

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Research

Literature is an absorption word from Sanskrit, namely shaastra, which means "text containing instructions" or "guidelines". Shaastra comes from basis word shaas which means directing, teaching, giving instructions, and tra which means instrument or means. Literature is also an expression of the human person in the form of experiences, thoughts, feelings, ideas, enthusiasm, beliefs in a form of concrete images that evoke enchantment with language instrument (Sumardjo and Saini KM (1991: 3)). This statement is also justified by Panuti Sudjiman (1986:68) explaining that "literature is a spoken or written works that has various superior characteristics such as originality, artistry, beauty in content, and expression. According to another literary experts such as Semi (1988: 8) opine that literature is a form of creative art work, where the object is humans and their lives by using language as the medium.

From the statements of the experts above, it can be concluded that literature is all spoken and written works that can be used as a reference in various activities such as in education and other fields because it is considered to have advantages or benefits that can develop human creative activities which are poured into language media, both orally and in writing so as to

produce beautiful works and have dazzling meanings. One of the results of literary works in the form of writing is a novel.

Novel is one of literary works in the form of prose. According to Sumardjo (1998: 29) says that novel is a story with the prose form in long shape, this long shape means the story including the complex plot, many characters and various settings. The story in the novel is the work of imagination that discusses the problems of human life or tells the human experience more closely in the form of a long fiction narrative and is told in various genres. According to Abrams (2012), there are several types of genres in novels that are most popular by reader, such as Romance, Mystery, Fantasy, Horror/Thriller, Historical Fiction, and Realist Fiction. One of the popular novels that is very interesting to discuss which contains with the elements of popular genres such as Romance and Comedy so that is be the Researcher choices as the object of the research in completing the thesis is "Crazy Rich Asians" novel by Kevin Kwan.

Novel "Crazy Rich Asians" (2013) by Kevin Kwan is chosen as the data source of this research. Researcher found that there are many phenomena indicate of the problem of social class in this novel. This romantic comedy genre was Kevin Kwan's first published in 2013. The setting of the novel is in Singapore and North America and it was a novel that adapted into a popular film with the same name and released in the United State on August 15, 2018. This novel was telling dramatically in 527 pages that talks about romance and comedy.

Many people are interesting with this novel because he claimed the novel was loosely based on his own childhood in Singapore and this novel become the international bestselling novel that has been translated into more than 30 languages and was followed by two sequels, *China Rich Girlfriend* in 2015 and *Rich People Problems* in 2017. Moreover, this novel was the top three position of the *New York Times* bestseller list for several weeks in 2018 and the film adaptation of this novel became Hollywood's highest grossing romantic comedy in over a decade. Not only that, in the same year for all his achievements in of his novel, He was named as one of the 100 most influential people in the world by *Time Magazine* (bookreporter.com 2018).

Another interesting thing from this novel besides the story is the author of this novel. The author of the novel whose title comes from the words that are currently viral in Asia named Kevin Kwan, a man who was born in Singapore in 1973 is the youngest of three children and comes from a well-established and highly respected Chinese family in his hometown. This is based on his family background such as His great-grandfather, named Oh Sian Guan, was the founding director of the Oversea-Chinese Banking Corporation which is the Singapore's oldest bank. His paternal grandfather, named Sir Arthur Kwan Pah Chien M.D., was an ophthalmologist who became the first Western-trained specialist in Singapore and was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II for his philanthropic efforts. His maternal grandfather, Reverend Paul Hang Sing Hon, founded the Hinghwa Methodist Church.

Kwan is also related to Hong Kong-born American actress Nancy Kwan and former Singapore finance minister Richard Hu, who is his father's cousin.

When he was 11 years old, Kwan and his parents decided to move to United States of America. Having lived in the west for a long time, makes Kwan's view of the lifestyle and habits that have long existed in his hometown such as differences of social class status that needs to be changed.

In daily life cannot be separated from various kinds of problems and in this universe one of the problems that exist usually find in around us is poverty. Talking about poverty is not a strange thing to hear and it is taboo in the modern era until now. This economic factor are the problems that most allow the occurrence of social class disparities in society. In fact, in some parts of this world social class is still the benchmark for the standard of life of a certain person or group and social class is not only talk about materialism but it's also about identity of someone of family.

Discussing about social class, the Researcher used Sociological Approach. There are many definitions about Sociology by expert, one of them is Swingewood in his book of *The Sociology of Literature* defines the sociology is objective and scientific study of human life in society, the study of its institutions and social process.

Social class is understood as a form of layer or hierarchy that occurs in a society. This layer will usually lead to discrimination that makes some people move to carry out the class struggle. The expected class goal is to increase social justice in a comprehensive and complex manner

indiscriminately, especially in the socio-economic dimension. Basically, social stratification is divided into three elements. Social groupings, social systems, and hierarchical levels. Max Weber is a social figure who tends to criticize the thinking of Karl Max. This sentiment occurred because Karl Max put more emphasis on humans as a priority than the awareness of the importance of the divine dimension. This paper is literature research with a qualitative approach. The methodology of this writing is a descriptive analysis study of Max Weber's social thought. The results showed two, namely; First, Max Weber's social stratification indicators are social power, social privilege means social privileges, and social prestige means social status. Second, Max Weber's social stratification consists of individual understanding (*verstehen*), rational and irrational-based social action, class struggle, and differentiation of power and authority. Which differentiation of class in society occur are usually based on economic factors, education, occupation, 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.

In various aspects of life, social class exists quite a lot countries even in the developed countries such as Singapore and North America. Social class is not permanent but it's difficult to change because in addition related to social status, it's also related to economic condition. however, the existence of social class is formed because of the financial differences that someone has

more than the other. Social interactions involving relationships between individuals in society will have two side effects, associative and dissociative. Associative impact will make their relationship closer. On the other hand, the dissociative impact of the relationship becomes more strained. The sparseness of these interactions can lead to social conflict. The main cause is differences in society with various triggers such as cultural differences, unequal interests, social changes that are too fast, to differences in thinking between individuals.

There are several experts of social class in literature, one of them are Max Weber. According to Weber (1864), Social class can be divided into three parts, they are Upper Class, Middle Class, and Lower Class and it is affecting the way a person or group of people perceives others. The differences like this that often lead to conflict between fellow humans. The conflict that causes by social class is still happen until this modern era and that's the reason that makes researcher attracted to analyze about social class and the conflict of social class itself. The researcher used the sociological approach as the shape of this research and needs an approach to analyze this novel. According to Weber (1964), this sociological approach arrived as a casual explanation of its course and effect.

Kwan in his novel also reflects on various phenomena related to social class and the resulting class struggle. Related to the topic, the researcher found some examples of Social Class and Class Struggle that really happened in our real life. The phenomenon of social class conflict is still widely found today, one of them is conflict of social class in Imperial of Japanese Family,

Princess Noriko that researcher found from website of m, liputan6.com. Princess Noriko is a second daughter of Prince Takamado and Hisako. Born into the Imperial of Japanese Family force her to obedient with all regulations there and one of the regulations is all the family of Japanese Imperial must marry someone who come from family of imperial too because imperialism is the highest caste of society in Japanese but on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014, she decided to married with a son of Priest of Temple that called Izumo Taisha Kunimaro Senge. Since then, she loses her title of nationality as a Princess and must leave the kingdom. This is one of the problems of social class conflict that causes by poverty and identity of Izumo Taisha Kunimaro Senge and family.

Therefore, the researcher entitled the analysis *“An Analysis of Social Class and Class Struggle Reflected in “Crazy Rich Asians” novel by Kevin Kwan: A Sociological Approach.”*

## **1.2 Identification of The Problem**

After the writer reads the novel carefully, the writer found some interest problem. The problem which are going to be investigated in this study, are as follows:

1. The social classes reflected in “Crazy Rich Asian” novel by Kevin Kwan.
2. The factors that influence social stratification in society found in “Crazy Rich Asian” novel by Kevin Kwan.

3. The representation of social stratification faced by each social classes reflected in “Crazy Rich Asian” novel by Kevin Kwan.
4. The struggles from each character against society as reflected in “Crazy Rich Asian” novel by Kevin Kwan.
5. The influence of differences social class to marriage found in “Crazy Rich Asian” novel by Kevin Kwan.

### **1.3 Limitation of The Problem**

There are several fascinating cases that can be analyzed in this novel that the writer identifies on 1.2 point. In conducting the research, the writer limits the problem that faced in this novel and focuses to find the main points to be researched as follow:

1. The social classes reflected in “Crazy Rich Asian” novel by Kevin Kwan.
2. The struggles from the main characters against society as reflected in “Crazy Rich Asian” novel by Kevin Kwan.

### **1.4 The Formulation of The Problem**

Based on the limitation of the problem, the researcher formulates the problem as follows:

1. What types of social classes reflected in “Crazy Rich Asian” novel by Kevin Kwan?
2. What are the struggles against social stratification as reflected in “Crazy Rich Asian” novel by Kevin Kwan?



### **1.5 Objective of The Research**

The purpose of this study is to answer the formulation of the problem above, so, the objectives of the research are:

1. To reveal the types of social classes reflected in “Crazy Rich Asian” novel by Kevin Kwan.
2. To figure out the struggles from the main characters against social stratification reflected in “Crazy Rich Asian” novel by Kevin Kwan.

### **1.6 Significance of The Problem**

The researcher hopes that by conducting this research, this research will gain theoretical or practical knowledge.

#### **1.6.1 Theoretically**

This study is expected to give both theoretically and Practically contribution on the area of literature especially in this novel. Theoretically, the result of this research is hoped to develop the study and analysing the social classes, as found in “Crazy Rich Asians” Novel. Though the researcher might find many kinds of social classes, this research is directed to give more explanation and information on the kinds of social classes found in Novel of “Crazy Rich Asian” by Kevin Kwan.

#### **1.6.2 Practically**

Practically, this research is very useful because the author tries to apply the theory of literary studies, especially novels. In addition, this research can provide a clear picture and guideline for readers' understanding to understand

especially analyzing literary works so that it can be a reference for other researchers to conduct literary studies in the same field or research topic even though with different novels or even different perspectives.

### **1.7 Definition of Key Terms**

The Researcher desires to explain the meaning of the title consideration concisely.

**Sociological Approach** : Sociological Approach is an approach to find imaginary meanings in literary works that study about society, social class, romance, religion, nature, etc. The sociological approach can be used to develop what the researcher sees in society is conveyed in his own style and if the story reflects the social class conflicts of society at a particular time.

**Social Class** : Social class is as a form of layer or hierarchy that occurs in a society. This layer will usually lead to discrimination that makes some people move to carry out the class struggle. The expected class goal is to increase social justice in a comprehensive and complex manner indiscriminately, especially in the socio-economic dimension. Basically, social stratification is divided into three elements.

**Social Class Struggle** : Social class struggle is referred to class warfare and class conflict, which means it's a condition of tension and disputes between social classes in society such as political tension and economic antagonism between them as a result of socio-economic competition.