

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents introduction of the background regarding the phenomenon that will be discussed in this research. This background brings a primary topic of heteronormative norms in the E.M. Forster's *Maurice*, which then leads to the problems that will be used as the foundation for this research. Apart from that, this chapter will also explain the reasons for its emergence and its benefits for future research regarding this research theme.

1.1 Research Background

Humans essentially are guided by a set of beliefs, ideas, principles, and culture that shape every aspect of their lives, especially in how they view the world, which is called ideology. Ideology itself fulfills the aspect of how the human being forms a mindset or gives a view, which is then used as a principle for oneself in dealing with or assessing all the possibilities that exist in one's own life. Every human being has their own point of view, hence, one's idea of the conventions that apply in society is undoubtedly different from one another. Therefore, humans often maintain their beliefs despite conflicting with the dominant ideology around them, leading to conflicts due to differences in opinion and interpretation among individuals or group, both internally and externally.

Ideology through a literary lens reveals the authority of ideology regarding the norms and class structures that apply to society, as well as how literature can explore and become a critique of ideology towards the system of authority in the realm of literature itself. This showed in a way of how the writer represents a character in his work who plays an important role in exploring things related to their inner self, such as a very own unique identities that somehow contradict to something that regulates, in the form of class rules/norms that apply in the surrounding environment. In discussing this matter, this research trying to reveal the phenomenon that captured in E.M. Forster's *Maurice* in the form of the oppression toward the societal norm that experienced by its characters.

The novel *Maurice* was written between 1913 and 1914, and was published in 1971 after the author died, due to the controversial topic, the theme of homosexuality, which was considered taboo at the time this work was written. Forster through *Maurice*, explores a theme of self-exploration of a middle-class man named Maurice Hall about his sexuality orientation. His identity as a homosexual man becomes the major issues in this book as the same-sex relationship is considered as criminal and prohibited by the law and as the setting taking place in the early twentieth century England. Furthermore, homosexuality is be avowed as immoral act because of the prevailing social norms such as acts of homosexuality are strongly opposed to religion that becomes a belief of society surrounding the characters. On the contrary, the other characters whom known as Maurice' friend and lovers, Clive Durham, is a noble man who came from the upper class, which also has the same conflict as Maurice's, but instead, he rather to choose to obeyed the society norms embedded in their environment by married a women, rather to listen to his heart as Maurice do.

Meanwhile, Maurice eventually reconnects with a man named Alec Schudder, a gamekeeper working under the Durham's family from the working class. The class differences between the two present various conflicts in their relationship as well as Maurice's self as social pressure from her class sphere based on the norms that apply and must be possessed. In contrast, Alec, who is not educated and does not come from a religious environment, does not use the norms as his basic fear, but rather the fear of abandonment from Maurice for the constraints he feels. Hence, the differences in norms and societal expectations that prevail in the two different classes make it influential in the ideology that each of them has in viewing their relationship.

In the environment that surrounds the character, namely during the Edwardian English era or in the early twentieth century, the ruling class asserts that any activity involving same-sex romance can be labeled as a negative act. In addition, the values/beliefs carried by the ruling class also reflect how the majority of the religious burghers view homosexuality as immoral and unnatural, so there will often be discrimination against people who identify as homosexual. Moreover, this

leads to inner conflict which comes from social pressure that requires the character to fulfill social expectations according to the prevailing norms in the form of heteronormative beliefs in maintaining social hierarchy. Therefore, the inner conflict within the character will increasingly make him sink into behavioral changes such as depression, feeling lonely and alienated, identity conflict, trust issues, etc., which can affect not only his perception of himself, but also his relationship with people around him due to the great expectations that are increasingly turning into a burden to bear.

Considering that *Maurice's* novel is identify as a queer literature set in early twentieth century England, where in his time, the theme of sexuality was not considered common among the masses, hence it was considered taboo or immoral. With a lot of queer literature focusing on the sexuality orientation of its main characters, they are often faced with perceptions or not infrequently persecution of the characters around them, including the society in their environment, causing these works containing queer themes to make the main characters often become marginalized by their own environment, also accompanied by complicated and complex feelings. The birth of this work does not make *Maurice's* novel the first queer literature to be created. Discourses that explore the theme of sexuality in queer literature already exist, either at the same time, before, or after *Maurice* was published. For example, *Another Country* (1982), a play written by Julian Mitchell set in a British public school in the 1930's, explores the conservative rules of public schools in England at that time which increasingly intimidated people with homosexual sexuality. Another example comes from the famous British writer D.H. Lawrence in his sequel works *Rainbow* (1915) and *Women in Love* (1920), two controversial works that explores the journey of the characters in finding her/his sexual orientation through the human's relation.

Moreover, British society at that time is divided by social classes consisting of upper class, middle class, and working class; in the upper class, they have access to proper education and do not need to work due to abundant wealth so that the cost of living is executive. Along with the middle class, higher education can raise their quality of life to be decent which will support individuals with a variety of

promising professions. In contrast to the working class, which tend not to have access to education due to low quality of life caused by low salary. Hence, somehow this difference in quality of life among each of the classes eventually will influences their lifestyle and outlook on life itself, also determining the way they react to the prevailing norms around them.

In relation to that, ideology in the Marxist view explains how the ruling class forms an idea that is designed in such a way as a tool to legitimize the dominated class to use its power to propagate its own ideology which is then designed into a norm. This ideological control then shaping false consciousness among the lower class due to the imposed of the ideology in the form of society norms that applied to the individual's environment surrounding. This shows that consciousness in humans is formed from life, which is based on economic order and social system that affect the lives of every human being. For instance, false consciousness in a literary work is present when a character has beliefs that are not in accordance with the prevailing notions around him, or it can also be present if the notions that are applied as a form of norm instead reflect something reprehensible. Ideology can then influence a connection between how material activity embedded in the environment can shape consciousness in a person's life. In ideology criticism, the depiction of gaps between classes and the customs that exist in a power dynamic can ultimately encourage individuals to question and analyze the ideological basis of their beliefs and the structure of society.

In accordance with *Maurice* novel, the characters have their own struggles in dealing with societal norms because their sexual orientation is not in accordance with environmental conditions. The societal pressure that is obtained makes the romantic relationship between Maurice and Durham run aground, as both characters have difficulty in adjusting to the surrounding environment that is dominated by the ideology of heteronormativity. Hence, there is a pattern of how the relationship between material conditions can influence or shape the awareness of the characters in this novel towards their interactions and in placing their position in society. According to Mudhar, one aspect can be depicted in a novel can be seen in how society can controlling the mindset of its people (in Awan & Nasir, 2018). This can

be in the form of either something invisible such as prevailing norms, expectations given according to position, or from certain institutions such as family, community, places of religious involvement or through the education system, such as schools.

In exploring this phenomenon, it is important to know that literature as a cultural product cannot separate itself from what was prevailing in society at the time the work was produced. Hence, Literature plays an important role as a reflection of society in various contexts of life that apply in the reality of society itself. As something that cannot be separated from society, literature according to Raymond Williams is, “‘full, central, immediate human experience’, usually with an associated reference to ‘minute particulars’” (Williams, 1977, p. 45). Thus, the connection between literature and society brings some human-related concepts to life as complementary components of literary culture. This kind of concept can be shape as a form of sociology, ideology, and politics applied in society surrounding the literature.

Through the researcher's understanding, heteronormative norms emerge as socially embedded norms which are then taken as applicable law, which is a form of ideology in this novel. In relation to the novel, the author aims to reveal how the policies provided by the ruling class in this novel can affect the nature of the characters in the novel and how it can affect the interaction patterns of the characters. Therefore, as the role of literary works is to reveal false consciousness through the character's 'struggle' to oppose the prevailing ideology around him, this research aims to explore the form of the character's opposition to the surrounding ideology which is narrated as a heteronomous norm as an ideology that does not go hand in hand with either the identity or the beliefs maintained by the character. This study uses Terry Eagleton's ideology theory as a reference in analyzing matters related to the concept of ideology inside the work.

There are also previous studies used in conducted this analysis, first is paper conducted by Toda Iglesia, entitled, *The Construction of Male-Male Relationships in the Edwardian Age: E.M. Forster's "Maurice", H.A. Vachell's "The Hill", and Public School Ideology* (2001). Through the study, Toda Iglesia identified the homosexual relationship in twenties century era challenges the public school

education ideology within two works using two approaches: sexuality analysis discourse by David Grenberg to identify the homosexuality construction and critical studies in explore the ideology of public school in Edwardian era. The second previous study is conducted by Basid and AsSulthoni, entitled, *Dinamika Ideologi Karman dalam Novel Kubah Karya Ahmad Tohari Berdasarkan Perspektif Sosiologi Sastra Marxisme* (2018). The study explained the ideology dynamic of the main character named Karman through the paradigm of social class structure in society. In aim to get the objective answer, the researchers use literary sociology by Karl Marx to identify social class grouping.

Furthermore, this research also inspired by a journal entitled, “*Two Men Can Defy The World*” – *Defiance Of Heteronormativity In E. M. Forster's Maurice* (2019), conducted by Banerjee. The study focused on revealing heteronormative forms as obstacles experienced by non-heterosexual characters through the hegemony of heteronormativity— which is also the prominent idea for the first problem statement in this thesis. Lastly, the previous studies that become inspire of this research is from Saraswati’s *Hegemoni Heteronormativitas Jepang Dalam Film Karera Ga Honki De Amu Toki Wa Karya Oigami Naoko* (2022). The study is seek to analyze the form of heteronormativity’s hegemony which makes the trans woman’ main character must submit to the rules and powers that apply in Japanese society using the theory the heteronormative hegemony approach from Gundula Ludwig and the concept of heteronormativity from Brandon A. Robinson.

There are novelties in this research according to the five previous study findings. This study is more focused on the *Maurice* novel itself and the theory of ideology by Terry Eagleton more broadly through the scope of Marxist, toward the characters struggle on challenge the existed heteronormative norm. Hence, from the previous studies above, this research will have a different analysis due to the use of different theory in analyzing the phenomenon. The focus on this research has the same analysis path as Toda Iglesia’s research, this research also has the same concept as the other previous studies— Basid & AsSulthoni’s, which applying the concept of Marx’s Marxist sociology as the basis of the theory in analyzed the character of the novel. The others previous study conducted by Banerjee’s and Saraswati’s are

likely the same as the topic of this research, which more discussed the character's struggle toward the norm of society surrounding that appear in form of heteronormativity.

1.2 Statement of Problems

Heteronormative norms, stemming from the control ideology that underpinned social thought during the Edwardian era, emerged as a regulatory force within society. The influence of heteronormativity on individuals whose identities deviate from these norms extends to their relationships with others, fostering a drive to challenge the oppressive dominance of heteronormative norms over the societal majority.

1.3 Research Questions

Related to the object of this research, which is studied through the theory of ideology by Eagleton Theory through the Marxist concept, This research seeks to understand how heteronormative norms as ideological control dominate Edwardian society in Forster's Maurice, by answering the following questions:

1. What are the representations of heteronormative norms emerge as a form of ideological controls in the novel?
2. What are the ways do people challenge the societal norm of heteronormative norms' oppression in the novel?

1.4 Research Purposes

Based on the formulation of the research question above, the researcher is intended:

1. To identify the representation of heteronormative norms as a form of ideological control in the novel.
2. To identify the challenging oppression can lead to a revolution against heteronormative norms as a social norm in the novel.

1.5 Research Significances

1. Theoretically

- a. This research is intended to broaden the literary study field regarding the issue of dominant ideology in the form of heteronormative norm within the concept of Marxism.
- b. This research is also expected to be a reference for students who want to study research on literary criticism studies within the scope of Marxist ideology.
2. Practically, this research's purpose is to give information and knowledge to the *Maurice* novel reader about social norms in shaping individual to its relation with ideology within Marxist framework.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid the misconception regarding the content of this research, here are following is the definition of key terms as a guide in understanding this research.

1. Heteronormativity: An ideology that views normal and natural expressions of sexuality as centered on heterosexuality only.
2. Norm: Unwritten rules in society that must be obeyed and followed with the aim of creating a controlled social environment.
3. Ideology Control: A set of belief, concept, value, norms—applied in any particular class or group, with an aim to persuade its people to have the same orientations and goals to achieve something based on certain interest.
4. Marxism: An understanding or ideology containing the views of Karl Marx which combines understanding of economics, political science, history and philosophy. This understanding is oriented towards the desire to make workers or proletarians have dignity and power as an act of state revolution.
5. Homosexual: One of sexual orientation spectrum which indicates a state of attraction, both emotional and physical, to the same sex.