

**CLASS STRUGGLE AS SEEN IN *BLACK PANTHER* AND  
*SUNAN KALIJAGA* MOVIE  
(A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS)**

A GRADUATING PAPER

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the Requirement for Gaining the Bachelor  
Degree in English Literature



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**2020**

**A FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT**

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

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Atas perhatiannya, saya ucapkan terima kasih.

*Wassalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb.*

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**MOTTO**



**“Viva La Resistencia !”**

*-La Casa De Papel (Money Heist).*



*"The beauty of being blessed is rising above doubters*

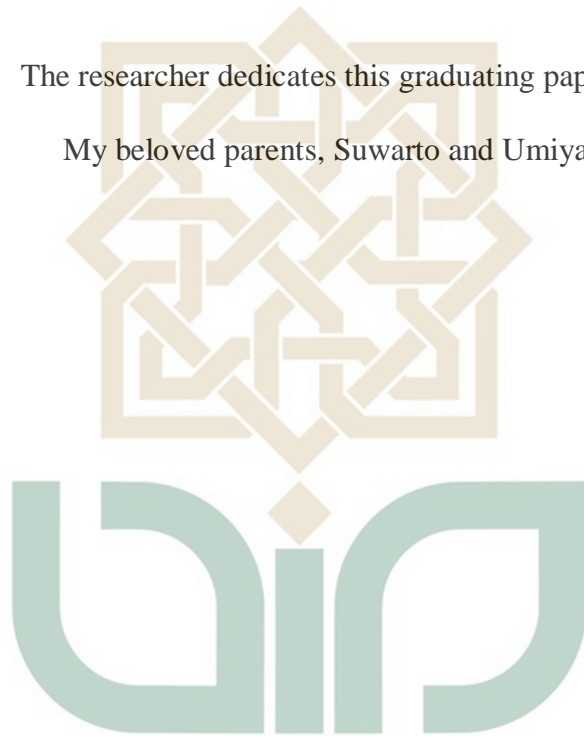
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*to create a beautiful moment.”*  
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-Kobe Bryant

## DEDICATION

The researcher dedicates this graduating paper to:

My beloved parents, Suwanto and Umiyati.



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all, I would like to say Alhamdulillah, because Allah SWT has given His grace and blessings to complete and finish this graduating paper. Second, I would sincerely thank the following people that have helped me during this process:

- a. Dr. Ubaidillah, M.Hum., as the head of English Department in Sunan Kalijaga State University, thank you for your advice and your help during this time.
- b. Dr. Witriani, M.Hum, as my thesis advisor. I would like to say thousand thanks for dedicating your time, energy, and patience to guide me during this thesis-finishing process. You have helped me a lot and listened to me.
- c. All of the English Department Lecturers from Sunan Kalijaga State University, Danial Hidayatullah, S.S., M.Hum., Febriyanti Dwiratna Lestari, S.S., M.A, Ulyati Retno Sari, S.S., M.Hum., Harsiwi Fajarsari, S.S., M.A, Bambang Hariyanto, S.S, M.A, Arif Budiman, S.S., M.A, Aninda Aji Siwi, S.Pd., M.Pd., and others.
- d. My beloved Parents, Suwarto and Umiyati, thank you for all material, spiritual, and affectional support. Thank you for taking care of me since day one. You both always believe in my dreams. I promise I will not let you down.

- e. All of my English Department friends batch 2016, thank you for always give moments to my journey since the first semester. You are the best memory in my life. I will never forget and will remember all the memories together.
- f. Rike Dwi Santari my lovely partner. Thank you for always being a support system of mine and a loving girlfriend. Let's share our life journey together and tons of happiness forever.
- g. Jordy Chandra Gunawan, my greatest friend since senior high school, Thank you for always accompanying me everywhere I go. You are the best partner in every match up PlayStation game such as NBA 2K, PES, UFC, FIFA.

Last, for all readers who read this graduating paper, I am waiting for your feedback to improve this graduating paper of mine.

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**CLASS STRUGGLE AS SEEN IN BLACK PANTHER AND  
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(A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS)**

By: Irwan Febriyansah

**ABSTRACT**

This research aims to identify similarities and differences in Black Panther and Sunan Kalijaga movies by using the comparative literature method and class struggle theory by Karl Marx. Class struggle theory by Karl Marx focuses on how the classification of social classes by people's performance in society. This research also aims to find the similarities and differences in Black Panther and Sunan Kalijaga movies by using a comparative literature method. The researcher finds the similarities between social class distinctions and background of the characters for instance Raden Mas Sahid and Killmonger who struggle for the lower classes. The researcher also finds that the differences between both movies are alienation forms and the characters' motives of their struggle.

**Keywords:** *Black Panther, Sunan Kalijaga, Class Struggle, Comparative.*

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Oleh: Irwan Febriyansah

**ABSTRAK**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan persamaan dan perbedaan pada film *Black Panther* dan *Sunan Kalijaga* menggunakan metode sastra bandingan dan teori perlawanan kelas oleh Karl Marx. Teori perlawanan kelas oleh Karl Marx berfokus pada pembagian kelas berdasarkan yang dilakukan seseorang dalam lingkup masyarakat. Penelitian ini juga bertujuan untuk mencari persamaan dan perbedaan pada film *Black Panther* dan *Sunan Kalijaga* dengan menggunakan metode sastra bandingan. Peneliti menemukan beberapa persamaan dari pembagian kelas sosial dan latar belakang dari karakter yang berjuang untuk kelas bawah, yaitu Raden Mas Sahid dan Killmonger. Peneliti juga menemukan beberapa perbedaan pada kedua film tersebut, yaitu tentang bentuk alienasi dan tujuan karakter yang berjuang untuk kelas bawah.

**Kata Kunci:** *Black Panther*, *Sunan Kalijaga*, Perlawanan Kelas, Sastra Bandingan.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of Study

Comparative analysis examine two works or more with a comprehensive approach. One of the comparative study can be found for instance in the literature works. According to Corstius comparative literature study begin from the universal point of view that all literature works as parts of literature text (Corstius, 1968). The study of comparative literature firstly found in Europe to see the influence of literature text. Moreover, the study of comparative literature is a new approach to see two or more different text in order to get a new perspective and gain many prospect in it. According to Aristotle, comparison in here is a form of knowledge that is rooted in likeness, in the fact that there is or could be someone or something to which the image of a person or thing refers significance is then invested what exists in the world. He also claims that the comparative relations between the image and what exists in the world to the ubiquity of the mimetic intentions (Aristotle, 1927:15). Comparative literature also compares two literary works. It analyze the similarities and dissimilarities between the two literature works (Kumar, 2000).

The prospect of comparative study in the literature works to find the cultural meaning from two or more different texts . Also, comparative study can shape and broaden the way we think about literature works itself. Another prospect that we can get through studying two different text is deepen our critical thinking towards texts with different culture and history. Hence, by comparing two literature works,

it opens our new point of view to get another meaning in some literature works, for instance movies, books and or drama.

Nevertheless, it is possible that the scope of literary works can be developed as objects of comparative study—for example, a movie. According to Robert Richardson, literature is a visual art. His statement based on the common characteristics between two art expressions: images are dissolving into each other, the rhythmic display of things and places, not necessarily with a human presence, the focus on one image, the multiple views of one image (place, thing, and characters), the rhythm of storytelling and so on. That is what movie also does, supplying the viewer with rich visual material and details. In both cases, it has something described (looked at), someone who reads (looks at), and what the reader is reading (looking at), that is his interpretation (Cohen, 1979).

The pioneer of filmmaking, Auguste and Louis Lumiere, said film derived from the celluloid strip on which the images that make up motion pictures were initially captured cut, and projected, or in another word film could be called as motion pictures (Barsam, 2010:3). Film is part of the literature works. it usually manifests a social conditions in society. The film director wants to make audiences aware of recent issues in their environment through the film. According to Jacob, the director of the film shows many aspects as in human life, such as their habit, attitud and social life explicitly. However, there are some explicit meanings carry by a movie. Some issues and ideas related to human life will be easy to understand. The meaning or issues maybe appear not explicitly in the movie. So, the audiences must be aware of it. Sometimes, it is possible to find more meaning in the movie by

recognized its directors, times, and places it created.

From the explanation above, the film is a portrayal of human life with recent issues in their society for example, the issue of lower-class resistance toward the upper class. The movies which the researcher choose as the object in this research are Black Panther and Sunan Kalijaga movie. Black Panther and Sunan Kalijaga movies are different genres, the first movie is about science fiction movie, while the other one is about autobiography movie.

Both of movies depict the class struggle as the issues, but they have differences and similarities. A similarity in both movies explain the class struggle cases. The characters in both movies who struggle are part of the upper class. Killmonger, in Black Panther movie, struggles to get the equality for himself and all Wakandan's intelligent who are being oppressed. Killmonger is from the upper class because his father was one of the princes in Wakanda. However, unfortunately, his father was murdered by his brother for sharing Wakanda's technology with other people. While Sunan Kalijaga struggles to get equality for poor society, he also from a wealthy family because his father is a district leader under the Majapahit Kingdom. Sunan Kalijaga, or also known as Raden Mas Sahid, struggle for his neighborhood because they live in poverty. Although both movies have different genres, they have a similarity about the social class. Both of movies use the modern social class definition by Karl Marx, that are the "upper class" and "lower class," or use the social class in feudalism era, they are king, knight, priest, and peasant. Both social classes definition are applicable to Black Panther and Sunan Kalijaga movies. These are reasons why the researcher compares both of

movie because it has many similarities.

Black Panther is a science-fiction movie based on Marvel Comic, this is the eighteenth film in Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) and directed by Ryan Coogler. The reason why the researcher chooses Black Panther and Sunan Kalijaga Movie because there are class conflict between the lower class (Proletariat) and upper class (Bourgeois). According to Marxism point of view, literature is a reflection of society (Swingewood, 1972:43), and the history of society may influence this. The story of Black Panther also explore about most valuable mineral in Wakanda named vibranium. It is related in real-life that the Africa continent has various valuable minerals such as gold, coal, uranium, and many more. The origin story of mine exploration in Wakanda and the Africa continent look similar. One place which contains mineral is a conflict area. Then, the powerful side takes over the area, which contains the mineral. The powerful side oppresses and forces the weak side to work for them to explore mine resources. While Sunan Kalijaga's movie tells about the son of Tumenggung Wilarikta, this movie depicted how the oppression happened in the feudalism era. People in this era live in poverty because they must give all their property to the king to pay tribute or tax to the empire. If they do not pay the tribute, the king will send a knight to threaten the people who will not pay the tribute. Every period of human civilization, there will be a class struggle, and literature is a device for some people to express their resistance (Swingewood, 1972:41). In other words, literature is a device from the lower class to fight against the upper class. The effect of this statement is broader rather than using class struggle terms. Society as a whole are mere and more splitting up into

two great hostile camps, and it is directly facing each other, they are Bourgeoisie and Proletariat (Marx, 1848:15). Social class always appear in society because people always want to be appreciated through their wealth, science, authority, the descent of honorable family, godly, and so on. It proves that social class is a big phenomenon that always occurs in society, and mostly, people are not aware of it.

To analyze class struggle in Black Panther and Sunan Kalijaga movies, the researcher uses the class struggle theory by Karl Marx. According to Karl Marx, the form of class struggle is a conflict between the lower class and the upper class (Elster, 1986: 134). The conflict between the lower class and upper class appears because people in the lower-class want equality with the upper class. To fight against the upper class, people in lower-class assemble their power to get equality as what upper class gets. The lower class is easier to collect the power because they have a similar fate, which caused by the upper class; this is poverty. Poverty created by industry and forced lower class being exploited by the upper class (Kristeva: 2011:515). In the context of struggle, both movies have similarity about the resistance of the lower class to the upper class. The characters who are struggling in Black Panther and Sunan Kalijaga movie comes from the upper class. Then, both of them are shifting to the lower class for different reasons.

This research also compares both movies to find similarities and differences in the portrayal of class struggle because both movies have a different purpose of

getting equality. According to Aristotle, comparison in here is a form of knowledge that is rooted in likeness, in the fact that there is or could be someone or something to which the image of a person or thing refers significance is then invested what exists in the world. He also claims that the comparative relation between the image and what exists in the world to the ubiquity of the mimetic intentions (Aristotle, 1927:15). Comparative literature also compare two literary works. It is analyzing the similarities and dissimilarities between the two literature works (Kumar, 2000).

## **1.2. Problem Statement**

Based on the background of the study above, this research aims to discover answers to the problem as follows:

1. How does struggle of the lower class to achieve equality depicted in *Black Panther* and *Sunan Kalijaga* Movies?

## **1.3. Objective Study**

Based on the problem statement above, this research is going to discuss two main problems. The objective of this research are:

1. Identifying the depiction of social class similarities in *Black Panther* and *Sunan Kalijaga* movie.
2. Describing how lower class struggles to get equality with the upper class.

#### 1.4. Significance of the Study

The significant aspect of this research are first, becomes one of the references to the other researcher who wants to deploy the class struggle theory and comparative literature method. Second, this research gives an explanation about the class struggle and to understand the construction of class struggle in *Black Panther* and *Sunan Kalijaga* movie by using the representation of characters who struggle against the upper class. Third, this research also uses the comprehensive understanding meaning of Marxist theory about class struggle in both movies.

#### 1.5. Literature review

The researcher has not found any research which uses Black Panther and Sunan Kalijaga movie the object of analysis. However, the researcher found three researches that use the same theory with this research. The first paper is entitled *The Struggle of Lower Class Against Government As Seen In Elysium Movie* by Ahmad Faqikhudin from State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga. This research identifies the upper class and lower class are represented in *Elysium* movie to describe how the upper-class oppress the lower class and to analyze the lower class struggles to achieve justice and equality against the upper class. The struggle of the lower class against the upper class presents dominantly in the story. The analysis of this paper use class struggle theory, which similar to this paper.

The second one is a paper by Khoirul Rizal from State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga, entitled *The Struggle of Lower Class As Seen In Mad Max: Fury Road*. This research uses the class struggle theory by Karl Marx. The research aims



to describe the class struggle in the movie. The research has a similarity analysis in the theory of class struggle.

The last one is a paper by Fikria Hanifah from State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga, entitled *Alienation And Class Struggle As Seen In Cloudy With A Chance Of Meatballs Film*. This research uses class struggle and alienation theory by Karl Marx to describe and figure out the form of class struggle.

### **1.6. Theoretical Approach**

In this research uses two theories, they are Class struggle theory and film theory. This research aims to find out how does the class struggle presents in both movies. Class struggle is a movement by the lower class to get equality with the upper class. In both movies, characters experience the oppression done by the upper class. So, they struggle to get equality with the upper class. The decision to use class struggle theory toward this research because the characters in both movie are struggling to get equality with the upper class.

#### **1.6.1. Class Struggle Theory**

Class struggle occurs in unsatisfying conditions from the lower class because the upper class oppresses them. Social class exists when a group of wealthy people and they have the power to discriminate against the lower class. People in the upper class use anything to oppress the lower class. In several descriptions, classes divided by the income. People with high income take the upper-class role, and people with low income take the lower class position. This statement is not entirely right because, according to Marx, class is divided by their performance.

“Classes are not differentiated by income. Although members of different classes will, typically, earn different incomes., they need not do so; and, even when they do, it is not by virtue of this fact that they belong to different classes. He also rejects the idea that classes can be distinguished by the occupations of their members, that is, by the specific nature of the work by perform. The work context, not the work itself, is constitutive of class. Finally, we can exclude the idea that classes are differentiated by status, be it by the informal status criterion of honor or by the formal criterion of belonging to a legal order.” (Elster, 1986: 124).

From the explanation above, classes are not determined by income. However, people in the lower class have different income with the upper class. From Marx’s point of view, classes are determined by their status.

The social class in Marx’s point of view has been divided into some classes by their group. In the middle age, it has feudal lords, vasals, guild-master, journeyman, apprentice, and serfs (Marx and Engels, 2007:7). It means a social status in ancient Rome, the social status was divided into slaves and plebeians as the lower class, and patricians and knights are the upper class. However, in middle age, class status is divided into serfs, vassals, apprentices, and journeymen as the lower class and feudal lords and guild-master as the upper class. Then, Marx divided the class into two different kinds. First is the bourgeoisie, also known as the upper class. They oppress the lower class to earn more income because they have power and money. Second is the proletariat, known as the lower class.

The class struggle occurs when the lower class wants to break capitalism and create a new system where there is no social class in the society. Social status in society is equal. When the lower class or proletariat becomes master, they will

take all of the production assets. The lower class wants to create society without class (Kristeva, 2011: 537). It means that the lower class possess the production asset of capitalism, and in the opposing toward capitalist, the lower class create a classless.

The new system builds by the proletariat is unlike feudalism or capitalism. The proletariat create a condition of social without class. A society without a class is the manifestation of the lower class struggle to abolish the boundary among classes social in the society because the upper class has oppressed the lower class. Class struggle is a movement from the lower class to get equality in society. This condition appears because of the capitalist economic system that is exploitative to employ their labor (2011: 504). Finally, this injustice becomes the power for the lower class to struggle against the upper class.

### **1.6.2 Comparative Theory**

Comparative literature is as study of comparing two or more literature works. According to Endraswara comparative study is a new method to study literature proportionally and critically (2010:17). He adds that comparative analysis positioning literature in some aspects, for instance aesthetic, sociologist, psychologist, and its pragmatic to others scope of knowledge. Moreover, the purpose of comparative analysis to criticize on literature study by considering the concepts of understanding a text. According to Corstius, when we are doing comparative analysis, we place ourself as spesific reader toward the literature as the object of analysis (1968: 4).

Furthermore, comparative literature analysis acknowledge the researcher to interpret and explain such literature works to analyze its language, modus, structure, and recognize way deeper through literature historical context and its cultural background. Based on those analysis it will sharpen the analysis toward comparative study. In line with that, the theory of comparative study have creative and proportional method. Procedural of the research use a literature works as subject and compare it to another literature works in order to get a comprehensive understanding. That principal will create a proper comparative anylisis product. According to Jost, the main principal of comparative study need critical thinking to present the pararelism of two literature works or more (1993).

According to Maspuroh in his research one of the approach to analyze comparative study is structural approach. Structural approach include factual structure such as character, setting, theme, and literature devices to get comprehensive analysis, the researcher adds cultural value analysis. According to Koentjoroningrat, there are five esential problem which emphasize on human value oriented, they are human living problem, problem with human creation such literature works, problem on human's position in places, problem of human relation with environment, and problem of human relation with others (2009: 157. Moreover, the researcher finds the similarity and differences of two or more literature works to get comprehensive analysis.

### **1.6.3. Film Theory**

Film is one of the media for human to express their ideas, and film become a dynamic medium. According to Villarejo, the film has been a dynamic medium

that puts to use others than those of the commercial narrative form (2007: 23). this research needs a film theory because the main data and object of this research is a movie. This theory uses for supporting the analysis. According to Stam, modify the formulation that film theory is an evolving body of concepts designed to account for the cinema in all its dimensions (aesthetic, social, psychological) for an interpretive community of scholars, critics, and interested spectator (Stam, 2006:6). Film theory also tells about any relation of the film as a medium, film as language, to the cinematic apparatus or the nature of the cinematic text, or cinematic reception. In other words, each data in this research (screenshot of the movie), which is displayed, has its meanings. Then the meaning can be understood by film theory. This research focuses on cinematography and *mise-en-scene* in the film theory to analyze the screenshot and get the meaning of it in *Black Panther* and *Sunan Kalijaga* movie.

According to Villarejo, there are several points to film analysis that, using the human body as the reference point for each designation Cinematography in this research stressed in framing techniques and camera angles. Villarejo divided framing techniques into seven types (Villarejo, 2007: 38):

- a. The extreme long shot (ELS), in which one can barely distinguish the human figure;
- b. The long-shot (LS), in which humans are distinguishable but remain dwarfed by the background;
- c. The medium-long shot (MLS), or plan American, in which the human is framed from the knees up;

- d. The medium shot (MS), in which we move in slightly to frame the human from the waist up;
- e. The medium close-up (MCU), in which we are slightly closer and see the human from the chest up;
- f. The close-up (CU), which isolates a portion of a human (the face, most prominently);
- g. The extreme close-up (ECU), in which we see a mere portion of the face (an eye, the lips).

*The mise-en-scene* that the researcher uses is *lighting*. *Lighting* establishes the mood and directs attention to detail—the effect of natural lighting in cinema takes an enormous amount of work. According to Villarejo, the system of lighting divided into five different kinds. There are key light, a fill light, and a backlight, high-key, and low-key.

The key light provides the primary or key light source. It tends to illuminate most strongly the shot's subject, and it also tends to cast the strongest shadows. A fill light, which might be positioned near the camera roughly 120° or thereabouts from the key light, literally “fills in” the shadows thrown by the key light. The backlight, finally, comes from behind the subject (in our example roughly another 120° from the fill light) and separates the subject from the background, counterbalancing the brightness of the key light. High-key lighting of the classical Hollywood cinema (wherein little contrast between bright and dark obtains, soft and revealing of detail) to the low-key (high contrast, harsh, and hard) lighting frequently used in horror and mystery. In the former case, the high-key style

contributes to a worldview that values transparency, clarity, intelligibility; the most extreme example of high-key lighting is the television situation comedy. In the latter case, lighting helps to gesture toward the underworld, the shadowy world, uncertainty, fear, or evil (Villarejo, 2007: 32-33).

## **1.7. Method of Research**

This part of the research contains the type of research, data sources, data collection technique, data analysis technique, and paper organization.

### **1.7.1 Type of Research**

This research uses qualitative research. It means no data analyzed by using statistics and quantification to analyze the data (Djunaidi and Fauzan, 2012:13). Searching the data source in the library to gain the essential sources and references that are required by the researcher. The sources from books, journals, pdf, and other texts needed by the researcher and related to the topic and object. Qualitative research delivers the description of data such as expression, words, and also subject that is analyzed by the researcher (Djunaidi and Fauzan, 2012:13). In other words, this research describes the data through expressions, the words in the text, and also the action that shows in *Black Panther* and *Sunan Kalijaga* movie.

### **1.7.2 Data Sources**

The researcher uses two sources, primary and secondary data sources. The primary data are taken from *Black Panther* and *Sunan Kalijaga* film. The unit data of it comes from the film descriptions (dialogs, scenes, and script) regarding the class struggle of the lower class in *Black Panther* and *Sunan Kalijaga* movie. The class struggle theory, as the main theory, deploys to analyze the film. The secondary

data chooses from the other data, which contain the information and ideas about the concepts that the researcher needs to analyze, and the data are also taken from books and the internet (journals, e-books, and other related resources).

### **1.7.3 Data Collection Technique**

The data in this paper take and select from the dialogues, scenes, and scripts of the film as the main resources. Then, the researcher takes note the necessary data from the movie by taking screenshot representative aspects of images, speeches, and utterances that related and helped the analysis, especially in the portrayal of struggling, oppression, upper class, and lower class in *Black Panther* and *Sunan Kalijaga* movie. The researcher also finds several data from the internet, library, and other sources related to this research.

### **1.7.4 Data Analysis Technique**

The data analysis technique starts by collecting the data and shreds of evidence on literary research. In this research, the researcher analyzes the film with a qualitative method because this method worked and made a database to filter some data in case there is some data are missed. The researcher analyzes the class struggle in *Black Panther* and *Sunan Kalijaga* movie using the Class Struggle theory. Then, the researcher compares both movies to find similarities and differences by using a comparative literature method.

## **1.8 Paper Organization**

This research is divided into four chapters: the first chapter consists of the research background, research questions, objective studies, significance of studies,



theoretical approach, as well as a definition of concepts and theory that is used, method of research, analysis of data research, and research organization. The second chapter consists of the intrinsic elements in the movies. The third chapter presents the analysis of Black Panther and Sunan Kalijaga movies regarding the conception of Marx's theory and comparative literature method. The last chapter, which is the fourth chapter, provides the conclusion and suggestion of the research.



## **CHAPTER IV**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **4.1. Conclusion**

The conclusion comparative analysis of two movies between Sunan Kalijaga and Black Panther movies use comparative literature method by finding the similarities and differences in oppression, struggling, and social classes aspect. The conclusion can be drawn that the similarities of both movies can be seen from the social classes distinction as social classes from feudalism and capitalist society are applicable in both movies. Whereas the differences in both movies can be seen through the oppression form and the struggle motives. Finally, comparing two different movies cannot be seen only from some aspects that have been mentioned above. Furthermore, as the researcher I strongly believe that compare literature works require the cultural study of the society that represent in both literature works, because comparing is not only about defining the similarities and the differences but also take a look forward on the background aspect of the movies.

Moreover, the struggle in eastern literature works refers to humanity struggle because the eastern society obey to islamic religion value which emphasize on helping other people as part of serving Allah S.W.T. Whereas the struggle in western literature works such in Black Panther movie refers to political struggle and they only pursuing the throne because it relates to the life background of the character who is struggling to get justice of their heir.

From the Islamic point of view, there is no differentiation about social classes. The only thing that makes human beings different from the other human is their faith in Allah S.W.T. The Al-Quran verse bellow can approve that all human

beings are the same in God's eyes.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۗ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقْوَمُ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

“O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted.”

The Al-Quran verse above is Al-Hujurat verse 13<sup>th</sup>. The Al-Quran verse above explains the human position in Allah's sight. The only thing that makes the human being different in Allah's sight is their faith. It is relating to both material objects that the researcher analyzes in the previous chapter. The social classes in both movies are determined by the income and the power of the characters. Hence, lower-class resist upper class to get equality with them.

#### 4.2. Suggestions

Black Panther and Sunan Kalijaga movies tell about a class struggle story. Hence, the researcher applies the Class Struggle theory Karl Marx that focuses on the main character of the movies. Thus, the researcher suggests the next researcher may apply the female masculinity theory to figure out the portrayal of female knight in Black Panther movie. The researcher also suggests that the next researcher may use the theory post-colonial theory to find out the portrayal of left behind Jabari tribe in Black Panther movie.

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