

**SOCIAL DISCRIMINATION ON WOMAN MARRIAGE IN JANE  
AUSTEN'S SENSE AND SENSIBILITY (1811):**

A Marxist Feminism Approach



**A Thesis**

BY:

NITA NURHALIFAH

F041171521

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT  
FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES  
HASANUDDN UNIVERSITY

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**ENGLISH LITERATURE STUDY PROGRAM**  
**FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES**  
**HASANUDDIN UNIVERSITY**

**APPROVAL FORM**


With reference to the letter of the dean of Faculty of Cultural Sciences Hasanuddin University No. 435/UN4911/KEP/2021 regarding supervisor, we hereby confirm to approve the undergraduate thesis draft by Nita Nurhalifah (F041171521) to be examined at the English Department of Faculty of Cultural Sciences.


Makassar, February 25<sup>th</sup> 2022

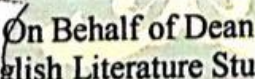
Approved by the Execution of Thesis Examination by  
The Thesis Organizing Committees


First supervisor

Second Supervisor

  
**Dr. Abidin Pamnu, M.A., Dipl. TESOL**  
NIP. 196012311986011071

  
**Dra. Herawaty, M.HUM., Ph.D.**  
NIP. 196301031988032003

  
On Behalf of Dean  
Head of English Literature Study Program

  
**Dr. Nasmilah, M.Hum.**  
NIP. 196311031988112001

**THESIS**  
**SOCIAL DISCRIMINATION ON WOMAN MARRIAGE IN JANE**  
**AUSTEN'S *SENSE AND SENSIBILITY* (1811):**  
**A MARXIST FEMINISM APPROACH**

**BY**  
**NITA NURHALIFAH**

**STUDENT NUMBER: F041171521**

It has been examined before the Board of Thesis Examination


On Wednesday, 25th January 2022


and is declared to have fulfilled the requirements.

Approved by  
Board of Supervisors

Chairperson

Secretary


  
Dr. Abidin Pammu, M.A., Dipl. TESOL  
NIP. 196012311986011071


  
Dra. Herawaty, M.Hum., M.A., Ph.D.  
NIP. 196301031988032003

Dean Faculty of Cultural Sciences  
Hasanuddin University

Head of English Department  
Faculty of Cultural Sciences



  
Prof. Dr. Akim Duli, MA.  
NIP. 196407161991031010

  
Dr. Nasmilah, M.Hum.  
NIP. 196311031988112001



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FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES  
HASANUDDIN UNIVERSITY**







Today, 10<sup>th</sup> February 2022, the Board of Thesis Examination has kindly approved a thesis by **NITA NURHALIFAH** (Student Number: **F041171521**) entitled:

**SOCIAL DISCRIMINATION ON WOMAN MARRIAGE IN JANE  
AUSTEN'S SENSE AND SENSIBILITY (1811): A MARXIST FEMINISM  
APPROACH**

Submitted in fulfillment one of the requirements of undergraduate thesis examination to obtain Sarjana Sastra (S.S.) Degree at the English Literature Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University.

Makassar, 10<sup>th</sup> February 2022

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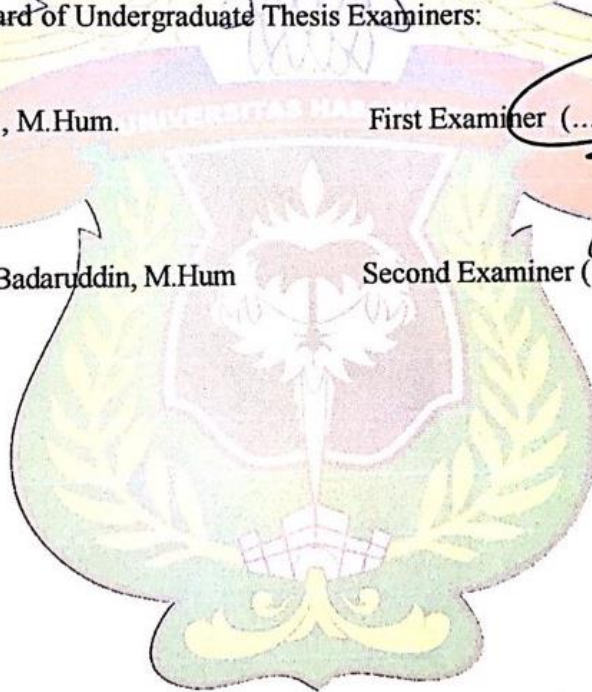
The thesis of NITA NURHALIFAH (Student Number: F041171521) entitled: **SOCIAL DISCRIMINATION ON WOMAN MARRIAGE IN JANE AUSTEN'S SENSE AND SENSIBILITY (1811): A MARXIST FEMINISM APPROACH** has been revised as advised during the examination on Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> February 2022 and is approved by the Board of Undergraduate Thesis Examiners:

1. Dr. M. Amir P., M.Hum.

First Examiner (.....)

2. Dr. M. Syafri Badaruddin, M.Hum

Second Examiner (.....)



**SURAT PERNYATAAN  
(STATEMENT LETTER)**

Yang bertanda tangan di bawah ini:

Nama : Nita Nurhalifah

NIM : F041171521

Judul Skripsi : Social Discrimination on Woman Marriage in  
Jane Austen's Sense and Sensibility (1811): A  
Marxist Feminism Approach.


Fakultas/Departemen : Ilmu Budaya/Sastra Inggris

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Makassar, Februari 2022

Yang Menyatakan,



  
Nita Nurhalifah

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The Writer



## ABSTRACT

**Nita Nurhalifah.** 2022. *SOCIAL DISCRIMINATION ON WOMAN MARRIAGE IN JANE AUSTEN'S SENSE AND SENSIBILITY (1811): A Marxist Feminism Approach* (Supervised by **Abidin Pammu** and **Herawaty**).

This study aims to explain social discrimination on woman marriage in a literary work entitled *Sense and Sensibility* by Jane Austen. The objectives of this study are: (1) To know what form of social discrimination on marriage reflected to main women characters in Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*. (2) To describe how Marxist Feminism is reflected in Elinor and Marianne in Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*.

The method of research that is used in this study is descriptive qualitative method. The data source of this study is *Sense and Sensibility* novel by Jane Austen, published in 1811 with 504 pages in total. Moreover, the technique of the data analysis that is used in this study is Marxist Feminism Approach and Marxist theory in revealing social discrimination on women marriages described in the novel. In conducting this research, library research methods were applied to obtain information and supporting theories.

The results of this study indicate that in *Sense and Sensibility*, there is social discrimination on woman marriage. To get justice in marriage, the main characters especially Elinor Dashwood and Marianne Dashwood have to go through several conflicts, there are: cultural conflicts which is Primogeniture rights and social conflicts which is discrimination based on wealth and prestige. Then, after overcoming the conflict, Elinor Dashwood and Marianne Dashwood finally found what they were looking for, married to a man based on love and lived happily ever after.

**Keywords:** *Social Discrimination, Women, Marxist Feminism, Marriage, Novel Sense and Sensibility*

## ABSTRAK

**Nita Nurhalifah.** 2022. *SOCIAL DISCRIMINATION ON WOMAN MARRIAGE IN JANE AUSTEN'S SENSE AND SENSIBILITY (1811): A Marxist Feminism Approach* (dibimbing oleh **Abidin Pammu** and **Herawaty**).

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan diskriminasi sosial pada perkawinan perempuan dalam sebuah karya sastra berjudul *Sense and Sensibility* karya Jane Austen. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah: (1) Untuk mengetahui apa saja bentuk diskriminasi sosial dalam perkawinan yang tercermin pada tokoh utama perempuan dalam *Sense and Sensibility* karya Jane Austen. (2) Mendeskripsikan bagaimana Feminisme Marxis tercermin dalam Elinor dan Marianne dalam *Sense and Sensibility* karya Jane Austen.

Metode penelitian yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode deskriptif kualitatif. Sumber data penelitian ini adalah novel *Sense and Sensibility* karya Jane Austen, terbitan tahun 1811 dengan jumlah 504 halaman. Selain itu, teknik analisis data yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah Pendekatan Feminisme Marxis dan teori Marxis dalam mengungkap diskriminasi sosial pada perkawinan perempuan yang digambarkan dalam novel tersebut. Dalam melakukan penelitian ini, metode penelitian kepustakaan diterapkan untuk memperoleh informasi dan teori pendukung.

Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pada *Sense and Sensibility*, terdapat diskriminasi sosial pada perkawinan perempuan. Untuk mendapatkan keadilan dalam pernikahan, tokoh utama khususnya Elinor Dashwood dan Marianne Dashwood harus melalui beberapa konflik, yaitu: konflik budaya yang merupakan hak Primogeniture dan konflik sosial yang merupakan diskriminasi berdasarkan kekayaan dan gengsi. Kemudian, setelah mengatasi konflik tersebut, Elinor Dashwood dan Marianne Dashwood akhirnya menemukan apa yang mereka cari, menikah dengan seorang pria berdasarkan cinta dan hidup bahagia selamanya.

**Kata Kunci:** *Diskriminasi Sosial, Wanita, Marxis Feminisme, Pernikahan, Novel Sense and Sensibility*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>COVER</b> .....	i
<b>APPROVAL FORM</b> .....	ii
<b>LEGITIMACY SHEET</b> .....	iii
<b>AGREEMENT SHEET</b> .....	iv
<b>DECLARATION</b> .....	v
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b> .....	vi
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	vii
<b>ABSTRAK</b> .....	viii
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	ix
<b>CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
1.1 Background of The Study.....	7
1.2 Identifications of The Problem.....	7
1.3 Scope of The Problems.....	7
1.4 Statements of The Problem.....	7
1.5 Objectives of The Study.....	8
1.6 Sequence of The Writing.....	8
<b>CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW</b> .....	10
2.1 Previous Related Studies.....	10
2.2 Theoretical Framework.....	11
2.2.1 Marxist Theory.....	11
2.2.2 Bourgeoisie and Proletariat.....	13
2.2.3 Marxist Feminism Approach.....	14
<b>CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b> .....	17
3.1 Method of Collecting Data.....	17
3.2 Data Source.....	17
3.3.1 Primary Data.....	17
3.3.2 Secondary Data.....	18
3.3 Method of Analyzing Data.....	18
3.4 Procedure of data collection.....	18
<b>CHAPTER IV ANALYSIS</b> .....	20

4.1 The descriptions of the characteristics of main women characters in <i>Sense and Sensibility</i> .....	20
4.2 The views of Marxist Feminism in <i>Sense and Sensibility</i> .....	29
4.3 Woman and Marriage in <i>Sense and Sensibility</i> .....	32
4.3.1 The Deprivation of Women’s Inheritance Rights.....	32
4.3.2 Social Discrimination on Women Marriage.....	34
<b>CHAPTER V CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION</b> .....	41
5.1. Conclusion.....	41
5.2. Suggestion.....	42
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b> .....	44
<b>APPENDIX</b> .....	46
a. Synopsis of the Novel.....	46
b. Biography of the Author.....	47



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In the first chapter, the researcher explains about the background of the study, identification of problem, scope of problem, statement of problem, objective of writing, and sequences of writing.

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Women make up half of the world's population and a large portion of them are still valued by the way how they can be able to produce. Women are considered to be in the position of men because their presence in the social is determined based on their biological morphology. It is also pointed out by Beauvoir (1949) translated by Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier about how women were portrayed in the society. *“Woman? Very simple, say those who like simple answers: She is a womb, an ovary; she is a female: this word is enough to define her.”*

In other words, Beauvoir also explains in *The Second Sex* for men, women are defined as the "other" themselves because they are oppressed and placed in a secondary position in society. This social construction is the final results of the preassumption that women are innately inferior to men. It is supported by Tyson (2006:85) who proposed:

“This belief in the inborn inferiority of women is a form of what is called biological essentialism because it is based on biological differences between

the sexes that are considered part of our unchanging essence as men and women”

The statements of the experts above show that the biological differences between men and women cause women to be considered physically and mentally inferior.

One of the goals of people in their life is to achieve prosperity, which here means a good education, a good job and a good social status. Because each person has a different status in their life, the social class that arises in life makes people different from each other. Discrimination is an unfavorable treatment of anyone based on gender, race, or other characteristics. It is regarded as a barrier to the achievement of the goals of equality, development, and peace. From Marx’s perspective, all social orders that have at any point existed are “class social orders” of some sort. In his view, there was one fundamental rule that administered the association of human undertakings in all social orders up to and including the ascent of private enterprise, and that will be that one piece of the populace claims and controls the essential material assets that society has while another part possesses none (Saunders, 1990:5). Related to Ansel’s (1988) stated that, “*Discrimination refers to unfair treatment of some sort*”. Of course, discrimination has a significant impact on those on the oppressed side. It is very harmful to the oppressed, as they do not have the space to have the right to their power, and the opposite is to the oppressor.

Marriage means many different things to many different people, A romantic and sacred bond. marriage, on the other hand, became more like a business transaction. It is pointed out by Bouchakour (2017:4),

“Marriage generally is considered as union of a man and women. A romantic and sacred bond of our time. However, in the nineteenth century marriage becomes more like a business deal or in some cases, a last chance for survival. Love was considered to be a lucky draw and not the bases of the relationship.”

Moreover, because of gender differences, this also has an impact on marriage which is known as a romantic and sacred bond. When it has gone through the marriage process, the woman is considered to have fully belonged to her husband and ends in a marriage that binds two people, fully led by a man. It is also related to Bouchakour (2017:14) who stated that,

“Marriage turned into a fairly unstable challenge for woman all through this time period. There were numerous special bad consequences that would arise after a couple married. Women regularly have become the assets of the person, and her belongings became his. The two would end up one entity being led by the male; he would make the selections of the family, which includes the ones of his spouse. Finally, if the marriage did not train session, it turned into fairly hard for people to get a divorce.”

The previous quotation implies that unequal treatment of women based on their gender or their identity as a woman stemmed from the ingrained belief that women were always a subordinate to men, particularly in sacred bond, marriage. This is a fascinating topic to discuss, especially given that the topic of social discrimination of women’s marriage not only exists in reality but has also been included in every form of work, including literature.

Literature can simply be defined as any type of written work. Wellek & Warren’s (1956:20-28) state that literature is produced by way of creativeness of the author. Literature is not just a document of records; it is not just the gathering of real events although it could show up within the actual lifestyles. Literature can create its own as a product of the limitless creativeness. It is also pointed by the

statement of Klarer (2004:1). who mentioned that, “*Literature is referred to as the entirety of written expression, with the restriction that not every written document can be categorized as literature in the more exact sense of the word*”. Based on the definition provided, the researcher concludes that literature is more than just a written work of one's imagination; it can also be defined as an imaginative work that represents the society in which humans interact on a daily basis.

In this study, the researcher has decided to analyse one of Jane Austen’s literary works. Jane Austen was a Georgian era author. Jane Austen was born on December 16 1775, in Steventon, Hampshire, England. Austen is one of the most influential female writers. Her works mainly deal with marriage and the lives of women in aristocratic families, depicting the world around her through her unique meticulous observation of women and lively words (Jie, 2019). Jane Austen's literary works are very interesting to study because Austen is a feminist who prioritizes the rights of women in her day. It is related to He and Liao’s (2015) who stated that,

“In my opinion, Jane Austen was a feminist writer. It seemed that Jane Austen was not as radical as the early feminists who took part in the violent movement to struggle for their rights. Jane Austen maintained that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men. In her novels, many women characters were not inferior to men. Women deserved to share the equal rights with men. At this point, Jane Austen could stand with some contemporary feminists.”.

Based on statement above, Jane Austen is a feminist-based writer, but in that context, she wants women to have equal rights and positions with men so that there are no social inequalities in women's lives.



Jane Austen's novels of love among the landed gentry gained popularity after 1869, and her reputation skyrocketed in the twentieth century. Her works, such as *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility*, are regarded as literary classics, bridging the gap between romance and realism. Some of her popular works are *Sense and Sensibility* (1811), *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), *Mansfield Park* (1814), *Emma* (1815), *Northanger Abbey* (1818), and *Persuasion* (1818).

The researcher has decided to analyze one of Jane Austen's popular novel, *Sense and Sensibility*, which was first published in 1811, as an object of analysis. The novel is interesting to study because it contains a story about the fate of women's love and marriage. In Austen's novel, women are not independent socially and reason problems. Young unmarried women only have a goal of getting married when they no longer have a father or a brother. This is very interesting to study because Austen puts the issue of Marxist feminism into his writings in a clear way but does not radically mention that women must have a position above men.

*Sense and Sensibility* tells a story about The Dashwood family; Mr. and Mrs. Dashwood and their three daughters, Margaret, Marianne, and Elinor who live at Norland Park, an estate in Sussex. This story is focusing on Elinor and Marianne, with their personifications of good sense (common sense) and sensibility (emotionality), respectively. The Dashwood family become destitute upon the death of their father, Mr. Dashwood. Their father's death leaves a home in Norland Park, to their half-brother, John. Before Mr. Dashwood died, he instructed John to take care of his sisters. But after his father passed away, his greedy wife, Fanny

dissuaded of his duty. Then Margaret's sisters and Ms. Dashwood moves to Barton Cottage in Devonshire.

Overall, Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* tells about the story of the Dashwood sisters, Elinor and Marianne, and their life and love. Elinor Dashwood is an elder daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Dashwood, she is 19 years old at the beginning of the novel, she has high responsibility to her family and she places their welfare and interests above her own and suppresses her own strong emotions in a way that leads others to think she is cold hearted. Marianne Dashwood, Elinor's opposite, is romantic and expressive; she is 16 years old at the beginning of the novel; Marianne endures the most development within the book, learning her sensibilities have been selfish.

Several reasons why the researcher chose this novel to be studied because the first, *Sense and Sensibility* is one of the greatest literary works written by Jane Austen and it is one of the greatest literary works in England. The second reason is that the novel's story depicts women social life, and by analyzing it, the researcher hopes to learn more about social problems and how to solve them. The third point is the researcher uses Feminism theory and Marxist Feminism approach. Therefore, the title of this study is *Social Discrimination on Woman Marriage in Jane Austen's Sense and Sensibility (1811): Marxist Feminism Approach*.

## **1.2 Identifications of The Problem**

After describing the background, the researcher identified some problems as follows:

1. There is social discrimination reflected on woman in Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*.
2. There is a discrepancy in marriage towards the main women characters in Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*.

### **1.3 Scope of The Problems**

Based on the identification of the problem found in the novel *Sense and Sensibility* by Jane Austen, the researcher focused on the social discrimination on women marriage of the main characters Elinor and Marianne.

### **1.4 Statements of Problem**

According to the scope of the problems above, the researcher formulates the statement of problem or research questions of this study as follows:

1. What forms of social discrimination on marriage is reflected by the main women characters have to deal with that are portrayed in Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*?
2. How can Marxist feminism be represented by the character of Elinor and Marianne in Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*?

### **1.5 Objectives of The Study**

Based on the statement of problems above, the researcher conducts this research to the objectives of the study as follows:

1. To know what form of social discrimination on marriage is reflected by main women characters in Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*.

2. To describe how Marxist Feminism is represented by the character of Elinor and Marianne in Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*.

### **1.6 Sequence of The Writing**

This study is composed of 5 (five) chapters:

1. Chapter I is the Introduction of the Study. It consists of the background of the research, the identification of the problem found in the literary work, the scope of the problem, the objective, as well as the significance of the study.
2. Chapter II is the Literature Review. It consists of list of previous related studies and theoretical background.
3. Chapter III is the Research Methodology, which provides the methodology, data sources, technique of the data analysis, and procedures of data collection.
4. Chapter IV is the Analysis, which explains the ideas and the discussion of the problems found in the novel.
5. Chapter V is the Conclusion and Suggestion, which concludes the analysis of the study and makes suggestion.



## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter consists of previous related studies and the theoretical background.

#### **2.1 Previous Related Studies**

The researcher concluded there are some relevant studies related to the topic which discussed about the social discrimination on marriage. Thus, the researcher found out that there are some these studies are similar to this study.

They are;

The first can be seen in Nailah's (2016) study entitled *The Reflection of Marxist Feminism in Suzanne Collins's Mockingjay*. The writer aims to analyze Marxist feminism, domination, alienation, class struggle, and revolution that occur in Suzanne Collins's novel *Mockingjay* to Katniss Everdeen as the main character. This study uses sociological approach and the theory used is Marxist feminism.

In Ahmad Fathoni's (2015) study entitled *Social Discrimination in Jane Austen's Sense and Sensibility (1811)*, the writer describes the struggle of Dashwood sisters especially Elinor and Marianne Dashwood in order to get prosperity of their social status. The writer is analyzing the novel based on Marxist approach.

Another study is entitled *A Conflict of Love in Jane Austen's Sense and Sensibility: A Marxist Approach* written by Lathifahanum (2006), The writer aims to analyze the social discrimination conflict of love reflected in Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* which gives emphasis on the main characters, Elinor and Marianne Dashwood. These analyses of this study used of Marxist approach.

Based on the previous related studies explained above, the researcher concludes that the correlation between this research and the studies mentioned above is that most of the studies discussed about the social discrimination especially on women. Two of the three writers also analyzed the same approach which use Marxist and one of them is analyzed by using the same approach to researcher, Marxist Feminism. However, this research has a difference, namely that the object of this research is the novel *Sense and Sensibility* by Jane Austen.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

### **2.2.1 Marxist Theory**

Karl Marx developed the Marxist theory that discusses the relationship between capitalist and social class exploitation. The theory and method and focused on the discussion of economic systems and social structures and their impact on daily life (1859).

The economic system that belongs to a community sometimes varies from time to time and place, depending on the social conditions that exist in the community. Karl Marx's Marxist theory gives the feeling that capitalism is always associated with the social class of society. Capitalism develops in all societies, especially the upper class. It is undeniable that the stance of capitalism is shared by many modern societies. It became commonplace when social conditions forced people to follow the evolution of their way of thinking.

According to Booker (1996: 72), the division of labor leads to the development of a class society. The population of society is divided into different classes, and their needs and desires are fundamentally divided. Marxism is the role of capitalism in oppressing the lower classes, as opposed to the role of patriarchy. In this case, power is the cause of capitalist wealth imbalances, so oppression and discrimination against the lower classes is also triggered by the considered social paradigm.

The division of classes into bourgeois and proletariat by Karl Marx developed in his theory of the struggle for the class of the proletariat called Marxist Theory.

In Marx's view on *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* (1844), capitalists sacrifice the proletariat to raise money and become more prosperous. There are many conditions of society that concerns the community towards social class. The change is in the form of the increase in social status that can change for the better (improved social status) or change for the worse (bankruptcy or no effort to raise social status). This was stated in the theory Marxism by Karl Marx in his book *Social Criticism*. This theory is proven through literary works from various countries which continue to connect social conditions caused by social class differences. Proletarian (capitalist) and bourgeoisie (worker) relationship is a relationship of conflict which talks about the dominant-subordinate. Karl Marx believed that one day the proletariats will realize their common interests so that the unite and revolt.

### **2.2.2 Bourgeoisie And Proletariat**

The most common problem in Marxist is a social struggle. According to Marx, class struggle well never end, human history is the history of class struggle. As long as humans still carry out their activities as social creatures, the history of class struggle continues.

Related to Marx and Engels (1969), The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.

Bourgeoisie and proletariat are the products of classes in society created by the economic conditions. Related to H.H. Gerth and C. Wright (1946: 227) who state that:

“it is obvious that almost always economic conditions of some sort play their part in such 'democratizing' developments. Very frequently we meet with the influence of an economically determined origin of new classes, whether plutocratic, petty bourgeois, or proletarian in character...”.

From the statement above, it can be discovered that economic condition has the power to create classes in society. People will be claimed as the bourgeoisie when they have high-class level of economic condition. On the other hand, people who are in low-class level will be claimed as the proletariat because they will become the labors of the bourgeoisie.

### **2.2.3 Marxist Feminism Approach**

Women and men have equal rights without regard to gender, social status, race, or other factors. This means that women have the independency to set their own life goals. Feminism appeared to achieve equality between men and women and to improve women's status. In a study *entitled The History of Feminism and doing gender in India* written by Pande (2018), Pande mentioned that,

“Any basic definition of Feminism or Feminisms can start with the assertion that at the center of feminism is the concerns for women’s subordinate status in society and with the discrimination encountered by women because of their sex. Furthermore, feminists call for changes in the social, economic, political or cultural order to reduce and eventually overcome this discrimination against women and creation of an equitable society in which gender justice is achieved”.

Based on Pande’s statement, Feminism is simply the social, economic, and political movements that share a common goal: equality for both men and women.

According to the concern of the feminist movement, Feminism has a lot of types such as liberal feminism, radical feminism, Marxist and socialist feminism, psychoanalytic feminism, existential feminism, postcolonial feminism, eco-feminism, and postmodern feminism. Each subject of feminism has specialty. Furthermore, Marxist feminism discusses classism as the women's oppression fundamental.

In France Revolution 1789, the injustice or inequality problems had begun to surface to discuss. The problem that always being critics are the difference of social class, race, and gender (Kusuma, 2015). One of the most argued issues up to these days is gender equality. It leads a massive movement called feminism.

Feminism, as a movement, has some branches that take different approaches such as liberal feminism, radical feminism, Marxist and socialist feminism, psychoanalytic feminism, existential feminism, postcolonial feminism, eco-feminism, and postmodern feminism.

Marxist feminism is the offspring of Marxism and feminism. This correlation of frameworks aims to liberate women by addressing the conditions that lead to oppression. It is based on the explanation of Tong (2009: 96). “...*classical Marxist feminists work within conceptual terrain laid out by Marx, Engels, Lenin, and other nineteenth-century thinkers. They regard classism rather than sexism as the fundamental cause of women's oppression...*”.

One identified source of female oppression, for example, is their exclusion from productive labor. Marxist feminism focuses on production, in which men

dominated production in society and women were treated as objects, as a result of capitalism in society. Women, on the other hand, do work as wives, which is referred to as domestic work. Marxist feminists assumed that when capitalism is not used, women's oppression ends. According to Tong (2009:102), *“women’s alienation is profoundly disturbing because women experience themselves not as selves but as others”*.

According to Marxist feminism, the source of women's oppression and exploitation is the family. When a woman works outside the home, she is still expected to perform domestic duties such as cleaning and caring for the children. Thus, women work twice as hard as men, but still face a significant wage disparity or are not paid when working from home. It based on Lorber’s (1997:10) statement that,

“Marx’s analysis of the social structure of capitalism was supposed to apply to people of any social characteristics. If you owned the means of production, you were a member of the capitalist class; if you sold your labor for a wage, you were a member of the proletariat. That would be true of women as well”.

Furthermore, the specific subject illuminated in Marxist feminism is women's economic independence. Women are capable of providing for their own basic needs. In line with Tong (2009:98) stated that,

“Always on call, women form a conception of themselves they would not have if their roles in family and the workplace did not keep them socially and economically subordinate to men. Thus, Marxist and socialist feminists believe we need to analyze the links between women’s work status and women’s self-image in order to understand the unique character of women’s oppression”