

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1. Background of the Study**

Novel as a literary work is expected appears the positive values for the readers, until they become sensitive to the problems related to the social life in the novel. Literary works are the result of imagination of the author that represents his or her experience, and social life that concerned in his or her time. Literary work is an expression of society and reflects the social situation in particular time (Wellek, 1995:110). It can be said that literary works related to imagination and experience of the author as well as the social background.

As the literary works, “most novels are concerned with ordinary people and their problems in the societies on which they find themselves. Novels do not, however, present a documentary picture of life in Peck (1984:102)”. It means that the novel is written by the author based on the reality in society. Novel as the literary works can also said as a tool to share the experience of the author, and the life of the author in her or his time. Literary work can also represent the real life and real situation when the literary work is produced. Everyone who likes novels can enjoy and understand how beautiful literature is. Moreover, they can feel or know the experience of the author, and they can improve their mind or their imagination by responding it. As Wellek and Warren (1977:94) stated, that

literature reserve about life and life, in most part is part of the real society. Therefore, literary work is the reflection of the real life. It can describe the events in our life, and also can contain the cultural and social background which indicates that literature and society is closely related because literary works expresses the real situations and problems existing in society. Some of social problems such as poverty, gender, discrimination and class conflict often occurs in literary works, especially in a novel.

One of the aspects in real life is about social condition of the society. It can be found in Chinua Achebe's novel entitled *Things Fall Apart*. It is the first of African novel which has an attention and confession from international world. This novel was written by Chinua Achebe and published in 1959. This novel inspired by William Butler Yeats' work entitled "*The Second Coming*". The author describes social life that happened in Nigeria. This novel tells about the main character, Okonkwo which focuses on Okonkwo's family, his life, custom of Igbo society, and the influence of colonialism in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Commonly, the story happened in Umuofia village that is located on half west Onitsha City, on half East Niger River in Nigeria. The setting of this novel is in 1890s. The Igbo's cultures described by Achebe seem same as the place where he was born, Ogidi. (<http://www.notablebiographies.com/A-An/Achebe-Chinua.html> ). Igbo society is described as the society which contains some ethnic groups with their own leader. Achebe, in his novel, *Things Fall Apart* tells about traditional African culture in the 1800's and its conflict in it. The social condition in the novel

included the class conflict between Igbo society and British Missionaries, it can be seen in the following quotation:

“Tell the white man (British Missionary) that we will not do any harm,” he said to the interpreter. “Tell him to go back to his house and leave us alone. But this shrine which he built must be destroyed. We shall no longer allow it in our midst. (Achebe, 1959: 96).

From the quotation above, we can see clearly that the arrival of missionaries and their purpose to come to Umuofia causes class conflicts between Igbo society and them (British Missionaries).

Since the story of the novel tells about social life after colonialism and the conflict of its culture and ethnic or social class, and the discussion about culture and social conflict includes in Marxist discussion, this research uses Marxist approach to analyze it. According to Peter Barry in his book *Beginning Theory* (2002: 244) he said that traditional Marxist criticism tends to deal with history in a fairly generalised way. It talks about conflicts between social classes, and clashes of large historical forces, but, contrary to popular belief, it rarely discusses the detail of a specific historical situation and relates it closely to the interpretation of a particular literary text. It can be said that class conflict in social life in Marxist criticism is the natural thing in society.

According to Selden (1986: 23) “Marxist tradition is viewed as the proprietor of the most continuation history. One of its statement which is quoted by most people and underlies the argumentation of social critical are the social existence of humans that determines their social thought”. It means that Marxist’s ideology is to resuscitate humans social condition and to overcome some

problems that occurred, especially the clash in society, such as class conflict.

Marxism hopes to create some sort of balance that makes the world a better, more secure place for those who have been oppressed and controlled.

Marxism sees progress as coming about through the struggle for power between different social classes. This view of history as class struggle (rather than as, for instance, a succession of dynasties, or as a gradual progress towards the attainment of national identity and sovereignty) regards it as 'motored' by the competition for economic, social, and political advantage. The exploitation of one social class by another is seen especially in modern industrial capitalism, particularly in its unrestricted nineteenth-century form (Barry, 2002:157).

In this case, based on the Marxist view, the class conflict occurred in society is caused by the two classes that have different social status, such as bourgeois (capitalist ) and proletariat class.

The main reason why the writer is interested in choosing Chinua Achebe's novel *Things Fall Apart*, first, it is the first African novel that tells about culture, social life in Africa, second it is a realistic novel. Besides, this novel has been analyzed by some previous researchers. The first is Bonaventura Jiwantara Adhi Nugraha, he analyzed the main character of the novel Okonkwo by using Psychology Approach. The second is Fitriah Amalia, she analyzed the supremacy of British missionaries toward Igbo society by using Post colonial Approach. The third is Qurrota A'yunin, she analyzed about colonialism and its effect toward Igbo society by using Postcolonial literary criticism. From some approaches which are used by the previous researchers. Besides, the story of this novel related to the Marxist discussion. Therefore, the writer analyzes Chinua Achebe's novel *Things Fall Apart* by using Marxist theory, because it presents a story of class conflict between Igbo society and British Missionaries happened in Africa.

## **1.2. Statement of the Problems**

How are the class conflicts between Igbo society and British Missionaries occurred in the novel?

## **1.3. Objectives of the Study**

The aim of this research is to describe the class conflict between Igbo society and British Missionaries that occurred in the novel.

## **1.4. Scope and Limitation of the Study**

The scope of this study is limited to the analysis of the novel *Things Fall Apart* written by Chinua Achebe which was published in 1959. It is one of the Achebe's novels that was inspired from the poetry *The second Coming* by William Butler Yeats. *Things Fall Apart* has the admission from the international world. The writer limits this analysis on the class conflict occurred in the novel. In this case, the class conflict which is included in the social class is part of the Marxist study.

## **1.5. Significance of the Study**

The findings of this research are expected to be very theoretically and practically useful. Theoretically, this study can be used as a reference for literary studies, especially which has relations with the literary work. Practically, it will be useful in providing information about the class conflict in Chinua Achebe's novel

*Things Fall Apart*. For other researchers, it may help by giving additional information about the topic discussed by the writer. By reading this study, the readers will understand the class conflict in the novel based on the Marxist Approach.

## **1.6. RESEARCH METHOD**

### **1.6.1. Research Design**

In this research, the writer applied descriptive qualitative research since it described the data which was in the form of statements, quotations, and expressions in the novel. The data are obtained from the novel related to this research. The writer conducted study of literary works which was related to the problems formulated found in Chinua Achebe's novel *Things Fall Apart* published in 1959. This study uses Marxist Approach because it focuses on analyzing the class conflict in the novel.

### **1.6.2. Data and Source of Data**

Data is an important element for research study. It can be the evidences and clues for the researcher to answer the research problem. The source of data of this research is taken from the novel entitled *Things Fall Apart* written by Chinua Achebe published in 1959 which consists of 108 pages. While the data are in the form of quotations, statement, and experssion related to the subject matter in the novel.

### **1.6.3. Steps of the Collecting the Data**

In brief, the writer selects carefully the data needed in *Things Fall Apart* and in the notes used by the writer for the analysis. There are some steps which are used to collect the data of this analysis. They are as follows:

1. Reading and understanding the story of the novel, “*Things Fall Apart*” written by Chinua Achebe published in 1959.
2. Selecting a clear description of a quotations, expressions and statements related to class conflict in the novel, as the object of the analysis.
3. Classifying the data related to the class conflicts in the novel.

### **1.6.4. Steps of Analyzing the Data**

In analyzing the data, the writer used the following phases:

1. Explaining the social class of Igbo society and Missionaries in the novel
2. Explaining the class conflict between Igbo society and Missionaries that occurred in the novel
3. Drawing the conclusion based on the data analysis.

### **1.6.5. Definition of Key Terms**

To avoid misunderstanding, there are two definitions. Those are class conflict and social class.

## **1. Class Conflict**

Class conflict and its structural bases are seen in a somewhat different perspective. Conflict does not have the same order of inevitability, but is led back to the interrelations of a series of more particular factors, the combinations of which may vary (Talcott Parsons, 2002:17). It indicates that the class conflict is the problems that occur in the social community because of the disagreement or social inequalities caused by differences either in ideology, or in economic aspect, and it has the effect in the social life.

## **2. Social Class**

Social class is a social construction with no basis as a biological or genetic concept. (Jim Vander Putten, 2001:18). Beside that, social class has the widely meaning which is used to show the social layers that is based on the economic criteria. It indicates that the social class is a group of people that occupy the social layers based on the economic criteria and they have the same culture.

### **1.6.6. Thesis Organization**

This thesis consists of four chapters. The first chapter is introduction, they are the background of the study, statement of the problem, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, research method, research design, steps of collecting the data, steps of analyzing the data, definition of key terms and thesis organization. The second chapter is divided into two parts. They are the review of related literature which contains of Marxist theory, social



class, class conflict, novel, social background of the novel, novel and its theme, novel and its setting, and the previous studies. The third chapter consists of the analysis that explains about the social class and class conflicts, and the last chapter is conclusion and suggestion.