

Social Interaction and Class Struggles in *Noughts & Crosses* by Malorie Blackman

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ABSTRACT

This research employs a sociological approach to literature, drawing on Georg Simmel's social interaction theory and Karl Marx's class struggle concepts, to analyze the dynamics between the upper-class Crosses and the lower-class Noughts in the novel *Noughts & Crosses*. The study identifies five forms and six types of social interactions, encompassing superordination and subordination, exchange, conflict, prostitution, and sociability, along with character-based classifications such as the miser, the spendthrift, the stranger, the adventurer, the nobility, and the poor. The central focus lies in understanding the struggles of the Noughts in their pursuit of social equality within a deeply divided society. Despite collective and individual efforts, fueled by class consciousness and the formation of the Liberation Militia, the research concludes that achieving equality remains elusive. The powerful Crosses, driven by hidden manipulations and a desire to maintain the existing system, thwart the Noughts' endeavors, underscoring the persistent challenges faced by the lower class in a society marked by reverse racism.

Keywords: *reverse racism, social interaction, class struggle, Noughts & Crosses.*

INTRODUCTION

Noughts & Crosses is one of the most popular works of Malorie Blackman. This book is the first book of the series with the same title, *Noughts & Crosses*, which was published in 2001 (British Council, n.d.). Malorie Blackman was awarded the Children's Book Award in 2002 and the Fantastic Fiction Award in 2004 with *Noughts & Crosses* (British Council, n.d.; Penzer, 2017). This book is classified as young-adult literature, which means that according to Crowe (1998), it is intended specifically to be read by young adults. Young-adult literature often involves harder issues in it such as abuse, depression, drug use, and others (Coats, 2011; Martinsen, 2006). Reading this

young-adult literature provokes thought and opens the readers' eyes to different views of racism along with other impressive themes and events in the story.

Noughts & Crosses narrates the tale of Sephy and Callum, two teenagers of distinct gender, race, and social class who transition from childhood friends to lovers. Sephy, a Cross, and Callum, a Nought, initially share a carefree childhood. As they grow older, the societal barriers of race and class become apparent, making their union seemingly impossible. Despite facing opposition from family, friends, and societal norms, their love persists, leading to challenges such as bullying, imprisonment, and even suicide. Amidst these obstacles, they strive to find ways to connect and

spend time together. Unfortunately, their journey concludes with Sephy pregnant and Callum facing a tragic end through hanging.

In this book, the racism depicted is called reverse racism because black people become the controller and white people become the controlled. Morris (2020) stated that this can happen because racism itself occurs when there are people who become the controllers and who are controlled. Ekezie in his book entitled *Reversing Racism* (2019) wrote that the forms of racism experienced by black people are inhuman and this makes black skin a stigma in society. Many victims choose to surrender and accept the treatment they receive forcefully, but many also struggle to achieve the same justice and privileges as white people. This struggle can lead to conflict and other racist behavior, from which the term reverse racism is developed. According to James et al. (2016) and Roussell et al. (2017), reverse racism makes the subordination of blacks replaced by the subordination of whites in all social life aspects.

We consider that reverse racism is challenging to study because it can provide wider views and thoughts to the readers, and the public in general, about racism. Further, this topic can also make whites and blacks, and people who still believe in skin color racism, discover the things that could happen to them and the feeling of being a victim or perpetrator if they commit acts of racism as in reverse racism. Hence, we decided to investigate reverse racism in this novel.

This research investigates more on the social interaction between the upper and lower classes and the struggles of the lower class. There is also an investigation on bullying that is experienced by the characters, as an example of one of the forms of social interaction, as well as its results for them. In the novel, it can be seen clearly that racial discrimination results in an unequal society. Racial discrimination is related to unequal behaviors from individuals or groups based on their race or ethnicity (Pager & Hana, 2008). In addition, the unequal society in the novel is a result of the class divisions based on the people's identities (blacks and whites) that also shape their socioeconomic status (income, education, and occupation) (APA, 2022). There are two classes in the story. The first class is the noughts the lower class

consisting of people who are white and have lower status in terms of income, education, and occupation. The second class is the Crosses the upper class consisting of people who are blacks and have higher status in terms of their income, education, and occupation (Ashmore et al, 2004).

Social interaction and class struggle become the two main topics of problems that are analyzed. There are many types of interaction in society, either positive or negative, based on the purpose, the cause-effect, the people involved, and so on. *Noughts & Crosses* also has different types of social interaction. There are so many interactions in *Noughts & Crosses*, both verbally and physically, between a character to the other characters and between the Noughts and Crosses. The reasons behind the interactions are also important to be explored further. This is because the interactions that occur are more complex with the problems that exist between the characters. Therefore, the types of social interactions in the novel, including the reasons behind them and the people involved in them, become a problem to be investigated. As for the class struggle, the society in *Noughts & Crosses* is unequal and the lower class has to struggle to be equal with the upper class. The process, the reasons, the results, and the things behind the struggle of the lower class become another problem that is analyzed in this research. Accordingly, the objectives of this research are formulated into two. First, to explain the kinds of social interaction that occurred between the upper class and lower class in *Noughts & Crosses*. Second, to analyze the struggle of the lower class in achieving equality in society in *Noughts & Crosses*.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are several studies which have been conducted previously that were reviewed. First, "The Postcolonial Racial Binary Reversed in Malorie Blackman's *Noughts & Crosses* (2017)" by Anna Persson Penzer, specifically analyzes Callum's character development. It explains that Callum adapts and struggles to achieve equality by fighting against the rulers of the society even though it leads to execution.

Second, "Alteration of Race and Racism between the Whites and the Blacks in Malorie Blackman's *Noughts and Crosses* (2016)" by Fitriani Firstkasari Putri argues that Malorie Blackman wrote the book to rewrite the history of blacks by creating them as the oppressor and to criticize the concept of race. It also analyzes the effects of the Crosses' colonization on the noughts.

Third, "Genre Bending and Blending in Malorie Blackman's *Noughts & Crosses* YA Series (2021)" by Irene Pérez-Fernández studies the bending and blending of two genres of literature, romance and young-adult literature, in the first three of Blackman's novel series and their role in society and history. It explains how flexible the two blended genres are, as seen through these novels that incorporate sensitive issues into entertaining and enlightening stories.

On the other hand, there have been studies examining Marxism in literary works. Fourth, "Elite Domination and Lower-Class Resistance in Ernest Cline's *Ready Player One* (2020)" by Dika Shafira Hidayat and Achmad Munjid investigates how IOI as a big corporation dominates the players by ruining their ideologies to gain profit and control over OASIS. However, the dominant players work together to win the battle between classes, indicating that class conflict makes the dominant people unite against the domination of the corporation.

Fifth, *A Marxist Reading of 'Howards End'* by E.M. Forster. The Class Struggle Aspect (2018) by Aouiche Imane and Ouari Nadjah argues that different beliefs create conflicts between different classes and the members within the same class. The conflicts make some members of each class try to unite the classes.

Sixth, "Marxist's Ideology and Revolution Analysis of George Orwell's Novel *Animal Farm* (2018)" by Safnidar Siahaan analyzed that the exploited animals make a revolutionary movement after they are persuaded by Old Major who use Marxist ideology against the old leaders and political system.

Seventh, "Class Conflict in Henry Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* (2020)" by Bechir Saoudi et al. states that the upper class exploits the lower class

materially and mentally. The upper class then sympathizes with the lower class after the lower class conveys their voices regarding the exploitation. It also states that a classless society cannot be achieved if the grouping of classes still exists.

Compared to the pieces of literature above, the problems that are analyzed and the concepts that are used to analyze these pieces of research are different from this research. This research analyzes reverse racism in the novel *Noughts & Crosses* which focuses more on the social interaction and the struggle of the lower-class using Simmel's theory and Marx's concepts.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research uses a sociological approach to literature to investigate the interactions, conflicts, and struggles of the two classes in *Noughts & Crosses*. It is an approach which studies the social and cultural aspects of society in literary work as a reflection of the lives in society (Setyorini, 2009; Welleck and Warren, 1956). How people interact and are influenced by society can be studied through this approach. It also provides information about the distributions in society that can lead to inequality and the influence of people in power against those who are not (Henslin, 2017). The explanation of the sociological approach and its scope is in line with the discussion of social class in this research. Further, we also use Georg Simmel's theory of social interaction and Karl Marx's concepts of class struggle for the analysis of this research.

Social Interaction

Simmel (1959) argues that interaction is the origin of all forms of social formation. The wider the existing social interactions, the more complex the social formations are (Frisby, 2002). Simmel (1959) classifies social interaction in certain forms and types. There are six types of social interaction, namely the miser, the spendthrift, the stranger, the adventurer, the nobility, and the poor. The miser is a person who attains pleasure through the possession of money, although it is not subsequently realized in

the form of a particular object. The spendthrift, almost similar to the miser, is the one who feels pleased regarding the possession of money but then it is spent on desired objects. The stranger is a type that does not give a subjective attitude in the relationship, rather a stranger gives a more objective attitude so that the members of the group can be more confident to express themselves. The adventurer is a free type, who is neither determined by the past nor influenced by the future and filled with present feelings. The nobility is an independent type who puts its own interests first. The poor is a person or a group who is aided by other people and has the right to the aid, but the aid is given in order that the poor do not become the enemies of society.

The forms of social interaction are divided into five forms, which are superordination and subordination, exchange, conflict, prostitution, and sociability. Superordination and subordination are interactions that occur between the person or group in power and the one in control where the superordinate expects a positive or negative response. Exchange is an interaction to exchange information. Conflict is an interaction that occurs due to conflicting interests which can lead to violence and bullying. Prostitution is an interaction offering sexual services. Sociability is an interpersonal interaction with awareness and purpose purely to interact (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2018).

Discrimination

Kohler-Hausmann (2011) defines discrimination as “an action or practice that excludes, disadvantages, or merely differentiates between individuals or groups on the basis of some ascribed or perceived trait”. Pager and Hana (2008) argue that practices of discrimination can be motivated by prejudice or racism. According to Barkan (2011) in *Sociology: Understanding and Changing the Social World*, racial and ethnic prejudice is “negative attitudes” toward all categories of people as well as an individual included in the categories on the basis of their ascribed race and ethnicity. The explanation is relevant to the racism and racial discrimination in the story. Additionally, Pager and Hana (2008) state that racial discrimination is related to unequal

behaviors from individuals or groups based on their race or ethnicity. Racial discrimination has a significant role in creating inequality in *Noughts & Crosses*.

Identity

Identity can be defined as characteristic(s) within a person. It can be obvious to other people, for example, skin color, as in *Noughts & Crosses*. The more obvious an ascribed identity, the more powerful and influential the identity is in the behavior and self-definition of a person (Thibodeau, 2010). In a social group or social class, the identity can be formed collectively. Thibodeau (2010) added that if people in a society realize that they have “characteristics in common”, collective identity will be formed. The characteristics are divided into two. First, ascribed characteristics that are assigned since they were born, such as gender and race. Second, characteristics that can be achieved at any age, such as occupation and political affiliation (Ashmore et al, 2004).

Social Class

Social class is a substantial social stratification regarding the socioeconomic status (education, income, occupation) that shapes people’s experience of themselves and the world (Ostrove & Cole, 2003; APA, 2022). Practically, the stratification of all societies is defined by hierarchies of power and wealth (Seabrook, 2002). However, in *Noughts & Crosses*, the stratification of the social classes in society is defined by people’s identities as black and white which then shapes the socioeconomic status of the people and becomes the class’ collective identity.

Class Struggle

Class struggle occurs before class divisions. Marx (1978) argues that in society there are two main classes that are in conflict with each other, the bourgeoisie (exploiter) and the proletariat (exploited). When the proletariat realizes its interest and position as a class in society (class consciousness), revolutionary action will be formed to improve their situation and degree (Marx & Engels, 1978; Holt,

2015). As Elster (1986) suggests, this action is a form of realization of the desire not to be exploited. Poverty can be one of the causes of this action which plays a role as an encouragement or an obstacle. The action then becomes a class struggle to achieve a classless society that is more equal (Marx & Engels, 1978; Holt, 2015). However, according to Marx (in Mayo, 1960), this action can lead to inter-class and/or intra-class conflict if the bourgeoisie tries to maintain the existing social structure and prevent such revolutionary action.

METHODS

The primary data for this study were obtained from the novel *Noughts & Crosses*. To collect the data, the novel was read closely several times in order to understand the parts of the story better. While reading, we also marked and noted the parts of the story needed to become the data for this research. These data consisted of narration, dialogue, and description of the characters and events in the story. We then sorted back which data should be used and which ones were not suitable to analyze.

Secondary data is also needed to support the process of analysis. This data is also required to add and complete the information related to this research. The secondary data is taken from books, journals, articles, and other written materials that contain information about the theories used or the topics discussed in this research.

The data collected are analyzed in three steps using a qualitative method. The first step is classifying the data according to the objectives of the study which are the social interaction between the upper and lower classes, and also the struggles of the lower class. The second step is analyzing the data based on the theory of social interaction by Georg Simmel and the theory of class struggle by Karl Marx. This is intended to provide an explanation regarding the forms and types of social interactions that occur between the two classes including the bullying experienced by the characters in the story, and the struggles of the lower class including the process and results. The third step is drawing conclusions from the results of the analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Social Interaction in Noughts & Crosses

Simmel (1959) argued that society does not appear by itself, yet there is an activity of consciousness underlying it and the activity is called interaction. In *Noughts & Crosses*, the society is divided into two classes which are the noughts and the Crosses. The first class, noughts, is the discriminated group consisting of white people. The noughts mostly live a lower-middle life in terms of finances and a difficult life in terms of work and education. They fulfil their needs economically by working as maids, public servants, labourers, and jobs with moderate positions such as police and secretary or assistant but with the help from Crosses. Whilst, the second class, Crosses, the discriminator group consists of black people. This group is the controller of the society for they have promising jobs and high positions in the society such as prime minister, ministers, governors, police, teachers, and others. They live well financially, have nice jobs, and good quality education. The two classes are not in a good relationship. The noughts hate the Crosses for they always discriminate against the noughts and boast about themselves. The Crosses are wary of noughts and hate them for what they are.

Simmel classifies social interaction into five forms, which are superordination and subordination, exchange, conflict, prostitution, and sociability (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2018).

Superordination and Subordination

Superordination and subordination are forms of interaction between the people or group who control and the one that is controlled where the superordinate expects a positive or negative response (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2018). The important thing in this form of interaction is the reaction or response that is given by the subordinate. According to Simmel as stated by Wolff (1950) and Levine (1971), there is still quite enough personal freedom even in the most repressive subordination. Wolff adds that the subordinate's personal freedom is eliminated if the superordinate uses physical violence directly.

An example of superordination and subordination happens exactly in the prologue between three characters, namely Meggie, Mrs Hadley, and Mr Hadley. Meggie, who is Nought and Callum's mother, works as a maid for the Hadleys, Sephy's Crosses family. Mr Hadley approaches Meggie on the back porch to ask about the wonderful time she had the evening before. Meggie senses something bad is going to happen and then she looks at Mrs Hadley. Her eyes talk with the hope that Meggie will tell her husband what she wants but Meggie cannot think of anything. Meggie tells him the truth that she enjoyed a warm evening at home with her family. Seconds after, Mr Hadley slaps his wife's face.

"Leave me alone," Mrs Hadley hissed at her. "When I needed your help, you didn't give it."

... And only then did Meggie realize what she'd done. Mrs Hadley had obviously used her as an alibi for the previous night and Meggie had been too slow to pick up on what Kamal Hadley had really been asking her. (Blackman, 2017, p. 5)

This part indicates that Mrs Hadley as the superordinate wants Meggie as the subordinate to give her a positive reaction as it can satisfy her, instead, Meggie gives a negative reaction that results in negative action which is the slap. In this interaction, Meggie has her personal freedom to answer and she uses it to tell the truth.

Exchange

Exchange is explained by Simmel as an interaction to exchange information or objects. In this form, a person or a group obtains something they did not have before and gives away or sells something they had before (Levine, 1971; Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2018). Something that is exchanged is not always information, but it can also be in the form of particular objects such as money, food, clothes, and others. However, in *Noughts & Crosses*, the characters mostly exchange information.

An example of an exchange happens between Callum and Sephy in the middle of the woods at midnight in Chapter 103. It is when Sephy runs away from her kidnapping cabin and three members of Liberation Militia, including Callum, run after her.

Callum needs to find Sephy first, and he succeeds. He lies to the others in order to save her.

"D'you see Orion's Belt?" He said softly.

I looked up and nodded.

"Always keep it immediately behind you. When you reach the road, turn left on to it and keep going."

... And then I remembered what had bothered me about the stranger since I'd first seen him. I grabbed Callum's hand. "Wait. That man with the blond pony-tail, the one who came in with you to see me?"

"What about him?"

"He works for my father. I saw him a couple of years ago at our house." (Blackman, 2017, p. 383)

Callum obtains information about Andrew Dorn, the General's second-in-command, who is actually a betrayal in the Liberation Militia. On the one hand, Sephy gains information about the way to go back to the city. They do not ask for the information, but they give and take each other's information for one another's benefit. It does not always have to ask for the information first, the important thing is that each character who gives information gets back information he/she did not have before.

Conflict

Conflict is an interaction due to conflicting interests which can lead to violence and bullying (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2018). Levine (1971, p.70) wrote that conflict explodes because of several factors such as hatred, envy, need, and desire. Furthermore, conflict is described as "the most violent symptom of a disease which represents the effort of the organism to free itself of disturbances and damages caused by them". Conflict acts as a solution to form a unity of two contrasted aspects, if it has to, by annihilating one of the parties. On the other hand, in *Noughts & Crosses*, bullying as the result of conflict happens not only between the members of the two classes but also the members within the same class.

An example of conflict happens in McGregor's house that involves Meggie and Ryan McGregor. Meggie asks Jude and Ryan whether they were

involved in that accident or not and Jude says the truth that they had to. However, the execution was different from the plan. Ryan also said that he had to do that because, in the Liberation Militia, you had to do as you were told to once you were in. Their answers merely make Meggie angrier. The conflict is reaching its climax from here.

“Meggie...” Dad’s mask slipped for the first time that evening. He looked so forlorn. He touched Mum’s arm. She spun around and slapped his face so hard, there was a crack as her fingers bent right back.

“You murdering, lying...You promised me there’d never be anything like this. You promised you’d only be involved in the background, in planning. You promised.” (Blackman, 2017, p. 197)

After that, the conflict does not reach a solution but it gets calmer. The main parties in this conflict are Meggie and Ryan, Callum’s parents. Ryan feels guilty but he has no other choice while Meggie feels furious over Ryan’s betrayal which results in physical violence. They are both hurt, but Meggie chooses to distance herself from Ryan to get a better feeling and condition.

Most of the examples of conflict have a few things in common. The factors that caused them are hatred. When it is unbearable and/or one of the parties is so powerful that a third party cannot stop the conflict, it results in physical violence. As a solution to create a better situation, one of the parties goes away. Moreover, there are several examples of conflict that result in bullying. They do not only happen between members of different classes but also within the same class.

An example of a conflict that involves physical bullying from a number of noughts to a nought and a Cross can be found in Chapter 26.

“Three years ago, Lynette and her boyfriend were attacked. By our own. Three or four nought men.” Dad’s voice rasped in contempt. ... “Those men almost beat Lynette’s boy to death and they beat Lynette so badly she was in hospital for over two weeks.”

“And d’you know why she was attacked?” Dad

carried on as if Jude hadn’t spoken. “Because her boyfriend was a Cross. Your sister was beaten and l-left for dead because she was dating a Cross.” (Blackman, 2017, p. 116)

In this case, the bullies are the noughts and a Cross man is the victim. He does not cause anything bad to the bullies, but because of hate for knowing a Cross who dared to have a relationship with a nought makes them do that. Lynette experiences severe trauma and hallucinations for three years after that accident. She is far out of reach in her own world, but when she relapses, she acts as if she is a Cross. When reality hits her, she gives up.

“It was no one’s fault. If it’s any consolation, she was killed instantly. She didn’t suffer, I’m so sorry.” (Blackman, 2017, p. 157)

Lynette dies by suicide. In chapter 36, it is explained that she dies because she is hit by a bus. The truth is she dies because of suicide, she puts herself in front of a moving bus.

Prostitution

Prostitution is an interaction for offering sexual services (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2018). The point of this interaction is sensual acts. There is an imbalance here where the contribution that a man gives is merely a small part while the woman gives the whole part. The man will give money in return, and the woman will feel humiliated and suppressed. Nevertheless, this does not happen in all cases because there are women who feel satisfied even without being given anything or receiving nonmonetary things (Levine, 1971).

This form of social interaction only happens once in Chapter 101 when Callum is left alone to guard Sephy in her prison cell. It starts with them expressing their true feelings for each other and then ends with them making love to each other. Through Sephy’s point of view, it is described how she feels that night.

So I was dreaming again. Lost in my own world where there were no noughts and Crosses. Just me and Callum, as Callum and I should be, whilst the rest of the world smiled kindly at us or turned their backs on us –but either way, we

were left alone. Callum's hand moved from my abdomen to my waist and higher. I pushed at his hand but it didn't move. His kiss became gentler. (Blackman, 2017, p. 376)

They do not mind anything else but themselves. Their sensual acts represent the main point of prostitution. However, when they realize what they do, guilt and sadness fill their feelings. When they interact through the action of sensuality, they feel satisfied. Later, in Chapter 112, Sephy tells Callum the reason behind her crying. From her explanation, she feels unhappy due to the fact that they are different and society will not let them build their love relationship. Still, she gets satisfaction over the sensual acts and she does not complain when Callum gives no money.

Sociability

Sociability is an interpersonal interaction with awareness and purpose purely to interact (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2018). In this form of social interaction, the people who interact think of themselves as sociably equal. Moreover, they can get sociability values (joy, relief, vivacity) equally (Levine, 1971).

An example is found in Chapter 11 when Sephy joins the noughts' table in the dining hall to have lunch together. She greets a nought girl and shakes hands with her after introducing each other's names. They talk freely without worrying over their status and other people's opinions, at least at that time.

"I'm Shania," she said softly.

"That's a pretty name. What does it mean?" I asked.

Shania shrugged. "It doesn't mean anything."

"My mother told me my name means 'serene night'." I laughed. "But Callum will tell you I'm anything but serene!"

Shania smiled at me. It was tentative and brief but at least it was genuine –whilst it lasted. (Blackman, 2017, p. 67)

Sephy tries to erase their boundaries and act as a friend to them. Her sociable action makes Shania respond to her in the same way. Shania feels the courage to talk to her like a friend. Their interaction's

purpose is merely to interact in an equally sociable manner.

The Types of Social Interaction in Noughts & Crosses

There are six types of social interaction that are classified by Simmel, which are the miser, the spendthrift, the stranger, the adventurer, the nobility, and the poor (Levine, 1971; Ritzer, 2010).

The Miser

The miser is a person who attains pleasure through the possession of money, although it is not subsequently realized in the form of a particular object (Levine, 1971). In this novel, the characters who are included in this type are Kamal Hadley and Adam Stanhope.

Mr Hadley or Kamal Hadley is quite a type of miser. He feels pleasure through the possession of money and authority. He is good not only in obtaining these two but also in using them to get what he wants and make people do what he tells them to do as well. He is never satisfied with the pleasure of achieving money and authority. Proof that Kamal Hadley is not satisfied with his possession is written in Chapter 31.

"I didn't hear you protest when my parties got you known by all the right people, started you moving in all the right circles". ...

"...But after the next election, I'm going to make it officially known that you and I are no longer together." (Blackman, 2017, p. 138)

This means he became a minister with the support of his wife, yet he is going to divorce his wife after the next election because he does not get the benefit of continuing their marriage. He can get what he wants with his own possession.

The Spendthrift

The spendthrift, almost similar to the miser, is the one who feels pleased regarding the possession of money but then it is spent on desired objects. The miser and the spendthrift demonstrate similarities in that they are never satisfied with the pleasures they achieved (Levine, 1971). The spendthrift in *Noughts & Crosses* is Persephone Hadley or Sephy.

There are proofs of events why Sephy is classified in this type. First, in Chapter 23, Sephy gives Callum his first-class train ticket that she bought with her own money.

I'd raided my bank account to get enough money to buy two first class tickets. ... It made the day 'ours' somehow, because the money was mine and nothing to do with my mother or anyone else. I smiled. "This day is going to be perfect." (Blackman, 2017, p. 101)

She spent her money on objects she desired, the tickets, so that she feels the pleasure. Second, in Chapter 85, Sephy sends a letter to Callum. It is about her plan to go away and live together with him somewhere.

"I've got plenty of money saved in my own personal bank account, plus there's my regular monthly allowance from both Dad and my grandmother's trust fund. And we can both work. Just as long as we're together. All you have to do is say yes." (Blackman, 2017, pp. 314-315)

For this proof, the money Sephy possesses is still in the form of money but she will not hesitate to spend her money for her and Callum. Sephy is happy when she is with Callum. Therefore, she spent her money on the objects that can make her be with Callum, even if it has to be in secret. She likes the pleasure when she can get that. She repeats it again and again to satisfy her, yet she is never really satisfied unless she is together with Callum and the society allows them.

The Stranger

The stranger is a type that is in the middle, neither too close nor too far. A stranger does not give a subjective attitude in the relationship, rather a stranger gives a more objective attitude so that the members of the group can be more confident to express themselves (Ritzer, 2010). The strangers in the novel are Kelani Adams and Jack. Kelani Adams is a world-famous Cross lawyer who works for the cases that she believes in, while Jack is a Cross prison officer who guards Callum's cell. Both of them do not take sides in any class. They do not judge the noughts badly like most of the Crosses do. They give objective attitude to the members of both classes.

Kelani Adams is a good lawyer who takes a case not for money but for justice that she believes in. She cares about neither noughts nor Crosses. It is proven on page 243 through Adam Stanhope's statement that "Once she'd read your husband's file, she was more than prepared to take the case". As in Callum's father's case, she helps Callum's family although they are noughts because she believes that there is injustice there and that she can help them to get the fairest result possible. She gives an objective attitude to the members of a different class. Moreover, she manages to spread her belief and confidence to them so that they are also confident that they can.

The Adventurer

The adventurer is a present-oriented type which means that this type is neither determined by the past nor influenced by the future. The adventurer is a free and unrestrained person filled with present feelings. This type also has the attitude of a conqueror, which is conquering the opportunities nevertheless they are harmonious or not with oneself or the world or the connection between these two (Levine, 1971). The adventurers in the novel are Callum and Jude McGregor. Both of them have the attitude of a conqueror and work on the opportunities in the present for what they believe in.

In Chapter 57, Sephy says that "Callum's a survivor. I'm not" (p. 222). It defines that Callum is a survivor who can survive in society and fight even with the smallest opportunity. Callum's present feelings are influenced by his desire to be together with Sephy and to achieve equality for his class. He takes as many opportunities as he can to get that. Even though, sometimes, he thinks about the past and the future but he focuses more only on the present. In Chapter 84, Callum joins the Liberation Militia. It is his one and only opportunity to join the Liberation Militia and to make a difference. Here, Callum is filled with the feeling of having a purpose in life. He knows through the Liberation Militia, he can be more powerful and have wider opportunities to fulfil his desire.

The Nobility

The nobility is the one who is independent and puts its own interests first. This type is a type that is between the top and bottom elements but is closed to

both elements, in other words, refuses to expand to another element. The nobility influences others in order to create a unity between the two elements, or to put it simply is that this type has 'a unifying influence' (Levine, 1971). The characters of this type are Mrs Paxton and Mrs Hadley. They are independent characters who put their interest first.

Mrs Paxton is the only teacher in Heathcroft High School who is brave to speak her voice to create a unity and equality for both nought and Cross students. She is an independent person who will do her best to influence other people to have the same interest as her. In Chapter 30, Mrs Paxton argues with Mr Costa, Heathcroft's headmaster, over the school's treatments toward the noughts.

"Mrs Paxton, are you really that naïve? Noughts are treated in this school exactly the same way as they're treated outside."

"Then, it's up to us to make this school a haven, a sanctuary for Crosses and noughts. A place where we provide equality of education, equality of opportunity and equality of treatment." (Blackman, 2017, p. 133)

Mrs Paxton is a Cross but she does not hesitate to help the noughts and fight the Crosses for equality. She sticks in her interest of equality and tries to unite the members of the two classes.

The Poor

The poor is explained as a person or a group who are aided by other people and have the right to the aid. The aid is given by the society for their sake, not the poor's sake, in order that the poor do not become the enemies of the society (Ritzer, 2010). The characters that are classified as the poor in the story are the nought students who were accepted in Cross schools nationwide. There are less than two dozen noughts who were accepted after the government opened Cross schools for noughts to study. Nonetheless, the treatments from the teachers and students of the schools make the nought students eliminated one by one from the schools. The aid that the poor receive from the government does not aim positively for equality in society but to make noughts so as not to be hostile to the government. In other words, it is for the sake of the government.

The Struggle of the Lower Class in Achieving Equality

The social classes in *Noughts & Crosses* are differentiated by the identities of the members. The people in *Noughts & Crosses* have ascribed identities, which are blacks and whites, which become their identities since they were born. If they are blacks, then they are Crosses and if they are whites, then they are noughts. The identities then shape the socioeconomic status of the members, including education, income, and occupation (APA, 2022). It results in racial discrimination that has an important role in creating inequality in *Noughts & Crosses*' society (Pager et al, 2008).

The struggle of the noughts is emerged by their class consciousness. Class consciousness is explained by Marx as a condition in which a class' members realize correctly their common positions and interests and perform collective actions to defend them (Elster, 1986). Class consciousness here is divided into consciousness of position and of interest. There are several nought members who might have other different interests, but the main interest of the noughts is same and that is equality in society. The evidence for the consciousness are found through the dialogue of the characters and the narration of the story.

The first-class consciousness analyzed is the noughts' consciousness of position in society.

In Chapter 1, through Callum and Sephy's conversation, it is understood that Callum, as a representative of the noughts, is conscious of his position.

"This place is like the whole world and the whole world is like this place. So where could I go?"

"This place isn't so bad, is it?"

"Depends on your point of view,' Callum replied. 'You're on the inside, Sephy. I'm not.'" (Blackman, 2017, p. 15)

He has not even reached the age of 17 yet his words give an explanation that he realizes where the position of noughts is. He is part of the lower class where in his point of view, the members do not belong to the place they live in.

The noughts realize their position not only by their own ways but also by how the Crosses want them to that there is no position for them, just like the meaning of their name. In Chapter 14, it is explained that the name “noughts” was given, not chosen, and it means nothing.

The noughts’ consciousness of interest, as previously mentioned, are different individually but same collectively. The individuals who have different interests are Callum and Lynette. They have their own interest and desire but they support the noughts’ actions to achieve equality. Callum wants to be someone who can make a difference. It is his interest to create equality in society for the noughts to have a better life. He also has an interest in being together with Sephy without worrying what other people think about them but that will only be achieved when there are no class divisions and racism. On the other hand, in Chapter 38, Lynette’s interest is to be appreciated and respected for who she is and what she does. Her interests and Callum’s are different but theirs can be fulfilled if the inequality is eliminated.

Besides Callum and Lynette’s interests, the noughts have their collective interest. It is to achieve equality. The nought members’ lives are so miserable and different from the Crosses’ that they want to erase them so that they can live in a peaceful and equal society. However, Blackman did not explain much about the nought members but she wrote more through McGregor. The McGregor is the representative of the noughts. As Marx referred to the term ‘class’, it refers to a class as a whole (Jordan, 1971). When members of the McGregor family express thoughts or actions for equality in society, it refers to the interest of noughts as a whole because they are one class, one entity.

In Chapter 68, there is an explanation regarding the Liberation Militia and its goal.

“Callum, what’s your opinion of the L.M.?”

“I...any organization which promotes equality between noughts and Crosses is” “Noughts and Crosses should be equal,” I tried again. “I support anyone who tries to bring that about.” (Blackman, 2017, pp. 281-282)

According to his answer, Liberation Militia is an organization, whose members are noughts, whose goal is equality between noughts and Crosses.

Here, Liberation Militia is a form of the noughts’ consciousness and unity to achieve their interest.

Marx (in Jordan, 1971), argues that the consciousness among the proletariat created not only the class unity and the hostility towards other classes but also the social desire to fight against an unjust and discriminatory society. Thus, the noughts’ consciousness succeeds in uniting the class which then encourages them to fight the Crosses who has created inequality between them. Marx then claimed the first attempts that the lower class made to unite themselves were in the form of combinations (Jordan, 1971). In *Noughts & Crosses*, the form of combination is realized through the Liberation Militia.

They fight for their interests by performing collective actions. The Noughts as the lower class do not have as much money and power as the Crosses to run more advanced actions. For them to create a collective action, poverty becomes two opposed factors. As written by Elster (1986), on the one hand, it becomes an encouragement because they have nothing to lose to be afraid of besides their deaths. On the other hand, it becomes an obstacle when it comes to resources. Callum’s father was charged with crimes he did not commit. In Chapter 60, Callum and his mother want to prove justice by finding solicitors, yet poverty and lack of power make it difficult to find parties willing to take this case of a capital crime. In contrast, for the noughts, poverty can also be an encouragement to become stronger and fight harder to achieve what they desire. The Crosses belittle the noughts’ power and skills because of their poverty. It does not make the noughts give up or feel inadequate. In fact, they aim to prove that they can be as good as the Crosses or even better.

The noughts cooperate in a collective action out of solidarity, justice, unselfishness, and such (Elster, 1986). The collective actions are a form of the noughts’ struggle to realize what they want as one class. Moreover, Elster also wrote that for Marx, the struggle is called a class struggle because the parties involved are classes. It is obviously a class struggle

because it is performed by the lower class or the Noughts against the upper class or the Crosses.

The struggles of the noughts are carried out not only collectively through the Liberation Militia but also individually by the characters. At the beginning of the novel, the government provides an opportunity for the 'crème de la crème' nought students to study in Cross schools. Callum is one of them. It is a good opportunity and achievement for Callum. The reason is because he can get a better quality of education. Further, he has a wider opportunity to fight for his personal and his class interests although he needs to study a year behind his actual age.

His father orders him in Chapter 3 to prove that the noughts are as good as the Crosses for he is a representation of their class.

“And you’ll be on your best behavior at Heathcroft, won’t you?” Dad beamed. “You’ll be representing all of us noughts at the school.”

“You must show them they’re wrong about us. Show them we’re just as good as they are,” Dad continued. (Blackman, 2017, p. 31)

However, the struggles are not as easy as they think. That is because of the Cross students and teachers’ behaviors toward the nought students are too difficult to overcome. The discrimination is getting worse. In Chapter 133, Callum tries to fight the unjust treatment of his teacher, Mr Jason. He tries to get a fair score because he has done quite well on his previous tests. Yet, his bad score is influenced by his bad attitude towards Mr Jason. The injustice here is clearly depicted. Callum has already tried to struggle for justice but because Mr Jason is more powerful, he cannot achieve the justice that he wanted. This little part proves that not all struggles result in success, especially when the opponent has more power.

Collectively, the struggles of the noughts are carried out through the Liberation Militia. As a fighter for equality for the noughts, this organization applies military structure and works in secret. In the Liberation Militia, the members have to follow and do what they are told to do. There are missions to do by its members and if they accomplish them correctly, they can get higher positions and salaries. If the members have high ranks and cells, they can

carry out any mission they want with the general’s approval. In Chapter 94, Callum’s cell succeeds in its mission to kidnap Kamal Hadley’s youngest daughter, Sephy. Sephy will be released if her father has fulfilled the Liberation Militia’s demands. The demands are ransom money and five members of the Liberation Militia are released from prison. This mission is not an order from the Liberation Militia but it is approved by the general because Callum’s cell is one of the most well-known cells for its achievements and Jude, as the cell’s supervisor, is a lieutenant.

The further the story goes, the more difficult the struggles of the noughts go through. Marx claimed that the bourgeoisie creates a world after its image (Jordan, 1971). In *Noughts & Crosses*, the society is dominated by the Crosses. The world is as if it is the Crosses’ world. Starting from the rulers, jobs, national events, and news, even to the simplest things like plasters. In Chapter 11, Shania, who is another nought student in Heathcroft besides Callum, tells Sephy that there are no plasters in the color of noughts in their society. It is one piece of evidence of how dominating the Crosses is. Another piece of evidence is in Chapter 18, there is “The Crossmas holiday” (p. 89). The word Christmas becomes “Crossmas” and it is applied from ages before in the story to the point it is not something unacceptable any more for both classes. The Crosses themselves tend to make the noughts’ images turn bad. It makes the distance from the noughts to an equal society even further and they have to struggle harder.

In spite of that Cross world, there are Crosses who oppose the current system and try what they can to help the noughts. As stated by Marx there is a possibility that members of a class are not always determined by their class (Jordan, 1971). Those Crosses are Sephy, Mrs Paxton, Minister Pelango, and a dissident group at Chivers Boarding School. They are the people mentioned in the story as the supporters of equality for everyone.

In Chapter 89, it is written how Sephy with the dissident group helps the noughts.

And I joined a dissident group. We were Crosses fighting for a change of the system. But we had to be careful. We each made a pledge to do what we could – now and in the future –

to further the cause of true integration between noughts and Crosses. I think we all felt that the only way we'd achieve real progress was to wait for all the old dogs to die so that we new dogs could replace them and their thinking. (Blackman, 2017, p. 328)

When Sephy is accepted in Chivers, she joins a dissident group that fights for the change of the system and integration between the two classes. She and her dissident group help carefully from behind so that they do not add another conflict. They believe that they can achieve their goals by doing that.

All forms of support from these Crosses are still categorized as help. Even though they have to fight their class, they have no regrets because they are not determined by their class and they want an equal society.

According to Marx (in Elster, 1986), class struggle is marked by manipulation to open conflict (Elster, 1986). As stated earlier in this chapter, struggles within the lower class can give rise to conflicts both within the class and between different classes. Despite the presence of Cross individuals advocating for equality for the noughts on both individual and collective levels, conflicts remain inevitable. In Chapter 28, Callum's parents debate over the actions of the Liberation Militia. As an equality fighter organization, Callum's mother disagrees with the actions that the Liberation Militia has done. Meanwhile, Callum's father opposed that because it is a form of struggle from the noughts to fight the Crosses. The struggles create conflicts among the members of the noughts. In Chapter 50, after the bombing accident, the Prime Minister warns the noughts that they, the Crosses, will not give up nor be oppressed over their actions. This evidence means that the lower-class struggle results in a more serious conflict between the Noughts and Crosses.

The ruling class or the bourgeoisie has seized the class struggle by manipulating the means of communication with "divide and conquer" as the principle (Elster, 1986). This is what Marx meant by hidden manipulation. There is a nought man named Andrew Dorn who works for Kamal Hadley and at the same time, the general's second-in-command in the Liberation Militia. Kamal manipulates the Liberation Militia and the noughts by placing a spy

there who has a remarkably high rank so that the people under Andrew's commands do not suspect him of betraying his class. Kamal's hidden manipulation succeeds in ruining the plans and actions of the Liberation Militia to fight the Crosses. He divides the noughts and conquers his goal. If the Liberation Militia fights through violence, then the Crosses fight using mind and force without violence. These manipulations within the noughts are the Crosses' ways to fight back, and they succeed. Manipulation is, sometimes, more effective than violent repression for it may result in uniting the opposition instead of ruining it (Elster, 1986).

After all the struggles and support throughout the story, the noughts as a class are still unable to achieve their interests. The conflicting interests between the Noughts and Crosses result in the struggles of the Noughts and the resistance of the Crosses. There are successful struggles but the Crosses do not let the noughts to be successful and to let the Cross world disappear. The noughts' members fight harder and stronger, individually and collectively, even with the support of a number of Crosses. However, the equal society they desire is far from being achieved.

CONCLUSION

Based on the previous analysis, it can be concluded that there are five forms and six types of social interaction between the Noughts and the Crosses, and the struggles of the Noughts are performed collectively and individually yet an equal society cannot be achieved. As the society in *Noughts & Crosses* is divided into two classes, the Noughts as the lower class and the Crosses as the upper class, social interaction happens between and within the two classes. The analysis in this research finds that the kinds of social interaction that occurred between the Noughts and the Crosses are classified into five forms and six types. The five forms are superordination and subordination, exchange, conflict, prostitution, and sociability. These forms are classified based on the interaction along with their reasons, purposes, and results. Bullying which resulted in suicide is also explained within the form of conflict. On the other hand, the six types are the miser, the spendthrift, the stranger, the adventurer, the nobility, and the poor.

They are classified based on the characters who interact. This classification is related to the attitude and interests of the characters in the interaction.

Besides the various kinds of social interaction, the class division in the novel reflect an unequal society. The inequality causes the noughts to struggle in order to achieve an equal society. The struggles of the noughts start with class consciousness where its members realize their positions and interests in society. Several members have their interests but their interest as a class is equality in society. They also realize that they are part of the lower class and there is no position for them in a world created by the Crosses. This class consciousness makes the noughts unite through the Liberation Militia, and perform actions collectively and individually to fight the Crosses. As a lower class, poverty becomes an obstacle in terms of resources and an encouragement to become stronger. There are a number of characters who oppose the current system and support the noughts. Nonetheless, conflicts still emerge. The noughts fight harder but the Crosses prevent them by hidden manipulation within the noughts. Therefore, it can be seen that the noughts struggle by performing collective and individual actions, yet equality in society still cannot be achieved.

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