

## SOCIAL CLASSES IN VICTORIA ERA REFLECTED OF MAIN CHARACTER IN THE CHARLOTTE BRONTE "JANE EYRE"

**Salsabila Chairunnisa Az-zahra Zulkifli Abdullah**

annisazulkifli.nz@gmail.com

*Sastra Inggris, Universitas Muslim Indonesia*

**Andi Mulyani Kone**

koneandimulyani@gmail.com

*Sastra Inggris, Universitas Muslim Indonesia*

**Abdollah**

Ullahlv66@gmail.com

*Sastra Inggris, Universitas Muslim Indonesia*

### **Abstrak**

*Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui kelas sosial yang dijelaskan dalam Jane Eyre karya Charlotte Bronte dan untuk memahami hubungan cinta antara orang-orang dari kelas sosial yang berbeda di Jane Eyre karya Charlotte Bronte. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa ada tiga kelas dalam novel tersebut yaitu kelas atas, kelas menengah dan kelas bawah. Dalam novel, kelas sosial dapat ditunjukkan melalui perilaku, tindakan, dan perasaan para tokoh yang menempati kelas sosial yang berbeda. Temuan kedua adalah tentang hubungan cinta antara Jane Eyre dan Mr. Rochester. Cinta mereka menghadapi kendala seperti; rahasia tentang pernikahan pertama Tuan Rochester dan kecelakaan Tuan Rochester yang menyebabkan kebutaannya.*

**Kata kunci:** *Jane Eyre, Kelas Sosial, Mr. Rochester*

### **Abstract**

This study aims to determine the social class described in Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre and to understand the love relationship between people of different social Classes in Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre. This study found that there are three Classes in the novel, namely the upper class, the middle class and the lower class. In novels, social class can be shown through the behavior, actions, and feelings of the characters who occupy different social classes. The second finding is about the love relationship between Jane Eyre and Mr. Rochester. Their love faces obstacles such as; a secret about Mr. Rochester's first marriage and Mr. Rochester's accident that caused his blindness.

**Keywords:** Jane Eyre, Social Class, Mr. Rochester

## **INTRODUCTION**

Literature is something special in society at a certain time. This view is based on the fact that literature is not something that stands alone, but is separate from the people who enjoy it. Literature has a position, role and function in society and everything is always changing from time to time and the differences between one society and another (Teuw, 2008). One of the famous literary works is Charlotte Bronte's "Jane Eyre". Jane Eyre is a novel in the 19th century that tells and reflects the social class of the Victorian era. After the death of King William IV, Queen Victoria will ascend

the throne of England. He knew that he would not make preparations for the throne, but he believed that he could fulfill his duties well later. As the door to her freedom opens, she realizes that she is just a girl in exile at Kensington Palace. But now she has become Queen of the United Kingdom, which covers the territory of Great Britain and Ireland. Social class is a group of people who share some common incidental component of their life chances. Social class differences are based on respect and social status. For example, a respected member of society is seen as having a high social status, and a member of society is looked down upon because of his low social status (Edmond, 2009). Social class is used by society to sort social categories in a stratification system based on economic status in social life (Wright, 2003; Syarifuddin, S. 2017). Social interaction related to inequality or social stratification is one of all conflicts in our society that are sometimes mentioned in literary works. Individuals sometimes treat others differently based on wealth, status, education, religion, and even race. Such situations create stereotypes to evaluate individuals and discriminate against one another. The term class not only stereotypes certain groups, but also clearly assigns their social roles.

The researcher chose this novel as the research subject because Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* is a literary work that reflects on social class. This story offers a simple reflection on life in Victorian England. By reading novels, researchers not only get pleasure from them, but can also increase their knowledge of social class during this period. This novel was chosen for analysis for several reasons. First, it is one of the best novels that tells about a woman's struggle to find happiness in a world where love and duty are often opposites. Second, it is a best-selling novel that is read by millions of people around the world. Third, the main character survives as a strong woman, a character who is admirable for her wits and willingness to stand up for her beliefs. Her story shows the difficulties and ease of her life.

## **METHOD**

Researchers use Qualitative Research. The qualitative method is able to deepen the understanding of social class in the novel "*Jane Eyre*" by Charlotte Bronte. More specifically, this research takes the form of textual analysis. Researchers will study about social class in Charlotte Bronte's novel "*Jane Eyre*". In analyzing the aspect of social class that is shown in the novel, the researcher uses the theory of Karl Marx. The data sources in this study are Charlotte Bronte's novel "*Jane Eyre*" and previous research on *Jane Eyre* as additional references. Researchers look for two variables, namely social class in Charlotte Bronte's novel "*Jane Eyre*" and Mr. Rochester with the main cast.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Social class in Charlotte Bronte's novel "*Jane Eyre*"**

#### **1. High class**

In the Victorian era, upper class people had different characteristics from the lower social classes in terms of status, lifestyle, and acquisition of resources. The dress worn by the upper class had a high-value luxury. Women will wear different colors for dresses and stockings. Another important accessory is a hat. Hats are used as protection from the sun. Upper class houses are much better than middle and lower class houses. This can be seen from the house that is occupied, of course the building has many rooms, luxurious household furniture. The room consists of a

bedroom, living room, lounge and bathroom. And each room will have a lot of furniture.

## 2. Middle class

The level of social class can change at any time, as depicted in Eliza's character, she used to be the child of a rich family but now that her mother died, the position of the upper class could shift. For the middle class to be a nun. A nun is a woman who voluntarily leaves the world and focuses her life on the religious life in a convent places of worship.

## 3. Lower class

Their school uniform is very simple but they feel comfortable because that uniform is what they are supposed to wear. The costumes are adapted to the activities at school, as well as when they are going to the park, they wear coats made of wool and straw hats. The Lowood School building is already fragile, and it can also be seen from the faded gray paint. Costumes for the lower classes are generally cheaper and more comfortable to wear. The lower class has many choices about the accessories they wear. Lower class costumes consist of t-shirts, socks, shoes, skirts and gloves. In the lower class, a large number of people work as housemaids in the upper class houses, especially women. Of course for the upper class will need more than three maids, even for each room there will be a special maid. They can start a job as a nanny (care for upper class children). Another profession from the lower class is as a tailor for the upper class. In the Victorian era, sewing machine technology did not exist, so the process was done by hand sewing manually or by using a needle and thread.

## Mr. Love Story Rochester with Main Cast

The story begins with Jane Eyre who tells the story of how she was small and lived a miserable life with her aunt, Mrs. Reed of Gateshead and his children. One day Mr Rochester came to Thornfield Hall (he lived out of town). They first met when Mr Rochester's horse slipped on the ice. From that meeting, they then talked. Talked about so many things that Jane herself was reluctant to continue the conversation because Mr Rochester found him a little odd and full of himself. Mr Rochester, who usually stays at Thornfield Hall for about 2 to 4 weeks, actually stayed longer. The reason, of course, is because he feels comfortable having friends to chat with, who he feels are equal to him. Jane was also quietly beginning to enjoy her conversation with Mr. Rochester. Until one night, Jane suddenly heard a laugh that came from nowhere. Jane got up to check and saw smoke coming out of her master's room. Apparently, the curtains in Mr Rochester's room were burned. He woke Mr Rochester but didn't wake up until at last he did use the curtains to put out the fire and hit his master. When he realized what was going on, Mr. Rochester went to investigate something and left Jane in her room.

When he returned, he thanked Jane. Jane's feelings for Mr. Rochester grew stronger. He began to look forward to their time together. Mrs. Fairfax did not like the relationship between Jane and Mr Rochester, given that no governess married her master, different social classes and large age gaps. 20 years apart, Jane is 19 and Mr Rochester is 39. Then the two got engaged, but on their wedding day, Jane saw the fact that it was Rochester she loved turned out to be a married man. Embarrassed by this Jane then ran away. After this incident he did not return for a long time until an incident brought him back to meet Rochester. The fire that destroyed the Rochester house was a turning point in their love. The fire killed Rochester's wife and blinded Rochester himself. Their love rekindled even though Rochester's situation wasn't what it used to be. This is a sign that love does not know any conditions. Sometimes even situations that can make someone's love story return even though at first it seems normal as told by Jane Eyre and Edward Rochester.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the explanation above, each upper class is usually respected by the lower social class because of several advantages such as position and resources. The middle class is a group of people who have enough money; they are professionals capable of meeting basic needs. These people, who were related to Jane Eyre of Charlotte Bronte, had professions such as doctors, teachers, and priests. And the lower class consists of poor people who cannot fulfill their needs. This novel tells of Jane's relationship with Mr. Rochester, whom she eventually marries. However, her love for Rochester has set Jane against social class traditions. Because it was Jane whose position was equal to that of a maid, while Rochester was the lord of Thornfield. That is, they both come from two different worlds, which at that time violated the norms of society when they got married

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