CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of The Study

Studying history is beneficial, but nowadays people seem to find history boring and uninteresting. The younger generation, on the other hand, finds video games more entertaining compared to studying history. On the contrary, the games industry nowadays implements not only modern themes for their video games but also the previous eras from the 19th century such as world war I II. Moreover, the medieval era has become a popular theme for modern video games. This is a great opportunity for the younger generation to learn history from video games, especially the ones involving the medieval era.

What is the medieval era? "The era that was a time of despair – the 'Dark Ages' – which witnessed the integration of the Mediterranean world and the collapse of its political, cultural, and economic unity" (Davis, 2013, p. 225). The first period of the Medieval era or Middle Ages, from the fourth to the ninth century is described as the European period between the fall of Rome in 476 CE and the beginning of the Renaissance in the 14th century.

After the fall of the Catholic Church, the movement of the Renaissance has become a life changer for the modern world. The movement created several captivating works of literature, art, and architecture in various European cities. Some of the famous artists of the Renaissance, like Leonardo Da Vinci, Raphael, and Michaelangelo are examples of the Renaissance artist itself. Numerous works of literature have been written in the Medieval Era and Renaissance, with no exception for the modern era. The Middle Ages, or the Medieval Era, influence popular culture in the modern era. The closest example is The Witcher series.

The Witcher is a novel series written by a Polish author Andrzej Sapkowski. *The Witcher* series has nine books that were published from 1994 to 2013. After a successful journey, the series were adapted into a video game series in 2007, which were developed, and published by CD Projekt Red "The Witcher". Well received in the community, eight years later, CD Projekt Red published the third series in 2015 with the title "The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt". The Witcher is known as a fantasy-medieval RPG genre game. Since the first release, the Witcher has illustratively implemented the Medieval Era setting well.

The Medieval Era has given the current literary art an influential perspective in popular culture. *The Witcher* is one of the examples of a video game which incorporated medieval era themes in popular culture. Even though the series has brought the perspective of the medieval era into popular culture, the exact picture of the medieval era is not the same as it was. "The perception of the past includes, but is not identical with, the writing and reading of history," (McKitterick, 2006). For example, the perception of the medieval era is that people were dirty and never took a bath in the past. This perception built up because certain movies were showed it. Another example are the bath houses in the 15th century. Bathing and eating at bath houses were often combined. As noted in the book, "Clean: A History of Personal Hygiene and Purity (Smith, 2008), This proves that popular culture perception in the medieval era has blurred reality in the medieval era, with no exception for the setting places.

There are a lot of settings and places that influence the medieval era perspective in modern culture. One of the examples is *The Witcher* series. The series has a lot of places that can be learned in this research study. For example, the areas of castles and the towns in *the Witcher III: Wild Hunt*. In those two examples, the video game series has adapted the building, castles, and houses of villagers, which means that there will be many aspects related to the era, whether they are true

or false. In this study, the writer analyzes the settings that are contained in *The Witcher* III: Wild Hunt video games, since the writer's goal, is to find the similarities through intertextual analysis of the medieval era settings both from the video game and literature.

1.2   Problem Statements

There will be two problem statements to discuss in this study.

1. What features of the places in the medieval era inspired the game series?

2. How similar are the settings of castles, towns, and villages in Witcher III compared to the medieval era?

1.3   Objective of The Study

1. Seek and analyze the features of places inside of the games based on real-life medieval-era settings.

2. Find the similarities and differences in the settings of castles, towns, and, villages in-game compared to descriptions of the medieval era in literature.

1.4   The Significance of the Study

There are several significances of this study not only for the writer but also for the University, the English Letter department, and the reader.

For the writer, this study is important to be completed since it is one of the requirements to graduate from Universitas Ma Chung. This study also makes the writer explore and expand his knowledge of related literature, especially in the literature of the medieval era. This study also

helps the writer inform the readers about the similarity and differences between the Middle Ages with the help of Intertextual Analysis.

This study also has some significance for the university, especially for the English department. Other students will receive benefits who have same interest in studying *the Witcher* game. They can use the study as an earlier study. For English departement, they will receive a new reference study about intertextual analysis.

1.5   Limitations of The Study

This study only focuses on settings in the medieval era. There are a lot of areas that can't be covered in this study. The medieval era's example details and specific history are discussed since the study is more focused on the settings in *The Witcher* video game series, the objective of the studies compares how accurately the settings are portrayed in the video game. Specific History is not the main point of this study.

1.6   Operational Definitions of The Key Terms

1.   Medieval Era:

The era was a time of despair – the 'Dark Ages' – which witnessed the integration of the Mediterranean world and the collapse of its political, cultural, and economic unity (Davis, 2013, p. 225).

2.   Intertextual Analysis:

The intertextual properties of a text are realized in its linguistic features. given the dynamic view of genre above, according to which a particular text may draw upon a plurality of genres, discourses, or narratives, (Fairclough, N, 1992, p. 195).

3. Settings:

The setting establishes where and when a story takes place (Smith, 1990)

4. The Witcher:

Witchers are mutants, men subjected to grueling training and flesh-altering experiments that prepare the for one purpose: to kill monsters (Projekt Red, 2022)

5. Video Games:

A game played by electronically manipulating images produced by a computer program (Crawford, 2011, p. 4)