

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Chess is a strategy game in the form of a board with 64 squares. Chess has been credited to many nations, including China, India, and Persia, but no one can pinpoint the game's exact origins. The game spread around the world as its popularity grew over the centuries. The first official world championships, held in London in 1866, were won by Wilhelm Steinitz. Since then, there have been numerous world champions, and chess continues to be the most-played skill game worldwide (How to Play Chess 4). The chess pieces consist of 16 white chess pieces and 16 black chess pieces. Each chess piece consists of a King, Queen, Bishop, Knight, Rook, and Pawn. There is only one King and Queen, Bishop, Knight, and Rook are two. While the pawns have as many as eight pieces. Each piece has its own rules.

Grandmaster is the highest title a chess player may earn from the Fédération Internationale des Echecs (FIDE), the world's largest chess organization. Grandmaster is the highest title a chess player may achieve, aside from "World Champion." This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. International Grandmaster degrees can also be found on occasion, especially in older literature. Both men and women can earn this degree, as well as two other FIDE degrees (International Master and FIDE Master) (Rios 7). The title GMW (Female Grandmaster) is also available. The level of expertise between a FIDE Master and an International Master is recognized with this degree. Susan Polgar

was the first woman to acquire the title of GM on the same criteria as male players in 1991. Most of the top ten female chess players have held the title of GM since around 2000. The International Correspondence Chess Federation bestows the title of international correspondence chess Grandmaster on chess compilers and problem solvers, while FIDE bestows the title of Grandmaster on chess compilers and problem solvers.

Walter Tevis' 1983 novel *The Queen's Gambit* follows fictional female chess prodigy Beth Harmon through her life. Adoption, feminism, chess, drug addiction, and alcoholism are among the themes explored in this bildungsroman, or coming-of-age novel. The novel was made into a Netflix miniseries of the same name, which debuted in 2020. Tevis described the narrative as "a salute to brainy ladies" in a New York Times article published around the time of the book's debut in 1983. There has been some discussion about who Beth Harmon was inspired after, but Tevis has truly denied that she was inspired by any chess player, male or female. Bruce Pandolfini, a US chess master, advised on the chess positions before the book's publication and was the one who suggested the book's final title after the chess opening "Queen's Gambit." He also returned 38 years later to consult on the 2020 Netflix adaptation. The queen's gambit is one of the older chess openings. It was first mentioned in the Göttingen manuscript of 1490, Salvio and Greco later studied it for analysis in the early seventeenth century (Sarratt 214). White's offensive strategy, which begins on the left side of the centre,

relies heavily on the queen's gambit. The game has a very different personality from king-pawn openings, which frequently lead to open clashes very fast (de Firmian 389).

Walter Stone Tevis was a novelist and short story writer from the United States. *The Hustler*, *The Color of Money*, and *The Man Who Fell to Earth* are three of his six novels that have been turned into big films. A fourth novel, *The Queen's Gambit*, was adapted into a Netflix miniseries of the same name in 2020. His works have been translated into at least 18 languages. In 1959, Harper & Row published his first novel, *The Hustler*. Tevis followed it up with *The Man Who Fell to Earth* in 1963. Such observations inspired *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1980), which is set in a gloomy New York City in the twenty-first century. Walter Tevis was nominated for a Nebula Award for Best Novel for *Mockingbird* in 1980. Walter Tevis also wrote *The Steps of the Sun* (1983), *The Queen's Gambit* (1983), and *The Colour of Money* (1984), the sequel to *The Hustler*. In 1981, *Far from Home*, a compilation of his short stories was published. Meanwhile, many say *The Queen's Gambit* is the most successful chess-themed TV series.

The Queen's Gambit cannot be separated from the life of Walter Tevis. Many elements in the life of Walter Tevis are central to the novel. Chess is one of the important elements in the life of Walter Tevis. Walter Tevis also plays an important role in chess by writing *The Queen's Gambit*. This novel he wrote also provides a different picture of the world of chess at that time and also influences the world of chess today. Besides that, it can be said that *The Queen's Gambit* is Walter Tevis and

Walter Tevis is *The Queen's Gambit*. Walter Tevis is not a writer who only researches chess, but he also goes directly into becoming an amateur chess player with a rating of 1421.

1.2 Identification of Problem

Walter Tevis demonstrates his passion for chess. Walter Tevis had a lifelong love for chess. Chess was in its golden period in the United States at the time. As a result, this research was carried out to demonstrate that Walter Tevis' work *The Queen's Gambit* aimed to show the world that chess is a very interesting game that can represent many things, including himself.

In *The Queen's Gambit*, decades before the writing of the novel, the world of chess was not as kind as it might seem. *The Queen's Gambit* was created by Walter Tevis as an expression of protest against the authority of the chess world at the time. Walter Tevis demonstrated his desire for someone like Beth Harmon to be present in the world through the main character of *The Queen's Gambit*, Beth Harmon, by demonstrating that something was wrong in the world of chess at the time.

1.3 Scope of the Research

Love and Challenges of the World of Chess in Walter Tevis' *The Queen's Gambit* is the title that the writer will develop. The discussion on this subject has three limits. First, the writer will concentrate on Walter Tevis' life as it relates to *The Queen's Gambit*. The events in Walter Tevis' life that influenced his novel. Second, the writer

will concentrate on the 1960s chess environment about Walter Tevis and *The Queen's Gambit*. Walter Tevis has witnessed an increase in the popularity of chess. Meanwhile, third, the writer will focus on things that Walter Tevis loves and things that Walter Tevis considers challenges in the world of chess. These are the factors that prompted the writer to examine Walter Tevis' love and challenges in the world of chess.

1.4 Research Questions

The writer will examine the following research questions in this analysis. Here are the questions.

1. How does Walter Tevis express his love towards the game of chess in *The Queen's Gambit*?
2. What challenges does Walter Tevis want to convey in *The Queen's Gambit* regarding the world of chess?

1.5 Objective of the Research

The writer attempts to express two objectives in this analysis. First, the writer would like to reveal that Walter Tevis loved chess, stating in *The Queen's Gambit* that chess is not only a boring game but also more beautiful than that. This analysis will illustrate the beauty of chess that inspired Walter Tevis to write *The Queen's Gambit*. Second, the writer wants to reveal what challenges Walter Tevis encountered in the world of chess in the 1960s which inspired him to write *The Queen's Gambit*. In this

analysis, the writer will reveal the irregularities that existed in the world of chess at that time.

1.6 Review of the Previous Studies

There are six works that the writer will use as a guide for writing in this thesis. Here are the six works.

The first is a thesis by Qiara Syafira "The Hierarchy of Needs Experienced by Elizabeth Harmon in Walter Tevis' Novel *The Queen's Gambit*". This is the thesis of a student from Sultan Agung Islamic University. This thesis is an inspiration for the writer because like the writer, this thesis also discusses *The Queen's Gambit*. However, in contrast to the analysis that the writer did, this thesis mostly discusses the main character of the novel, while the writer discusses the author's life throughout the novel. In addition, the themes and topics discussed in this thesis and the thesis that the writer is writing are very different.

The second is Zofia Rucka's thesis "A Textual Analysis of Traditional Representations of Women in *The Queen's Gambit*". This is a thesis from Utrecht University, Netherlands. The similarities between this thesis and the writer's thesis are that they both discuss *The Queen's Gambit*. This thesis also provides a brief synopsis of *The Queen's Gambit*. However, there are many differences between this thesis and the writer's thesis. This thesis discusses the series adaptation of the novel. In addition, this thesis discusses more feminist matters in *The Queen's Gambit*.

The third is a journal article entitled "Walter Tevis: Recollections of The Hustler" by Jamie Tevis. This journal describes in sufficient detail the life of Walter Tevis. The writer makes this journal to related study because this article describes the life of Walter Tevis, and the writer also analyses the same thing. Unfortunately, this journal only discusses the life of Walter Tevis and does not discuss *The Queen's Gambit*.

The fourth is Silvia Nofrita's thesis "A Reflection of Charles Dickens" Childhood Experiences in Oliver Twist. This is an English Department student's thesis, graduating in 2010. In this thesis, the author also analyses it using Biographical Criticism. This thesis also explains how to use Biographical Criticism, especially Biographical Authors. The similarity of this thesis with the analysis that the author does is that both use Biographical Criticism which points to the author of the work. However, in this thesis, the author does not only focus on the author of his work but also focuses on the elements in his work.

The fifth is a journal paper by Mohammad Afzal Hossain "Political and Socio-Cultural Poetics of the Novel The Queen's Gambit by Walter Tevis: A New Historicist Perspective." The writer was inspired by this journal article since it tackles political concerns relating to *The Queen's Gambit*. In this journal article, the writer briefly discusses the same topic. The writer's discussion is different from this journal paper in that the writer concentrates on Walter Tevis' life as it relates to *The Queen's Gambit*.

Meanwhile, this journal article examines subjects such as politics, religion, and other racial difficulties.

The sixth is "The Uses of Biography in Criticism" by John Meixner. This journal teaches the technique of Biographical Criticism. According to Meixner, Biographical Criticism supports readers in understanding a work via the author's perspective. Meixner also stated that when employing Biographical Criticism, the primary focus must be on the work being analysed. The writer's examination and this publication have one thing in common: they both focus on Biographical Criticism. The difference is that this journal is limited to Biographical Criticism, whereas the writer's analysis goes beyond that.

