

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

One of the key elements of Marxist ideology by Karl Marx is class struggle, which explains the course of history in terms of the struggle between contrasting social classes in antagonistic socio-economic groupings (slavery, feudalism, and particularly capitalism). The tensions among Proletariat and bourgeoisie, working-class and landowner, All this reality leading class struggle has become a popular topic in human existence. There isn't just a class struggle in the past, but it continues until today.

In the recent era, the class struggle still exists in real-life situations. Through the class struggle, the capitalist class get rid of the limitations of Feudalism themselves and became the powerful class in the community. The power differential between the two classes causes problems in communities, such as inequalities faced by the lower class (working class); low salaries earned as workers; improper life; and oppression by the middle and upper classes or bourgeoisie. Then, because of the oppression of the upper class, the class-consciousness of the working class is stimulated to struggle to achieve social justice and equality within the political-economic system. Those phenomena become concern some writers and also film director.

One of the film directors that concern about the issue of oppression is Tom Hooper. He was born 5 October 1972 and big in England. He has directed shows and media advertising at the University of Oxford and after graduated, Tom Hooper has directed six movies and become director on tv show several times. In his career, he earned many awards and nominations at Academic Awards, BAFTA Awards, Golden Globe Awards. One of the best works directed by Tom Hooper is movie adaptations from a French historical novel by Victor Hugo entitled Les

Miserables. In this movie, he concerns about class struggle, oppression, and capitalism.

One of the Literary works by Tom Hooper that explicitly describes class struggle is the film entitled *Les Miserables*. This movie describing the social problems in the French revolution era, in which so many societal issues and social inequalities exist here. This movie was released on 25 December 2012. In this movie, the author represents the conflict of the working class, especially the main character dealing with oppression which is done by capitalists and bourgeoisie. The working class responds to do class struggle and revolution to achieve freedom.

In the 19th century, exactly 20 years after the start of the French Revolution, a prisoner named Jean Valjean was released on parole after receiving punishment for 19 years. Earlier, Jean Valjean was jailed for allegedly stealing a piece of bread. Although free, but every gesture is always overseen by Inspector Javert and insulted by society. After he met a priest who forgave him when he stole his jewelry, He promises to himself to change his bad attitude, behavior, and everything. Jean Valjean then changed his identity to Mr. Madeleine. After a time skip, he was successful in building a business and became a respected mayor for his kindness. One time, Fantine one of his employees, was slandered by another fellow worker and made her evicted from work. Hoping to get help from Jean Valjean, but the sound of screaming help could not be heard. Fantine feel so suffered and depressed, she sold all her jewelry and her beautiful long hair. Under these circumstances, Jean Valjean saved her and promised to raise his only child, Cosette.

For years, Cosette lived calmly and happily with Jean Valjean. Even so with his new name Mr. Madeleine, he is no longer being chased by Inspector Javert. One time, Cosette makes a young man named Marius fall in love with her. Cosette also felt the same way for Marius. But what Cosette does not know is that Marius is a member of the revolutionaries who will overthrow the power of the King of France who is considered wrong. The atmosphere in France at that time was chaotic, especially the internal war between the revolutionaries who

demanding independence with the Royal troops. In these difficult circumstances, Jean Valjean had to move places to avoid Inspector Javert. Of course, this also makes Cosette far from Marius.

The French Revolution began in M. Lamarque's funeral procession. All Parisians (Parisien) were asked to give all the furniture of the house to be used as a fortress. When the war happened, Jean Valjean found Marius's message to Cosette and wanted to help him fight with the royal troops. Jean Valjean joined the revolutionaries, but he found inspector Javert covered with blood and roped on the pillar. Even though Jean Valjean hates Inspector Javert so much, but he still felt sorry for his condition and set him free. The French army with full weapon attacks the revolutionaries. All young men died except Marius who was taken by Jean Valjean. When he regained consciousness, Marius deeply regretted the deaths of all his friends. Jean Valjean who met him told Marius about his past and asked Marius to keep his past a secret from Cosette. He fled back after making sure Cosette was happy with Marius. Jean Valjean returned to the church and was ready to die there. Cosette and Marius who learned of Jean Valjean's whereabouts soon followed shortly before Jean Valjean died. The film ends with the scene of all the dead people singing the revolution song.

The movie received various positive responses from the viewer. It gets 7.6/10 points from IMDb (Internet Movie Database). *Les misérables* has many amazing actors, their performances in the film are very amazing. The actors and actresses put more emotion into the songs and make the story of the film more interesting. The whole story is filled with beautiful music and poetry, it brings new sensations to enjoyed movies. However, this film also receives bad responses. *Les Misérables* cannot be enjoyed by the viewer who doesn't like music. This movie is hard to understand because of the movie aimed almost 100% musical without any dialogue. Some of the actors are miscast and they are not good at singing, it makes the film completely bad because of the vocal performances from the actor.

Les Misérables was successfully gained \$441.8 million over the world and also earned many awards. The movie has won three Golden Globe Awards: Best

Motion Picture-Musical or Comedy, Best Actor-Jackman's Motion Picture Musical or Comedy, and Hathaway's Best Supporting Actress. It also won four British Academy Film Awards (BAFTA) including Hathaway's Best Actress in a Supporting Role. It also get eight nominations for the Academy Award, including Best Picture (the first musical nominated since the 2002 Chicago winner) and Best Actor for Jackman, and won three for Best Sound Mixing, Best Makeup and Hairstyling, and Best Supporting Actress for Hathaway, respectively.

The appeal of the movie is the element of a story itself, such as: the character and characterization, the plot, and the style that represent in the story. The main character Jan Valjean who experienced a hard life and struggle until the end of his life. At the beginning of the story, Jan Valjean was oppressed for 19 years in prison. After released on parole from the prison, he was always faced with difficult conditions during his life even after he successfully became mayor. He was always chased by police who recognized him while in prison. he always lives moving and hiding from the police. Even his life is unpeaceful, he is still a kind, friendly, and helpful person. He always help the poor people and when the war began, he helped the revolutionaries fight against the capitalists. Until the end of his life, Jan Valjean always kept his dark past so that his son would not know about it.

The researcher choose this movie because the plot described very interesting. this movie uses a straight plot. At the beginning of the story, Jan Valjean was oppressed for 19 years in prison. After released on parole from the prison, he was always faced with difficult conditions and many conflicts during his life even after he successfully became mayor. He was always chased by police who recognized him while in prison. Jan Valjean adopted cossette after promise to her mother before she died. he always lives moving and hiding from the police. The final conflict began when the revolutionaries started a war against capitalists. Jan Valjean joined the war after getting a letter from Marcius(The boy who loves Cossette). The conflict is ended because all of the revolutionary army died except Marcius. Jan Valjean saved Marcius to the hospital and left him to marry Cossette.

The movie has a happy ending since Marcius and Cosette married and. Before he died, Jan Valjean give a letter that contains his story in the past. Jean Valjean died peacefully in the lap of his daughter.

The theme of this film are suffering, hope and struggle. The movie is full of suffering, hope, and the struggle of different characters with their respective goals in life. Les Miserables itself which means miserable people. This film has a unique style, the author uses a song and poetry become the dialogue between the actors. It makes the sensations of every scene more emotional. The style is also accompanied by musicality that makes the idea of the story are delivered interestingly.

The researcher selects the movie because it depicts the oppression of the bourgeoisie since they have greater power and wealth than the working class. The movie also depicts how the main character, portrays the working class fighting back for equality to live a better life.

B. Problem Statement

The major problem of the study is how oppression is reflected in the movie. The problem of the study is dissected further into the following research question.

1. What are the character and settings described in the movie?
2. How are the oppressions faced by the working class as depicted through the character and the setting?
3. Why are the working-class responses to the oppression they faced?

C. Objective of the Study

The writer has three objectives in this research. The first objective of this research is to find out the characteristics of the character represented in the movie and the setting of the film. The second objective is to recognize the upper class or bourgeoisie oppressions toward the working class. The last objective is to find out the workers' reaction to the oppression.

D. Significances of the Study

1. Theoretical Significance

The study contributes to the body of knowledge, especially literary study on Marxist Study.

2. Practical Significance

The study enriches the present writer's understanding of Marxist Study.