

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of The Study

Literature is a concept of human life. According to Eagleton (1983:2), literature is “creative” or “imaginative” writing. There are so many kinds of literature products such as music, novel, art, poem, drama. The novel is a collection of many ideas, stories, characters, bound with the writer’s imagination to become a story. It means, when the author makes their literary work, that is an expression of the problem from the novel. The kinds of the novel problems are love, a struggle for life, conflict of life, war, violence, and social class. *A Little Princess* by Frances Hodgson Burnet is one of novels that tells social class problems. Social class is a context rooted in both the material substance of social life (wealth, education, work) and the individual’s construal of his or her class rank, and is a core aspect of how he or she thinks of the self and relates to the social world.

Frances Hodgson Burnet’s novel is a very influential social class because the story lifted conditions of the community; they are education, economic, political status, wealth and poor. In the novel *A little princess*, the author focuses on the differences between upper and lower class individuals respectively. A major aspect of the social aspect is the relationship that will embody the social class that raises two main classes based on the type of property that affects and expenditures for the purposes of life McLellan (1971: 93). The author sees the difference between the student who is wealthy because of their parents and students who become poor workers and work as janitor of the school.

It shows that there are two classes in the school. In the story of the novel, poor students (working as a janitor at the school) get paid by low wages and wealthy students who can afford all facilities the school get paid by higher wages and get special treatments. Meanwhile, according to McLellan (1971: 178) the development of industrial capitalism structure divides the two kinds of classes, there are bourgeois and the proletariat, the wage of the working class is classified as a proletariat. Based on the fact above second grade proletariat and

bourgeois have different functions, where the class of bourgeois rule the process overall spending while the proletariat class is regarded as the 'object' in the process of spending by labor 'selling' them and put on a low wages or salary McLellan (1977:176).

The statement above concluded that the upper social classes are respected by lower social class because of several advantages which belonged to the upper social classes; there are the position and wealth. The upper social class usually gets special treatment but the lower social classes only become a janitor who cleans all classroom. Therefore, the consciousness of this social class will bring consequences to different behavior between social class one to another social class and political concept.

Marx divides the economic structure into two they are; the superstructure and the base or infrastructure. The superstructure is the ideology that is caused by the social economic structure of the society. The superstructure is the whole social, political system, education, ideology and the other system of the class (Williams, 1977:75). The ideology means false consciousness. It appears in the form of feeling, value or perception of the social dominance. The people are made to believe something that seems natural but there is another thing behind it. The high class is the dominant group because they are the owner of the system production. They try to negotiate their existence to the lower class by using natural way such as the representation of social class in *A Little Princess*.

Frances Hodgson Burnet's novel talks about a little girl named Sara Crewe who at the beginning of the novel is a solemn seven year old girl. Sara is the only daughter of the widowed Captain Crewe, and during her early childhood in India, she was given everything a little girl could possibly desire. Sara was brought all the way to London in Victorian era England for a formal education and to escape the inevitable hardships of India such as disease. When Captain Sara Crewe leaves at Miss Minchin's boarding school, he wishes that Miss Minchin will give everything to her. Sara has a private sitting room, a personal maid, and all the comforts that money can buy. In the story, everyone is ready to think about Sara as an arrogant and spoiled child, but instead, she is

compassionate, considerate, very intelligent, polite, and creative young girl, and very much aware that her father's great fortune doesn't make her better than anyone else. But, after four years coincide with Sara's eleventh birthday, she gets news that her father died. Her father dies after a friend loses his money in a business deal in India. Sara is left penniless and without any family, then she has to work as a servant at the school. She lives in the attic room next to the cook and not only runs errands of all kinds but also must keep up with her studies and help teach the younger girls about French lesson. The next story is about Sara's survival to live as a servant in Miss Minchin's boarding school and to face her sufferings because sometimes Miss Minchin doesn't give her meals whereas Sara has finished working hard 4 all day. But that's not for a long time because Sara returns to become a wealthy girl after she meets Mr. Carrisford, the one who "lost" Captain Crewe's fortune in a business. But in reality, the business deal is successful but Captain Crewe dies before knowing the truth about his money and about his friend.

Social class not only draws attention to the society or teacher or parents but also the author of *A Little Princess* novel, Frances Hodgson Burnett. Frances Hodgson Burnett's literature is an important part of late nineteenth and early twentieth century literary culture. In this study, the writer focuses on analyzing social class reflected in Frances Hodgson Burnett by using Marxist Approach. Marxist Approach to literature takes into account, the author's social origin and the socio-cultural background in which she is born and brought up. It is an attempt to relate the author with the social surroundings because the social surrounding affects the author's sensibility and goes in the making of the literary creation by that author.

The researcher chooses the novel *A Little Princess* by Frances Hodgson Burnett's because there are some reasons. The first reason is the existence of yet examining the issue that is a social class. The author sees the suffering and oppression of the main character Sara Crewe by the owner of the school, Miss Minchin. This is seen when Miss Minchin knew that Sara was no longer a wealthy young girl, she told Sara to work as a maid and not half-hearted to

torment her. Especially when the other servants also told Sara doing all the work. For a girl at her age, it is very hard to do.

The second reason is the main character; she is Sara Crewe. Sara is a unique and interesting girl. Sara always thinks like an adult even though she was only seven years old. Her mother's death since Sara still a baby makes her close and love her father very much. Sara is a realist and imaginative girl. Since she knew that her father had died and she has nobody as her family, she realizes that she has to fill her needs by her own self. But in that situation, she still has imagination and hope that help her to face her suffers. The last reason is the popularity of the story *A Little Princess* so much gives messages and hope to readers.

The researcher uses Marxist theory as an approach to analyze this novel because the most appropriate theory which discusses equality is a Marxist theory. The problem of this discussion is differences between upper class and lower class in Miss Minchin's boarding school with aspects of human life such as economic, social and political aspect.

According to Suseno (2001: 5), Marxist is a term of the ideology about the relation between economic, social and political Marxist is an ideology that studies the social, economical, historical, revolutionary problem based on the social conflict in the boarding school. The researcher gives the title of the research: "SOCIAL CLASS REFLECTED IN FRANCES HUDSON BURNETT'S *A LITTLE PRINCESS* NOVEL (1904): A MARXIST APPROACH"

## **B. Problem Statement**

Based on the previous background of study, the writer aims at analyzing the problems:

1. How does the author describe the social class in the novel?
2. What are the causes and effects of social class in the novel?

### **C. Objectives of The Study**

Conducting the research, the writer formulates the objectives of the study, as follows:

1. To describe social class reflected in Frances Hudson Burnett's *A Little Princess* (1904).
2. To analyze the causes and effects of social class in Frances Hudson Burnett's *A Little Princess* (1904).

### **D. Limitation of The Study**

The writer focuses on the research in analyzing Social Class Reflected in Frances Hudson Burnett's *A Little Princess* (1904) on a Marxist Approach.

### **E. Benefit of The Study**

The benefits expected from of the study are:

#### 1. Theoretical Benefits

The result of this study is expected to be able to give information and contribution of knowledge to the academic reference. It can be also as a reference for other researchers who want to conduct further research and particularly the literary studies on this *A Little Princess* novel.

#### 2. Practical Benefits

The study is wished to enrich knowledge and experience of the writer and another researcher of Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta who have interest with literary study on the novel from Marxist approach.

### **F. Paper Organization**

The research paper of the Social Class Reflected in Frances Hodgson Burnett's *A Little Princess* (1904): A Marxist Approach:

Chapter 1 introduction, that consists of the background of the study, problem statement, objective of the study, limitation of the study, benefit of the study, and research paper organization.

Chapter II concerns with literature review; underlying theory and previous study.

Chapter III concerns with research method consisting of kind and design of research, object the study, type data and data source, technique of data collecting, technique of data analysis.

Chapter IV concerns with historical background of English society in the early twenty century.

Chapter V concerns data analysis; it presents five basic principles of Marxist approach.

Chapter VI presents the conclusion, and suggestion.