

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with background of the study, limitation of the study, problem statement, objective of the study benefit of the study, and thesis organization.

#### A. Background of the Study

Suzanne Collin's young adult novels of *The Hunger Games* trilogy—*The Hunger Games* (2008), *Catching Fire* (2009), *Mockingjay* (2010)—presents a dystopian adventure tale through the eyes of a teenage girl. The novels lift several topics such as the totalitarian government, class differences, and media spectacle. *The Hunger Games* trilogy has become one breakthrough in dystopian fiction since its first book was published in 2008. *The Hunger Games* has influenced many American writers in writing dystopian fiction. James Dashner with his *The Maze Runner* trilogy which is so much influenced by Collin's *The Hunger Games* trilogy. Then it is followed by other young writers like Veronica Roth in *Divergent* trilogy, and Mari Lu in *Legend* series. Although *The Hunger Games* is not the first dystopian fiction, as several novels have put the chart before, such as Lois Lowry's *The Giver* (1993) and Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, *The Hunger Games* is able to be the turning point of the booming dystopian novels in 2000s. And American literature market becomes dominated by this genre.

The special characteristic of *The Hunger Games* trilogy that makes it different with other dystopian series is the arc of its story; from gladiator game, to revolution, to war; as well as its storyline which is interwoven by action, adventure, mythology, sci-fi, romance, and philosophy. The readers, therefore, can view the trilogy differently. Relating to the study on *The Hunger Games* trilogy, not all readers command the same literary competence. Hence many studies on *The Hunger Games* trilogy have been conducted by the readers in different perspective.

The study on Suzanne Collis's *The Hunger Games* trilogy has been conducted by using different perspective in delving out the trilogy. In feminism perspective, Roberta (2014) and Loobek (2012) conduct their study focused on the main woman character—Katniss Everdeen—in *The Hunger Games* trilogy. In the core of Cultural Studies, Rebeca (2015) has put the chart in examining the trilogy by focusing on the character of Katniss Everdeen. All of these studies are focused on the major character of the trilogy. Some other studies have succeeded in viewing the trilogy by focusing on the Hunger Games. Chong (2013) and Nayar (2012) have conducted their studies in viewing the Games arena as the survival media. On the other side, Johansson (2013) puts his attention on the Games as the media representation; meanwhile Peterson (2012) views the Hunger Games as the social criticism. Furthermore in literary criticism, study on *The Hunger Games*

has been conducted by Mc.Gunigal (2012) by focusing the themes of *The Hunger Games* trilogy.

In order to give the different color for the studies on *The Hunger Games* trilogy, the present researcher conducts the study by using Marx's theory of class struggle to delve out the class struggle elements—the opposing classes, the cause of class struggle, the power relation, the effects of class struggle, and the type of class struggle—reflected in the trilogy in order to see how the problem of American democracy and capitalism reflected in *The Hunger Games* trilogy. The analyses of class struggle elements in the trilogy are brought in to contrast and compare the dystopian society of Panem with 21<sup>st</sup> century America in order to investigate if the trilogy criticizes the American democracy and capitalism.

## **B. Limitation of the Study**

This study is focused on class struggle reflected in Collins's *The Hunger Games* trilogy—*The Hunger Games* (2008), *Catching Fire* (2009), and *Mockingjay* (2010)—in Marxism perspective in order to reveal the problem of American democracy and capitalism reflected in the trilogy.

### **C. Problem Statement**

The major problem statement of this study is to reveal the problem of American democracy and capitalism reflected in Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* trilogy. The main focus of the study is to analyze the following questions:

1. What contexts underlie the writing of *The Hunger Games* trilogy?
2. How is the problem of American democracy and capitalism reflected in *The Hunger Games* trilogy?
3. Why does the author take the class struggle as vehicle to criticize the American democracy and capitalism?

### **D. Objective of the Study**

This study is aimed to reveal the problem of American democracy and capitalism reflected in Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* trilogy. The objectives of this study are:

1. To explain the contexts underlie the writing of *The Hunger Games* trilogy.
2. To explain how the problem of American democracy and capitalism reflected in *The Hunger Games* trilogy.
3. To explain why the author takes the class struggle as vehicle to criticize the American democracy and capitalism.

## **E. Benefit of the Study**

### **1. Theoretical Benefit**

Theoretically, this study is aimed to give the contribution to the larger body of knowledge, especially in literary study. The study on Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* trilogy is expected to improve the library research in literature, especially in novels analysis.

### **2. Practical Benefit**

Practically, this study on Collins's *The Hunger Games* trilogy is aimed to benefit the readers by the value of her work in every aspect that the reader can afford; probably how differently people view the book. The readers are defining the book in very personal and exciting ways.

## **F. Thesis Organization**

This study consists of six chapters. Chapter I is introduction; it deals with background of the study, limitation of the study, problem statements, objectives of the study, benefits of the study, and thesis organization. Chapter II is underlying theory; it deals with underlying theory which is divided into sociology of literature theory and Marxism class struggle theory, and the previous studies. Chapter III is methodology of the study; it deals with type of the study, type of the data, the data sources which consists of primary and secondary data sources, technique of the data collection, and technique of the data analysis. Chapter IV is historical background; it deals

with social aspect, economic aspect, political aspect, cultural aspect, science and technology aspect, religious aspect, and the author's biography. Social aspect deals with the class system in America, race and ethnic, family and children living arrangement, and social relation. Economic aspect deals with America's Gross Domestic Product, the U.S. Economic Sectors, taxation, unemployment, American living standard, and American economic problems. Political aspect deals with the U.S governments, the nature of American politics, the two-party system, American domestic policy, and American foreign policy. Cultural aspect deals with American beliefs and values, and American culture in globalization era. Religious aspect deals with religious beliefs, and religious practice. Chapter V is class struggle analysis; it deals with class struggle analysis of Collins's *The Hunger Games* trilogy, and discussion. Chapter VI is conclusion and suggestion; it deals with conclusion, pedagogical implication, and suggestion.