

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides five subchapters which are background of the study, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, and scope and limitation of the study.

1.1. Background of the Study

Society is constructed by different level of social class that frequently leads to be a class conflict which influence the aspects of human life. According to Weber (2009, p. 224), social class is a group of people with similar condition that can be determined by economic factor. Human being is directly related to the social class to which we belong: the higher social class, the higher our natural, or inborn superiority (Tyson, 2011, p. 112). There are two fundamental classes introduced by Marx & Engels (1888, p. 3) the bourgeoisie as upper class who control production mean while the proletariat as lower class who serve and work for wages. However, Max Weber has different opinion which breaks down into three classes. They are upper class who come from a rich family and inherited by a wealthy or noble birth and middle class refer to group of people who have average finance by become workers for a company and educated. Meanwhile, the lower class are labors or workers who get paid depending on working hour, homeless, and unemployed.

Different distribution of power within the classes yields the disparity between classes. Superior class receives the most of power which possible them to take control and uses it to oppress inferior class. The upper class extends their power by exploits the lower class. Marx & Engels (1888, p. 9) state that the upper class try to preserve their status as powerful class by setting the property only in a few hands of bourgeoisie. Owing to this, people of lower class are stuck in the ground of classes and face more obstacles to leave their class. Typically, the upper class impede the lower class to climb to the higher level of class intends to maintain their exclusiveness as highest in class hierarchy. Also, they maintain the power

circulation only for them to keep their position as powerful class which leads to class conflict.

Class conflict is a conflict that arises between the classes. Usually, the conflict is caused by imbalance power within society. In a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another (Marx & Engels, 1888, p.3). Members of upper class which are granted by power oppress the lower class who are powerless. The bourgeoisie takes advantage of the proletariat to enrich themselves and fulfill their own desires at the expense of others (Saoudi et al., 2020). In production means society, there are exploitation and discrimination towards lower class who are work in company or landlord who has means production. The conflict within the classes contributes to class struggle as the results of discrimination of lower class.

Class struggle is the action to resist the kinds of oppression and discrimination toward lower class and middle class. According to Marx and Engels (1888, p. 22), it overthrows upper class supremacy and it is a power conquest by lower class. Class struggle is a demanding action of lower class to increase their welfare. As stated by Marx and Engels (1888, p. 19) proletariat fights the bourgeoisie to increase their life quality and destroys the individual property of bourgeoisie. The aims of the class struggle are to eliminate oppression and discrimination of upper class, create an appropriate society that brings welfare to lower class, and gives the member of lower class to access some resources in order to helps them to climb to higher class and they are not stuck in bottom of class hierarchy.

Social classes, class conflict, and class struggle are the issues that reflected in literary work. Literary depicts some aspects of reality (Wellek & Warren, 1956, p, 83). They also classified the literary work into three main categories namely poetry, drama, and fiction. Fiction as one of literary works contains complex issues that similar with problems that human has faces in life. Those are narrated both in novel and short story as part of fiction. Usually, short story represents human life even it has a short narration. It portrays human experiences such as society circumstance of certain era and psychology condition of people. It can be seen when

a character has similar experiences to human's experiences in real world. A narration in a literary work can be a clue of reality that helps us to get a depiction of the real life. Literary also portrays norm, behavior, values, belief, political situation of particular years in a certain place. In accordance with society condition, a literary work can be a medium to criticize the society through a message under the story. Here, Marxism can be the underline theory to reveal the relate issue in a literary work.

Marxism is an ideology that resist the existence of classism in the society. Marxist theory, in contrast, rejects the idea that the social class into which we are born determines our superiority or inferiority as human beings (Tyson, 2011, p. 112). It criticizes the system which determined people based on their socioeconomic background. Marx argues power and privilege are belonged to people who have properties for production which means the activity for making money. They peak hierarchy of classes through dominate and pressure workers as lower class. On the other hand, Max Weber (2009) express his opinion in order to extend the Marxist theory. He claims that the order of classism is not only related to production matter but also skill and education. Furthermore, he presents the idea of power is influenced by class, status, and group power. Hence, the main reason of choosing Weber's theory is the writer wants to analyze the classes in the story through many factors such as status and education. Those the things determine person's class that is reflected in *Zemindar's Wife*.

Zemindar's Wife is the part of an anthology book *A Pair of Jeans* that was published on 13th March 2013 by Qaisra Shahraz, a British-Pakistani author that frequently writes stories under the theme race, gender issues, and cultural diversity. Her works make her recognized as a one of the one hundred influential Pakistani women in 2012 (Shahraz, 2013). She also brings theme about classism through her story *Zemindar's Wife* which tells about feudal system in a village. Moreover, her short stories in *A Pair of Jeans* includes *Zemindar's Wife* are studied in universities in several countries. The statements above are reason of choosing and analyzing

the short story using classism, class conflict, and class struggle theory as the part of Marxism.

The phenomenon of social classes is depicted in the short story *Zemindar's Wife* (Shahraz, 2013). Sarfaraz Jhangir is a rich man of high bred and inherited a wealthy by his forefathers. Most of the land around the village belongs to him. Hence, the villagers called him as *Zemindar* which means a landlord. He is married to Noor, a woman of a rich influential landlord. Sarfaraz and his wife represent upper class who has power while the villagers depict the lower class as inferior class. The villagers are forced by Sarfaraz as the *Zemindar* to sell their land to him. He wants to build a bauxite mining in their land and gains a lot of money although make the villagers lose their homeland. He tries to psychological blackmail by invites the villager to a sumptuous dinner for consecutive weeks and serves them with luxurious meals. He has a hidden motive which tries to make the villagers sign documents. Yet, Younis as an educated person does not agree to do *Zemindar's* order and criticizes the feudal system in their village (Shahraz, 2013).

The following are previous studies which use same source of data *Zemindar's Wife* but take different focus of investigation. First, Mashori & Sabah (2015) conducted the study about author's agenda uses theoretical framework proposed by Young 2003 entitled '*Subalterns Can Speak: Shahraz's Message of Hope for Human Equality in Zemindar's Wife*'. They found that the message under the story is an equality for human. Four years later, Khoiriyah (2019) conducted the study about woman's struggle entitled '*The Portrayal of Woman's Struggle in Qaisra Shahraz's Zemindar's Wife*' used Islamic Feminism theory by Amina Wadud. Next, Afzal & Sheikh (2020) conducted a feminist stylistics study entitled '*Representations of Women in Daniyal Mueenuddin's Saleema and Qaisra Shahraz's Zamindar's Wife: A Feminist Stylistic Study*' used feminist stylistic framework of Sara Mills. Last, Roifah (2023) conducted the study about depiction of woman in marital life entitled '*The Portrayal of Married Woman's Life in Zemindar's Wife by Qaisra Shahraz* used the feminism theory by Simone De Beauvoir.

There is a gap between previous studies since the studies above mostly investigate about discrimination towards woman, woman's struggle and human equality. Yet, there is no study which uses Marxism to analyze the description of social classes, class conflict, and class struggle. Thus, the study's novelty is the writer focuses on analyzing the social classes that is one of main issues reflected in *Zemindar's Wife* in the anthology book *A Pair of Jeans*.

1.2. Research Questions

Based on the background above the research questions are formulated as following:

1. What are the social classes depicted in *Zemindar's Wife*?
2. How do the class conflicts arise in *Zemindar's Wife*?
3. How do the characters react towards class conflict in *Zemindar's Wife*?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The purposes of this study are formulated as below:

1. To describe the depiction of social classes which exists in *Zemindar's Wife*.
2. To elaborates the class conflicts in *Zemindar's Wife*.
3. To find out the characters' reaction toward the class conflict in *Zemindar's Wife*.

1.4. Significance of the Study

This study is expected to give theoretical and practical significance. The theoretical significance of this study is to preserve the existence of Marxism which related to social classes and enrich the literary study in Marxism as the way to prevent the extinction theory. So, the theory will survive and applicable for study of literature in the future.

The practical significance of this study is for the next students of English Study Program as a reference which will do research in the future and inspires them to conduct similar study. Also, gives a new insight which helps the reader to get

better understanding about the factors that determined social classes, the order of social classes, and the impacts of social classes in society. For the community, it rises the awareness about the impacts of social classes and encourage to create an ideal community that concern about equality.

1.5. Scope and Limitation

The scope of this study is applying the theory by Max Weber (2009) that discusses social class to analyze the depiction of social classes, and applying theory of Karl Marx (1888) to examine class conflicts arise in the story and characters' reaction toward the class conflict. In addition, the writer uses several books and previous studies to support the main theories. This study will be limited on narrator's narration and utterances of characters in story which related to social class, class conflict, and class struggle.