

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Gypsies (or Gipsies) are also widely known as the Romani people. These people are characterized by their illegality and irregularity of existence (Hancock I. , 2005). They are considered as a dispersed ethnic group, although they populate locations in Europe, especially Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe including Turkey, Spain, and Southern France. The Gypsies are originated from Northern India and arrived in Mid-West Asia and Europe around 1000 years ago (Kenrick, 2007, p. xxxvii). The first historical records of the Gypsies reaching south-eastern Europe are from the 14th century. By the 1440s, they were recorded in Germany (Law & Swann, 2013, p. 11). Some Gypsies migrated from Persia through North Africa, reaching the Iberian Peninsula in the 15th century. The two currents from Germany and Persia met in France (Broughton, Ellingham, & Trillo, 1999, p. 148). Diana Muir Appelbaum describes The Gypsies as a unique group among people because they never identify themselves with a territory. They do not have tradition of an ancient and distant homeland in which their ancestors originated, nor do they claim the national sovereignty in any land they reside. The Gypsies identity is bounded with the ideal of freedom without having any ties to any land nor place to reside (The Rootless Roma, 2011).

In the novel *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* (1831) by Victor Hugo, one of The Gypsies, Esmeralda, takes a role as the main female protagonist. The novel's writer, Victor Marie Hugo (February 1802 – 22 May 1885) was a French poet,

novelist, and dramatist of the Romantic movement. Victor Hugo himself is considered one of the greatest and best-known French writers. Outside of France, his most famous works other than *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* is the novel *Les Misérables*, (1862). Hugo started planning a major novel discussing about social misery and injustice in the early of the 1830s. He was a vanguard of the Romantic Literary Movement with his play *Cromwell* and drama *Hernani*. Many music was inspired from his work, both in his lifetime and his death. Hugo, in his lifetime, produced more than 4000 drawings and campaigned for social causes (State Library of Victoria, 2014). Therefore, Victor Hugo is not only a talented artist, but also a talented writer.

One of Victor Hugo's remarkable novel is *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*, which was published in 1831. Its popularity was among others caused by the many translations it has throughout Europe. This novel is not a Beauty and the Beast fairy tale (Bendersky, 2006), rather it is primarily about Paris, the cathedral, and medieval French society which is filled with obsessive lust, naive love, and the unfolds of betrayals (Inverarity, 2011). The original French title refers to Notre Dame Cathedral, on which the story is centered. The plot centers on Quasimodo (Clark, 1996), the deformed bell-ringer of Notre Dame and his struggle to gain acceptance into society, leading to his chance encounter with the enchanting Gypsy Esmeralda while rebelling against his ruthless and bigoted master, Judge Claude Frollo. The English translator, Frederic Shoberl, named the novel *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*, because in 1833, Gothic novels were more popular than Romance novels in England (Cygnet, 2014). The writer chooses *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* (1831) Novel by Victor Hugo because it is the original work of *Notre-Dame*

de Paris. This novel has many adaptation versions, starting from movies, cartoons, opera, and many other books. The novel written by Victor Hugo is the first original work that depicts more about people's lifestyle in Late Middle Ages, especially in Paris. Other versions, such as the Disney version does not really depict the people in Late Middle Ages, rather it focuses more in the fairy tale story that every story always has happy ending.

The setting of the novel takes place in 1482, Paris, France. This period is interesting to research on because during this time many Gypsies were roaming around the European countries (Fraser, 1995, pp. 50-51). Up until the present time, many people stereotyped that The Gypsies are identical with people who often commit crime such as robbery, murder, and abduction. Their group has always been seen as a disturbance of the society because of their attitude, manner, occupation, and nomad lifestyle. They never settle in one place for a long time which lead people to think that they do not have decent civilization or way of thinking (Kann, 2013).

The writer wants to pay interest in the Gypsies as the main data of her research. Many studies have been conducted with Gypsies people as the issue. Powell, in his journal stated that most theories on the Gypsies' stigma have centered on structural factors such as issues of race, ethnicity, the role of the media, and the general incompatibility of nomadism with a sedentary mode of existence (2008, pp. 87-109). There is also another study from Viorel Achim which takes Gypsies as the main focus of the research. The study focuses on the situation of the Gypsies in the inter-war period and its correlation with the integration and assimilation of Gypsies' culture (2004, pp. 145-161). The previous Gypsies' studies discuss more of the

issues of race, ethnicity, situation, and social position. This study focuses more on the Gypsies' portrayals found in the novel *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. Because of this, in analyzing the novel, the writer conducts this study by using socio-historical criticism approach.

1.2 Field of the Study

This study is related to the field of literature.

1.3 Scope of the Study

The main data of this study is *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame (1831)*. Because the novel concentrates on the setting of Paris in the 19th century, the scope of history used in studying the novel will be using the actual historical moments of Paris during that era to compare with the social condition depicted by the writer in the novel.

1.4 Research Questions

Based on the discussion above, the identification problem of this research can be formulated as followed:

1. How are Gypsies portrayed as nomads in Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame (1831)* novel?
2. How are Gypsies portrayed as criminals in Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame (1831)* novel?

1.5 Objectives of the Study

In accordance to the problem of the study, the objective of the study is to find out:

1. Gypsies portrayals as nomads in Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* (1831) novel.
2. Gypsies portrayals as criminals in Hugo's *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* (1831) novel.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This research is significant as it helps the writer to apply the socio-historical approach learnt in literary criticism course. This approach helps the writer to understand better the Gypsies portrayed in Victor Hugo's novel.

1.7 Definition of Terms

1.7.1 Gypsies

The Romani also spelled Romany or roomăni known as Gypsies or Roma. They are Indo-Aryan, traditionally nomadic ethnic group living mostly in Europe and the Americas, originating from the northern Indian subcontinent (Hancock I. F., 2001, p. xx). The Gypsies people dispersed throughout Europe over the course of over a thousand years with large populations in Eastern and Southern Europe. There are significant populations in the Spain, Turkey, France, Greece, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia and the United States (Kenrick, 2007, p. xxxvii).

1.7.2 Notre-Dame de Paris

Notre-Dame de Paris is from French word *notre dam de pari* meaning “Our Lady of Paris”, known as Notre-Dame Cathedral or simply just known as Notre-Dame, is a medieval Catholic cathedral on the Île de la Cité in the fourth arrondissement of Paris, France. The cathedral is widely considered to be one of the finest examples of French Gothic architecture and it is among the largest and best-known church buildings in the Catholic church in France, and in the world. The naturalism of the sculptures and stained glass is in contrast with the earlier Romansque architecture (Notre Dame Cathedral Paris, 2009).

