

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

“She must marry; she must marry with an eye to money; and the reason she must marry is that the family inheritance has been settled on a male” (Newton 119). It is the sentence that always thought by Mrs. Bennet. Mrs. Bennet is a person who does her life based on the society’s culture. There are some factors that determine society’s life. They are the economic condition, the habit of their environment, the society’s culture, and etc. Social class is the real case that appears some years ago. Zahia states,

Therefore, Victorian society can be split up into three classes: upper, middle, and lower. Upper class; did not work, income came from inherited land and investments, Middle class; men performed mental or "clean" work, paid monthly or annually, and Working class; men and women who performed physical labor, paid daily or weekly wages. (9)

Based on the quotation above, people are separated into some groups based on their economic condition; they are the upper class, the middle class, and also the lower or worker class. The social class status can determine someone’s fortune. Upper class often regarded as people who have power. As the opposite, the

middle and lower class are not as lucky as the upper. During the 19th centuries, middle class were groups of people who had no a lot of money or even good connections. The lower or worker classes are the groups of peoples who must struggle for their lives harder than the other classes. This was not like the upper class people who always had a lot of money and also good connections to ensure their lives in the future.

Dealing with the social class status based on the economic condition, in the 19th century, men were luckier than women. This is because of some privileges gotten by men. Men can do anything to make his family's life better. Newton emphasizes as follow,

To read Jane Austen's letters is also to be aware- to be reminded-of the privilege that belonged to middle-class men. For Austen had five brothers and they had what she did not: access to work that paid, access to inheritance and preference, and access to the independence, the personal power, that belonged to being prosperous and male. (27)

In that era, women could not get what men got. Men were the free creature; they had rights for everything as their power. They could go to work and got money; they also had access to inheritance from their families. But there was nothing women could do. Because of the limitation women get in the society, that condition takes a big part to force them to get low paid work or be a married woman. For the example, an unmarried woman from the middle or lower class,

they are able to go to work. If they only have few skills; they can do nothing for her family, even for themselves. Frost emphasizes that, “An unmarried woman like Mary Wollstonecraft- hard-pressed to find a measure of economic independence-often had to settle for menial, low-paying work that satisfied neither her economic requirements nor her need for self-respect” (263). Marriage is one of the ways for women to make their economic condition better. They claimed that a marriage can bring a good future for their lives.

Frost stated:

Men, in their youth, are prepared for professions and marriage is not considered a grand feature of their lives; whilst women, on the contrary, have no other scheme to sharpen their faculties... To rise in the world, and have the liberty of running from pleasure to pleasure, they must marry advantageously, and to this object their time is sacrificed, and their persons often legally prostituted. (260)

Based on that quotation, a marriage is a must for a woman. She has to marry to increase her family's social class.

This is quite different from men. Men can do anything that women cannot. Man should not be a prisoner of their marriage to increase their family's social class. They are prepared for professions. On the other hand, most of women in that period should be a prisoner of their marriage to increase their family's social class. Newton states that, “Some single men, it would appear, have independent access to money, but all single women, or daughters, must marry for it” (28).

Furthermore, Newton also emphasizes, “Families with daughters, therefore, think a great deal about marriage, while single men with fortunes do not” (28). Because of the women’s weakness condition at that time, something that women can do to help their family is by marrying men who have good fortunes, and because of it, parents will always push their daughters to accept their first proposals. According to Handler and Segal, “Parents tyrannize children in order to aggrandize the family estate, forcing them into marriages that violate their “natural” inclinations” (703). As a result, a marriage without love is a common condition. They do not have to think about their feeling. This is because they think that love will appear when they live together.

A literary work by Jane Austen entitled *Pride and Prejudice* reflects that marriage can be a good way to improve condition of the middle class women. In this novel, the middle class women are prepared to be good wives for their future husbands. They do not go to work. They cannot do anything like as men do. They cannot choose someone who will be their husband based on their feeling. And they have big responsibilities to help their family’s economic condition. According to Newton, “To read Jane Austen’s letters-with their steady consciousness of bargains, pence, and shillings-is to be aware of one small but nagging way in which she experienced the restrictions of being an un-married middle-class woman: she had little money, and she had almost no access to more” (Newton 27). This novel shows how the struggles of middle class women to improve their condition, although it is not easy as they wish. This is because they do not have access to work, inheritance, and etc.

In the case of marriage role in *Pride and Prejudice* novel, it happens to a middle class woman named Charlotte Lucas. She is an educated woman, but she is not clever. She is a plain woman, and she is not as beautiful as the major character Elizabeth and Jane of the novel. She has nothing to do to make her family better. This is because, she is a middle lower class woman, and she is less skills. Charlotte condition is really different from the Elizabeth and Jane condition. Whereas the major character has a lot of chance from her lovers to make her condition better, but Charlotte cannot. The only chance she has came from the one and only man, named Mr. Collins. Marriage is a good choice for her. Like as the other people on the society, she has desire to be a prison of marriage without love. It means that her marriage is a motive to increase her family social class. That is why this paper will show how a marriage can be a solution in raising women social status during the period of 19th century. This paper will focus on how Charlotte as a middle class woman improves her family's social class through her marriage to Mr. Collins.

B. Problem Formulation

This study tries to formulate the problems as follows:

1. How were middle-lower class women conditions in 19th century reflected by Charlotte in the *Pride and Prejudice* novel?
2. How does Charlotte's marriage become a solution in raising her social status as reflected in the *Pride and Prejudice* novel?

C. Limitation of the Study

In this paper, this study just focuses on how marriage can be a solution for middle-lower class women in raising their social status in 19th century as reflected in the Charlotte character. The aim of this study is to explain how Charlotte's marriage becomes a solution in raising her social status in *Pride and Prejudice* novel by Jane Austen.

D. Objectives of the Study

Based on the problem formulation above, this proposal writing focuses on the following objectives:

1. To explain middle-lower class women condition in the 19th century reflected by Charlotte in the *Pride and Prejudice* novel.
2. To describe how Charlotte's marriage can be a solution in raising her social status as depicted in *Pride and Prejudice* novel.

E. Significance of the Study

The study is expected to give the readers many advantages and wide knowledge of marriage in 19th century. This study is expected to be a reference for further research about marriage in 19th century, especially the students of College of Language and Communication Science Sultan Agung Islamic University Semarang majoring in literature.

F. Organization of the Study

This final project is systematically organized in chapters. Each chapter will discuss different matters as follows:

Chapter one provides of introduction that consists of: the Background of the Study, Problem Formulation, Limitation of the Study, Objective of the Study, Significance of the Study and Organization of the Study.

Chapter two is review of related literature. It consists of the synopsis and some theories related to the study: The portrayal of women in the society in 19th century, and Marriage in nineteenth century.

The chapter three is research method. It consist types of research and data organizing that consists of data collecting method, types of data, and analyzing the data.

Chapter four is findings and discussion. It deals with the data that answer problem formulation.

Chapter five is deal with the conclusion and suggestion.