

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Literary work is one of the ways to unleash creativity. Regarding their functions, literary works do not merely give the audience joy, but also enlightenment (Horace as cited in Citraningtyas, 2013). It means they are not just an expressive work in the name of art, but also kind of media to give education, for example to criticize. Rondhi (2014) states that not all art is made as part of aesthetic experience but also made only as a self expression or as an expression of political propaganda, moral, or religion.

In Indonesia, some artists and writers use their art to criticize the government. Nurhakiki (2015) and Neagle (2016) mention that the examples are Wiji Thukul, a writer talking about labors in Indonesia, and W. S. Rendra, who criticized the life of the Indonesian in the New Order era. Awareness delivery through art involves artists as the mediator of the social phenomenon with the system's policies determinant (Zaenuri & Lestari, 2009). One of the art works used to criticize problems happening in Indonesia is song. Through song, the listeners do not merely listen to the songs but also analyze meaningful lyrics with strong messages to deliver.

One of the singers using songs as media to criticize Indonesian problems is Virgiawan Listanto or well-known as Iwan Fals. Iwan Fals' songs mostly talk about social justice and criticism in the era of Indonesia New Order (Wijaya & Shoim, 2014; Primasanti & Alrianingrum, 2017). Susanti and Nurmayani (2020) argue that Iwan Fals criticizes the government since its performance is unsatisfactory as shown in 'Manusia Setengah Dewa' song. Because of the songs he has composed, Iwan Fals has been banned by the Indonesian New Order regime (Sriwahyuntari, 2005).

In this study, the writer intends to analyze the social inequality experienced by the proletariat in Iwan Fals' songs in the framework of Marxist analysis, focusing on the Marxian class theory. In Marxian class theory, the society is divided into classes as a result of economic differences. The classes are formed by the capitalist mode of production and the ownership of property. The classes mainly consist of two primary classes: the capitalist or the bourgeoisie, and the labor or proletariat (Ritzer, 2011, p. 58). Magnis-Suseno (1999) argues that these different classes raise different goals; the bourgeoisie's goals are to gain as much profit while surviving in the business competition. He also adds that the proletariat's goals are to earn wages and to take over the ownership of the business where they work. These different goals lead into an exploitation of the proletariat as they have to work hard for wages, while the bourgeoisie do not have to work hard as the proletariat has already worked for them (Magnis-Suseno, 1999). Iwan Fals' songs criticizing the social inequality

experienced by the proletariat in the Indonesia society intrigues the writer to know further.

More on the two classes mentioned, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, Solina (2016) explains that the bourgeoisie is the one who has the assets of the production, while the proletariat plays two roles: as the worker of the bourgeoisie and the consumer of the product they produce. The proletariat works for the bourgeoisie in order to earn wage and to fulfil their main needs. This condition fits the Marxian class theory, the highest class remains rich and powerful from their ownership of big business while the lowest and middle class have to work hard for the highest class to earn wage and fulfil their needs. The proletariat simply work hard in order to reach welfare for themselves under the shadow of Capitalism (Ramos Jr, 1982).

Iwan Fals' songs are mostly protest ones as he tried to point out the unfairness happening. It is intriguing to analyze Iwan Fals' songs whether they also speak out about the unfairness between the classes in the point of view of Marxism. *Guru Oemar Bakri*, *Sarjana Muda*, and *Sore Tugu Pancoran* are songs telling how the low class people are trying to earn wages to fulfil their needs by looking and doing jobs. However, life is not always easy for them as sometimes their work does not produce enough money and looking for jobs is not as easy as turning back the hand. These three songs give the listeners point of view of the struggle of the low and middle class in earning wage and fulfilling their needs while experiencing social inequality as well.

Marxist analysis has been done by (Kusumastuti & Nugroho, 2017) in their study titled *Representation of Marxism in Biography Film (Study of John Fiske Semiotics about Karl Marx Social Class Conflict in Guru Bangsa Tjokroaminoto's Film)*. In their analysis, they discuss the social class conflict of Marxism in John Fiske's semiotics method in the film. The film itself tells the story of Tjokroaminoto against the social class conflict by establishing Bumiputera and Sarekat Islam organizations. This action was taken in order to equalize the rights of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

Other Marxist analysis in literary works is written by Hira (2017) in his undergraduate thesis titled *Marxist Criticism on Disney's Movie Cinderella*. He argues that the difference of the classes affects the treatment between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. He also adds that the proletariat should never be against the bourgeoisie or otherwise the proletariat will get punishment. It is clear that the bourgeoisie can do whatever they want while the proletariat has to obey what the bourgeoisie wants.

Study that use Iwan Fals' songs as their source has been done by Susanti and Nurwayani (2020) in their journal article titled *Kritik Sosial dan Kemanusiaan dalam Lirik Lagu Karya Iwan Fals*. They discuss how Iwan Fals criticizes social and humanitarian problems through his songs. They use two of Iwan Fals' songs; *Manusia Setengah Dewa* and *Para Tentara*. In *Manusia Setengah Dewa*, they argued that it voices the hope that the new president could be friends with his people and be wise to them. Meanwhile, *Para Tentara*

criticizes the law enforcers who are being repressive to the people they should protect. This song also tells that the society does not want to be treated that way; they want to fight back. However, people realize that they are nothing and powerless.

The writer chooses this topic to analyze how Iwan Fals talks about the social inequality of the proletariat that fits in the Marxian class theory. The songs that will be used as an object in this research are *Guru Oemar Bakri*, *Sarjana Muda* and *Sore Tugu Pancoran*. *Guru Oemar Bakri* tells a story of a teacher who struggles for his life; *Sarjana Muda* is a song of an undergraduate who tries to find jobs with his diploma; *Sore Tugu Pancoran* is a song about the struggle of Budi, a paperboy. The characters mentioned are also from different age ranges; the middle-aged Oemar Bakri, the young adult in *Sarjana Muda*, and the young Budi. In short, all of the songs mentioned are talking about the struggles of the unprivileged people of all ages, which has become an important issue for a long time in Indonesia.

Although there are already several scholars have studied about Iwan Fals, his songs still promote richness in their cultural local products. In this study, the writer would like to analyze Iwan Fals' in the point of view of a generation who lived more than 20 years after the songs were written in the New Order Era. The difference of the Iwan Fals' era and the writer's era may result in different findings as well.

## **1.2. Field of the Study**

The field of the study is literature in analyzing Iwan Fals' songs.

## **1.3. Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study is analyzing Iwan Fals' songs using Marxian class theory.

## **1.4. Problem Formulation**

The writer formulates problems of the study of this research as follows:

1. What are the social inequalities experienced by Indonesian proletariat in Iwan Fals' songs?
2. What are the factors causing the characters in the songs experience social inequality?

## **1.5. Objectives of the Study**

With regards to the problems mentioned, this research is conducted to achieve these following objectives:

1. To find out the social inequalities experienced by Indonesian proletariat portrayed in Iwan Fals' songs.
2. To discover the factors which make the characters in the songs experience social inequality.



## **1.6. Significance of the Study**

This study aims to help the readers, especially the students in Soegijapranata Catholic University, understand social inequality in the point of view of Marxism portrayed in Iwan Fals' songs. This study also aims to be eye-opening for the readers towards the songs' lyrics as media to voice social inequality around as it is still an issue in this society. In addition, this research is expected to show the readers that songs may reach more audiences to spread the voice against social inequality. The writer also hopes this study could help future researchers of related study as part of their references.

## **1.7 Definition of Term**

### **1. Marxist Analysis**

Marxist analysis is an analysis of literature works based on the theory of Marxist by Karl Marx. Marxist analysis is focusing on the class struggle in the society and how the system of the social classes works.

### **2. Social Inequality**

Social inequality is a condition where a certain class has to experience unfairness from another class. In this society, the proletariat is the one who has to experience social inequality as they have to sell their labor to earn some money to fulfil their daily need to the bourgeoisie. However, the proletariat working hour seems to be exploiting them to do more for the bourgeoisie with low income possible, so that the bourgeoisie get the profit desired.