

Causes of social conflict in Okky Madasari's novel 86 based on the perspective of Marxist literary sociology

Penyebab konflik sosial dalam novel "86" karya Okky Madasari berdasarkan perspektif sosiologi sastra Marxis

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Abstract

Currently, human interactions' dynamics result in the escalation of social conflicts that are becoming increasingly difficult to resolve. The representation of social conflict is frequently illustrated in literary works, as elucidated in the Marxist sociology of literature theory. Therefore, this research aims to describe the causes of social conflict experienced by Arimbi as the main character in novel 86 based on the perspective of Marxist sociology of literature. The method used was descriptive qualitative with a library approach. The method used was descriptive qualitative with a library approach. This research conducts systematic research according to Creswell, specifically by (1) problem statement; (2) literature review; (3) research design; (4) data collection; (5) data analysis; (6) interpretation; and (7) conclusion. This research results in the discovery, namely a portrait of social conflict in the form of troublesome, bribery, discrimination, economic disparity, collusion. The portrayals of social conflict stem from differences in stance, cultural disparities, and varying interests. Every cause of the social conflict originates from the thoughts or desires of individuals belonging to a social class higher than Arimbi. Conversely, as Arimbi's storyline nears its conclusion, she gets entangled in a conflict with the social class beneath her.

Abstrak

Dewasa ini dinamisasi setiap manusia mengakibatkan timbulnya konflik-konflik sosial semakin tak terbendung. Potret konflik sosial sering kali tergambar dalam sebuah karya sastra seperti halnya dijelaskan dalam teori sosiologi sastra Marxis. Oleh karena itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan penyebab konflik sosial yang dialami Arimbi sebagai tokoh utama dalam novel 86 berdasarkan perspektif sosiologi sastra Marxis. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan kepustakaan. Penelitian ini menggunakan sistematika penelitian menurut Creswell, yaitu (1) perumusan masalah; (2) tinjauan pustaka; (3) desain penelitian; (4) pengumpulan data; (5) analisis data; (6) interpretasi; dan (7) kesimpulan. Penelitian ini menghasilkan temuan, yaitu potret konflik sosial berupa keributan, penyuapan, diskriminasi, kesenjangan ekonomi, kolusi. Potret sosial tersebut disebabkan oleh adanya perbedaan pendirian, perbedaan kebudayaan dan perbedaan kepentingan. Setiap penyebab dari potret sosial bermula dari adanya pemikiran atau keinginan dari orang yang memiliki kelas sosial di atas Arimbi, atau sebaliknya ketika menuju akhir alur kisah Arimbi yang terlibat dalam konflik dengan kelas sosial di bawahnya.

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A. Introduction

The portrait of social conflict has become a trending topic in various media and has become attached to the dynamic aspects of social life in this era. It refers to conflicts that arise due to tensions between individuals or groups in society (Siregar, 2022). This social conflict is often depicted in literary works as a major element in social institutions, such as conflicts between religious groups and the political world. This is part of public activities that are not easy to articulate and can cause unrest among many people. Often, individuals create literary works as a reflection of their discontent with the conditions surrounding them. These works serve as a form of expression for the dissatisfaction or tension they experience, as well as an effort to reflect on and critique existing social realities, as seen in the novel *86* by Okky Madasari. This fictional novel tells the dark side of bureaucracy and the social values of society in this era.

Social conflict can manifest in various forms, including conflicts between workers and capital owners, conflicts among different social classes, or conflicts arising from social and economic injustices. Written works are cultural products that develop within a nation and often manifest as narratives. These works sometimes go beyond their function of simply reflecting the realities of society at a given time. More than that, a written work often contributes to building, acculturating, and reproducing values through verbal actions and creative imagination (Wicaksono et al., 2020). Several experts in the fields of literature and society have their own areas of focus and seriousness, including Karl Marx in social and literary theory. It is essential to examine the various literary theories that are rooted in Marx's social theory, as well as Marx's identity as a writer (Marx & Engels, 1973). Thus, Marx certainly understood literature from the aspect of its literary interiority and its social exteriority. With this position, Marx's social theory then developed into the concept of literary sociology, which can be called Marxist literary sociology (Birchall, 1977).

In principle, Marx views literature as an inseparable part of society and as part of the entire economic structure. Therefore, literature is also part of a unified condition of a society's thinking system (Worsley, 2013). Furthermore, Marx discovered the origins of literature and art, which he said came from a portrayal of social life and all its organic and free causes (Riaz et al., 2022). At this point, literary works are placed as thought based on reality and dependent on public activity (Perry, 2021). The object of this research is the novel *86* by Okky Madasari, which will be analyzed through the lens of social conflict according to Karl Marx. This novel depicts the dynamics of conflict occurring in Indonesian society, particularly concerning social inequality, power structures, and individual struggles against an unjust system. This novel tells the dark side of prescriptive norms that are in the nature of providing instructions or provisions and proscriptive norms in human life. This study focuses on the main character in the novel *86*, Arimbi, who, after completing her studies at a private university in Solo and working as a typist at the Jakarta Court, faces various conflicts in her life (Madasari, 2011).

Based on Marxist literary sociology, the existence of conflict in a story is an element derived from free organic social life that can make a story feel more interesting and can form the reader's curiosity to continue exploring the contents of the story (Crehan, 2018). So, social conflict is something dramatic, namely the existence of a conflict between two or more egos in the characters in the story, which indicates a social action and response (Paulia et al., 2022). Social conflict has been extensively studied within various contexts, including literature, social theory, and societal dynamics. However, there is a noticeable gap in research that specifically explores the portrayal of social conflict in contemporary Indonesian literature, particularly within the framework of Marxist literary sociology (Øversveen, 2022).

Factors contributing to social conflicts within society encompass variations in the perspectives and beliefs held by individuals. Within daily social interactions, the diversity of individual characters plays a crucial role as differences in opinions, goals, and desires can impact the onset of social conflicts. Then, the cultural differences of each individual or group will cause diverse

characters and behavioral patterns in the broader community. In addition, there are differences in the interests of each human being, who has their own unique interests, so that each individual or group will compete and conflict to fight for their respective opportunities and means (Awan et al., 2020).

Based on research into social conflict portraits from Karl Marx's perspective, Conflicts between social classes can be depicted in a novel. If viewed from a Marxist theoretical approach, antagonistic behavior towards a person is always inherent in humanity (Nisbet, 2017). Just like the bourgeoisie, which causes a lot of problems in the novel *Earth of Mankind* by Pramoedya Ananta Toe (Risnawati et al., 2016). Antagonism can also occur in our living environment, as in the novel *Mata and the Secret of Gapi Island*. This gave rise to various resistance and conflicts with resistance figures defending the environment (Habsari, 2023).

Social conflict has been extensively studied within various contexts, including literature, social theory, and societal dynamics. However, there is a noticeable gap in research that specifically explores the portrayal of social conflict in contemporary Indonesian literature, particularly within the framework of Marxist literary sociology. While Marxist analysis has been widely applied to canonical works like Pramoedya Ananta Toer's *Earth of Mankind*, its application to newer, popular literary works such as Okky Madasari's *86* remains underexplored (Risnawati et al., 2016). Furthermore, previous studies have predominantly focused on the general depiction of social conflict in literature, without delving into how individual characters, especially female protagonists like Arimbi, experience and navigate social conflict in relation to larger societal structures such as bureaucracy, gender roles, and class conflict.

This gap in the literature presents a distinct opportunity for additional investigation. This research addresses the gap by providing a fresh perspective on Marxist literary sociology, focusing on Madasari's *86* and analyzing the social conflicts experienced by Arimbi. In contrast to traditional Marxist readings that concentrate only on broad class struggles or historical materialism, this study offers a nuanced exploration of how individual characters' experiences within modern Indonesian social and institutional structures—such as the legal and bureaucratic systems—reflect the ongoing tensions between social classes, power, and gender. Therefore, this study aims to describe the causes of social conflict experienced by Arimbi as the main character in the novel *86* by Okky Madasari.

B. Method

Cresswell provided a systematic framework for conducting qualitative research. The steps in the research method are as follows. (1) problem statement, which describes a specific research problem; (2) literature review, to understand Marx's theory and concepts that are relevant to the problem raised and to find gaps in previous research that have not been widely studied; (3) research design, to build knowledge through the interaction between Marx's theory and novel *86* and subjective experience; (4) data collection to collect and organize several texts that are in accordance with the research theme; (5) data analysis is needed to find patterns and identify the phenomenon of social conflict contained in the novel *86*; (6) interpretation by pouring it into a narrative form that explains how the data supports the answer to the research question. These findings can also include in-depth data quotes; (7) conclusion, which concludes the research results that answer the research questions and highlights Marx's research contribution to literary works (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

C. Results and Discussion

As previously explained, Marxist literary theory is based on the ideas of Karl Marx who stated that social classes are the main drivers in the life of a social order. Marxist literary theory holds the same simple premise that literature can only be comprehended within a broader context of social reality. Thus, fundamentally, the concepts and principles of Marxist theory are related to: (1) the

mode of dialectical materialism, where the material of literary works derived from social reality, which fundamentally has its origin in the form of production; (2) the power of a literary work lies in the extent to which it can be understood within a broader framework of the life of the society, which created it; (3) reification in the world of literature that distinguishes between literary form and literary content, with form is related to commodities (works and readers), while content is related to the value of using literary works in social life (Manshur, 2012).

So social conflict can manifest in various forms or types, such conflict, namely conflict individuals, between races, between social classes, conflict in the political conflicts, and conflict in the international world (Nandini et al., 2022). Social conflicts throughout the novel 86 occur around Arimbi who a migrant worker at the courthouse is. Each form of social conflicts occurs in various types, including personal social conflict, between social classes, and politics. So, the causes of each type of conflict must be observed in depth, in order to understand the storyline correctly and can be reflected with social conflicts that occur in real life (Asmida, 2020).

Essentially, social conflicts arise from the existence of ego and instinct, resulting in clashes between varying interests within individuals or community groups. So, there are at least three main causes of social conflict that often occur in the community, namely: (1) differences in opinion and ideology adopted, (2) cultural differences, which often arise due to friction between the more dominant culture and the culture below it, and (3) differences in interests related to human instincts to achieve personal goals, leading that they carry out conflicting actions (Kristeva, 2011).

The forms of social conflict in Okky Madasari's novel 86 include troublesome, bribery, discrimination, economic disparity, alleged collusion. Researchers categorize each form of social conflict into the causes of each form of social conflict. namely according to the following Table 1.

Table 1. The causes of the following social conflict

No.	Types of Conflict	Forms of Conflict	Causes of Conflict
1.	Personal	Troublesome Bribery	Opinion Differences
2.	Interclass	Economic disparity	Cultural Differences
3.	Political	Discrimination Collusion	Differences in interests

1. Opinion Differences

In Marxist literary sociology, social conflict often arises simply due to differences in beliefs between individuals from the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Marx further explains that this friction cannot be avoided because of resistance to domination and competition from the proletariat to obtain at least equality in access to limited resources (Perry, 2021). The researchers found a portrayal of social conflict surrounding Arimbi, the main character in Okky Madasari's novel 86, which is caused by differences in beliefs and opinions, specifically troublesome behavior, and bribery. Below is an explanation of each aspect of social conflict and its causes.

a. Troublesome

The conflict between Arimbi and Judge Dewabarata always occurs after the trial is over. As a prosecutor's typist, Arimbi must be very familiar with the habits of the judges who lead the prosecution when writing a trial decision, the explanation is as follows.

- (1) *"Beginilah kebiasaan Hakim Dewabrata yang disukai banyak orang. Menyelesaikan semuanya dengan cepat. Tapi bagi Arimbi, ada satu hal dari Hakim Dewabrata yang sering menyusahkannya. Hakim ini tak pernah mau menggunakan komputer untuk mengetik putusan. Ia lebih suka menulis tangan di atas setumpuk kertas buram"* (Madasari, 2011, p. 40).

Judge Dewabrata's habits always made Arimbi's job difficult because she had to read his notes, which were very hard to decipher. There was a difference of opinion due to conflicting desires, as Arimbi wanted the judge to type using a computer to make it easier to copy the trial verdict results. The quote illustrates an attempted bribery by the village head towards Arimbi, aimed at securing a position for his son in the prosecutor's office by offering a guarantee of one hundred million rupiah. The researcher categorizes this conflict as a difference of opinion or belief because the village head believes that everything can be easily obtained with money, especially through bribery. On the other hand, Arimbi, who also sought to fulfill her responsibilities as a trial typist, wished for her work to be easier and faster to complete, especially since each judge had been provided with computers better suited for drafting trial results.

b. Bribery

The village head carried out nepotistic behavior to fulfill his youngest child's wish to become a prosecutor's employee like Arimbi by giving Arimbi one hundred million rupiahs. The explanation is in the village head's words to Arimbi as follows.

- (2) *"Saya sudah siap seratus juta, mbak. Bisa diambil kapan saja. Yang penting anak saya bisa jadi pegawai di pengadilan"* (Madasari, 2011, p. 63).

The quote illustrates an attempted bribery by the village head towards Arimbi, aiming to secure a position for his son in the prosecutor's office by offering a guarantee of one hundred million rupiah. The researcher categorizes this conflict as a difference of opinion or belief because the village head believes that everything can be easily obtained with money, especially through bribery. This includes the village head's belief that Arimbi can also work at the prosecutor's office in a big city due to the bribe money that Arimbi has accrued. The village head's opinion and beliefs are certainly different from what Arimbi has actually experienced thus far, where Arimbi can only work at the prosecutor's office as a typist and has never given bribes to anyone. Furthermore, Arimbi's experience while working at the prosecutor's office is very different from what the village head imagined, namely having a stable job and earning a fairly substantial income.

2. Cultural Differences

The second cause of conflict is cultural differences. Cultural differences will not only cause conflict between individuals but can also cause conflict between groups (Mwetulundila, 2016). Different cultural patterns will cause different personality patterns and behavioral patterns among a broad audience group. In the novel *86*, researchers found causes of conflict based on cultural differences, namely Economic disparity. The presentation of the research results will be presented as follows.

a. Economic disparity

The disparity between Arimbi and Mrs. Danti, who is Arimbi's superior at the prosecutor's office and often accepts bribes, is evident. The explanation in the novel *86* by Okky Madasari is as follows.

- (3) *Arimbi: "Memang bisa, Bu, minta pindah?"*
Bu Danti: "Ya asal ada duitnya. Pengacaraku yang urus. Lima juta sebulan."
Arimbi: "hah? Lima juta?" (Madasari, 2011, p. 151).

Actually, the cultural differences between Arimbi and Mrs. Danti stemmed from the economic gap that was evident in their behavior and lifestyle. Mrs. Danti, as the chief trial typist at the prosecutor's office, led a glamorous lifestyle and owned various luxury goods that turned out to be the result of bribes from officials seeking to facilitate their cases in court. This contrasts with Arimbi, who, despite working as a clerk for a long time, had never accepted a bribe and lived a modest life.

Until one day, they were both caught in the same bribery case and detained in the same prison. Mrs. Danti was going to be transferred to a better prison cell, but Arimbi could not request a transfer like Mrs. Danti could because Arimbi was merely an ordinary court employee and Mrs. Danti's subordinate. The cultural differences between Arimbi and Mrs. Danti were clearly evident, where the practice of bribery was commonplace for Mrs. Danti. Arimbi was simply Mrs. Danti's subordinate who received an additional salary from her or from lawyers and judges because she often assisted in making a case easier by typing the judge's decisions.

3. Differences in interests

Differences in interests can be interpreted as pursuing different goals of interest, groups will compete and conflict to fight for opportunities and means. In the novel 86 by Okky Madasari, researchers found the causes of conflict based on differences in interests, namely discrimination, allegations, and collusion. The presentation of the research results will be explained as follows.

a. Discrimination

Arimbi's annoyance arose when she woke up and prepared to go to work. However, Arimbi just found out that the electricity in her rented house was off while the houses around it were still on. Arimbi's annoyance will be explained as follows.

- (4) *"Arimbi mengumpat dalam hati. Bagaimana bisa perusahaan listrik hanya mematikan listrik di kontrakkannya sementara rumah-rumah lain yang hanya terbatas dinding tetap terus menyala"* (Madasari, 2011, p. 20).

The electricity company discriminated against Arimbi. The conflict arose from differences in interests between the electricity company and Arimbi when it cut off the electricity in her rented house while the homes surrounding Arimbi's rented house remained powered because their occupants usually paid higher electricity bills. Electricity companies often impose arbitrary power outages due to a shortage of power supply, specifically targeting small houses or slums. Divergent interests are present between the electricity company and homeowners who pay lower electricity bills. The electricity company discriminates based on the needs of those experiencing power shortages, leading to rotating power outages that impact solely small houses or slums. Simultaneously, the requirement for equal electricity distribution in all households, especially during morning hours, is crucial, even for individuals like Arimbi, who faces challenges preparing for work due to inadequate electricity supply.

b. Collusion

Arimbi has engaged in collusion to address her financial issues. She already understands such problems. Arimbi thinks that all problems can be solved with money. The quotes in the novel will be presented as follows.

- (5) *"Arimbi sumringah. Ah, dimana-mana sama saja. Semua beres dengan uang. Delapan enam, pikirnya dalam hati. Dia sudah paham dengan urusan seperti ini. Yang penting sudah tidak ada masalah lagi."* (Madasari, 2011, p. 133).

The collusion executed by Arimbi aimed to address the issues she faced in prison but was resolved by colluding with certain parties, similar to what Mrs. Danti, Cik Aling, and other officials did when they faced trial. Researchers categorize actions as conflict triggers due to conflicting interests, as Arimbi resolves her challenges through collusion. Although inmates who accept gratuities or bribes may feel satisfied, this practice has become an open secret within the incarcerated community.

The conflict about collusion still occurs in the novel *86* by Okky Madasari. In this discussion, the practice of collusion carried out by the characters Arimbi and Andrian will be explained, here is a quote from the novel.

- (6) *Arimbi: "Uang? Uang apa?"*
Adrian: "Jumlahnya besar. Lima ratus juta."
Arimbi: "Íya, tapi untuk apa?" Arimbi semakin curiga. Adrian mendekatkan mulutnya ke telinga
"Arimbi. Ia mengecilkan suara.
Adrian: "Dia Cuma minta besok kamu tidak bilang dia yang menyuruh ke restoran."
(Madasari, 2011, p. 166).

Initially, Adrian requested Arimbi to meet someone at a restaurant to deliver a bribe with the intention of engaging in collusion. Adrian, a lawyer, attempted to conceal a detail from his client's trial that involved Arimbi as a middleman for the bribe. Researchers identified the cause of the conflict as a clash of interests, as Arimbi believed she was only carrying out an additional task from her superiors to deliver money to a corrupt judge. Arimbi thought she had done nothing wrong, so she planned to be truthful and disclose the facts during the trial. However, collusion was again executed by Adrian's client by giving Arimbi five hundred million rupiah, as long as she did not reveal the truth during the trial, where Arimbi was tasked to meet Adrian's client at the restaurant.

Collusion refers to the practice of secret cooperation with the intention of carrying out an unethical purpose. This was found by researchers in the novel *86* by Okky Madasari. Collusion in this discussion explains the partnership between Cik Aling and Pollution. Cak Aling is never late in giving deposits to the police, The explanation can be seen in Cik Aling's safe here.

- (7) *"Disini malah aman. Lihat sendiri, kamarku jadi pabrik sabu-sabu," katanya sambil terbahak-bahak. "Disini nggak perlu kucing-kucingan sama polisi lagi. Yang penting setoran lancar, semua aman. Delapaan enaaam!"* (Madasari, 2011, p. 204).

In this excerpt, Cik Aling reveals to Arimbi that she has been in prison for a long time and continues to run her crystal meth business from inside. The operation runs smoothly because Cik Aling regularly pays a sum of money to the prison authorities from her profits. In this case, Arimbi, who has already joined Cik Aling's business, must be willing to accept a reduction in her share. Researchers categorize the cause of this conflict as a difference in interests because Cik Aling wants a portion of Arimbi's profit to be handed over to the prison as bribe money to ensure the safe operation of her business inside. Meanwhile, Arimbi wants a larger share of the profit for Ananta, her husband, due to the significant risk involved in being a crystal meth dealer across several cities.

The revelation of the causes of the portrait of social conflict in Okky Madasari's novel *86* aligns with Marxist criticism in literary works, specifically by examining the historical or cultural social conditions at the time the author wrote the literary piece (Mudiawati et al., 2023). So literary works were referred to as a reflection of the culture and social conditions that apply at a time and place (Wolff, 2021). The conflict between social classes, as well as the conflict between individuals

concerning the political sphere and similar issues in the novel, depicts the behaviors, work systems, and habits prevalent in the lives of the majority of people around Okky Madasari. These characteristics reflect the spread of capitalism throughout Indonesian society, which is deeply ingrained and fosters an ego that seeks to control everything for personal or group interests. Thus, it can be said that individuals or groups who possess power will always provoke conflict with social groups that hold less power (Sulhan & Januri, 2022).

A similar situation occurs in the social conflict experienced by Arimbi, the main character in the novel *86* by Okky Madasari. The social conflict that occurs always starts with the thoughts or desires of people from a social class above Arimbi. Conversely, towards the end of the story, Arimbi becomes entangled in a social conflict with those in a lower social class. This ultimately leads to the normalization of actions by individuals in the upper class, or those with greater wealth and power, towards individuals with less wealth and power. In some cases experienced by Arimbi, conflicts can be swiftly resolved with money, leading to social conflicts that encompass troublesome actions, bribery, discrimination, collusion, suspicion, and various forms of social inequality.

D. Conclusion

Social conflict can arise from various factors, as illustrated in Okky Madasari's novel *86*, depicting conflicts individuals, between social classes, and between political groups. individuals, between social classes, and between political groups. From a Marxist literary sociology perspective, social conflict in the novel stems from varying opinions, interests, and cultures. Conflicts like trouble and bribery, resulting from differing opinions, belong to the category of conflicts between individuals. Moreover, economic disparity is categorized as conflicts between social classes due to cultural distinctions. Moreover, divergent interests lead to collusion and discriminatory corrupt practices, constituting conflicts within the political sphere.

Based on the results of research on the causes of social portraits in the novel *86* by Okky Madasari, it is evident that social conflict will always present two parties: the protagonist and the antagonist. The perspective taken in a social conflict, whether individual or group with varying social classes, results in different viewpoints. Her perspective is influenced by her position, cultural affiliation, and unfolding interests. This undoubtedly sparks social conflict, especially in this novel, due to the diversity of individual stances, cultures, and interests.

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