uses a political satire approach to convey the message of anti-fanaticism and anti-war. It mocks the absurdity of Nazi ideology and parodies the folly of totalitarianism. Political satire in film is a form of social criticism that uses humor, irony, or satire to expose stupidity, injustice, or crimes committed by individuals, groups, or political systems. Political satire is a language style used in literary works whose content is satire and criticism of political phenomena (Yahya, 2021: 1). Mocking and exposing the truth that is often hidden behind political practices, propaganda, and public policies is the main goal of political satire. Through the characters of Jojo and Hitler, his imaginary friend, Nazi propaganda and fanaticism towards Adolf Hitler are exposed as ridiculous and irrational.

Taika Waititi was born on 16 August 1975 in Raukokore, New Zealand. He is a New Zealand comedian, director, screenwriter and actor who is known for his anarchic sensibility, his use of the absurd and his humanistic view of the world.

Waititi was the son of a Māori father who was an artist. His mother was of mostly Russian Jewish descent and worked as a teacher. The couple divorced when he was a young child, and he grew up, for the most part, with his mother in Wellington, New Zealand, with many visits to his father's home in Raukokore.

Taika Waititi has always been drawn to stories that look at life through the eyes of children. In this case, the child is one we might not normally invest in. During the World War II, Taika Waititi's grandfather took part in the fight against the Nazis. Waititi was fascinated by this period and has always had a fascination with these events. One day, Waititi's mother told him about Christine Leunen's book "Caging Skies." The book is told from the perspective of a German child being indoctrinated by adults. So Waititi was interested in the book.

Waititi has a child, so he became more aware of the fact that adults are supposed to guide children through life and raise them to be better versions of themselves. But in times of war, adults often do the opposite. In fact, when all the world needs is guidance and balance, adults seem chaotic and unreasonable from a child's perspective.

Waititi experienced some prejudice growing up as a Māori Jew. So, Waititi made *Jojo Rabbit* a reminder, especially today, that we as adults need to teach our children about tolerance and remind ourselves that there is no place for hate in this world.

Children are not born with hate; they are taught to hate. Waititi hopes that *Jojo Rabbit*'s humour will help reach out to a new generation. It's essential to keep finding new and innovative ways to tell the horrific story of World War II over and over again to a new generation so children can listen, learn, and move forward together. Here's to getting rid of ignorance and replacing it with love.

It can be concluded that Taika Waititi's purpose in making this movie was as a tool of anti-war satire. It highlights the importance of empathy and humanity in the face of hatred. Although set in World War II, *Jojo Rabbit* has a universal message about the importance of tolerance, acceptance and compassion. Through the use of humor, Waititi attempts to make the audience question and reflect on the atrocities of the Nazi regime without getting caught up in an overly lurid or clichéd narrative.

Social criticism in a literary work is nothing new in a cultured society. Literary criticism is the work of a literary critic, whether the advantages or disadvantages of a literary criticism are related to the intelligence of a critic (Pradopo, 2007: 11). Film makes a work as a medium to explore the logic and reality of a society. Through literature, authors are able to explore the logic, contradictions, and realities that exist in society, making it an effective medium to convey social criticism implicitly or explicitly.

One of the most recognisable forms of literary criticism is satire. As a tool of criticism, satire uses humour, irony, sarcasm and hyperbole to expose depravity, injustice or absurdity in society. With its witty and often entertaining style, satire not only captures people's attention but also provokes deep reflection on the issues raised. In this context, satire functions not only as entertainment but also as a tool to undermine hegemony, challenge the status quo and promote social change. This makes satire a form of literary criticism that is relevant and effective in any era.

Satire is a criticism of bad or stupid human behaviour with the aim of inviting the audience to see and ridicule it, which will lead to social change. Wafi et al, (2020) found that satire can be used when the goals or motivations of the actor align with the perceptions and views of the audience. In the media context, satire arises from a shared dissatisfaction with a social issue. This usually happens when there is no clear or concrete solution to the problem, often due to complicated political situations. As a result, information is presented in a satirical style in order to attract the attention of the general public and put the issue under discussion in the spotlight.

Film is not only a mirror but also a tool for social change because of its ability to influence the way people think about certain issues. In the Marxist tradition, for example, literature is seen as part of the superstructure, reflecting the economic and ideological basis of society and playing a role in maintaining or challenging the hegemony of power. By exposing injustice, corruption or lies in politics, literature provides a space for collective criticism and reflection. This relationship makes literature and politics two mutually enriching domains, where literature helps channel aspirations and resistance, while politics provides the framework that shapes the complexity of literary narratives.

Film and politics are two fields of study with different focuses. Literature is about fictional texts produced by writers, but it has a close relationship with society. This is because literature is born out of the conditions experienced by the author in which the literary work is created. Politics, on the

other hand, talks about the policies of the rulers (state and regional). These policies are also related to society. Looking at the concentration of the two disciplines, literature has a close relationship with politics. This is because they both deal with the state of society.

Film is often a medium for expressing views, criticising or supporting political power, ideologies and policies. Through stories, poems, plays or essays, literature reflects the socio-political conditions of an era, explores power dynamics and gives voice to the oppressed. In many cases, literature serves as a tool of resistance against authoritarian regimes or as a means of expressing utopian ideas of a better society. Conversely, politics also influences the development of literature by providing the historical context, issues and social dynamics that inspire writers.

Politics is an activity aimed at gaining and maintaining power in society. Language as a political tool is used by certain parties to gain power. Language is able to change the human mindset, command the human mind and even damage the human mind or is referred to as a tool of political control. For this reason, individuals use language for personal gain. One of the styles of language used in politics is the use of satire. Satire is a form of figurative expression in the form of satire. Satire is a satirical language style in the form of rather subtle satire, as the satire is not expressed directly and contains criticism/weaknesses for the sake of improving the person being addressed. Satire in political news often appears in online media as an expression of entertaining criticism (Yulianti, 2019). Political satire is used as the only medium of criticism with humour, which is used as a weapon of argumentation (criticism and ridicule) that is very sensitive, but still gives the impression of humour to the recipient of criticism.

Political satire plays a very important role in conveying social and political criticism, especially on sensitive issues such as ideology, war and propaganda. With humour, irony and sarcasm, satire is able to explore the absurdities and contradictions in ideological doctrines that are often considered



sacrosanct or unassailable. In the context of war, satire exposes the destruction, inhumanity and hidden agendas that often underlie conflict, while offering an alternative perspective that invites deeper reflection. Meanwhile, in the context of propaganda, satire becomes a tool to expose the manipulation of information by those in power to influence public opinion, showing how propaganda works to create blind loyalty, hatred or fear.

Political issues sometimes become tedious and boring when packaged in a description of crisis analysis. In response to this reality, satire comes as an option that presents criticism in different formats. Cartoons, memes, and writings are almost inseparable from satirical language styles. Film media can present satirical politics, as in the film *Jojo Rabbit*. The goal is to show the conditions of the Second World War in Germany, which have long since occurred and are shown in popular films to show how dangerous the ideology was at the time. Indirectly to show the public the real truth. So that ignorance in thinking does not happen again.

Political satire is effective because it can deliver sharp criticism without losing its appeal to a diverse audience. By creating a space for humour in the midst of serious issues, satire provides an emotional distance that allows people to process heavy topics without feeling intimidated. In the case of ideology, war and propaganda, satire often breaks through the official narrative in a witty and satirical way, helping audiences to see the reality behind deceptive claims or promises. Satire is not only an entertainment tool, but also an intellectual weapon that ignites critical awareness of power dynamics and their impact on people's lives. As a result, political satire serves not only as social critique, but also as a catalyst for change, encouraging people to question, debate and reject injustices hidden within grand narratives of power.

Humanity has experienced centuries of war in the name of ethnic, religious, cultural, natural resource and other differences. War can be an extraordinary act of massacre against a particular population, a particular race, a particular religion. Such a tragic example in Germany, which at that time was

led by Adolf Hitler, sent 17 million Jews to concentration camps and ended up in dark and closed rooms filled with poison gas, while children were injected with death or euthanasia. The event is called genocide.

When it comes to Nazi Germany, regardless of the propaganda methods they used, the movement and shift in power of Nazi Germany was inevitable. It started with Germany's defeat in World War I and, according to the Treaty of Versailles (1919), Germany was required to pay all the losses caused by the war, which left the German people feeling humiliated and unacceptable. As a result, the German people wanted strong leadership that could uplift the dignity and worth of their nation. Hitler, with his distinctive propaganda, openly campaigning anti-semitism and anti-Versailles, emerged in this crisis. Nazi party chief Adolf Hitler believed that Germany was the noblest nation in the world (Nurudin, 2008).

Adolf Hitler was a political figure who had his fascist ideology to rule Germany. He is famous around the world for his efforts to encourage Germans to implement fascist ideology in their own country, Germany. This man is considered responsible for the deaths of tens of millions of people during World War II. His courage, as he said in *Mein Kampf*, was that “the single easiest way to achieve victory against reason is force and terror.” As such, Adolf Hitler remains regarded as a revolutionary figure in Europe, especially in Greater Germany, breaking out of sectarian shackles, especially among Germans of the Jewish people.

Fascism is a political ideology that prioritizes the interests of one's own country and avoids democracy, an ideology that emphasizes one's own nation and looks down on other nations. In other words, one of the most extreme forms of nationalism is fascism. Fascism is an extreme form of nationalist ideology that embraces political power. Fascists seek to organize the country from the point of view of systems, values, and enterprises, including political and economic systems. They encourage the formation of a single party totalitarian state that aims to mobilize the masses of the people as a whole. The state is



designed to form a governing elite through policies of eugenics, physical education, and indoctrination. Fascists believe that to maintain the strength of the nation, strong leadership, collective identity, and the ability to commit violence and wage war are necessary.

In Germany, the ideology of fascism is called nazism. Using his fascist ideology, Adolf Hitler always emphasized to the younger generation of Germans that Germany was the most powerful, noble, and great nation, and that they could do no wrong and would rule the world. This was done because Germans were of Aryan blood, which was the basis of German strength. However, that strength was shackled by outside forces, namely Jews and Communists, the Jews as the cause of it all had to be exterminated. Therefore, Adolf Hitler decided to eliminate sadness and open up a living space. At that time, Germany had to build a strong army under the leadership of a Fuhrer or great leader.

Decades after Hitler's death and Germany's defeat in World War II, many people are still fascinated by the cleverness and prowess of the speech and propaganda techniques used by Nazi Germany, especially by its charismatic leader, Adolf Hitler. Until now, there are many books, movies, scientific journals themed about the nazism and Adolf Hitler. Like the movie that will be discussed in this study, namely "*Jojo Rabbit*" 2019 Movie.

Film exists as a mass culture, emerging with the development of urban and industrial societies, as part of popular mass culture. As a medium, films are not neutral, there must be parties that dominate or represent their interests in the film. Film can also be said to change people's lives, because in film we can see a true image or reflection, and sometimes we are not even aware of it. As a moving image, film is a reproduction of reality as it is. Film also has dualism as a reflection or representation of society and a reflection or representation of reality. Movies convey audio-visual messages so that movies need a vehicle as a medium for delivery.

According to (Zuhri et al., 2020), film is a cultural statement that conveys messages from the storyteller to the entire audience. The ability of films to convey messages, especially emotional messages, often immerses the viewer in the story of the film. In (Edhi, 2020) it can be said that film and literature work together in the progress of human civilisation. A film made from a literary work is no longer a strange thing because they can relate to each other. Films usually have a language style as well. This language style includes diction or word choice and rhetoric.

Visually, *Jojo Rabbit* uses an unusually bright palette for a war film, creating an atmosphere that contrasts with the tragedy of the story. Waititi's unique directing style brings satirical elements to life, such as ironic dialogue, exaggerated characterisation and comedic scenes that satirise Nazi ideology. The music in the film is also a standout element, with the use of modern songs adapted in the style of the 1940s, such as the German version of 'I Want to Hold Your Hand' by The Beatles.

The film was widely praised for its ability to tackle heavy themes of hate and war with an entertaining approach, without compromising the depth of its moral message. *Jojo Rabbit* won the Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay in 2020 and received several other nominations, including Best Picture and Best Supporting Actress for Scarlett Johansson, who played Rosie. However, the film was also criticised by some who felt it was too light in its depiction of Nazi atrocities, despite Taika Waititi's deliberate choice of a child's perspective to highlight the absurdity and irony of the doctrine of hate.

Overall, *Jojo Rabbit* is a unique and bold work that combines humour, satire and drama to deliver a message about humanity and the dangers of indoctrination. The film is a powerful reminder of the importance of empathy and love in the midst of hatred and conflict, and proves that stories about war and ideology don't always have to be told in a dark tone to have a deep emotional impact.

In addition, political satire has the ability to transcend the boundaries of censorship or authoritarianism, as its messages are often couched in humour or absurdity, which allows for a more subtle but still pointed critique. The power of satire also lies in its ability to reach the masses through various media, such as film, literature, theatre or digital media. In this way, political satire becomes an important tool for creating public awareness, undermining the hegemony of dominant ideologies and promoting social change. In many cases, political satire is not only entertaining, but also provides a space for people to see social and political reality from a new perspective, challenge official narratives and inspire collective action.

The film garnered significant critical acclaim while simultaneously provoking scholarly debate about its unconventional treatment of anti-hate themes. As Thompson (2019) observes, Waititi's bold narrative strategy employs the naive perspective of a ten-year-old protagonist to deconstruct Nazi ideology, creating a powerful juxtaposition between childhood innocence and political indoctrination. The protagonist's inherent empathy becomes increasingly compromised by the systemic hatred permeating his social environment, illustrating Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* - how societal structures shape individual dispositions (Bourdieu, 1977). This narrative device serves as a poignant commentary on the intergenerational transmission of prejudice, demonstrating how even the most virtuous human potential can be distorted through ideological contamination.

Daniels (2020) further contextualizes the film within the tradition of Menippean satire, arguing that Waititi's exaggerated parody of Nazi officials functions as a scathing critique of genocidal mentalities. Through grotesque caricatures that maintain superficial normalcy, the film exposes what Arendt termed "the banality of evil" (Arendt, 1963), while simultaneously revealing the mechanisms of ideological manipulation. The director's satirical approach effectively deconstructs how extremist ideologies appropriate and pervert fundamental human beliefs, transforming them into instruments of oppression.

Several experts have researched politic satire. Previous research on politic satire, which researches first read from Damian Talan (2022) entitled “*Satire Isu Politik Dalam Materi Stand Up Comedy Bintang Emon (Studi Kasus Pada Program Somasi Kanal Youtube Deddy Corbuzier)*”. This research explains the StandUp Comedy program that talks about social, political, and various issues that are the concerns of the StandUp Comedians. Using political satire, these issues can be analyzed. The purpose of this research is to find the satire of political issues in the somasi program hosted by Bintang Emon.

The second research the researcher read was “*Satire Politik dalam Media (Analisis Wacana Kritis terhadap Video Musikal DPR Dalam Kanal Youtube Skinny Indonesia24)*.” This study analyzes the use of satirical language and political messaging in the musical video 'DPR' published on Skinny Indonesia24's YouTube channel, employing critical discourse analysis methods.

The last research which the researcher read entitled “*Animated satire and collective memory: reflecting on the American “history wars” with The Simpsons*” by Olli Hellmann. Through an analysis of The Simpsons, this research explores how satirical memory serves as a reflection of societal debates. By employing the fictional figure Jebediah Springfield as a symbolic stand-in for America’s founding fathers, the show offers recurring critiques of the intense ideological clashes (‘history wars’) between liberal and conservative factions in the U.S.

This research differs from previous studies, especially in the main focus and object of research. The main focus of this research is on politic satire by Jojo Betzler. Next, focus on the factors that hinder the occurrence of politic satire. Therefore, the title of this research is The Political Satire in *Jojo Rabbit* Movie.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the explanation above regarding politic satire, which is interrelated with current social relations in the study of The Political Satire in *Jojo Rabbit* Movie, the researcher prepared two questions to analyze this politic satire, namely by using the application of film analysis, which included:

1. What political satires are implemented to criticize the ideology of fascism in *Jojo Rabbit* Movie?
2. How are the ideology and indoctrination of politic satire created in *Jojo Rabbit* Movie?

## 1.3 Research Objectives

Based on the research questions above, this study has the following objectives:

1. To understand of politic satire implemented by Jojo Betzler in *Jojo Rabbit* Movie.
2. To explore the ideology and indoctrination of politic satire (critical thinking fascism) during the reign Adolf Hitler in *Jojo Rabbit* Movie.

## 1.4 Research Significance

The researcher hopes that the importance of this research can enlighten the freedom of all nations and all forms of genocide must be eliminated. In addition, the researcher divides this research into two objects of study, namely theoretically and practically.

Theoretically, this research aims to enrich and expand studies in the field of literature, especially politic satire. The researcher hopes that every group in society can know about the importance of a nation having the same right to live, this is based on the creation of world peace.

Practically, this research is expected to be a motivation and inspiration for the community, both individually and in groups, to always be able to instill

a sense of anti-hated towards other nations, races, ethnicities, and religions. Although this research cannot be perfect, the researcher hopes that English Literature students can use the object of this research to understand politic satire. This research is also expected to be a practical source for future researchers who are interested in satire, especially for research on politic satire.

### **1.5 Definition of Key Terms**

1. Literary criticism: Literary criticism is the activity of analysing, interpreting, and evaluating literary works in order to understand their meaning, structure, and aesthetic and ideological values.
2. Satire: Satire is a linguistic style or form of literary expression that uses humour, irony, sarcasm or parody to criticise or ridicule behaviour, policies or phenomena in society, especially those considered unethical, unfair or absurd.
3. Political satire: Political satire is a form of criticism that uses humour, irony, sarcasm, or parody to expose, ridicule, or criticise political actions, policies, or figures, as well as phenomena in the political system.
4. Political literature: Political literature is a literary work that deals directly or indirectly with political themes, issues, or ideas, whether through the portrayal of characters, events, conflicts, or power structures.
5. Propaganda: Propaganda is a systematic attempt to influence the opinions, emotions, attitudes, or behaviour of people or groups by delivering persuasive and often one-sided messages.
6. Ideology: Ideology is a set of ideas, values, beliefs, and principles that shape a person's or group's frame of mind and view of the world. Ideology serves as a guide to understanding social, political, economic and cultural realities and determines how individuals or groups act and respond to various issues in everyday life.
7. Humour: Humour in satire refers to the use of humour, irony or absurdity to convey sharp social or political criticism.



8. Irony: Irony is a literary technique or style of communication that expresses the discrepancy between what is expected or seen and the actual reality.
9. Sarcasm: Sarcasm in satire refers to the use of sharp, hurtful or mocking remarks or comments to criticise or expose the stupidity, injustice or ugliness of a situation or person. Sarcasm often contains irony, but with a sharper and sometimes more caustic intensity, as it usually involves expressions that seem to praise or approve of something, but are actually the opposite of what is meant.
10. Film: Film is a work of art and an audio-visual communication medium that combines moving images, sound, and narration to convey a story, message, or information to an audience.

