The Social Conflict in Que Nguyen and Adele Lim's *Raya and The Last Dragon*

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Abstract. This research is entitled The Social Conflict in Que Nguyen and Adele Lim's *Raya and the Last Dragon*. The focus of this research is divided into two, namely to analyze the social conflict and conflict resolution within the story. The primary data source is the screenplay of *Raya and The Last Dragon* by Que Nguyen and Adele Lim. This study uses sociological approach which focuses on Marxist literary criticism to analyze the social conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, as well as how the conflict resolution unfolds. This study employs a descriptive qualitative method. The results show that social conflict is reflected through class structure in an unequal economic system in the form of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, as well as class conflict in the form of inequality of power resources, class resistance, and struggle for power resources. Moreover, conflict resolution is depicted in the form of class consciousness, working class unity, and social change. Thus, the study concludes that social conflicts rooted in class inequality can lead to divisions, betrayals, and struggles for power resources among groups who are suspicious of each other, and this story emphasizes that consciousness of injustice, unity among the oppressed, and collective action between them are important keys to achieve justice, equality, and sustainable peace.

Keywords: *bourgeoisie, class structure, conflict resolution, proletariat, social conflict,*

INTRODUCTION

One of the most common problem in society is social conflict. Social conflict will always exist within humanity, as long as people and social groups still interact with each other. Social conflict can lead due to cultural and individual differences or social, economic, and political groups (Omelaenko, 2021). A conflict arises from the differing thoughts and interests of various parties or groups, leading to tensions between them. However, this situation often ends with an attempt to reach a resolution (Oktavia & Asri. 2021).

Social conflict is not only reflected in society but also in literary works. Literature is closely related to society (Saputri et al, 2021). Thus, the relationship between literature and society allows literature to depict and criticize various social conflict dynamics. One of the most popular literary works in this era is screenplay. Screenplays can be appreciated

both as a working document and as a piece of literature (Jeremy, et.al, 2014), which may also express a social conflict.

In this paper, the writer will analyze a literary work by Que Nguyen and Adele Lim entitled *Raya and the Last Dragon*. *Raya and the Last Dragon* is a work from the Disney production house that takes place in fantasy world named Kumandra, a land which is inspired by various Southeast Asian cultures. The story presents themes that are relevant to the society. This story emphasizes the history of society of the land of Kumandra, that lives in harmony and wealth due to dragons. But then Drunn, an evil creature, attacks the humans, turning them into stone. The dragons sacrifice themselves and leave behind a dragon gem that is considered as a power resource by the clan. The Dragon Gem is controlled by one clan, leading to a conflict between clans. Then, Kumandra is broken into five clans: Fang, Heart, Tail, Spine, and Talon. Each clan has different commanders, powers, and social structure.

Que Nguyen and Adele Lim's *Raya and The Last Dragon* highlights complex issues that relate to the real world. This is portrayed through presenting underrepresented and marginalized groups or giving certain groups different and even opposite portrayals to the typical one. The phenomenon of this potrayal is similar to the conflict which often happens in real-world societies, because *Raya and the Last Dragon* is inspired by traditional Southeast Asian cultures (Sarwindah & Sihombing. 2022). This is largely because Asia has a multicultural society. Social conflicts often occur in multicultural areas which divisions are provoked by discriminatory social structures, ethnicity or tribe, and even religion (Mukherjee, 2021). It is also happened in globally. This is what makes this story truly interesting to be studied deeper.

Que Nguyen and Adele Lim's *Raya and the Last Dragon* has a strong depiction of social class differences between clans, where each clan has different resources, powers and economies (Ulya & Rezaian. 2022: 2). It is caused by the unequal distribution of resources belongs to the influence of authority. The differences in social class make clans compete with each other to get authority and prosperity. It is because the superior group will have great access to resources, even the ability to control the lower group. The divisions between social classes lead to the problems of trusting each other, reflecting conditions in real world that always face similar conflicts in around the world. In this case, it is very interesting to analyze how the social class differences in each clan are depicted in this story and find out the influence of social class on creating the social conflict.

According to the background above it can be found the statement of problems:
1. What social conflict is depicted in *Raya and The Last Dragon*?
2. How conflict resolution is depicted in *Raya and The Last Dragon*?

This research is expected to provide a deeper understanding of how social conflict and conflict resolution are depicted in literary works, particularly in the screenplay Que Nguyen and Adele Lim's Raya and The Last Dragon. Theoretically, by applying Marxist literary criticism, this research aims to reveal the power and unequal distribution of resources that trigger conflicts between social groups, as well as to explore the social class differences that are at the root of these conflicts. This theoretical perspective enriches academic literary analysis by showing how fictional stories reflect real structural inequalities and class struggles. Practically, this study aims to help readers critically understand the reality of social conflict in today's society.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The researcher takes some previous study which are relevant with this research. The following are relevant research which are used to conduct this study:

First, a research conducted by Nadilla Octavia (2020) with the title Social Class Conflict in *Kevin Kwan's Crazy Rich Asians*. This research is relevant because Octavia analyzes social conflict using sociological approach. But, Octavia only focus examines social conflict experienced by the characters in novel Kevin Kwan's Crazy Rich Asians. While this research analyzes social conflict in screenplay *Raya and The Last Dragon* using Karl Marx perspective and focus to analyze social conflict that happened in society. This research aims to fill those gaps.

Second, a research conducted by Byvan Quai Alkana (2022) with title *Social Conflict in Peter Tierya's The Mecha Samurai Empire Series.* Alkana analyzes the background of the social conflicts and the struggle to become a conflict group in three types of novels written by the same author. He uses the theory of Ralf Dahrendorf, an adaptation theory from Karl Marx. While this study discuss social conflict happened in society in Raya and The Last Dragon using Marxis perspective. This research aims to fill those gaps.

Last, a research conducted by Febriani and Andayani with the title *Exploring class conflict in Samira Sedira's People Like Them through Lewis Coser's theory*. This research is relevant because discuss class conflict in a story. But they focus to examine the forms of class conflict and tells the factors that cause the class conflict in *Samira Sedira's People Like Them*. Febriani and Andayani uses Lewis Coser theory to analyze class conflict and the factor that causes the class conflict. It can be read that the differences with this study is in focus analysis, the type of data, and theory used. This study aims to fill those gaps.

This research uses a Marxist literary criticism approach. Through this approach, the researcher analyzes how literary texts reflect social reality reflected by class inequality, power domination, and exploitation of certain groups rooted in the ideas of Karl Marx. Marxist literary criticism highlights the representation of class conflict, the mechanisms of oppression carried out by the dominant class, and the forms of resistance that emerge from the oppressed class. Marx also emphasizes the importance of resolution to the class conflict that occurs. For Marx, this resolution can only be achieved through changes in social structure that allow the creation of class consciousness among the proletariat. This consciousness eventually encourages collective solidarity in order to fight bourgeois domination and realize social transformation. The Marxist theoretical framework will be further explained as the basis for analysis in this research.

- Social Conflict

According to Marx, social conflict is a result of the unequal economic system and class structure that exists in a capitalist society (Ningsih & Prasaja, 2022). It can be read that capitalism creates a class structure in society based on ownership of the means of production and access to resources. This is in line with Marx's view that social conflict arises due to injustice in the distribution of wealth and power (Wood, 2004: 125). This makes society always divided into social classes that have conflicting economic interests.

- Class Structure

A class is defined by the ownership of property. Marx says that classes arise out of production relations because the latter create 'masses with a common situation, common interests (Wood, 2004: 133). According to the ownership of property, Marx divides society into two classes:

Bourgeoisie

The bourgeoisie, who own the means of production (factories, land, capital, machinery, and whose source of income is profit) (Guudle, 2017). The bourgeoisie holds territorial, resource, economic and, consequently, social and political power. This power allows them to shape the ideologies, institutions and norms of society to maintain their control and wealth. It can be read that they use their power to ensure the security and sustainability of their economic gains, preserving a system in which wealth accumulates at the top.

Proletariat

The proletariat, who must sell their labor to survive. The proletariat, or working class is positioned in a dependent and often exploited role. They are forced to work under conditions and wages set by the bourgeoisie, who prioritize profits over the welfare of workers. Proletarians are often alienated and have a lack of access to resources. The proletariat, the modern working class as a class of labourers, who live only so long as they find work, and who find work only so long as their labour increases capital (Marx, 2020: 20).

- Class Conflict

Class conflict is a key driver of historical change. The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles (Marx, 2023: 12). Marx also argue that class conflict is central to social dynamics, where the class with economic power (bourgeoisie) seeks to maintain its dominance over the working class (proletariat) who have no control over resources. Class conflict arises due to inequality in access to resources, rights and power. Marx argues that centralized means of production, and concentrated property in a few hands (Marx, 2023: 16). It can be read that class conflict occurs in the form of inequality in the access to resources. This inequality triggers class conflict in the form of class resistance. This is in line with Marx's perspective that the direction of capitalist development will force the working class to unite and fight against the exploitation and oppression they experience (Marx, 2023). It can be read that inequality encourages the birth of collective action as a form of resistance to bourgeois domination as a manifestation of class conflict.

- Conflict Resolution

In social conflict theory, especially from a Marxist perspective, conflict resolution usually entails changes in the social and economic structures that cause the conflict (Saroj, et. al, 2019). This form of conflict resolution begins with class consciousness, which is the awareness of the working class of their position as the oppressed party in the capitalist system. This is in line with Marx's perspective that the working class becomes aware of their interests as a class through the class struggle itself, in order to overthrow capitalism (Marx, 2020). This consciousness leads to working class unity, where the working class unites and works together to fight oppression and strengthen their collective power. Marx emphasized the importance of this solidarity as a key asset to challenge the dominance of the ruling class (Callinicos, 2011). It can be read that working class unity as a form to resolve the conflict in capitalist society. From this awareness and unity emerges social change, which is significant social change as a result of class struggle. This is supported by Marx's view that social change could be initiated only through the action of the few people who had grasped the truth (Marx, 2023). It can be read that social change as a form of conflict resolution that can be a path to structural change through the overthrow of the

capitalist system and the establishment of a classless society, where the means of production are collectively owned

METHOD

This research uses an extrinsic approach, which focuses on the relationship between literary works and aspects outside the text, such as the social, cultural, and economic conditions of society. This extrinsic approach is applied through a literary sociology approach, focusing on Marxist literary criticism to analyze the social conflicts that appear in Que Nguyen and Adele Lim's *Raya and the Last Dragon*. Sociology is an approach to the study and analysis of literature which attempts to understand societal aspects of a particular group or people (Alwaqaa, 2020: 3). Following that explanation, sociology views literary works as a reflection or critique of social structures, particularly in terms of power, class, and inequality. In order to have a deeper understanding of the social conflict in this story, this research also employs a Marxist literary criticism as a main perspective. As part of sociological approach, Marxist criticism highlights the struggles between social classes, offering a framework to examine the dynamics of power, class structures, and inequalities within the narrative (Kashindi, 2018).

This research uses descriptive qualitative design. Qualitative descriptive is a method that focuses on explanation a phenomenon or situation systematically and accurately, through non-numerical data without manipulating the data (Kumar, 2018). Thus, qualitative descriptive can be used to develop in-depth understanding of the research topic. The main data source in this research is the screenplay of *Raya and The Last Dragon* written by Que Nguyen and Adele Lim. The screenplay contains 96 pages with sequences, dialog, narration that form the basis of social conflict analysis in this study. The form of data in this research is in the form of dialog quotations, and narratives that specifically include interactions between characters, acts of struggle for resources, conflicts of interest between tribes, as well as narrative contexts that support the discussion of forms of social conflict, class structure, and conflict resolution. The researcher takes several steps to obtain the data. First, the researcher reads the screenplay thoroughly to understand the plot, character, and conflict that occur in the story. Second, the researcher identifies key parts of the screenplay, such as dialog, narration, or scenes that relevant with the topic. Last, the researcher takes note and highlight relevant data according to the research topic. Then, the researcher analyzes the data through some steps. First, after the data is categorized, then the data is identified according to the depiction of social conflict in the story through class differences, power, and source distribution. Then, the researcher analyzes the identified data using Marxist literary criticism. At this stage the researcher provides an explanation of meaning or a deeper understanding of the data that has been analyzed, connecting. Last step, based on the interpretation, the researcher formulates conclusions about what social conflict and how conflict resolution is depicted in this story and its relevance to the Marxist perspective.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
RESULT

The results show that social conflict in *Raya and the Last Dragon* is reflected through unequal access to the main resource, the Dragon Gem, which creates inequality between tribes and creates an unequal social structure between the bourgeoisie (Heart Tribe) and the proletariat (other tribes). This triggers class conflict in society so that the oppressed group (proletariat) tries to fight against the dominant group in order to gain

equal access to the main resource, the Dragon Gem. The conflict resolution in this story is depicted through a collective process that reflects three main concepts in Marxist theory which are class consciousness, working class unity, and social change.

DISCUSSION

This section presents the analysis based on the two research questions proposed in this study. The first part addresses the types of social conflict depicted in *Raya and the Last Dragon*, while the second part focuses on how the conflict resolution is portrayed within the story.

1. **Social Conflict in *Raya and The Last Dragon***

The writer finds that there are two reflected social conflict in this story. Class structure within unequal economic system and class conflict.

   a. **Class Structure Within Unequal Economic System**

The class structure in society is formed as a result of the economic system that divides groups of people based on access to resources and means of production. Marx view, that a class is determined by the ownership of property and access to the resources. The class structure in *Raya and the Last Dragon* can be seen through the explanation below.

   - Bourgeoisie

In *Raya and The Last Dragon,* the Heart is the only tribe that has full access to the Dragon Gem. Dragon gems, which is the most important power resource, makes the lives of the Heart tribe more prosperous than others. The Heart tribe lives in prosperity and security, in contrast to the other tribes who are poorer and struggling to survive. Dragon Gem has an important role in protecting the Heart tribe from external threats. This is why the Heart tribe can maintain a safe and peaceful life. Their safety from enemies as well as Druun, and the rich economic life of their people makes them have a higher status than other tribes who did not have full access to power resources. It can be proven from the data below.

> **BENJA**
> For generations, our family has sworn to protect the gem. Today, you will join that legacy.
> **EXT. HEART PALACE – DAY**
> A MONTAGE of life in heart
> Crane elegantly glide above Heart's temple. Small fantastical critters scurry across branches. A hand delicately places flowers into a spirit house
> Life here is peaceful and good.
> **BENJA**
> They're only our enemies because they think the dragon gem magically bring us prosperity (Nguyen & Lim, 2021: 7)

From the quotation above the Heart tribe can be categorized as bourgeoisie, because they have full access to Dragon Gem as a power resource since long way ago. It makes them live in prosperity and having higher economic. This is in line with Marx perspective that, the bourgeoisie is the social class that owns the means of production, such as land, factories, capital, or other key resources in a society (Walter & Saggers,

2020: 89). In addition, in this story there is further evidence that the Heart tribe is the bourgeoisie.

> SWOOSH!!! Benja repels into the room from above and quickly dispatches a dozen different adversaries. His sword turns into a cool grappling whip which he uses to dive everyone back.
> **BENJA**
> You will not set foot on the Dragon Gem's inner circle (Nguyen & Lim, 2021: 17).

In the quote above, it is clear that Benja is trying to protect the Dragon Gem by attacking people from other tribes who want to get close. It is clearly show the exclusive attitude of the bourgeoisie who do not want other parties, especially groups that can be considered as proletariat, to have access to these resources. This is in line with the Marxist theory that the bourgeoisie will maintain their ownership in order to perpetuate their power and prosperity. In addition, the act of maintaining dominance is also reflected in Raya as the daughter of Benja, who since childhood has shown full confidence that only her tribe has the right to protect and control the Dragon Gem. It can be seen from the following data.

> **BENJA**
> (confidentially)
> I'm glad you feel prepared, dew drop, because I have something important to tell you. The other land, they're on their way here as we speak.
> **YOUNG RAYA**
> They are?
> Benja, nods
> **YOUNG RAYA**
> Okay, okay, we can do this. I'm ready. I know exactly how we'll stop them (Nguyen & Lim, 2021: 8).
>
> **BENJA**
> I invited them
> **YOUNG RAYA**
> But, they are our enemies (Nguyen & Lim, 2021: 10).

From the quotation above it can be seen that Raya since young has had the mindset of a member of the dominant class who must protect and defend important resources belonging to her tribe. It shows that Raya feels a responsibility to stop outsiders from approaching, as well as reflecting the exclusive attitude of the bourgeoisie who do not want access to their resources taken away by anyone. Meanwhile Raya views other tribes as a real threat to the Heart's continued power.

- Proletariat

In *Raya and The Last Dragon*, the other tribes besides Heart live in very poor economic and safety conditions. This is due to they do not have full access to the main resource, the Dragon Gem, which makes them alienated. The tribes are Fang, Tail, Talon and Spine. They must struggle to survive through any means to maintain the life of their own tribe. It can be seen from the following data.

> **YOUNG RAYA (CONT'D)**
> "Rice or stew?"
> Namaari however goes silent

YOUNG NAMAARI
This is actually one of the first times I've had rice in a while.
YOUNG RAYA
Really?
YOUNG NAMAARI
Fang may look nice on the outside, but we have some pretty big holes on the inside (Nguyen & Lim, 2021: 13-14).

The quotation above shows that there is a contrast between external perceptions and the internal reality faced by the Fang people. The term "big holes on the inside" implies a structural void that may refer to resource scarcity, social instability or even internal political pressures. This indicates that the prosperity of the Fang tribe is an illusion, which may only stem from the image, not from the overall prosperity of the people. It can be read that Fang lives in poverty, due to limited access to power resources Dragon Gem. The other tribe also facing the similar condition. It can be seen from following data.

RAYA (O.S.)
Talon, a bustling port city built almost entirely on the water. Protected from Druun by a Wall on one end, and water on the other Talon is one of the very few towns left in the land. It has the looks of a Southeast Asian Night Market, and the energy of New York's night life
RAYA
Yeah, Talon may look nice, but it's a hotspot for pickpockets and con-artist.
Raya looks over at Noi and The Ongis as they split a piece of food (Nguyen & Lim, 2021: 43).

The quotation above illustrates that the Talon people live in unstable conditions and must rely on trickery and criminal acts to survive, due to not having access to the main resource, the Dragon Gem. From a Marxist perspective, this is an underclass response to unequal access to resources. When access to resources is restricted or controlled by the dominant group, the oppressed group will look for alternative ways to survive, even if it breaches social norms. A similar phenomenon is reflected in the tribe of Tail. It can be proven from the following data.

YOUNG RAYA (V.O)
First Tail. A sweltering desert with sneaky mercenaries who fight dirty. (Nguyen and Lim, 2021: 31)
BOUN
You know, during the day, you can almost forget they're here, but at night (clearly unnerved)
This is why I never leave the boat.
RAYA
You are smart kid
BOUN
They took my family. (Nguyen & Lim, 2021: 42).

The quotation above shows that the condition of Tail tribe reflects the most extreme form of the impact of unequal access to resources. In a situation of isolation and limitations in terms of food, water, and protection. The environment is barren, so the people must live on a boat in the border waters with other tribes.to survive and protect themselves from Druun attacks. The tragic condition of limited access to resources is also

reflected in the Spine tribe. This tribe is known as a strong and brave community in the face of Druun. However, their fighting spirit cannot save them from destruction, due to limitations in terms of protection resources and access to the power that is the Dragon Gem. This can be proven in the following data.

> **RAYA**
> "You're the only one here?
> **TONG**
> My people battled the Druun with much valor... but lost. (Nguyen & Lim, 2021: 62).

The quotation above shows that courage and physical strength alone are not enough for a prosperous life including security. Without equal access to resources, group like the Spine keep a weak position in Kumandra's social structure, and become victims of unequal access to resources.

The overall depiction of the conditions above reinforces the idea that, the Fang, Talon, Spine, and Tail tribes can be classified as the proletariat class because they do not have access to the Dragon Gem, which functions as the main power resource that can provide security and prosperity for society. It makes them live in a tragic social and economic condition. This is in accordance with the Marxist perspective, as Marx explained that the proletariat class is a group of people who do not have access to the means of production and the main resources so that they have to struggle a lot for their live.

b. Class Conflict

Class conflict is a concrete manifestation of social conflict, because in Marx's view, the core of the dynamics of society lies in the struggle between groups for scarce resources. It arises due to inequality in resources in society. Class conflict occurs between the two main social classes in society, which are the bourgeoisie who control the means of production, and the proletariat who do not have access to these means and live in struggle and oppression. The writer found the form of class conflict in Raya and The Last Dragon. It can be proven from the following explanation.

- Power Resources Inequality

The main conflict in *Raya and The Last Dragon* centers on the Dragon Gem. The Dragon Gem is considered the most precious power resource, as it can protect humans from Druun attacks and it is considered the source of power and prosperity for the people of Kumandra. The dragon gem is being held by one of the tribes, Heart. The Heart tribe that holds the Dragon Gem is considered as a peacekeeper, but this also causes jealousy among other tribes who feel they are also deserving of the Dragon Gem. This injustice creates social and political tension, as the Heart tribe is perceived to have greater power and authority by other tribes. It can be proven at the data below.

> **TAIL CHIEF**
> (extra paranoid)
> Nice speech chief Benja, but why'd you really bring us here? Are you gonna rob us?
> **DANG HAI (CHIEF OF TALON)**
> (slightly drunk)
> Why would he need to rob us? The land of Heart already has everything.
> **SPINE CHIEF**

It's easy to pontificate on Kumandra when you hold the mightiest weapon in all the lands.
BENJA
The gem's not a weapon, it's a sacred relic (Nguyen & Lim, 2021: 11).

The Heart tribe is considered having an economic and political benefit because the Heart holds the Dragon Gem, which by some other tribe leaders is considered as a "weapon" or symbol of the highest power. The leaders of the other tribes thought the Heart already owns everything, indicating an awareness of social inequality between the tribes that leads to distrust and alienation from key power resources.

- Class Resistance

In *Raya and the Last Dragon*, the form of class conflict is shown through the relationship and conflict between the tribes in Kumandra, especially the two main characters, Namaari and Raya. Namaari, who is from Fang as part of the proletariat, attempts to resist the bourgeois (Heart) in order to gain full access to the main power resource Dragon Gem through betraying Raya. Namaari pretends to be friends with Raya but in the end, Namaari betrays Raya.It can be proven from the following data.

Namaari suddenly strikes Raya, sending her to the ground.
She looks on in shock at Namaari.
YOUNG NAMAARI (CONT'D)
In different world, maybe we could a been friends. But I have to do what's right for Fang.
Namaari goes for the Gem, but Raya leaps in front of her. They start fighting. (Nguyen & Lim, 2021: 16).

From the quotation above, the act of Namaari's betrayal of Raya can be categorized as a concrete form of class conflict through class resistance, as explained in Marxist theory. According to Karl Marx, class conflict is a conflict that occurs between the group that controls the means of production (bourgeoisie) and the group that does not have it (proletariat), and resources are unjustly distributed among them (Saroj, et.al, 2019: 2). When the proletariat experience exploitation or oppression, class struggle will emerge as a form of resistance to the domination of the upper class (Bantwal Rao, et.al, 2015: 16). Thus, Namaari's betrayal of Raya is a form of class conflict that manifests through class struggle, as it occurs in the context of tension between two social classes with conflicting interests.

- The Fight for Power Resources

In *Raya and The Last Dragon* class conflict is reflected by the fight for the power resources. The Dragon Gem, which is considered the most precious resource, is kept by only one tribe, the Heart as a bourgeoisie. This leaves other tribes, such as Fang, Spine, Tail and Talon, in a weaker and marginalized position. This inequality in resource control creates a sense of injustice that triggers conflict. The other tribes begin to show ambition to gain the Dragon Gem, as they feel they have the same rights over the resource and do not want to continue to be under the domination of the Heart tribe. It can be seen from the data below.

FEMALE SPINNER WARRIOR
Fang's making a play for the Gem!
SPINE CHIEF
Spine should have the Gem!
TAIL CHIEF
Not if we get to it first!
Everyone pulls out their weapon (Nguyen & Lim, 2021: 17).

From the quote above, it can be seen that the tribes in Kumandra are going to fight, because the tribes who are part of the proletariat feel that they also deserve access to the Dragon Gem. The reaction of each tribal leader who immediately drew weapons showed that this tension was not only diplomatic, but already at the breaking point of the conflict that led to open violence. In a Marxist context, this action represents the struggle of the proletariat class rising up against long-standing structural inequality. It is supported by Marx posited that once the proletariat gained class consciousness or became aware of the unjust position they occupy under capitalism, they would rise up and overthrow the bourgeoisie through violent revolution (Kingdon & Gray, 2022).

2. The Conflict Resolution in *Raya and The Last Dragon*

In Que Nguyen and Adele Lim's *Raya and The Last Dragon* does not only represent conflict, but also presents forms of conflict resolution. The conflict resolution is closely related to the consciousness of social inequality and collective efforts to create change. Through Marxist perspective, conflict resolution in this story can be analyzed through three main aspects: class consciousness, working class unity, and social change. These three aspects will be elaborated below.

- Class Consciousness

In the context of Raya and the Last Dragon, class consciousness becomes the initial foundation in the process of conflict resolution between tribes based on the struggle for power resources, namely the Dragon Gem. Class consciousness in this story is evident through the transformation of the main character, Raya. After the splitting of the Dragon Gem and the fall of the Heart Kingdom, Raya no longer has a privileged status as the heir to power. Instead, she becomes part of the oppressed class, living in miserable conditions. This situation puts Raya in the position of a proletarian - not having access to the resources of power, and having to survive in divided social conditions. It is this change in position that triggers the emergence of class consciousness in Raya. This realization drives Raya to embark on a cross-tribal journey, not only to collect fragments of the Naga Gem, but also to improve the social situation of Kumandra, which has been in conflict for a long time. This is reflected in the following data.

SISU
(Shaking water out of her ears)
Isn't that obvious, big guy? My girl Raya and I are gonna fix the world – bring everyone back. (Nguyen & Lim, 2021: 67).

The quotation above shows that Raya realizes the need for systemic change in Kumandra, and that the reunification of the society is not just a case of collecting the pieces of Dragon Gem, but also destroying the structure of inequality that divides them. This realization comes from her experience as a party directly affected by the conflict in Kumandra. This is line with Marxist view that class consciousness is a collective understanding by groups of the working class of their position in the social structure,

especially in relation to domination by the ruling class (Smith, 2018 :5). It can be read that Raya's actions reflect class consciousness through the manifestation of her desire and efforts to reunite Kumandra in order to eliminate the inequality that causes conflict.

- Working Class Unity

In Raya and the Last Dragon, this form of working-class unity is manifested when characters from different backgrounds, Boun, Noi and Ongis, as well as Tong, decide to unite to help Raya confront Fang, who became the bourgeoisie after the Dragon Gem broke out, and eliminate the Kumandra conflict. They come from different tribes, but have one thing in common: they both suffer due to unequal access to power resources. This collective experience became the basis for the emergence of solidarity between the proletarians. Raya is reluctant to involve them in the mission because she feels the situation is too dangerous. However, Boun refused to stay silent. He stated that Raya is not the only one who lost her family. This statement emphasizes that this struggle does not belong to just one person, but to the oppressed class. The kneeling action followed by Noi, Ongis, and Tong is not just a form of respect, but a symbol of solidarity among victims of an unequal system. It can be proven from the following data.

> **BOUN**
> You're gonna bring everyone back? I want to help
> **RAYA**
> I'm sorry i can't let you do that. it's too dangerous.
> **BOUN**
> You're not the only one who lost family to the Druun.
> (kneels)
> Please let me help you.
> Noi and the Ongis kneel as well
> Tong kneels and presents the Spine dragon gem
> **TONG**
> I too wish to join this fellowship of druun butt-kickery
> Raya takes the gem and looks at Sisu.
> Then they start to plan a strategy. (Nguyen & Lim, 2021: 67).

From the quote above, the actions of the proletariat characters show a form of working-class unity born from a shared experience of suffering. Boun, Noi, Ongis, and Tong are not from the elite, but from the oppressed who are also affected by unfair access to power resources. They are not united by force, but by the consciousness that they are in the same position of being alienated and deprived by an unequal system. Their willingness to fight together reflects the emergence of solidarity that change can only be achieved through cooperation and togetherness among oppressed groups. This is in line with Marx's idea that the working class must unite in large numbers in order to achieve conflict resolution of the underlying structure of inequality in capitalist society (Roberts, 2020). It means this moment is a clear manifestation of working class unity, where individuals from the working class realize their position in an unequal social structure and unite to fight against oppressive domination.

- Social Change

In the Marxist view, social change is the result of the resolution of class conflict that leads to a complete transformation of the social structure. In *Raya and the Last Dragon*, a reflection of social change is clearly seen when tribes that previously suspected each other, competing and opposing each other, finally unite at the end of the story. This unity is not just a symbol of temporary peace, but indicates a structural transformation in Kumandra society from a broken and unequal system, to a system that is collective and egalitarian. It can be proven from the following data.

> Sisu steps aside to reveal Boun, Tong, Noi, the Ongis, and Namaari standing side-by-side. Behind them, hundreds citizens from all over Kumandra are lined up. Benjad is overwhelmed, he can't believe his eyes.
> **RAYA**
> **(to BENJA)**
> Ba, welcome to…Kumandra
> As the crowd moves into the cross the bridge, Benja looks at Raya – this is more than anything he could dreamed of. (Nguyen & Lim, 2021: 95).

The quote above shows that all parts of society, from both the previously dominant and oppressed groups, now stand together as one. This represents a social change that erases the separation lines between classes and creates a more inclusive society. There is no longer a group that claims sole ownership of the Dragon Gem and the authority is no longer centralized in one tribe, as before. It is supported by Marx's idea that social change is not enough with small improvements, but must go through a revolution that changes the structure of power and ownership in society (Nicolaievsky, et.al . 2015: 207). This can be read that social change in this story manifested through the unity of the entire Kumandra society to resolve the conflict between them.

CONCLUSION

This research shows that Que Nguyen and Adele Lim's Raya and The Last Dragon contains the depiction of social conflict and conflict resolution. The story portrays class conflict that arises due to inequality in access to power resources, while also illustrating the efforts made by the characters to resolve these conflicts and rebuild a fairer society. The presence of both elements highlights the reflection of social conflict and conflict resolution from a Marxist perspective.

Social conflict in Raya and The Last Dragon reflected through class structure within unequal economic system. Class structure shows capitalist society which results the division of the bourgeois and proletarian classes, where the Heart tribe is depicted as the bourgeois class because they control the main power resources of Dragon Gem and live in prosperity, peace, and protection. Meanwhile, other tribes such as Fang, Spine, Talon, and Tail are depicted as the proletariat class who do not have the same access to Dragon Gem and live in poverty. Social conflict in this story occurs in the form of class conflict, which starts from the inequality of control over power resources. The Dragon Gem, which is considered a power resource that brings prosperity, is only controlled by the Heart tribe, resulting in tensions with other tribes. This tension led to working class resistance through betrayal by those who felt oppressed. The fight for the dragon gem then occurs when each tribe competes to control it, reflecting the class struggle in a Marxist perspective.

Conflict resolution in this story reflected through class consciousness, working class unity, and social change. Conflict resolution emerges when there is class consciousness

as characters realize that the divisions and distrust between tribes only worsen the problem, and they realize that it must be fixed. This leads to working class unity, which can be seen when characters from the lower tribes begin to work together and put aside their differences for the common purpose. This leads to social change, where Kumandra reunites to become a fair society. The moments of unity and struggle of the characters show that solidarity among the working class is the key to resolving the conflict in Kumandra to achieve a more just, equal and peaceful social society for all tribes.

In short, *Raya and the Last Dragon* shows that social conflicts rooted in class inequality can lead to divisions, betrayals, and struggles for power resources among groups who are suspicious of each other. However, the story also emphasizes that consciousness of injustice, unity among the oppressed, and collective action are important keys to achieve justice, equality, and sustainable peace. The story ultimately shows that solidarity among the oppressed can not only stop a conflict, but also play a role in transforming a broken society into one that trusts each other, coexists harmoniously, and holds the value of justice for all.

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