

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **A. Background of Study**

In essence, humans are social creatures. A social being is a group of people who live in a society. Community life and socializing often lead to conflicts between people. Conflict in society is very natural because everyone has different views on life. An example of a common conflict is social class differences. The rich must be the rich, while the poor are the poor, that is the stigma that still exists in society.

In fact, literature substance goes more profound and incorporates a bounty of data and occasions that serve the different sciences such as sociology. Novel is a literary work. In building literary works, intrinsic, and extrinsic aspects are needed, intrinsic aspects which include themes, plots, characters, and officers, setting, language style, point of view, and mandates, while extrinsic aspects include author and reader psychology, social class, socio-culture, politics, and author's biographies.

Social class is the differentiation of the population or society into classes in a hierarchical manner, in which the occurrence of class distinctions in society is based on economic factors, education, work and the relationship between the status (position) of a family member and the status of other family members. When the position of the head of the family increases, the status of other family members also increases. Social class has three different levels, namely the upper class, middle class and lower class. The upper class are those who control individual or general sectors of society, have a high and stable income and a high level of education. The middle class is characterized by a high level of education, high income, a high appreciation for hard work, education, savings and future planning needs, and their participation in community activities. The lower class is usually made up of unskilled workers. Their income is relatively low, so they cannot save, try to meet immediate needs instead of meeting future needs, have a low level of education, and are recipients of government welfare funds.

However, social class also has a great influence on human life, such as health, relationships, and learning. Many people become depressed with this wealth group because they are so obsessed with being the upper class in the social class, in various ways they try to make them the upper class. But there are some people who feel inferior

to their own social class, for example if there is a woman who wants to marry a man who is very rich, but she feels unworthy to marry him because she is worried that people will say that she only wants that person 's wealth. Because many upper class people feel that if there are people from the lower classes who want to join their families, they feel that people are only after their wealth, but it is not certain who they value that kind of person.

In a novel the author always tells the various conflicts experienced by the main character. Conflict in literary works makes the story not bland and the reader becomes emotional when there is a conflict with the main character. Social conflicts that occur within humans and society are divided into various kinds, types, and forms, one of which is conflict between classes. Social class conflict can occur at different social status, which can be caused by differences in interests or differences in views. In everyday life there are often forms of conflict, such as conflicts between employers and workers, conflicts between rich and poor, between farmers and landlords.

In this research, the writer chooses the novel by Kevin Kwan. This Singapore-American writer has published 3 novels, namely *Crazy Rich Asians*, *China Rich Girlfriend*, and *Rich People Problems*. Kevin Kwan was given the title of five writers to watch by the hollywood reporter for Hollywood's Most Powerful Authors list in 2014. In 2018, he was included in Time magazine's list of 100 most influential people in the world and The Asian Hall of Fame, the Robert Chinn Foundation project which was initiated in 2004.

*Crazy Rich Asians* is a novel by Kevin Kwan, the novel was published in 2013 and has become a bestseller in many countries. After that, he published the following two sequels, *China Rich Girlfriend* in 2015 and *Rich People Problems* in 2017. In 2018 the novel *Crazy Rich Asians* was made the 3rd Hollywood film with Asian players. The film is also a box office in various countries with fantastic income.

Rachel Chu and Nicholas Young are lovers who have been dating for two years. They are a lecturer at one of the campuses in New York. During the two years of dating, Nicholas did not share his family origins with Rachel. Until one day Nick invited Rachel to go on vacation to Singapore, which is his hometown. Rachel thought it would be fun to get to know the Nick's family. But when he arrived in Singapore, Rachel was

shocked by the very rich Nick's family. Rachel only knows Astrid as Nick's cousin not with a large family who is the richest Chinese descent in Singapore.

When trouble comes in Rachel's life, at Aramita's bachelorette party, all the women there look sarcastically at Rachel. The Singaporean women gossip about Rachel's unclear family origins and think Rachel is incompatible with Nick, the heir to the Young family fortune. Back in Singapore, Rachel and Nick came to Nick's parents' house, Nick introduced Rachel as his girlfriend. At the beginning of Rachel's introduction, Nick felt that Nick's parents could accept him, but it turned out that Nick's mother had investigated Rachel's origins and Eleanor would not agree with her son being with Rachel. At Aramita and Colin's wedding reception, Rachel is humiliated with Francesca's words and it makes Rachel angry.

Rachel tells all her experiences on Nick. Then Nick felt guilty and invited Rachel to go on vacation to Malaysia. Before going to Malaysia, Nick went to his mother's house and said that he would propose to Rachel. Nick's mom doesn't agree with Nick's plan, but Nick remains desperate and just walks away. In Malaysia, before Nick proposed to Rachel, his mother and grandmother arrived at the villa first and thwarted Nick's plans. Eleanor said about Rachel's family history that Rachel didn't even know. Nick's grandmother said Rachel didn't deserve for Nick because she's an inmate's daughter. Rachel was shocked by everything she heard and broke up with Nick. When Rachel will go to China to meet his father suddenly Rachel's mother came with Nick. Rachel's mother told all of her past stories to Rachel. Finally Rachel understood and made up for her mother. After they made up, Rachel and Kerry joined Peik Lin and Nick. Rachel meets Nick and thanks him for bringing his mother. He quietly told her that the blue jays inspired her to do so. They kiss and make up.

There are several reasons why the author chose *Crazy Rich Asians* novel as research material. First, the first published novel by Kevin Kwan is the best-selling novel in the world, and has even been translated into Indonesian. This proves that the public likes this comedy - romantic genre novel. Even though there are many novels with the same theme, in this novel by Kevin Kwan, readers will be presented with a variety of interesting new things to create imagination.

The second reason, this novel addresses issues about salient social class differences. There are assignments according to caste which people don't care about

today. This novel also tells about conflicts due to differences in social class. Interestingly, not all characters are indifferent about social class. Kevin Kwan also talked about the various cultures and history of China in Singapore.

The last reason, we can take various moral values contained in the novel *Crazy Rich Asians* by Kevin Kwan. Because this novel has various themes that are included, it makes the reader also take useful values. One of them is that not all happiness is obtained only because of money and power. This story teaches that love knows no social class.

Based on the explanation above the writer will analyze conflict class social reflected in novel *Crazy Rich Asians* using a sociological approach. Then, the researcher gives title – Social Class Conflict in Novel *Crazy Rich Asians* by Kevin Kwan : A Sociological Approach.

### **B. Research Question**

- a. What social classes are there in the novel *Crazy Rich Asians* by Kevin Kwan?
- b. What are the social class conflicts reflected in the novel *Crazy Rich Asians* by Kevin Kwan?

### **C. Objective of The Study**

- a. Describing the social class in the novel *Crazy Rich Asians* by Kevin Kwan.
- b. Describing the conflicts of social class found in novel *Crazy Rich Asians* by Kevin Kwan.

### **D. Significances of The Study**

- a. Theoretical Benefit  
The researcher hopes that this study will give new information to other researchers, particularly to the literary study of *Crazy Rich Asians* novel.
- b. Practical Benefit  
This research is expected to enrich knowledge and experience information for writing in many aspects. This research also uses

literary research to gain a deeper understanding of the class social conflicts around us. In addition, this research provides information for students Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta or other students who have the same interest in literary studies from a sociological approach.