

**ALIENATION AND CLASS STRUGGLE AS SEEN IN CLOUDY WITH A
CHANCE OF MEATBALLS FILM**

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Degree in English Literature



By:

FIKRIA HANIFAH

14150005

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

FACULTY OF ADAB AND CULTURAL SCIENCES

STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY SUNAN KALIJAGA

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A FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

I certify that this thesis is definitely my own and I am completely responsible for the content of this thesis. Other writers' opinions or findings included in the thesis are quoted or cited in accordance with ethical standards.

Yogyakarta, 27 July 2018



Fikria Hanifah

Student No.14150005



KEMENTERIAN AGAMA
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI SUNAN KALIJAGA
FAKULTAS ADAB DAN ILMU BUDAYA
Jl. Marsda Adisucipto Telp. (0274) 513949 Fax. (0274) 552883 Yogyakarta 55281

PENGESAHAN TUGAS AKHIR

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Tugas Akhir dengan judul : "ALIENATION AND CLASS STRUGGLE AS SEEN IN CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS FILM"

yang dipersiapkan dan disusun oleh:

Nama : FIKRIA HANIFAH
Nomor Induk Mahasiswa : 14150005
Telah diujikan pada : Senin, 20 Agustus 2018
Nilai ujian Tugas Akhir : A-

dinyatakan telah diterima oleh Fakultas Adab dan Ilmu Budaya UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta

TIM UJIAN TUGAS AKHIR

Ketua Sidang

Dr. Witriani, S.S. M.Hum.
NIP. 19720801 200604 2 002

Penguji I

Danial Hidayatullah, SS., M.Hum.
NIP. 19760405 200901 1 016

Penguji II

Ulyati Retno Sari, S.S. M.Hum.
NIP. 19771115 200501 2 002

Yogyakarta, 20 Agustus 2018
UIN Sunan Kalijaga
Fakultas Adab dan Ilmu Budaya
DEKAN



Prof. Dr. H. Alyan Khoiri, M.A.
NIP. 19600224 198803 1 001



KEMENTERIAN AGAMA REPUBLIK INDONESIA
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI SUNAN KALIJAGA
FAKULTAS ADAB DAN ILMU BUDAYA
Jl. Marsda Adi Sucipto Yogyakarta 55281 Telp./Fax. (0274)
513949

Web: <http://adab.uin-suka.ac.id> Email: adab@uin-suka.ac.id

NOTA DINAS

Hal : Skripsi
a.n. Fikria Hanifah

Yth.
Dekan Fakultas Adab dan Ilmu Budaya
UIN Sunan Kalijaga
di Yogyakarta

Assalamualaikum wr. wb

Setelah memeriksa, meneliti, dan memberikan arahan untuk perbaikan atas skripsi saudara:

Nama : Fikria Hanifah
NIM : 14150005
Prodi : Sastra Inggris
Fakultas : Adab dan Ilmu Budaya
Judul :

**“Alienation and Class Struggle As Seen in Cloudy with
a Chance of Meatballs Film”**

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Atas perhatian yang diberikan, saya ucapkan terima kasih.

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Yogyakarta, 3 Juli 2018

Pembimbing


Dr. Witriani, SS., M.Hum

NIP. 19720801 200604 2 002

The Alienation and Class Struggle as Seen in *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* Film (2009)

By: Fikria Hanifah

ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the actions of the characters that contain the alienation and class struggle in *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* film. In this film, alienation occurs because of the oppression done by the upper class, and class struggle is one of the ways to overcome the alienation. This research applies qualitative method to describe the alienation and class struggle in this film by using two theories proposed by Marxists. Alienation and class struggle theory by Karl Marx become the main theory, and film theory by Amy Villarejo is taken as the supporting theory to identify the findings in this research. From the analysis, it can be concluded that the society of Swallows Fall island is alienated because of the mayor's oppression, and Flint, the main character, strives for the economical and ideological class struggle to overcome the alienation toward Swallows Fall society.

Key Words: Marxist, alienation, class struggle, *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*

The Alienation and Class Struggle as Seen in *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* Film (2009)

Oleh: Fikria Hanifah

ABSTRAK

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis tindakan karakter yang mengandung alienasi dan perjuangan kelas dalam film *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*. Di dalam film alienasi ini terjadi karena penindasan kelas atas, dan perjuangan kelas adalah cara untuk mengatasi alienasi itu sendiri. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif untuk mendeskripsikan alienasi dan perjuangan kelas yang terdapat dalam film. Penelitian ini juga menggunakan 2 macam teori Marxist, teori alienasi dan perjuangan kelas oleh Karl Marx sebagai teori utama dan teori film, *Cinematography* oleh Amy Villarejo sebagai teori pendukung penelitian. Dari analisis, peneliti menemukan bahwa masyarakat pulau Swallows Fall teralienasi oleh penindasan tokoh Walikota sebagai kelas atas, dan Flint sebagai karakter utam amelakukan perjuangan kelas ekonomi dan perjuangan kelas ideologis untuk mengatasi alienasi yang dialami masyarakat di pulau Swallows Fall.

Kata Kunci: Marxisme, Alienasi, Perjuangan Kelas, *Cloudy with a Chance Of Meatballs*

MOTTO

“Sesungguhnya sesudah kesulitan itu ada kemudahan.”

(QS. Al Insyirah: 6)



DEDICATION

Sincerely, I dedicate this Paper to:

My Beloved Parents Mr. Slamet and Mrs. Retno Maya Saroh S.Pd.I.

My Beloved Brother Fahmi Tauhid SPd.I.



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Finally, I realized that this research has many errors in the writing. Therefore, I do hope all of the readers do not mind giving suggestions for the improvements of this paper.

Yogyakarta, 3 July 2018

The Researcher,

Fikria Hanifah
Student No.14150005

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COVER	i
A FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT	ii
APPROVAL	iii
NOTA DINAS	iv
ABSTRACT	v
ABSTRAK	vi
MOTTO	vii
DEDICATION	viii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ix
TABLE OF CONTENTS	xi
LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Background of Choosing the Subject.....	1
1.2. Research Question.....	6
1.3. Objective of Study.....	7
1.4. Significances of Study.....	7
1.5. Literature Review	7
1.6. Theoretical Approach.....	9
1.6.1. Alienation Theory.....	9
1.6.2. Class Struggle.....	10
1.6.3. Film Theory	11
1.7. Method of Research	13
1.7.1. Type of Research	13
1.7.2. Data Source.....	13

1.7.3. Data Collection Technique	14
1.7.4. Data Analysis Technique	14
1.8. Paper Organization.....	15
CHAPTER II INTRINSIC ELEMENTS.....	16
2.1. Theme	16
2.2. Characters and Characterization.....	18
2.2.1 Round Character	18
2.2.2. Flat Character.....	23
2.3. Setting of Place.....	28
2.4. Setting of Time	28
2.5. Plot Summary	30
CHAPTER III DISCUSSION	35
3.1. The Identification of Social Class	35
3.1.1. The Upper Class	36
3.1.2. The Lower Class	40
3.2. Alienation of the Swallows Fall Society.....	43
3.3. The Struggle of Lower Class Against The Upper Class	48
3.3.1. Class Struggle of Flint Lockwood	49
3.3.2. The Motive of Flint Class Struggle	54
3.3.3. The Significance of Class Struggle.....	56
CHAPTER IV CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION	59
4.1. Conclusion.....	59
4.2. Suggestion	61
REFERENCES.....	62
CURRICULUM VITAE.....	64

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 The shot of Baby Brent Sardines company in the Swallow Falls	4
Figure 2 The shot of Baby Brent Sardines cans sold in the shop of Flint's Dad	5
Figure 3 Flint struggles to stop the FLDSMDFR machine.	17
Figure 4 The Shot of Flint Lockwood	19
Figure 5 Flint with ambitious face.....	19
Figure 6 Flint disappointed with his Failure.....	20
Figure 7 The Shot of Sam Spark.....	21
Figure 8 The Shot of the Mayor of Swallow Falls	22
Figure 9 The Shot of Flint's Mom.....	23
Figure 10 The Shot Flint's Dad	24
Figure 11 The Shot Many	25
Figure 12 Many helps Earl's son who get sick.....	25
Figure 13 The Shot of Baby Brent.....	26
Figure 14 The Shot of Earl	27
Figure 15 The Shot of Swallows FallIsland in Map.....	28
Figure 16 Cars in Swallows Fallisland	29
Figure 17 The shot of Flint's Laboratory	29
Figure 18 The Major speaks in front of Swallows Fallsociety.....	39
Figure 19 The Shot of Swallows Fallisland.....	42

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of Choosing the Subject

According to Abrams (2009:177), literature (from the Latin *litteraturae* “writings”) has been commonly used since the eighteenth century, equivalently with the French *belles lettres* (“fine letters”), to designate fictional and imaginative writings-poetry, prose fiction, and drama. Literature is not only a kind of writings but also a kind of philosophical writing. It makes literature be part of life because it brings the experience of life into literary works.

Thus, literature work is not only an object of entertainment but also a representation of life. Literature persuades people to understand more about social in life through literary works. Literature helps us as a human being to understand this life by analyzing the expression of what people feel and think through literary works (Rees.1973:9).

One of the most developed kinds of literary works is film. Film is popular in this modern era. In film studies, we can see another point of view of film and find its cultural value inside. Film is a social practice for its makers and its audiences; in its narratives and meanings, we can locate evidence of the ways in which our culture makes sense of itself (Turner, 1988:3).The film presents a social practice of the views of its makers, such as the experience and culture experienced by its makers and consumed by audiences who also have experiences and culture. Film is not even the final target of enquiry, but part of a wider argument about

representation—the social process of making images, sounds, signs, stand for something—in film or television (Turner, 1988:47). So, by analyzing film, we can find the representation which connects to social meanings as seen in film elements. This research analyzes an animation film *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* produced by Columbia Pictures in 2009 and directed by Phil Lord and Christopher Miller.

Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs film is about a scientist named Flint Lockwood who really wants his findings to be useful for Swallow Falls, the island where he lives. Swallow Falls is known as an island that produces sardine and all of the people there only eat processed sardine. The situation gets worse when the sardine Company in Swallow Falls island is closed. It causes people to eat the sardine from there, and it makes them get bored of eating sardines every day. Flint wants to change this situation. He makes a machine named FLDSMDFR which can produce many kinds of food. He does it, but the machine goes error and flies up to the sky and makes foods falling from there. The citizens of Swallow Falls are happy and proud of him because of his finding. This situation is used by the mayor to get benefit from Flint's machine. He cheats on Flint to use the machine to promote Swallow Falls to the world

The researcher is interested to analyze *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* film because of some specific reasons. First, this film shows the social conflict in human life, especially between the government and the society. In social life, the

government is supposed to protect the people not threatens or gives a heavy burden to them (<https://www.hipwee.com/opini/peran-pemerintah-untuk-rakyat/>). The government is expected to solve problem which can harm the society. In this film, the government is depicted as a dictator government. It is represented in the character of the mayor. The mayor as the government abuses the society for his own business. He does not solve the problem in the sardine company from collapse, but he burdens the society with his rules. Moreover, the problem in this film is irony because the sardine company as the commodity of Swallows Fallisland abused the society instead. The commodity of the state actually should prosper the society. It should improve the wealth of the society. In addition, *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* film reveals the role of scientists to improve the economy of a state. It is represented by the character of Flint Lockwood who wants to improve the economy commodity in Swallows Fall island. These reasons motivate the researcher to analyze *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* film.

Based on the story of *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* film, the researcher found several problems between the character of the Mayor and the Swallow Falls residents. Sardine is the commodity of economy in Swallows Fallisland. The Baby Brent sardine company under the control of the government is built as the biggest sardine Industry in the Swallows Fallisland. It raises assumption that the most of Swallows Fallisland inhabitants work in the Baby Brent Sardine company. It can be seen at this following picture:



Fig.1. The shot of Baby Brent Sardines company in the Swallows Fallisland. (*Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*, 00:04:11)

The picture uses long shot to show the Baby Brent Sardines company as the biggest sardines industry in Swallows Fallisland. The picture also uses back-light as the lighting to show the depth of the picture and to show the misery condition of the setting. The big building as seen in the picture leads to the assumption that the society of Swallow Falls island work in this company. Another indicator that shows Baby Brent Sardines is a large company is its canned sardines product is also produced all over the island. It can be depicted in this following scene:



Fig.2. The shot of Baby Brent Sardines cans sold in the shop of Flint's Dad (*Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*, 00:09:50).

The picture uses medium long shot, and it depicts Flint is selling Baby Brent Sardines cans in his Dad's shop. The picture uses key light to show the objects all over the picture. It proves the Baby Brent Sardines Company is a big company because of its large marketing.

The collapse of the Baby Brent sardines company under the control of the government in Swallows FallIsland causes its residents to be oppressed. They are required to eat their own product, the sardines from the Baby Brent sardine company because the sardines that have been their main commodity are no longer sold in the world. It does not give them any choices but eat sardines every day. They feel queasy to eat sardine every day even the sardine processed in various ways. They think that sardine is super gross food, but they have no choice to eat sardine everyday. The government on the Swallows FallIsland, the character of the mayor who has the power to regulate things on the island, ignores

people's opinions. Instead, he wants to turn Swallows Fallisland into the island of sardines without considering the people who feel depressed. It makes the society in Swallows Fallisland is abused by the mayor. This situation creates conflict between the character of the mayor and the Swallows Fallsociety. The main character of the film, Flint Lockwood is also the society who feels abused. He is the only one who is conscious to abolish the abused. He wants to help the Swallows Fallisland with his ability as a scientist.

The problem between the character of the mayor and the society of Swallows Fallisland in *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* raises the issues of the social conflict in the relation between the society and the government. The researcher is interested to analyze how the conflict between the government and the society of Swallows Fallisland can be explained and how the effect of the conflict between these two group can be explained.

1.2. Research Question

Based on the explanation above, this paper concerns to identify:

1. How the conflict between the government and the society of Swallows Fallisland can be explained?
2. How the effect of the conflict between these two groups is explained?

1.3. Objective of Study

Based on the problem statement above, this paper aims to analyze the alienation of Swallow Falls' society. It also analyzes the class struggle of Flint to overcome the alienation because of the government exploitation.

1.4. Significances of Study

This paper has several significances, such as it describes the capitalist government policies that restrict the lower class people and impedes the development of the country. Beside, the readers can get a sight about the application of Marxism theories to research object. For the researcher, the paper can give a knowledge of literature theory and how it can be applied to literary works.

1.5. Literature Review

The researcher found only one research about *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*. It is a linguistic research in a journal form analyzed by Dwi Wahyu Apriani and Tita Ratna Wulandari from University of Bina Darma. The title is *Engaging EFL Students in Understanding Pragmatics through the Analysis of Verbal Humor in Cartoon Film "Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs"*. This journal analyze show the film could promote English language training and how the visualization enhances student's inspiration and the input of their comprehension of study, basically pragmatics with conversational humor within the movie. The analysis was in linguistic basis, so it is different from the current analysis which uses literary theory.

The researcher also found four papers which use the same theory as this research. The first paper is entitled *An Analysis of Marxism Alienation In The Lorax Movie* analyzed by Fajar Amrulloh Ahmad from Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University. This research examines *The Lorax* movie using Marxist alienation theory as the theoretical approach. The purpose of this research is to describe the alienation process in the movie. The result shows that the relation between capitalism and alienation happening in the movie is related to the product and the production process. The difference between the analysis above and the current analysis is that the analysis above only uses alienation theory and does not use class struggle theory.

The second one is a paper written by Khoirul Rizal from Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University entitled *The Struggle of Lower Class As Seen In Mad Max: Fury Road*. This research uses class struggle theory by Karl Marx. It aims to describe the class struggle which happens in the movie. The result reveals the form of class struggle in the film which uses ideological form. The analysis has similarity with this analysis in the theory of class struggle but it does not use alienation theory.

The next research is by Ahmad Faqihudin from State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga titled *The Struggle of Lower Class Against The Government As Seen In Elysium Movie*. This research tries 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 the lower class struggles to achieve justice and equality against upper class. This research concludes that *Elysium*

movie can be categorized into the socialist movie. The struggle of the lower class against the upper class is shown dominantly as the focus of the story. The analysis only uses class struggle theory, it is different from this analysis which uses alienation theory along with class struggle theory, but the focus of the problem is similar, they both focus to analyze the government as the upper class.

The last research is a paper by Muhlisin from State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga with the title *An Analysis of Alienation As Seen In Andrew Niccole's Movie, In Time*. This research analyzes the effect of alienation to the psychology in the Ghetto zone, the place of proletarian character. This paper also analyzes how the characters overcome the alienation. The result shows that Will Salas character has the first characteristic of alienation and for the next question, the characters have three efforts to overcome the alienation. The difference between Muhlisin's analysis and this analysis is that his analysis only uses alienation theory without class struggle theory.

1.6. Theoretical Approach

The researcher analyzes the problem with a theory. It is necessary because theory is a tool to analyze the text. Based on the problem above, the researcher uses two Marxist theories, alienation and class struggle theories. This research also uses film theory to support the main theory.

1.6.1. Alienation Theory

According to Edwards, alienation means powerlessness or lack of control; a person is alienated from something if he or she has no control over it (1978:265).

Marx divides alienation into three kinds. First workers are alienated from the product of their work. Second, workers are alienated from the process of work. Third, workers are alienated from their “species being” (Edwards, 1978:266). First, the workers are alienated from the product. It means that the workers have not used the product produced by them. Second, workers are alienated from the process of work. It means that the workers cannot handle the time and the way of their job because the capitalist control. Next, the workers are alienated from species-being. It means that the workers are alienated as a human. They work as a labor which everything is in the capitalist control, so they lost their human characteristics.

Before this research analyzes the class struggle of Flint character, the research analyzes Flint’s alienation as the aftermath of the mayor’s exploitation.

1.6.2. Class Struggle

Class struggle theory is the theory which is answering the second research question. Class struggle theory is used to disentangle the alienation problem. All history has been a history of class struggles, of struggles between exploited and exploiting, between dominated and dominating classes at various stages of social evolution (Marx, Engels. 1848:6). Based on the film, the class struggle happens because of the alienation caused by government’s exploitation. He struggles to overcome the alienation of Swallows Fall residents. This research examines the class struggle of Flint in this film.

1.6.3. Film Theory

Film theory is used to analyze this research. It supports the analysis because the subject of this analysis is a film. Film theory as a secondary theory besides class struggle and alienation theory is used to support the analysis of the film construction. The film theory to analyze this research is *mis-en-scene* by Amy Villarejo. The specific of the film theory used is cinematography. Anything to do with the camera, that is, belongs to the real of cinematography (Villarejo. 2007:36). This research uses shot and lighting to analyze the film scene because it supports the analysis which focuses in the relation between the character through the interaction. The shot shows the expression of the character which support the analysis. Meanwhile the lighting support the analysis of the setting and also the interaction between the character. Film analysis has revolved an anthropocentric taxonomy for describing distance, that is, using the human body as the references point for each designation:

1. The extreme long shot (ELS), in which one can barely distinguish the human figure;
2. The long shot (LS), in which human is distinguishable but remains dwarfed by the background;
3. The medium long shot (MLS), or Plan American, in which the human is framed from the knees up;
4. The medium shot (MS), in which we move in slightly to frame the human from the waist up.

5. The medium close-up (MCU), in which we are slightly close and see the human from the chest up.
6. The close-up (CU), which isolates a portion of a human.
7. And the extreme close up, in which we see a mere portion of the face.

Beside the shot of camera angle, cinematography also uses lightening. It describe in this following:

1. Key light is the one light source around which you build your lightingscheme. It is usually the main provider of illumination to your film set or location. You “key” your other lights (quantity and quality) off this main source. The keylight may live anywhere around your subject, but it traditionally is placed 45degrees (horizontally and vertically) off the axis of the camera’s lens and above the height of the talent’s head.
2. Fill light is a light source used to help control contrast. The light energy that it emits “fills in” the shadows often created by the brighter key light. The physical placement of the fill light is on the opposite side of the subject from the key light, roughly 45 degrees (horizontally) off lens axis.
3. Back light is the light that defines an edge, or halo effect, around the backside of the subject. Because it lives behind the subject (opposite side of the film set from the camera’s lens) and provides a light “rim” to the outline of the subject, the back light serves to

separate objects from the background and enhance the illusion of depth within the film frame. (Thompson. 2009:17).

1.7. Method of Research

Method of research explains the procedure of the observation. It is beneficial to know clearly every step of the observation. The method of this research is explained as follows:

1.7.1. Type of Research

The research needs research design to cultivate data collection with theoretical approach. This research uses qualitative research design.

According to Creswell, qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively leading from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data (2009:232).

This method fits the theory employed here which identifies class struggle experienced by the main character.

1.7.2. Data Source

This research uses two kinds of data sources as explained below:

1. Primary Data are film as the object of the research. This is the main data of this research. The source of this primary data is animation film entitled

Cloudy with a Chance of Meatball. The unit of the primary data is the event of the story of the film. The event involves an actor doing an action that means linguistically, it consists of subject and verb.

2. Secondary Data are the supporting data. The researcher uses secondary data to prove the analysis of the main data. The secondary data here are books, articles, and journals which support the theory of data analysis.

1.7.3. Data Collection Technique

The researcher collects the data step by step. Firstly, the film was read to describe the structure of whole story which involves the events of the film. Then, some scenes were screen captured to collect the data for the analysis. The researcher found the references which relate to *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatball* film as the object of the research and the Marxist theory.

1.7.4. Data Analysis Technique

There are three steps of data analysis here. First, the main data was analyzed with Marxist theory. The researcher compared the events of the film to the characteristic features of alienation and class struggle theory. The analysis aims to prove that the character experiences class struggle and alienation. Second, the analysis also uses film theory, especially *mis-en-scene* by Amy Villarejo. The researcher identified the scene by angle of camera and lighting. Film theory supports the analysis of the data to prove the hypothesis. In the end, conclusion was drawn based on the analysis

results. How does alienation happen to Swallows Fallsociety in *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* film and how Flint character does a class struggle to overcome the alienation?

1.8. Paper Organization

This research contains four chapters. Chapter one contains background of study, research question, objectives of study, literature review, theoretical approach, method of research, and paper organization. Chapter two contains the intrinsic of *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* film. Chapter three contains the analysis of *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* film with Marxist theory as a theoretical approach. Chapter four is the conclusion which contains the conclusion of this research and the suggestion for the next researcher and the reader of this research.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

4.1. Conclusion

This research is purposed to analyze the alienation and class struggle portrayed in *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* film. The alienation and class struggle appear in this film because of the class conflict between the upper class and lower class. The upper class in this film is represented by the mayor's character. Meanwhile, the lower class is represented by the society of Swallows Fall island, included the character of Flint as the main character. This research analyzes the events of the film with two types of Marxist theory, alienation and class struggle.

Based on the analysis stated in chapter 3, alienation is found in the Swallows Fallsociety, and it is because if the oppression from the capitalist government. The Sardine Company which is under the control of the Mayor is collapsed. It forces the Swallows Fall society to eat the sardine product every day. The character of the Major as the government has more power, and he does not care about the oppression of Swallows Fall society. He oppresses the society to get the wealth as the government. The Swallows Fall society has no power to control their life. They have no choice but eat sardine every day. According to Marx, this alienation is about the human who alienate themselves as a human being. Human as a human should be able to express and control their life. As seen

in this film, the society has no power to control them. They are controlled by the mayor who has power to control the Swallows Fall Island.

Flint Lockwood, the main character in *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs* film is the only one who is conscious with the alienation of Swallows Fall society because of the oppression of the mayor. Flint is aware to overcome the alienation. He strives for the class struggle. The identification of Flint Class struggle is divided into two forms, the economical struggle and ideological struggle. The economical struggle of Flint is the changing of the economical commodity in Swallows Fall Island to be better. Sardine is the economical commodity in Swallows Fall Island. Flint wants to increase the quality of the economical commodity. He wants to change the boring sardine with many varieties of food. The ideological struggle of Flint Lockwood is to build the society property, the FLDSMDFR machine, the machine which can change water into food. Flint wants to abolish the rule of mayor by building the society property. The motive of Flint Lockwood class struggle totally helps his hometown Swallows Fall island from the boredom to take the sardines. His dream is supported by his mom who already passed away when he was child. It becomes the special power for Flint to strive for the class struggle. The significance of class struggle is the equality that has been reached. It abolishes the Mayor rule to only eat and produce sardine food, but with FLDSMDFR machine as a society property, and everyone can make other foods.

Class struggle also can be seen in Islamic perspective. In the verse of Qur'an, Ar-Ra'du verse 11, it is written

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 مِنْ وَالٍ

Allah says in the holy Qur'an: "For him, there are *mu`aqibat* in succession, before and behind him. They guard him by the command of Allah. Verily! Allah will not change the condition of a people unless there is a change of what is in themselves. But when Allah wills a people's punishment, there can be no turning back of it and they will find besides Him no protector" [Ar-Ra'd: 11]

Based on the Quraish Shihab's interpretation toward this verse, Allah will not change the fate of a nation from being difficult to be happy, or from being strong to weak, before they themselves change what is in themselves according to the circumstances they will live (<https://tafsirq.com/13-ar-rad/ayat-11#tafsir-quraish-shihab>). The people can not change their condition if they do not change it by their self. It means, they must struggle to change their condition. It reflects in class struggle theory that the lower class must do something to change the condition of the oppression of the upper class.

4.2. Suggestion

Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs film taken as the object of study in this research employs the alienation and class struggle theory. This film also can be analyzed with other theories. The researcher suggests the further researchers to analyze this film using the psychoanalysis theory proposed by Sigmund Freud. The next researcher can focus on the similarity of the psychoanalysis of Swallows Fallsociety reaction of food rain with the psychoanalysis of human sexual reaction.

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