Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 Background of Study

In the era where everything is digitized, a new medium is born and it is called an internet. With unlimited access and a faster speed, almost any daily needs are integrated with internet such as online shop, online gaming, online gaming, including online literature also known as digital literature. "Its authors aim at conceiving and realizing works which are specific to the computer and the digital medium by trying to exploit their characteristics: hypertext technology, multimedia dimension, interactivity... The productions of digital literature were of course not born ex nihilo (Bouchardon, 2017).

What is really fascinating that with this medium, people are not only storing the previously exist book but also creating a story with unique style and new to literature genre such as an entity called SCP-Foundation.

The topic of this paper is Vladimir Propp's narratology. Narrative theory or also known as narratology etymologically, the science of narrative (Onega, and Landa. 1996). The scope of narrative's term itself is limited to the representation of at least one event, one change in a state of affairs (Bal. 1946). It is not as simple as *I eat* or *She fell* but as complex as *She fell because she looked at me while I eat* which not a separated events but connected to one another. However, in fifties and sixties under the influence of Saussure's linguistics, we witnessed a so-called "language turn" that inspired structuralism, semiotics, New Criticism, and deconstruction and placed the notion of text or textuality at the centre of attention (Ryan. 2016). It makes the word 'narrative' turn from signifier into signified. Although the story transferred through discourse such as text or oral language, the

concept and meaning of that story still remain in our head even though the story itself is vanished from our memory.

This means that 'narrative' is not only limited to the story itself. In fact, stories can be summarized, adapted, and translated, and that they can be told by various media, emancipates them from language and makes them somewhat independent from the particular signs through which they are transmitted (Ryan, 2016). With this however, means that narrative has much broad range than events that connected to each other making a text.

Tzvetan Todorov proposed the term 'narratology' to designate a general domain of study, covering both research about plot-structure (histoire), and about text-structure (discourse) (Bal. 2006). It means that Todorov believed narratology can be used to analyse all levels of narrativity including the traditional text such as books or folklore, but also a modern form of literature such as an internet article. However, Todorov also assumes that narratives behave like a language; therefore, Todorov thinks that their description will benefit from the use of categories found in natural languages (Bal, 2006). Therefore, the main focus of Todorov's is a narrative will have a semantic structure.

Vladimir Propp however, more focus on the structure of narrative that is contained in folklore. Vladimir Propp noticed that stories displaying various motifs can be described as manifesting very similar sequences of units (Bal. 2006). Thus, Propp argue that even there are multiple folklore from different regions the sequences' formula still the same; the protagonist of the story will be carried by magical ride into far-far-away land. The functions are the essential elements of a story, while the various circumstances of their performance, such as the agents, the means, the intentions, play only a secondary role (Bal, 2006).

Vladimir Propp also proposed the idea of Dramatis Personae which can be translated as the character of a play. Dramatis Personae including character archetypes which consist of 7 types and plot archetypes which consist of 31 types. These archetypes are work as one and cannot be separated.

Although, these archetypes are working as one, Propp also stated that it is not always necessary to have all the elements and in sequential order, as long as these archetypes can function as one story then it is fine.

Which leads to the analyzing the SCP-Foundation website titled SCP-352. Although in SCP-Foundation seems to have a different style and form of the story, but it is possible to use Vladimir Propp's Dramatis Personae.

SCP-Foundation was found in January 19, 2008, although, who is the founder of SCP-Foundation is remain anonymous to this day. SCP-Foundation defining themselves as a collaborative speculative fiction website about the SCP Foundation, a secretive organization that contains anomalous or supernatural items and entities away from the eyes of the public.

The universe of SCP-Foundation itself setting around the secret organization that trying to Secure, Contain, and Protect the anomaly that might be endangering humanity or crushing the illusion of 'normality.' SCP-Foundation abbreviation also works as their philosophy, their main purpose of their existence is not merely destroying anomaly, but studying it and even preserve it.

The unique elements of SCP-Foundation are their catalogue system. Unlike other literary web such as Wattpad, SCP-Foundation embrace their story as in non-fiction report of scientific experiment. In the SCP-Foundation universe, the anomaly is treated as legitimate subject that can affect their universe.

In SCP-Foundation "report" the reader will find terminologies such as **Item#**—the numeric identification of anomaly. **Object Class**—A system that determined how difficult to contain an SCP. The Object Class includes Safe, Keter, Euclid, Thaumiel, and Appollyon. **Special Containment Procedures (SCP)**—Is a set of instruction to be followed that will keep the anomaly contained. **Description**—The section of SCP-Foundation website that described the anomaly from head to toe. Sometimes in this section the reader will find the picture or drawing of an anomaly.

Introduce some of their famous title such as SCP-173, a sculpture that will snap people's neck if they are look away, and SCP-352, a witch that will devour people's meat based on a Russian children story, Baba Yaga.

The story of SCP-352 begin with classification of said 'object'. Start from Object Class which is Euclid, followed by a Special Containment Procedure which contain the standard procedure of containing the object. The object of SCP-352 is kept in an observation dorm with an airlock chamber installed and the object of SCP-352 are keep tracked by using GPS.

Baba Yaga is a witch from Slavic folklore who lives in a magical hut in the forest and either helps, imprisons, or eats those she encounters (J. Mark, 2021). While her name can be translated close to "Grandmother Witch" although there is no universal agreement in her translated name (J. Mark, 2021).

She is depicted as an ugly old woman that possess superhuman strenght who lives in her hut that has four chicken legs in the middle of the forest and eats children. Her character widely known in *Vasilissa the Beautiful.* Baba Yaga appear to be Vasilissa God-mother but in exchange she must do impossible tasks or she will be eaten. Although her character depicted as cruel and evil throughout century, modern literature looks at it from different angle. Baba Yaga is seen as a character who has wisdom and motherly values.

Although her character not always appear in visual forms, many of popular media and title reference her story and characteristic. "John Wick: Chapter 3-Parabellum" for example. In the movie, John Wick's character often described as a supernatural being that lurks behind the shadow with such strength, thus he ultimately known as Baba Yaga. In another movie title, "Ant-Man and the Wasp" a character named Kurt compared the main antagonist of the movie, Ghost, with Baba Yaga because of the superhuman power that she possessed and the ability to vanish in a second.

SCP-Foundation also narrates the legendary story of Baba Yaga into its universe. Known as SCP-352, Baba Yaga depicted as strong cannibal that can lure

her victim into the grasp of her hand by using a strain of her hair. She also has her iconic hut, a chicken-legs hut.

Known for her ability, story, and trait, Baba Yaga is one of the iconic characters in literature history that will never be forgotten. The main purpose in this paper is to understand the narratology pattern shift of Baba Yaga's story from a children story into SCP-Foundation article.

1.2 Research Question

The questions that this paper uses to determined Baba Yaga the Witch in SCP-Foundation website are:

1. What are the narrative structure on Baba Yaga the Witch in SCP-Foundation website and Vasilisa the Beautiful?

2. How is Baba Yaga the Witch in SCP-Foundation website connected to Vasilisa the Beautiful?

1.3 Purpose of The Study

This study aims to analyse:

1. Narrative structure on Baba Yaga the Witch in SCP-Foundation article.

2. The differences of narative structure on Baba Yaga the Witch in SCP-Foundation website to Vasilisa the Beautiful.

1.4 Scope of The Study

This study mainly focuses on the identification of narrative structure of Baba Yaga the Witch that appears in SCP-Foundation website and the differences between Baba Yaga the Witch in SCP-Foundation website and Vasilisa the Beautiful by using narrative theory by Vladimir Propp.

1.5 Significance of The Study

The writer hopes this study will be helpful to contribute in literature field especially in a narrative theory and helping future writer that study narrative theory as well.