

FASCISM DEMOLISHMENT IN *THE HUNGER ANGEL* (2012)

BY HERTA MÜLLER

Thesis

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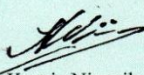
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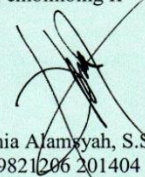
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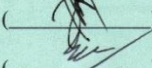
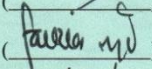
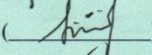

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ABSTRAK

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Skripsi ini merupakan analisis dari novel *The Hunger Angel* (2012) yang ditulis oleh Herta Müller. Topik yang dibahas adalah bagaimana komunis Russia di era pemerintahan Stalin mencoba menghancurkan lawan ideologinya yaitu fasisme dengan cara menghancurkan kehidupan orang-orang Jerman yang dianggap berpotensi untuk bergabung dan memperkuat ideologi tersebut. Permasalahan dari analisis ini adalah sejauh mana novel tersebut mengungkap penghancuran fasisme yang dilakukan oleh Russia di era pemerintahan Stalin, serta seberapa besar fungsi elemen-elemen fiksi seperti karakter, seting, dan konflik berpengaruh untuk memperlihatkan penghancuran tersebut. Tujuan dari analisis ini adalah untuk mengungkapkan penghancuran ideologi fasisme oleh Russia, serta untuk mengetahui peran karakter, seting, dan plot dalam membantu mengetahui tindakan penghancuran fasisme. Teori yang digunakan dalam analisis ini ialah konsep *Power* dari Michel Foucault. Metode yang dipakai adalah *text-based interpretation* dan *context-based interpretation*. Hasil dari analisis ini menunjukkan penghancuran ideologi fasisme dilakukan dengan cara menghancurkan hidup orang-orang Jerman. Dengan kata lain, penghancuran orang-orang Jerman merepresentasikan penghancuran ideologi fasisme.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRAK.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iii
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Background of the Problem.....	1
1.1.1 Gulag.....	3
1.1.2 Fascism Demolishment.....	5
1.1.3 Biography of The Author: Herta Müller.....	6
1.1.4 The Hunger Angel.....	8
1.2 Problem of the Study.....	9
1.3 Purpose of the Study	9
1.4 Previous Study.....	9
1.5 Theoretical Framework.....	11
1.6 Methodology.....	16
CHAPTER II: FASCISM DEMOLISHMENT	
2.1 Isolation.....	17
2.2 Terror and Violence.....	30
CHAPTER III: CONCLUSION.....	45
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	47

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Problem

World War II is well-known as a global war aiming for power expansion. It is related to the role of politics and ideology; the tool to gain power by a country to conquer the others. In general, there were two groups of power involved in the war. They were the Allies and the Axis whose members came from all countries over the world. However, Europe, as the biggest part of both Allies and Axis power, appears to be the most interesting to be analyzed. Russia and Germany, for example, were the countries that involved in this second war. This was caused by ideology differences between fascism (Germany) under Hitler's leadership and communism (Russia) under Stalin.

Fascism and Communism were very different in their principles. According to Encyclopedia of Government and Politics (2002:168), fascism, in term of ideology and political goals, represents the most intense and radical form of nationalism known to modern Europe. Its political system is led by one charismatic leader with absolute authority. It supported private property and condemned socialism. On the other hands, communism is an ideology postulating full social equality and a political and economic system for its implementation as envisaged by Marxists. Unlike fascism, communism was stateless and governed by people and believed that the government controls everything. These clashes between them caused a long-term war between Germany and Russia in Europe.

The post-war time was the critical and essential time to maintain and gain the power of the most powerful ideology. To reach this purpose, it should make sure that the opposite ideologies had no chance to do any revolt by doing ideology demolition. According to Oxford Dictionary (2016) demolition or demolition is defined as the action or process of demolishing or being demolished. This is aimed at human being as the fundamental part of the ideology; the creator and the player of it. Since the war has ended, it was organized to be done secretly. Gulag, for example, was known as labor camp for rebuilding the damage caused by the war. However, based on the experiences faced by German ex-laborers, it was intentionally created as a secret place to demolish Russia's political oppositions during post-war period.

Thus, this study analyzes fascism demolition which refers to communism regime's secret strategy to destroy its enemy, the fascism. Russians do this by sending all Germans about the age of 17-45 to Gulag. Most of them were innocent and were put on the list because their relatives had involved in fascism. By isolating them far away to remote area in Russia, they were alienated from world outside and were unable to do any revolt to defeat communism. In addition, it was a part of Russia's plan to hide the truth about treatments faced by Germans. During the isolation, violence and terror were also done as the part of demolition acts. They were purposed to create a massive fear among the Germans to prevent them from showing opposition to revolt. Based on the treatments faced by the victims who were specialized into Germans, it can be categorized as fascism demolition.

The issue about fascism demolishment is interesting for some authors to be shown in their literary works. One of them is the novel *The Hunger Angel* (2012) by Herta Müller. This novel shows how the protagonist, the victim of fascism demolishment, experiences violence and terror in Gulag at the end of World War II. Since it has correlation to the politics and history in real life, this novel is certainly interesting to be discussed.

1.1.1 Gulag

Gulag or *Glavnoe Upravlenie Lagarei* was a concentration camp located in remote area in Russia. It was first created in 1917 under Lenin's era and was mainly used as labor camp to increase Russia's economy and sometime as political prison. During the years of Joseph Stalin's rule from 1929 until 1953, the system of state repression grew in size, scope, and brutality. The Gulag was viewed by the authorities as a place for both punishment and potential redemption of inmates through labor. Then, it developed into a system of mass terror that included labor camps, prisons, the labor army, exile of various kinds, psychiatric hospitals, and a pervasive climate of fear.

Furthermore, Berkhoff (2012:69) says the key issue in the rear Gulag was *discipline*, in which Stalin meant as to mercilessly combat disorganizers, deserters, and panic-mongers, and to destroy spies and saboteurs. This shows that even though Gulag was first officially introduced as labor camps to increase Russia economy, the violence for political reason had secretly grown up there. Gulag was intentionally developed by Stalin as a complex system of repression by

using violence in order to demolish his political enemies. Thus, everyone who was suspected and accused as the enemy of the state would be sent to this camp.

People of many ethnicities, faiths, social classes and political affiliations were imprisoned in Gulag. Germans was one of the biggest part of Gulag prisoners. Solzhenitsyn (2002: 51) says:

All that was required in order to heighten the general consciousness was to arrest a certain percentage—of those guilty, those half-guilty, those quarter-guilty, and those who had hung out their footcloths to dry on the same branch as the Germans [...] During the last years of the wars, of course, there was a wave of German war criminals who were selected from the POW camps and transferred by court verdict to the jurisdiction of Gulag.

The statement above shows that Russia focused on arresting Germans to be sent to Gulag. This was caused by the different ideologies between communism Russia and fascism Germany. It also shows that this political tension between Germany and Russia caused many of innocent Germans were arrested.

The life in Gulag camps was very cruel. Inmates were shot for little or no reason. Torture was common and inventive. Kuusinen in Applebeum (2004:378), one of the witnesses of Gulag survivor, says:

Even today, after thirty years, I can hardly describe the horror of that first night at Lefortovo. In my cell I could hear every noise from outside. Nearby, as I later discovered, was the 'interrogation department', a separate structure which in fact a torture chamber. All night long I heard inhuman screams and the repeated sound of lash.

The quotation above shows the horror that was faced by Gulag inmates. In addition to being exiled in a cell, they also had to face the violence and terror as their daily routine there. The violence was intentionally done to destroy inmates'

life gradually. Clothing and food can be set as the examples of the violence. Inmates were often forced to go outside with insufficient clothing in 40-degree frost. Food was allotted based on meeting labor goals. The food quota system resulted in slow starvation for many, as once people began to weaken; they could never meet their labor norm, and therefore received less and less food. They were surrounded by death during their time in Gulag.

1.1.2 Fascism Demolishment

There are two key words to form the terminology in this study. They are *fascism* and *demolishment*. Some of the words can be found in dictionary and the rest explained by the expert.

The first word is Fascism. According to Passmore (2002:31), fascism is a set of ideologies and practices that seeks to place the nation, defined in exclusive biological, cultural, and/or historical terms, above all other sources of loyalty, and to create a mobilized national community. Moreover, according to Collin (2004:95), fascism is extreme nationalist ideas violently opposed to communism. In addition, Scruton (2007:244) states the name of fascism is now used more widely, to include German Nazism, on the basis more of a common ethos than a common doctrine. In this analysis, fascism refers to an ideology opposed to communism spread in Europe during World War II under Hitler's leadership.

The second word is demolition. Demolishment or demolition, in Oxford Dictionary (2016), is defined as the action or process of demolishing or being demolished. In this analysis, demolition refers to the process in destroying something.

Thus, *Fascism Demolishment* in this analysis refers to the acts conducted by Stalin's regime to destroy its political enemy, the fascism, through repressing the Germans. It is done by sending them to Gulag as forced laborers to cover Russia's political strategy to demolish fascism.

1.1.3 Biography of The Author: Herta Müller

Herta Müller was born on 17 August 1953 in Nitchidorf, Southern Romania. Her family belonged to a German speaking minority group in Romania. Her father had been a member of Hitler's Waffen-SS during World War II. Her mother was deported to a labour camp in the Soviet Union in 1945 when she was still 17. In 1973, after she finished her schooling from Nikolaus Lenau High School, she enrolled at West University of Timisoara. In 1977, Müller began to write.

Müller is the writer of more than twenty five titles to her credit. She made her debut in the world of literature in 1982 with the publication of her first book, '*Niederungen*' (*Nadirs*) in Romania. Her other important works are '*Traveling on One Leg*' published in 1989, '*The Appointment*' published in 1997, and '*The Land of Green Plums*' published in 1994. '*The Hunger Angel*' originally titled in German as '*Atemschaukel*', published in 2009. It is translated into English by Philip Boehm. It depicts the persecution of German minority in Romania under communist regime.

For her brilliant literary works, Müller has received more than twenty awards to date, including the *Kleist Prize* (1994), the *Aristeion Prize* (1995), the *International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award* (1998) and the *Franz Werfel Human*

Rights Award (2009). Her novel, *The Hunger Angel*, was nominated for the prestigious *German Book Prize* in 2009. She received the *Nobel Prize in Literature* the same year. *The Hunger Angel* is the most brilliant works from Müller. The Nobel Committee in *The Hunger Angel*'s back cover says:

[It] is a masterly novel from the winner of the 2009 Nobel Prize, hailed for depicting the "landscape of the dispossessed" with "the concentration of poetry and the frankness of prose."

This statement of Noble Committee proves that the novel *The Hunger Angel* is a masterpiece in literary works. In her novel, *The Hunger Angel*, Müller tries to portray the life of Germans under Stalin dictatorship in Russia's concentration camp called Gulag.

The Hunger Angel was inspired by Müller's mother experience as Soviet's Gulag forced laborers. It was the deportation of thousands of long-established ethnically German Romanians to labor camps in the Soviet Union as World War II was ending. Müller, in an interview with New York Time Magazine in 2012, said:

"When my mother, who had spent five years in the Gulag, combed my hair, she would tell me how her own head had been shaved, and without telling me she had learned it in the camp, showed me how to peel a potato so that the skin was very thin, and nothing was wasted."

The interview shows that she gets the inspiration to write The Hunger Angel from her mother's story. She voices the unspoken darkness of the history with her works. She leads the readers to their deepest soul through her work. The New Yorker in *The Hunger Angel*'s cover states "[It] is written in terse, hypnotic

prose....exquisite”. Briefly, it tells us that Müller has a brilliant story and way in making her notable literary works.

1.1.4. *The Hunger Angel*

The novel *The Hunger Angel* (2012), written by Herta Müller, reflects fascism demolition. In this analysis, *Fascism Demolishment* refers to intentional attempts by Stalin’s communism regime to demolish fascism in World War II. It is done through repressing the Germans by sending them to Gulag camp in Russia as forced laborers. It is represented through what is done towards the protagonist, a German lives in Romania, Leopold Auberg. He is still in his innocent seventeen years old. The Russian and Romanian police with the list came to take him to Gulag along with other listed Germans. He is accused as a fascist and Hitler’s follower since his father was a German who had joined as Romanian soldier. His whole life has been destroyed during the acts of fascism demolition. It is conducted by using isolation, terror and violence as the strategy to demolish the fascism.

First, Russians send the character to isolation. He is isolated for years. He is sent to remote area in Russia. He lives as a prisoner. He is directed to uncivilized life. His access for knowledge and information has been restricted. He is prevented to develop his skill. He is incapable to fit himself in after being released. He is trapped in his bad memories of the isolation.

Second, Russians do terror and violence to the character. He is accused as enemy of the state. He gets terror and feels intimidate by seeing physical punishment other laborers get. He sees other laborers’ death in the camp. He is

menaced by strict armed guards. He is forced to work like a machine in deadly circumstance. He is tortured with hunger. He faces insecurity for the rest of his life.

1.2 Problem of the Study

Fascism demolishment emerged as an important issue in Herta Müller's novel, *The Hunger Angel* (2012). Thus, there are some research questions used to analyze fascism demolishment which are formulated as follow:

1. How far does the novel *The Hunger Angel* (2012) expose the issue of fascism demolishment?
2. To what extend do the character, setting and plot (conflict) in the novel *The Hunger Angel* contribute in revealing fascism demolishment?

1.3 Purpose of Study

This study is aimed to seek how far *The Hunger Angel* (2012) exposes fascism demolishment. Furthermore, the analysis is conducted to figure out the role of characters, setting and plot in revealing fascism demolishment.

1.4 Previous Study

There are two studies about novel *The Hunger Angel* (2012) by Herta Müller. They are from Aurelija Daukšaitė that focuses on hunger trauma and Bethany Amato Morgan which focuses on metaphorical representation of hunger and labor. These two studies have given contribution and inspiration in analyzing this novel. However, the study that discussed about *Fascism Demolishment* has not been found yet.

Daukšaitė's analysis of *The Hunger Angel* (2013) in European Academic Research is entitled *Hunger Trauma in Herta Müller's The Hunger Angel*. The analysis is about perspective of trauma, focusing mainly on the character's trauma. The analysis related to the concept of post-traumatic symptom from Farrell (1998) that shows traumatic event in the past can influence the future of the victim. The result of the analysis is the main character as German forced laborer got trauma from his five years experience in Gulag. This trauma is caused by the deadly hunger faced by the character.

The other analysis is from Bethany Amato Morgan in his Master of Art thesis (2013) entitled *Metaphorical Representations of Hunger and Labor in Herta Muller's Atemschaudel*. In this analysis he gives more attention to metaphorical representation. He focuses on Müller's use of metaphors, symbol, and allegory to reveal the meaning. The analysis related to the concept of recent developments in metaphor theory by Zoltán Kövecses (2011) that discusses the theory of metaphor as six different theories: "categorization, standard conceptual metaphor theory, blending theory, the neural theory of metaphor, conceptual metaphor theory as based on the idea of main meaning focus, and relevance theory. The result from the analysis shows that Müller achieves a trauma narrative of labor camps that is more poignant than any photograph could achieve and gives the power of language to victims of these camps.

Both of the studies above give contributon and inspiration to the topic *fascism demolishment*. The studies use the same novel but different topic and theory, first focuses on trauma while the others on metaphorical representations.

Unlike the previous studies, this study focuses on fascism demolishment which refers to treatments faced by Germans as secret strategy of Stalin communism regime to demolish the fascism.

1.5 Theoritical Framework

The analysis about fascism demolishment in this novel is related to the concept of power by Michel Foucault. He has broader view on power than more traditional model such as Marxist. Foucault in O'Farrell (2005:99) states that power is not a 'thing' or a 'capacity' which can be owned either by State, social class or particular individuals. It is a relation between different individuals and groups and only exists when it is being exercised. Thus, the term power refers to sets of relations that exist between individuals, or that are strategically deployed by groups of individuals.

Since power is defined as sets of relation between different individuals or groups, the presence of resistance will always take part in it. Foucault in O'Farrell (2005:99) says that resistance existed everywhere and at every level wherever power was exercised. The resistance from opposite groups or individuals, then, encourages the power to expand. It is the principle of power relation that the bigger the resistance to be faced and defeated, the higher the chance to expand the power. He adds that power is exercised with a series of aims and objectives. The aims and objectives are to get more authority to control. As Nietzsche (1968:366) says that the will in striving for power, for an increase of power, is part of individual happiness. It shows that human being always try to gain more power in life.

Furthermore, Foucault has classified power into different kinds called as modalities of power. Foucault in Fendler (2010:44) states that modalities of power can be divided into fourfold; sovereign power, disciplinary power, pastoral power, and bio-power. However, in this analysis, only sovereign power and disciplinary power are used since both of them are regarded as complex social functions and as political tactics. In addition, they are related in the practice.

First, sovereign power, according to Foucault in Fendler (2010:44), operates when authorities (people or laws) try to control other people. It is done through physical torture and violence such as punishment. By punishing the people, the authority intended to create a feeling of fear in victims' self. This fear of being punished or even being killed creates the terror for the people. It is supported by Humphrey (2002:11) as he says:

Violence inflicts physical injuries and thereby causes pain and suffering. Through pain violence reaches into the sentient body and threatens the victim's identity and existence. We can lose our consciousness, the self-knowledge of our existence, by being overwhelmed by pain. The experience of pain confronts individuals with the 'space of terror', the abject limits where meaning collapses.

The text above shows that violence and terror are related to each other. While violence is aimed to destroy people physically, terror is aimed to destroy people psychologically. Both violence and terror would give massive effects to the victims which can be continued for long-term period. The sovereign power, then, is aimed to show that the most powerful one can take control over the others. In other words, the aim is to maintain and gain power.

Second, disciplinary power, according to Foucault in O'Farrell (2005:102), is a technology aimed at how to keep someone under surveillance, how to control his conduct, his behavior, his aptitudes, how to improve his performance, multiply his capacities, how to put him where he is most useful. It refers to systematic efforts to control movement and operations of the body and to exercise power over individuals in order to produce docility and submission. It is aimed to anyone who is potential for being suspected as dangerous person. Furthermore, discipline is applied through surveillance and knowledge. The beginnings of power are established through intensive mechanisms of surveillance that induce paranoia and create fear in the population. One surveillance mechanism is gaze which is symbolized by the *panopticon*, a prison design that allows a supervisor to watch inmates. Foucault (1997:201) says:

The major effect of the *panopticon* is to induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power. So to arrange things that the surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action. In short, that the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers.

The quotation above shows that *panopticon* is intended to create eternal feeling of paranoia and fear in human life. It creates such terror of always being watched in victim's self. Then, it causes massive fear to do something that opposes the rule of authority. As a result, it will help the authority to maintain its power and also facilitate it to gain more power.

The concept of *Power* by Michel Foucault is used in analyzing the relation between Russia and Germany. After Russia got the victory over the Germany in

1945, Russia's government took the power over the Germans. As the powerful one, Russia's government demanded Germans from the age of 17 to 45 to be sent to Gulag as forced laborers. It was a camp which designed by communist Russians as both prison and labor camp for its political enemy, fascist Germans. Furthermore, in Gulag, both sovereign power and disciplinary power were applied. Russians punished the Germans by beating them so that they did not dare to oppose Russia. As a result, they lived under Russia's control. Moreover, Gulag used similar system as *panopticon*. It made the inmates felt that they were always being watched. It created fear to do something oppose to Russia's rules. These treatments faced by Germans can be said as fascism demolishment.

Thus, *fascism demolishment* in this analysis refers to the acts done by Stalin's communism regime to destroy the fascism. The acts are done to the character during his time in Gulag as German forced laborer. In other words, Gulag is used as a secret prison to demolish the fascism. It is conducted by using isolation, and terror and violence as the strategy to demolish the fascism.

The analysis of this novel is supported by text and context based interpretation. Context based interpretation means that the analysis of this novel is not only focused on the text itself, but also involved the phenomenon that really happens in the real world. Meanwhile, Glenn (2007:298) states that the text-based interpretation demands concentration on the piece of literature itself; nothing more than what is contained within the text itself is needed to understand and appreciate the text's unchanging meaning. It focuses on character, plot (conflict), and setting.

Character is important element to reveal the meaning of this novel. Abrams (2009:42) states that characters are the persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as possessing particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from what the persons say and their distinctive ways of saying it—the dialogue—and from what they do—the action. The way to analyze the character is taking a focus into character's action, thoughts, conversations, and the reaction toward conflicts and circumstances. In this novel, the main character represents as the victim of fascism demolishment in Gulag. He lived in Gulag for five years. He faced violence, hunger, and punishment during that time. His experience in Gulag is important in revealing fascism demolishment.

Another fictional device used in order to analyze this novel is plot (conflict). Conflict is important part to make up the plot. Quinn (2006:95) states conflict can be identified into four kinds; man versus himself, man versus man, man versus ideas, and man versus society. There are internal conflicts and external conflicts. In this novel, the external conflict—the interactions of the characters and the people and situations surrounding them— has caused internal conflict to the character. However, the internal conflict is the dominant conflict. His experience of inhuman treatments in Gulag causes immortal fear in himself. The conflicts give contribution in identifying and examining the analysis about fascism demolishment.

Setting also gives contribution in order to reveal the meaning of this novel. Bickham (1999:1) states that setting is not merely the physical backdrop of the

tale. It relates to the circumstance, condition, situation, location, and atmosphere of the characters in the story. In this novel, the setting focused on the condition and situation of the character. The character is suffered with horrible life in Gulag at the end of the World War II. He lives in brutality. He is feared of being killed. This is important to analyze fascism demolishment.

1.6 Methodology

The analysis of novel *The Hunger Angel* is done through text and context-based interpretation. It is done by analyzing some part of fictional devices, such as; character, plot (conflicts) and setting. Character and conflicts are used to reveal the way to demolish the fascism by analyzing the effect of conflicts toward character. Then, the setting deals with the situation, condition, and atmosphere. It gives contribution in process of analysis by giving help in revealing the meaning. These elements are analyzed based on the concept of power by Michel Foucault.