

CLASS STRUGGLE AS SEEN AS IN *UPSIDE DOWN* MOVIE

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CLASS STRUGGLE AS SEEN AS IN *UPSIDE DOWN* MOVIE

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ABSTRAK

Film telah menjadi wajah baru dari sebuah karya sastra. Film sangat menarik untuk di analisis karena terdapat dua aspek penting pada film yaitu Audio dan Visual. Pada penelitian ini, *Upside Down* movie menjadi subyek dari penelitian ini. Film ini menceritakan tentang dua buah dunia kembar yang mengelilingi satu matahari. Dari dua dunia tersebut terdapat perbedaan yang sangat signifikan yaitu Up Top World yang berisi orang-orang kaya dan Down Below yang berisi orang-orang miskin. Kedua dunia tersebut hanya terhubung lewat satu perusahaan besar yang bernama Transworld. Perbedaan kedua dunia tersebut menyebabkan perbedaan status sosial atau kelas sosial. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan bagaimana bourgeois dan proletar digambarkan dalam film ini dan bagaimana class struggle dilakukan. Penelitian ini menggunakan Marxist teori sebagai teori utama dan Film teori sebagai teori pendukung. Setelah menganalisa seluruh data yang telah dikumpulkan, dapat disimpulkan bahwa karena adanya sebuah pembatasan dan pembeda antara kedua dunia, maka pihak dari proletariat akan melakukan class struggle untuk mendapat kesetaraan. Proletariat disini tidak saja rakyat yang berasal dari Down Below, karena semua rakyat entah berasal dari Up Top maupun Down Below, jika mereka bekerja kepada Transworld, mereka tetap tergolong sebagai proletariat.

Keywords: *Upside Down* movie, class struggle, bourgeoisie, proletariat

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By: Muhammad Tomy Mahfudz

ABSTRACT

Film has become the new face of a literary work. Movie is very interesting for the analysis because there are two important aspects in the film, there are Audio and Visual. In this study, the researcher chooses *Upside Down* movie to be the subject of this study. This film tells about two twin worlds that surround one sun. From the two worlds there is a very significant difference that is Up Top World which contains the rich and Down Below that contains the poor. Both worlds are only connected through one big company called Transworld. The differences between the two worlds cause differences in social status or social class. This study aims to discover how bourgeois and proletariat are depicted in this film and how the class struggle is done. This study uses Marxist theory as the main theory and Film theory as a supporting theory. After analyzing all the data gathered, it can be concluded that because of a restriction and differentiation between the two worlds, the parties of the proletariat will do the class struggle for equality. The proletariat here is not only the people who come from Down Below, because all the people either come from Up Top or Down Below, if they work for Transworld, they remain classified as the proletariat.

Keywords: *Upside Down* movie, class struggle, bourgeoisie, proletariat

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to;

My Beloved Parents

My beloved brother and sister

My big family

My great teachers and lecturers

English Literature Department of UIN Sunan Kalijaga



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MOTTO

No Sacrifice, No Victory



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of Study

Literature is the representation of human life through art works or literary works, like social life, politics, culture, and many other things that are related to human life. It can cover all aspects in human life, including social aspects. This occurs influential, because it includes the relation between each individual to their social environment. Actually, social life is mostly described in the kind of literature that is called movie or film. Villarejo said, film is an evanescent experience, archived in memory, consigned to the realm of the unseen. If preservationists reclaim some of what has been lost, they and we will never be able to assert full or final control over the visible world; we will only catch glimpses of it (2007: 7).

Basically, film is one of the literary works that manifest of society. It means that films often depict human life in general by raising issues that often occur in the society. It is actually a way of film director for delivering her/ his message to the audience, in other words, the film director wants to sensitize the audience on the surrounding environment through the film. Talking about the delivery of messages, there are two ways a film director conveying the message, which is implicitly or explicitly. This is related to Jacobs' statements.

The explicit content is some sort of "moral value" or socio-political attitude that the filmmaker wanted to show through the film. Whereas, implicit content is a deeper level of interpretation, which may be less

obvious however can still be inferred by seeing how the characters are changed, grown and developed throughout the course of the film. Issues and ideas dealing with general human relations may be easy to recognize although it is not explicitly stated by the character. Implicit and explicit are based on the film as a self-contained work, on “internal evidence”. It is possible to find richer meaning in a film, by knowing all about its creator, time and place it as created, meaning from “external evidence” that is not possible to identify exclusively from the film itself (as cited in <http://und.edu/instruct/cjacobs/FilmTheory&Analysis.html>).

As mentioned above, films often depict human life in general by raising issues that often occur in the society. This also applies in the *Upside Down*, a film which the researcher uses as the object in this research. *Upside Down* is a kind of fantasy and romance film.

Just like most of the film, *Upside Down* also raises issues that often occur in the society. In *Upside Down*, there are complicated social problems that is very interesting to be discussed, those are class struggle issue and the conflict social between the classes. For example, the content of the film is where the restriction is happening to the people of the two worlds to interact with each other. The only official contact for people from both worlds is Transworld, Transworld's created by drawing oil from Down Below to be processed by Transworld and resold as electricity and high price to Down below. This makes Adam conduct class struggle to change his life, although Adam does not realize that the act he does is a class struggle and had a potential to change his life and others. With Bob's help, eventually they can make both worlds have no limitation anymore. These are the reasons why the researcher chooses *Upside Down* as the object of research. In every society, there is always a difference of social class, and the existence of social class will trigger the exploitation. The exploitation of social class will make

an inequality and then class struggle will appear. Just like what Marx and Engels said, the class struggle will always in the history of all societies (2008: 7). The main purpose conveyed by Solanas as the director of the film quite deep; he wants to portray to the audience how the difference between the upper class and the oppressed is. Things that make it different from another film are the existence of two twin planets that orbiting to one sun, however the life that comes from each planet is so different. And the love story problem that makes this movie becomes comedy movie. There is another reason why the researcher chooses *Upside Down* as the object of the research. It is important to know about the world is never being the same in everything. It always has a difference and also has a distinction every aspects, and sometimes it opposes to each other: big and small, young and old, good and bad, rich and poor, positive and negative. It has been described in the Qur'an Surah Al Dzariyat verse 49 below:

وَمِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقْنَا زَوْجَيْنِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٤٩﴾

“And of all things We created two mates; perhaps you will remember.”
(www.quran.com/51)

The verse above explains that everything in this world is created in pairs, covering two different things. Because of these differences, the formation of social groups naturally occurs. In every social group, there are different social classes that separate one group to another. The opposite is also described on this film; in the distinction of the lower and high class social class that makes the lower social class has to struggle to change their fate to achieve their purpose.

Upside Down published in 2012 film that tells the story of two people who live in two different planets that have double gravity. There are two planets there, which is upside down. These planets do not rotate and they just hang in the sky. There is a law of nature that made people from the up top world will always be pulled to up top world and people from the down below will always be pulled to down below. In addition, there is also a law of nature that makes the things that were in place that were not supposed burned (things belonging to up top world will be burned if it is on down below world). All things are pulled by the gravity of the world it comes from, and not the other. An object's weight can be offset by inverse matter, or things from the opposite world. After some time in contact, things in contact with inverse matter burns. So there is a limit for each different world to have a contact with the different world.

Upside Down movie also contains love story. Like another love stories about the rich and the poor, their love story is also not approved. Adam Kirk is a boy from down below that falls in love with Eden Moore from up top world. One time, they met in secret at Sage Mountain. However, bad things happen. Eden got an accident that made her amnesia. After ten years have not met, Adam sees Eden on TV. He recognizes that Eden is working in TransWorld. TransWorld is an oil generator corporation that take oil from down below, to be processed in the upper world and then sold in electricity to down below with higher price. This is the one and only connection between both worlds. Therefore, Adam tries to use TransWorld to meet Eden and win her back.

There is a social distinctions in this movie, there are two classes, they are the up top and the down below. The up top described as the developed country and the down below described as the developing country. As stated in *Cambridge Business English Dictionary*, developed country is “a country with a lot of industrial activity and where people generally have high incomes” (<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/developed-country>), while developing country is “a country with little industrial and economic activity and where people generally have low incomes” (<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/developing-country>).

The social distinctions that cause class struggle in this film intends the researcher interest to analyze the class struggle described in *Upside Down*.

1.2. Research Questions

Based on the background of study in this research, some questions will be formulated as follows:

1. How is the class struggle described in *Upside Down* movie?
2. How can the classification of the social class in *Upside Down* movie be explained?

1.3. Objectives of Study

Based on the case that has stated in the problem statements above, the objectives of this research are:

1. To find out the class struggle described in *Upside Down* movie.
2. To describe the classification of social class in *Upside Down* movie.

1.4. Significances of Study

This research is discovering how the world's like in social aspect like the distinction between two different social classes. The significance of this research has direct and indirect usage, theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research hopefully gives the understanding about research to a movie, and gives a significances to literature development that proper to its existence as a cultural studies that related to a *capitalism* in *Upside Down* Movie. This research hopefully have a capability to give an idea in the application of cultural studies with Marxist theory especially *Capitalism*.

Practically, the researcher expects that the reader of this research has an interest about analyzing a movie to get the point inside the movie. This research is usefully expected to give a significances to the academic as a reference on their next research. It is very expected to the reader of this paper about the *capitalism* that drawn in this movie and the *capitalism* in the real life.

1.5. Literature Review

There are some prior researches that have relationship with the topic of this research. The first prior research is taken from Sanata Dharma University, entitled "A Study on Class Struggle: The Reaction of Working Class toward Bourgeois' Oppressions in the 19th Century France as Seen in Emile Zola's *Germinal*" by Fransiska Chandra Leonita in 2009. The problem statements of this study are: (1) how are the settings and characters in Zola's *Germinal* described? (2) what are the oppressions experienced by working class as reflected through the settings and characters? (3) what are the workers' reactions to the oppressions

they experienced?. The objectives of this study are to find out the description of setting and historical background of the novel, and also the characters described by the author, to identify the oppressions through the working class life experience in the novel, and to find out the reaction of the workers toward the oppressions. This study uses library research as the method. To answer the problem statements, this study uses some theories; they are the theories of character, characterization, setting, and Marxism theory (theory of oppression and class struggle). This study also uses socio-cultural historical approach. The results of this study are that working class in France in the 19th century was treated unfairly by bourgeois. They were exploited physically, mentally, and economically. They are also oppressed by the insecurity of workings. The working class reacted against the oppressions in three forms: they did ideological struggle, they were united by making a union and collecting provident funds, and they go to economic struggle.

The second prior research is also taken from Sanata Dharma University, entitled “The Class Struggle as the Impact of Oppression by the Ruling Class as Seen through Characters in Clifford Odets’ *Waiting for Lefty*”, by Cahya Ari Nugroho in 2012. The problem statements of this study are: (1) how are the characters described? (2) how is the oppression experienced by the oppressed characters portrayed? (3) how is the class struggle as the impact of oppression portrayed. The objectives of this study are to describe the characters, to identify the oppression experienced by the character, and to find out how the class struggle as the impact of oppression experienced by the oppresses characters can appear to

the surface. This study uses library research as the method of the research. This study uses some approaches to answer the problem statements; they are Marxism approach and economic, social, and political philosophy approach. The results of this study are: the character described as proletariat and capitalist, there is oppression that experienced by the characters before they are doing a resistance, and all of the resistance action is triggering the class struggle.

The third prior research is taken from UIN Sunan Kalijaga, entitled “The Struggle of Lower Class against the Government as Seen in *Elysium* Movie” by Ahmad Faqikhudin in 2015. The problem statements of this study are: (1) how are the upper class and the lower class represented in *Elysium* movie? (2) how does the upper class oppress the lower class? (3) how does the lower class struggle to achieve the justice and equality against the upper class?. The objectives of this study are to identify how the upper class and lower class are represented in *Elysium* movie, to describe how the upper class oppresses the lower class, and to analyze how the lower class struggle to achieve the justice and equality against upper class. This study uses and objective approach by applying Marxist class struggle theory and supported by representation theory of Stuart Hall. The results of this study are that the struggle of lower class in the movie is the way of lower class to get their justice. The portrayal of lower class is an attempt of reversing the representation of government through a negative meaning.

1.6. Theoretical Approach

1.6.1. Marxist Theory

The first Marxist theory that is used in this research is capitalism. This is used to answer the second research question, which is about the classification of social class. Capitalism is the superstructure of society that consist of culture, ideology and politics that follow the basic structure of society. According to *The Macmillan Dictionary of Modern Economics*, capitalism means:

Political, social, and economic system in which property, including capital assets, is owned and controlled for the most part by private persons. Capitalism contrasts with an earlier economic system, feudalism, in that it is characterized by the purchase of labor for money wages as opposed to the direct labor obtained through custom, duty or command in feudalism.... Under capitalism, the price mechanism is used as a signaling system which allocates resources between uses. The extent to which the price mechanism is used, the degree of competitiveness in markets, and the level of government intervention distinguish exact forms of capitalism. (*Macmillan Dictionary of Modern Economics*, 3rd Ed., 1986, p. 54.)

The researcher chooses Marxist theory to analyze this movie. Marxist theory has some roles in human life. Marx explains about how society works especially an account of the nature capitalism. Capitalism brings a destruction to old society and builds a new society that escort it to socialist revolution proletariat (F. Engels).

Long before me the bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this struggle of the classes and bourgeois economist the economic anatomy of the classes. What I did that was new was to prove:

- 1) That the existence of classes is only bound up with particular historical phases in the development of production;
- 2) That the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat;
- 3) That this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of all classes and to a classless society. (marxist.org)

Starting on an event that led to the formation of the social class that is the explosion in the building Transworld makes oil taken from Down Below have to spill and contaminate Down Below. From this incident it creates a situation where their classes are different between the two worlds. After the existence of social classes, there appeared rules that restrict the contact between the two worlds.

Some aspects of social and technological mechanism are: the division of labor for the production of capital, class-structure, technological modernization of the means of production, and commodity exchange. Each of the mechanisms has informed the film industry from its very beginning. In the domain film, they form the powerful culture-producing piece of social machinery that Marxist film theorists have come to call “the cinematic apparatus”.

The mechanism of the division of labor of the production of capital is very easy to see how the relations between studio executives, directors, actors, extras, etc. The mechanism of the class-system tends implicit to endorse the most conservative of bourgeois values. Protagonists are routinely constructed as a paragon of Endurance, of loyalty, of Self-sacrifice, of Individuality, and so forth. The mechanism of technological modernization as Mark pointed out (Capital, 115), the driving force behind the development of industrial technologies has always been the desire to standardize labor practices and relegate laborers to increasingly specialized roles within the overall process. Thus, with technological revolution, the artist and craftsmen who once labored to produce finished goods soon found themselves reduced to the role of anonymous “workmen” who labored in teams to produce parts of product. The mechanism of commodity exchange

under the capitalism system, manufactured goods take the form of commodities. By definition, a commodity is a product of labor whose value is no longer calculated on the basis of its intrinsic qualities. Rather the value of a commodity-product is solely determined by the exchange market. Thus the imposition of a market economy arbitrarily determines by the exchange market.

The main aspect is the distinction in classes. *Upside Down* movie distinguish the classes in two classes, the up top world and down below. The up top world is the place of the wealthy and prosperous, in the other hand the down below is a place for the poor people, dirty and they have to steal to warm their house. It makes a conflict between the two world that there are a limitation about the contact between the two world. The opposite that occur come from different social classes as stated by Maclver.

“We shall then mean by a social class any portion of a community which is marked off from the rest, not by limitations arising out of language, locality, function, or specialization, however primarily by social status.” (Maclver, 1937: 167)

The other aspect is the system of *consumerisme* that uses cosmetics as a symbol of the *consumerism*. Nowadays, cosmetics are the symbol of the beauty, and sometimes people have willing to spend their money to get it. And another example is the way that the TransWorld or people from up top take to get an advantages by taking the resources from down below to be processed and they sell it to down below with high prices. As Marshall identified, social class is a power that forces people into different groups from one another, by rejecting the differences between them (Marshall, 1950:114).

In the movie, the people from up top take the resources from the down world and they cultivate it and resell it with high prices to the people from down below. It is a reflection of *capitalism* that has been described by Karl Marx. In fact, capitalism gives adverse effect, which is the widening gap between the rich and the poor. Here, the rich are often called the bourgeoisie, while the poor are often called the proletariat or worker class. According to Engels “Bourgeoisie is meant as the class of modern capitalists, owners of the means of social production and employers of wage labour. Proletariat, the class of modern wage labourers with no means of production of their own, are reduced to sell their labour power in order to live” (as cited in Marx and Engels, 1848: 14). In practice, the proletariat is often exploited by the bourgeois. Therefore, the proletariat takes the fight to get their rights. In Marxist theory, this is called class struggle. He says that class struggle is carried out by the working class only if capitalism is giving difficulties to their economic and social as well as aspirations. Indeed, there is no evidence to say that the working class wants to the struggle; however capitalism is the one who force them to struggle (1978: 42).

1.6.2. Film Theory

Film theory debates the essence of the cinema and provides conceptual frameworks for understanding film’s relationship to reality, the other arts, individual viewers, and society at large. The process of film analysis is film analyzed in terms of scene, montage, cinematography, sound and editing. In Marxist theory, there are some aspects that makes this theory relate to this movie.

The approaches to the film studies focus on the ways of cinema sometimes perpetuates, and sometimes betrays, the ideological mechanisms that rationalize the bourgeois world-view. These ideological mechanisms include both the social institutions and the industrial technologies that actively have a function to produce the bourgeois culture that we consume in a daily basis.

Film is structured like a language. Cinema's dynamism, its capacity to arrange and rearrange time and motion, thus reveals its dimensions that are deeply social, historical, industrial, technological, philosophical, political, aesthetic, psychological, personal and so forth.

Film theory debates the essence of the cinema to understand the relationship between movies with reality, the other arts, individual viewers and social life. This term is not to be confused with film analysis. Film analysis is the process to analyze the scene, montage, cinematography, sound and editing.

The researcher takes movie as the main data of the research, so the researcher takes film theory for the second theory. The film theory is used to support the analysis. The writer uses film theory to support the analysis of the capitalism and class struggle in this movie. The film theory gives clear explanation of what the producer means in the movie. What has been played in the screen of the movie always have a meaning. According to Quinones, movie has five elements that used to describe the ways of the meaning of the film is created; they are cinematography, *Mise-en-scène*, narrative, sound and editing (Quinones, 2007: 3).

1.7. Method of Research

1.7.1. Type of Research

The analyzing of the data is carried out by qualitative approaches. Qualitative research is not using statistic and quantification to analyze data. This research uses expressions, words and actions from the subject. (Djunaidi and Fauzan, 2012: 13).

1.7.2. Data Sources

In this research, the researcher gets the data from the science-fiction, romance movie, *Upside Down* movie. The data that the researcher uses are the script, scene and dialogue of *Upside Down* movie as the main data source. The researcher also uses books, journals, articles and websites that have relation to the topic as supporting data.

1.7.3. Data Collection Technique

The researcher takes the text, the act and the scene of *Upside Down* movie for collecting the data. First, the researcher watches the “*Upside Down*” movie and then reads the script to choose where parts would be chosen to be analyzed using Marxist theory.

The researcher classifies and divides every scene in “*Upside Down*” movie that relate to the research. The researcher chooses the data to be used as the main data. And then the researcher makes it simple into units of data that will be easier to be analyzed. The researcher also collects some data as the supporting data, and

then the researcher analyzes the data using the theory that is chosen for this research.

1.7.4. Data Analysis Technique

The analyzing of the data is carried out by qualitative approaches. The researcher focuses on the data that related to the theory. Researchers also saw among the data if among these data have any connection or not with each other. The researcher analyze deeper from scene that choosen, the expression, and the dialog from the movie as the source of data by using *marxist theory* in the *Capitalism* concept of Karl Marx.

1.8. Paper Organization

This section is the arrangement of the research that starts from chapter one that contain of background of study that explain about the reason why the researcher interesting to this case to research, research questions, objectives of study, significances of study, literature review, theoretical approach, method of research, and paper organization.

Chapter two is about the explanation of the intrinsic element of *Upside Down* movie that contain of kind movie, character and characterization, theme and settings, and plot summary.

Chapter three is the analysis that explains about the main point of the research that contain of explanation from the data that has gotten from the approaches. The analysis divided into two main points: classification of social class and class struggle.

In chapter four, there is the conclusion from the analysis from the chapter before and suggestion for the next research.



CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

4.1. Conclusion

This research has a purpose to analyze how social classifications that occur in the *Upside Down* movie. Social class is divided between Bourgeois and proletariat. On the Bourgeois is described as Transworld and William Lagavullin as Landlord. While on the proletariat is described as people who work in Transworld as an employee. Although both people from two worlds work at Transworld, however the treatment of the people of the two worlds is different. The treatment of the employees from Down Below is stricter than the treatment of the employees from Up Top World.

In Class Struggle that performed by the characters, there are four points that sums it all up, namely (1) Form of Class Struggle (2) Motive of Class Struggle (3) Effect of Class Struggle (4) Significance of Class Struggle.

There are two forms of Class Struggle in this movie. They are the ideological Class Struggle Economical Class Struggle. Due to the poor conditions endured by the people of Down Below caused Adam to strive to do the Class Struggle. In addition due to economic problems, Adam also did the Class Struggle with the purpose to be reunited with Eden. The motives of the Class Struggle that Adam did is based on the economic problems that occur in most people of Down below, and, also because Adam wanted to pursue Eden. The effect on Adam when doing Class Struggle is he experienced some of the events that changed his life when he was doing Class Struggle and thereafter. He experienced a lot of things as a fugitive and forbidden to meet with Eden again. As well, he was also forced to give up his research that he developed to belong to Transworld. The results of the Class Struggle that Adam do is he can get back together with Eden and lives

between two worlds changed, and no longer the gap that separates the two worlds. Importance of Class Struggle in the movie is how Adam to make changes that not only change his life however he also could change the lives of others and even the two worlds. This movie teaches that everything can change when someone is willing and able to change their own without ever giving up.

4.2. Suggestion

This movie teaches that everything can change when someone is willing and able to change his/her own without ever giving up. The researcher has suggestion for another researcher that want to analyze about social changes. Social changes can be found in Islamic perspective. In Al Quran, Surah Ar-Ra'd verse 11;

لَهُ مُعَقَّبَاتٌ مِّنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ يَحْفَظُونَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ وَإِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ سُوءًا فَلَا مَرَدَّ لَهُ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِّنْ دُونِهِ مِنِّ وَالٍ ﴿١١﴾

For each one are successive [angels] before and behind him who protect him by the decree of Allah . Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves. And when Allah intends for a people ill, there is no repelling it. And there is not for them besides Him any patron. (Ar- Ra'd, 11)

The verse above has a relation with social changes. “Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves”. Just like the point of class struggle that has a purpose to change their life, they have to struggle. From Islamic perspective, the God not only give a guidance to worship

the God, however also give a guidance of social life. Everyone who wants to change their life, they have to struggle to change it.



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