

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Social relation and stratification are important things in a particular society. They consider that high social level is a winner. They do not want to make social intercourse with a society from low social levels.

Social relation and stratification make a power abuse especially for them who live and stay on high society. They do not have respect feeling and always belittle toward a society who is under them. This situation is caused by many factors. The major factor which causes it is the condition that there are two groups in the society, the poor and the rich.

In Marx's view the rich is called the bourgeois who is the owner of the production devices like factory, machine and land. Meanwhile the poor is replaced by the term proletarian who is the working class which worked at the rich selling their power to get salary. The different property between them causes the class gap because the poor cannot fulfill what they need. The rich, the owner of production devices certainly can fulfill their necessities. They exploit the power of the poor to enrich their profits. This situation is created in the production process. The difference between the rich and the poor is different treatment between them. The rich who has a good fortune in educational and income will be respected as the classes who have an authority. The poor who are less educated and have less

income are considered as unimportant people in social relation. The condition has made the poor isolated from their society. It is undeniable that social relation and stratification of particular society plays an important role in literary creation.

A literary work may contribute to a reader a more concrete insight about reality and it reflects not only individual phenomena in isolation, but also the full process of life. It is due to the fact that what happens in the society often becomes the basic reason of an author to create a work of art. There are many kinds of a work of art. For example novel, drama, film etc. Drama is kind of literary work that can be able to appreciate.

Anton Pavlovich Chekhov was born in the small seaport of Taganrog, Ukraine, on the Sea of Azov on January 29th, 1860 and died on July 15th 1904.

He was a Russian physician, dramatist and author who is considered to be among the greatest writers of short stories in history. His career as a dramatist produced four classics and his best short stories are held in high esteem by writers and critics. Chekhov practiced as a doctor throughout most of his literary career: "Medicine is my lawful wife", he once said, "and literature is my mistress". Anton Chekhov is remembered as a playwright and one of the masters of the modern short story. He was the son of a grocer and the grandson of a serf who had bought his freedom, that and that his sons, 19 years earlier. Chekhov spent his early years

under the shadow of his father's religious fanaticism while working long hours in his store.

He was a literary artist of laconic precision who probed below the surface of life, laying bare the secret motives of his characters. Chekhov's best plays and short stories lack complex plots and neat solutions. Concentrating on apparent trivialities, they create a special kind of atmosphere, sometimes termed haunting or lyrical. Chekhov described the Russian life of his time using a deceptively simple technique.

Chekhov began writing short stories during his days as a medical student at the University of Moscow. After graduating in 1884 with a degree in medicine, he began to freelance as a journalist and writer of comic sketches. Early in his career, he mastered the form of the one-act and produced several masterpieces of this genre including *The Bear* (1888) in which a creditor hounds a young widow, but becomes so impressed when she agrees to fight a duel with him, that he proposes marriage, and *The Wedding* (1889) in which a bridegroom's plans to have a general attend his wedding ceremony backfire when the general turns out to be a retired naval captain "of the second rank". *Ivanov* (1887), Chekhov's first full-length play, a fairly immature work compared to his later plays, examines the suicide of a young man very similar to Chekhov himself in many ways. His next play, *The Wood Demon* (1888) was also fairly unsuccessful. In fact, it was not until the Moscow Art Theater production of *The Seagull* (1897) that Chekhov enjoyed his first overwhelming

success. The same play had been performed two years earlier at the Alexandrinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg and had been so badly received that Chekhov had actually left the auditorium during the second act and vowed never to write for the theatre again. But in the hands of the Moscow Art Theatre, the play was transformed into a critical success, and Chekhov soon realized that the earlier production had failed because the actors had not understood their roles. In 1899, Chekhov gave the Moscow Art Theatre a revised version of *The Wood Demon*, now titled *Uncle Vanya* (1899). Along with *The Three Sisters* (1901) and *The Cherry Orchard* (1904), this play would go on to become one of the masterpieces of the modern theatre.

Uncle Vanya is a tragicomedy in four acts. It was published in 1897 as an improved version of an earlier play, *Wood Demon*, completed in 1889. *Uncle Vanya* debuted on the stage in 1899 at the Moscow Art Theater. At 3 p.m. in the garden of an estate, an old peasant woman named Marina sits knitting at a table under a poplar tree. From a samovar, she pours a glass of tea for Astrov, a physician, who accepts it while they talk about the changes in him in the past decade. Astrov is at the estate to treat the gout and rheumatism of Professor Serebrakov, an old man who inherited the estate from his first wife, Vera. The professor is out strolling with his beautiful second wife, Helena and his daughter, Sonya, by his first wife. With them is a neighbor, Telegin, nicknamed Waffles. Marina is Sonya's nanny.

Vanya, Sonya's uncle and the brother of Vera, comes out to the garden and joins Marina and Astrov. Vanya has lived on the estate since the time his sister owned it. Now that the professor has retired and come to live at the estate, schedules have changed and Vanya is irritated. After his stroll, Professor Serebrakov comes by with Helena and the others. Telegin sits down as the other strollers go indoors. Vanya remarks on the extraordinary beauty of Helena, laments his boring life. Vanya says he once admired old Serebrakov but now despises him. Helena should cheat on her decrepit husband, he says, rather than wasting her youth on him. Sonya and Helena return to the garden, firing back, she says he was once a man of strong convictions but has allowed his weaknesses to get the better of him.

After Astrov leaves, Vanya and Helena head indoors. Along the way, Vanya tells her what he has apparently told her many times before, that he worships her and wants to be more than her friend. After midnight, in the Serebrakovs' quarters, the professor crabs about his health and the burdens of old age. Helena bemoans the contentiousness on the estate. Vanya's mother despises everyone but the professor. Vanya renews his pursuit of Helena, telling her how much he loves her. Astrov and Telegin has been drinking. Sonya advises him to quit alcohol, saying a man of his stature shouldn't allow drink to control his tongue and his feelings. Sonya thought Helena married her father for his money.

The next day, Vanya, Sonya, and Helena convene in the Serebrakov's living room for a 1 p.m. meeting called by the professor for an undisclosed

reason. Vanya urges Helena to ignore the professor and fall in love with someone. Sonya then bemoans Astrov's lack of interest in her. Astrov says he respects Sonya but has no feelings for her, he confesses that he loves Helena. The professor enters with Sonya, Telegin, and Marina. Helena gives Sonya the bad news about Astrov. Sonya is crestfallen. After Marya enters, the professor announces he plans to sell the estate, which makes only a meager profit, reinvest the proceeds in a more profitable venture, and move to Finland. Vanya protests, saying he assumed the estate was Sonya's, inasmuch as Vanya's father passed it to Vanya's sister, after he died and that Sonya inherited the property from Vera after she died. Professor Serebrakov concedes Vanya's point, saying he meant to get Sonya's approval to sell the property. Telegin asks Vanya to stop his angry declamation. Vanya pays no attention and attacks the professor as a fraud who knows nothing about art. In disgust, Telegin leaves. Marya says, "Listen to Alexander." Then Vanya leaves.

Shortly after the professor leaves, the sound of a gunshot rings through the hallways. The professor shouts for someone to restrain Vanya, who has shot at the professor but missed. Vanya shoots again and misses. Finally, he throws the pistol to the floor and sits down. Sometime later, winding yarn with Telegin, Marina expresses relief that the estate will soon return to its normal routine. Vanya laments his shameful behavior while the doctor presses him for the missing item, a bottle of morphine. Sonya intervenes and persuades Vanya to return it. When Astrov is alone with

Helena, he kisses her goodbye on the cheek. In return, she kisses him passionately for a moment, then leaves with her husband. Astrov leaves shortly thereafter. Sonya and Vanya get back to the business of running the estate.

Many adaption of *Uncle Vanya*'s work, such as *Uncle Vanya*, a 1957 adaptation's of a concurrent Off Broadway production that starred Franchot Tone, who co-produced and co-directed the film. *Uncle Vanya*, a version of the star-studded 1962-63 Chichester Festival stage production, directed for the stage by Laurence Olivier, who played the Doctor, and also starring Michael Redgrave as Vanya, Max Adrian as the Professor, Rosemary Harris as Elena and Olivier's wife Joan Plowright as Sonya. Harold Hobson of the Sunday Times described the Chichester production as "the admitted master achievement in British twentieth-century theatre" while The New Yorker called it "probably the best 'Vanya' in English we shall ever see". *Dyadya Vanya*, a 1970 Russian film version, adapted and directed by Andrei Mikhalkov-Konchalovsky. *Vanya on 42nd Street*, a 1994 American film version, adapted by David Mamet and directed by Louis Malle. It stars Wallace Shawn and Julianne Moore. Originally a little-known studio production, it was later adapted for the screen, where it garnered wider acclaim. *Country Life*, a 1994 Australian adaptation, set in the Outback, starring Sam Neill as the equivalent of Astrov. *August*, a 1996 English film adaptation, set in Wales, directed by and starring Anthony Hopkins in the Vanya role. Additionally, the 2009 film *Cold*

Souls revolves around Paul Giamatti, portraying a loose version of himself, struggling with the title role in a stage production of Vanya. Sonya's Story, an opera adapted by director Sally Burgess, composer Neal Thornton and designer Charles Phu, portraying events in the play *Uncle Vanya* from the character Sonya's perspective, premiered in 2010.

While watching the play, not all of the audience understood and loved the meaning or story to be conveyed by the author. As well as *Uncle Vanya* play has its strength and weaknesses. Like most of this comments, the set of the play is wonderful, it moves through the rooms of a rambling wooden dacha, with carved eaves and window frames, to reveal samovars, oil lamps, old-fashioned dressers, and a cluttered desk waiting for Vanya and his niece Sonya. The actors are excellent, as well especially Ken Stott, playing a funny and likeable Vanya, whose charm and humanity make his wasted life more poignant. Stott's appearance, more rustic cameo than romantic lead, contrasts perfectly with Anna Friel's beautifully elegant Yelena; he knows he has no hope, but his dignity is still gnawed by useless desire as he clutches his "sad, lovely autumn roses" and watches her succumb to the local doctor. The costumes are very pretty, in a clichéd linen-jackets-and-lace-parasols way. The tea glasses, garden swing and mournful guitar help set the scene for this late-19th-century tragicomedy and its moments of emotional intensity.

The play caused a stir on its opening night when famous theatre director Peter Hall loudly interrupted Sonya's difficult finale from the

fronts of the stalls. According to witnesses, he repeated “It's not working, it's just not working,” and “It’s like something on television.” Hall, who has just turned 82, has since apologized and insisted that he shouted this out after waking up disorientated from a last-act nap. This may be an excuse, but the idea that the audience was dropping off during the misfired gunshots and tearful partings of the play’s emotional climax is not hugely reassuring either. Despite all that is good about them, there is a lack of conviction (and possibly even a sense of demoralization) underlying the highly competent performances at the Vaudeville. There is a wonderful moment in the third act when Yelena, peering through the lace curtains at the autumnal garden, says: “September already. The nostalgic trappings of traditional British Chekovania do not in themselves weaken this production.

Uncle Vanya played a lot in several theaters like Noel Coward Theater, London, Lincoln Center Festival, Rutgers Theater, Masson Gross School of the Arts (United States), Moscow Art Theater, Vaudeville Theater, London, etc.

Thus, by understanding the drama, the writer can see that Anton Checkov seeks to give his response to social stratification of Russian people in eighteenth century in which, at that time, people believe that social class is the most important thing in social relation, and love is the second one. Therefore, in this research, the writer wants to observe Anton Checkov’s view on social relation and stratification in *Uncle Vanya* in

Marxist perspective. Moreover, based on the fact, the writer is interested to analyze Anton Checkov's *Uncle Vanya* by using Marxist perspective. In this study the writer encourages herself to give a title "SOCIAL RELATION AND CLASSIFICATION REFLECTED IN ANTON CHECKOV'S *UNCLE VANYA* DRAMA: A MARXIST PERSPECTIVE"

A. Literature Review

To prove the original of this research the writer presents the previous researcher deals especially on *Uncle Vanya*. There is a writer who has been conducted research on Anton Checkov's *Uncle Vanya*, Nefiar Reza Alavi (UMS,2008) entitled "*Compulsive Drive of Uncle Vanya on Keeping the Trust in Checkov's Uncle Vanya Drama (1896): A Sociological Psychological approach*". Nefiar Reza Alavi was student of Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta. The difference between Nefiar Reza Alavi and this study is in the approach. In this research, the writer will analyze *Uncle Vanya* by using Marxist Perspective. The Marxist analysis on *Uncle Vanya* has never been used as far as the research knows, at least in University in Surakarta.

B. Problem Statement

The problem of the study is "How is social relation and stratification reflected in Anton Checkov's *Uncle Vanya* drama?". In this study, the statement of social relation means the relation in the society between high

and low social level. Social stratification means the class level that results in society, based on the economic class.

C. Limitation of the Study

In this research, the writer gives limitation to focus on Marxist approach. It is emphasized on social relation and stratification in Anton Checkov's *Uncle Vanya* drama by employing Marxist perspective as the primary approach.

D. Objective of the Study

Based on the problem statement, the writer formulates the objective of the study are as follows:

1. To analyze Social Relation reflected in Anton Checkov's *Uncle Vanya* drama.
2. To analyze Stratification reflected in Anton Checkov's *Uncle Vanya* drama.

E. Benefit of the Study

The writer hopes the result of the study has the following benefits:

1. Theoretical Benefit

- a. The study is projected to give literary work (drama) contribution and information to the larger body of knowledge, particularly in the literary studies.

- b. To give a high contribution to the body of knowledge, particularly to those who are interested in Anton Checkov's *Uncle Vanya* play.

2. Practical Benefit

- a. The study is expected to enrich the knowledge and experience of the writer.
- b. This research gives a deep understanding for the writer about the play based on Marxist perspective.

B. Research Method

1. Type of the Study

In this study, the writer applies qualitative research in which the researcher does not need a statistic to collect, to analyze and to interpret data. In brief, qualitative research in the research is employing the method of collecting, describing, classifying, and analyzing the data and then drawing conclusion.

By using qualitative method this research is aimed to describe the social relation and stratification of *Uncle Vanya* drama based on Marxist perspective. The data sources are library and literary data. Its purpose is to analyze using Marxist perspective.

The steps to conduct the research are as follow:

- a. Determining the type of the study
- b. Determining the object of the study

- c. Determining data and data source
- d. Determining technique of data collection, and finally
- e. Determining technique of data analysis

2. Object of the Study

The object of the study is *Uncle Vanya* drama by Anton Checkov and was debuted on the stage in 1899 at the Moscow Art Theater.

3. Type of the Data and the Data Source

a. Type of the data

The types of data are texts that consist of words, phrases, and sentences.

b. The Data Source

The data will be classified into two categories, primary and secondary data: the primary data is the drama of *Uncle Vanya* produced by Moscow Art Theater. While secondary data, are drama or any information related to the practice of social relation and stratification that support the Marxist perspective.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

To collect the data, the writer uses the documentation method, the steps are:

- a. The writer reads and observes *Uncle Vanya* text play.
- b. The writer looks for the data and writes the data based on its classification.
- c. The writer selects the data.

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

In this research, the technique used to analyze the data is descriptive technique. The researcher describes the structural elements of the play with Marxist perspective. The collected data are interpreted and analyzed in detail through Marxist perspective in this case by showing social relation and stratification of *Uncle Vanya* play. Then giving conclusion based on the analysis. The steps taken by the writer in analyzing the data are as follows: the first is analyzing the data based on its structural elements. It is focus on the structural analysis of the drama. The second step is analyzing the data based on Marxist perspective. It is focus on the meaning of social relation and stratification.

C. Research Paper Organization

This research consists of six chapters. The first chapter deals with background of the study, literature review, problem statement, limitation of the study, benefits of the study, research method and paper organization. The second chapter presents the underlying theory, in this chapter the researcher explains the basic principle theory of Marxist perspective used to analyze the drama. The third chapter contains the social background of social relation and stratification. The fourth chapter deals with the structural elements of drama that consists of character and

characterization, plot, point of view, setting of place and time, theme, and style. Marxist perspective analysis will be put on the fifth chapter. The last chapter consists of conclude and suggestion.