

The Social Class Differences Reflected On People's Lives In *The Snowpiercer* Movie By Bong Joon Ho (Marxist Theory Analysis)

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ABSTRACT

This research studies about The Social Class Differences Reflected on People's Lives in The Snowpiercer Movie. The purposes of this research are: (1) to describe about the division of social class differences to people's lives on the Snowpiercer movie and (2) to analyze the impacts of social class differences on people's lives on the Snowpiercer movie. This research used qualitative research method. In analyzing the data the researcher uses Marxist theory (1950).

The researcher found some data that were divided into two classes of society. The first one is the upper class as the bourgeoisie, in bourgeoisie class the researcher found out nine data. The second is the lower class as proletariat, the researcher found out six data, each of which reveals about bourgeoisie social life, lifestyle and behavior. In addition, the researcher also found the impact for people's lives in the Snowpiercer movie such as from all the data presented, it can be concluded that social class are divided into two main classes and differentiated through the behavior, social life, and their goods. And those things cause the impact for people's life in Snowpiercer movie which ultimately caused the deaths of both classes. A cannibalism, rebellion, and even population reduction as the impact of social class differences.

Keywords: *Social class differences, Marxist, Snowpiercer Movie.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Literature cannot be separated from social life because literature and society are two things that are interconnected, it can be said that literature as reflection of the society both form its good and bad values and literature as an imitation of human action, often society. Thus what happens in a society is reflected in literary works, through literary works people can learn about the condition of the society in particular time. According to Wellek and Warren (1977: 94), literature reserve about life and life, in most part, is part of the real society. It means that literature may reflect

a situation of condition such as social life, because literary works itself are created based on the imagination of the author and generally reflect social conditions. Movie is one of the forms of literary work that tells a story with moving pictures also has a sound and it has interesting thing which is produced by movie (Cambridge, 2008). According to Barsam and Monahan (2010:2).. In this research, the researcher chooses science fiction and action genre. Science fiction genre usually tells about the future and technology. Thus, science fiction movie genre uses science knowledge or it usually uses background

of science and for this research the science fiction movie that the researcher chooses is *Snowpiercer* movie

This *Snowpiercer* movie is written by Bong Joon Ho, this movie released on August 1st, this science fiction movie is describe the exploits social class in today's society which creates inequality in the distribution of wealth itself, which is shown by the distribution of carts on trains. "the system governing the giant postapocalyptic train that is the setting of the film favors the privileged few at the expense of the dense masses who have a lot of difficulties in life". It makes "the rich richer and the poor poorer". Poor people, in dire conditions This is exploits the clear inequalities exposed by the divisions within social classes. Based on the information above it can be said that this *Snowpiercer* movie has a close relationship with social life.

The relationship between the *Snowpiercer* movie and social life are related to one and another that we can see through watching the movie, it can be seen from the cultural background of the society where the story of the movie was written. This movie gives variety phenomenon by words in the dialogue and the scenes, such as social classes, or social life. In this research, the researcher analyzes about the social class differences that reflected on people's lives in the *Snowpiercer* movie and to analyze the impact. It is important case because as social creature who live in society it would be very possible to encounter those conflict because the phenomenon also occurs in society.

Here the conversation between the characters that contain of Marxist theory: (Snowpiercer, 00: 17: 08)



Monologue

Mason: I am a hat, you are a shoe, I belong on the head, you belong on the foot, I belong to the front, you belong to the tail, know your place.

This scene happened in front of the gate and watched over by an army, this conversations on the scene (00: 17: 08) meant for the lower class from the upper class in the train of *Snowpiercer*, one of the characters from the upper class named Mason she talk to the lower class people. Trough the monologue from Mason it can be seen that everyone need to occupy the class in which they have been born. This movie reveals that class divided into two main classes that is Bourgeoisie and Proletariat.

According to Karl Marx (1950:42), classes are group of individuals who share a common position relative to the forces of production. Each class is distinguished by what it owns with regard to the means of production. Furthermore, she suggests people belong in the tail, while she belongs in the front, that is how class differences are shown in this movie and this is how she rationalizes all of the injustice that take place on the train. From the explanation in Marxist theory it means that in society the formation of class division arises in capitalist society because contradiction and injustices. The researcher chooses this movie because it reflects to the social condition about social

class differences in our real life, and this movie contains a lot information about two social classes such as the upper class and the lower class. This movie describes a lot about social class and its motivated the researcher to examine more deeply about social class differences like the divisions of social class and the impact of people's lives through the *Snowpiercer* movie. The researcher used the Karl Marx's theory to classify a division of class differences in capitalist society and to know about the people's social condition in the *Snowpiercer* movie. The social class gap that occurs in the movie is the reason of the researcher to chose and analyze this topic because based on the one example of the data above, It is very clear that social life between humans or society has been differentiated based on their respective social status, the issue of social class is a very interesting thing to study because this research discusses a social problem and human life which is poured into a literary work, the researcher interested in finding others data that discusses the differences and class divisions between the upper (Bourgeoisie) and the lower classes (Proletariat) and the factor that apperas in *the Snowpiercer* movie. Therefore the researcher carries out a research entitled The Social Class Differences Reflection On People's Lives In *The Snowpiercer* Movie By Bong Joon Ho (Marxist Theory Analysis).

II. METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

In this research, the researcher uses a qualitative research. It means this research produces descriptive data as form of the text is concerned with qualitative phenomenon, i.e., phenomena relating to or involving quality or kind (Kothari,2004: 3). The researcher describes the data

through the dialogues, action, a speech language and expression which is shown in the *Snowpiercer* movie. The researcher determines the data which are proper to be analyzed such as events of oppressors oppressed the lower class, objects, dialogues and the action of the character in the movie.

1. Technique of Collecting the Data

In collecting the data, the writer uses library research. Nawawi (in Nisfandy, 2011:5) states that in library research. The writer uses library research to get information and to collect data by selecting written sources which are relevant to the topic that the writer analyzes. After that, data would be observed the important and relevant data. Then write down the data. all these steps are applied in this research, as follows :

1. Watching the movie from the website <http://149.56.24.226/snowpiercer-2013/>
2. Understanding the story
3. Finding out the important data
4. Identifying the relevant sources that can support the data such as the dialogues or the pictures of the scenes.
5. Writing down or making note about some data that refers to the research and theory.

2. Technique of Analysis the Data

The inquiry consists of type of research, data resources, method of collecting data, and method of analysis. Each of the data is briefly described as follows. After collecting the data, the researcher analyzes the data by using some procedure, such as:

1. Identifying The researcher identifies the data both from primary data : a movie from Bong Joon Ho with tittle *The Snowpiercers* and secondary data: books, journals, articles, and other

sources. The researcher identifies the content of 9 the movie that relates with the research object which are social class differences that appear in *Snowpiercer* movie.

2. Classifying; the researcher classifies the data , for instance , the dialogue text from the main character or the other character from the movie. the researcher also classifies books , theories ,and journal which appropriate the research.
3. Analyzing; the researcher analyzes the text of the dialogues and also secondary data such as the journal and articles related to the research object.
4. Conclusion; the last step, the researcher makes the conclusion of all the data. This step is the final step in finishing this research.

III. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The researcher explains the finding of the data that found in *Snowpiercer* movie and accordance with the problems and purpose of the research, that is the division of social class differences and the impacts that appears in *Snowpiercer* movie trough the characters dialogues. The researcher using Marxist theory about social class by Karl Marx to analyze the class division, in Marxist theory classes are divided into two main classes that is Bourgeoisie and Proletariat (the working class). according to Karl Marx and Engles ” Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other Bourgeoisie and Proletariat” Karl Marx and Engles (1950). Furthermore, in analyzing the movie the researcher finds the data and discusses to clarify the data that focuses on discussion of two points :

1. The Divisions of Social Class Differences Reflected on People’s Lives in *Snowpiercer* Movie.

2. The Impacts of Social Class Differences Reflected on People’s Lives in *Snowpiercer* Movie.

In this research the researcher found nine data for upper class as the bourgeoisie, and 6 data for the lower class or the proletariat, here some of the example of the data :

Datum 1



(*Snowpiercer*, 01 : 39 : 00)

Wilford : **Well done, bravo. None of your people have ever been here, to the engine. I have never been to the tail section.**

Curtis : Why not ? too dirty for you ? don’t you want to rub againts the vermin of the tail section ?

Wilford : Do you think my station is without it’s own drawbacks ? it’s noisy and lonely.

Curtis : Right. Steaks, plenty of room. This whore to bring you anything you want.

The datum (1) this scene happened in the engine section of the front place in the train, in a clean and luxurious room Wilford's character is the bourgeoisie class, it can be seen from his clean and even very luxurious living in the train. This can be explained through the following dialogue, based on Wilford's statement “None of your people has ever been here. I have never been to the tail”. This statement means that no one has ever come to his residence in the engine section because not everyone can enter there because there are guards guarding the place, then it can be said that the place is a good place to liveIt also supported by Curtis statements about “Right. Steaks, plenty of room. This whore to bring you anything you want” its clarify the statement that bourgeoisie or Wilford as the upper class people he can have everything and

anything they want can be found in the front section of the tail. From this data it can be concluded that the bourgeoisie are the upper class who live in luxury and can have whatever they want.

Datum 2



(Snowpiercer, 00 : 04 : 53)

Soldier : Sit down !. I said sit down ! Edgar :
Curtis, Sit down, sit down..

Datum (2), in this scene which takes place in the back of the back carriage of the train or the tail section which is seen to be very crowded by some people. Some of these people are sitting and some others are standing and will be sitting soon, they all look dirty and shabby while there is one person standing in front of them with clean uniforms and holding a gun. The person that is holding a gun is a soldier that relates to the upper class or bourgeoisie; it can be seen a soldier who is the bourgeoisie is giving orders in this case it can also be seen that the bourgeoisie shows superiority to other people, the soldier which is related to the upper class or bourgeoisie described that the bourgeoisie is a class that has the greatest power and the most domineering in the train so they can control and command, and because they are superior and they have the authority also the power so they are obeyed and feared.

Datum 3



(Snowpiercer, 01 : 30 : 00)

Mason : Do any of you feel like sushi ?

Tanya : Sushi ? hell, yea line that shit up.

Mason : You people are very lucky.

This scene happened in the front section of the upper class or the bourgeoisie place, it can be seen from the clean place and looks fresh with a little greenery in it. It looks like someone is preparing something and Mason who is the character from the bourgeoisie brings Curtis and the others proletariats to the front section, more precisely is the place where the sushi is served. In this case it can be said that Mason or bourgeoisie class are accustomed to eating fancy dishes on the front section. This can be seen in the following dialogue “ **Do any of you feel like sushi ?** ” it shows that the bourgeoisie or the upper class they can eat everything they want since they are in the front section. Sushi is an unusual food, not everyone can eat it, because sushi itself is a typical food of other countries, that is Japan so as we know already that sushi is categorized as a luxury food and commonly consumed by the upper class or the bourgeoisie they can even eat sushi from the private chef even though they are imprisoned in the train.

Datum 4



(Snowpiercer, 1 : 51 : 22)

Wilford : **The space only allows for a very small person. Young children. Six and under.** Have difficulty learning the concentration and patience required for such an important station but Claude spent a long time training this part.

Curtis : you . . .

Wilford : The engine last forever but not so all of its parts. **Thanks goodness the tail section has manufactured a steady supply of kids.** This scene happens in engine section it can be seen that Wilford as the bourgeoisie people standing in front of a really small child that working on his job to operate the machine, in this scene shows that the bourgeoisie forcibly employs a kid, for their profit to operate the train engine to keep the train running. This kind of thing means of the exploitation towards the proletariat especially the kids.

It can be explained in the following language **“Space is only possible for very small people. Young adult. Six and under.** This reveals that the bourgeoisie deliberately exploits a kid from proletariat, because only children can enter because of their small body size. It also illustrates that these children are considered a profitable tool for them.

Then **“Thankfully the tail has resulted in a steady supply of kids.”** This reveals that the bourgeoisie takes advantage of the child in the tail or the child of the proletariat forcibly employed by the bourgeoisie like running a train engine so that the train can keep running and the bourgeoisie on the train can continue their life.

Datum 5



(*Snowpiercer*, 00 : 36 : 33)

Paul : **That is right man, that is your food, they are protein blocks.**

Curtis : **Is that why they took you ? to make this garbage ?**

Painter : Ouch !

Curtis : . . . you can not draw this.

The scene in the following data is a scene where Curtis and the others meet Paul, friends who are making food that the proletariat usually eats on the tail. At this point it can be seen that the proletariat has been consuming a very unworthy diet all this time.

Through the following dialogue **“that is your food, they are protein blocks”** that protein blocks are rectangular food made for the proletariat in the tail. **And “making this trash?”** This dialogue shows that protein block is a disgusting food for them, it can even be said that protein block is a food that is very unfit for consumption and even disgusting because actually the ingredients for making it come from cockroaches. This is meant that in this movie the proletariat people they only having protein blocks as their food nothing else, the proletariat people they can not choose what will they eat so it is different with the the bourgeoisie class.

IV. Impacts

Impact of Social Class Differences
After the researcher has classified and analyzed the social classes in *the Snowpiercer* Movie, Then, in this section the researcher continues with the impacts of the differences in social class depicted in the movie. They are:

a. Cannibalism

A Cannibalism is one of the impacts or consequences that come from class differences between the ruling class, the bourgeoisie and the oppressed community group, the lower class or the proletariat, causing cannibalism to occur in the tail section. It can be seen in the following scene

.Snowpiercer, 01:10:00)



Monologue

Curtis :

More than thousand people in iron box, with no water, no bread, nothing. Can you imagine ? no. We were hungry. we stopped being humans. We became animals, do you know what i hate the most about myself ? i fucking hate that i know what part of human tasted good. I know that youngbabies taste the best.

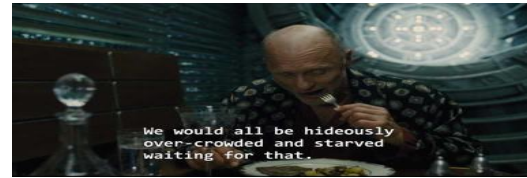
Based on what Curtis said as the one of the main characters of the proletariat he talked about their condition in the tail section such as “ **I know that young babies taste best** “. Trough that sentence explained that Curtis the proletariat people he knows how babies taste and the following reveals that the proletariat does not get the food supply or even the water. Which is causes the tail section struggling of starving. It also causes them to lose their humanity or consciousness, and this results in them to eating each other's body parts and even babies for keep their life.

It can be concluded that the division of social class in this movie causes the proletariat to suffer injustice in the distribution of food between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie so they starve and eat human flesh or become cannibals because they are forced by the circumstances.

b. Rebellion

The rebellion here is the impact of injustice in class differences between the

bourgeoisie and the proletariat, the passengers of the tail section or the proletariat are unfair and even inhumane and are considered trash by the upper class



in the front section or the bourgeoisie.

Like violence, exploitation, and domination, these things pushed the proletariat into a rebellion led by Curtis and an informant and advisor, namely Giliam. This can be seen in the following data.

Snowpiercer, 00 : 10 : 54)



Curtis : **Yes. Everything is one stroke. We liberate the wholetrain. We control the engine, we control the world. If we don't we get nothing. Past revolution all failed because they failed to take the engine.**

Giliam : So... what are you saying ?

Curtis : This time, we take this engine

Giliam : Then what ?

Curtis : we waste him

In the dialog “We control the engine, we control the world.” It is seen that the proletariat has the aim of seizing and taking over the wheel of the train at the very front, namely The Front, so that they can control the train and change their entire lives. In this case it can be conclude that the feeling of rejection and arbitrary treatment and discrimination caused the proletariat to rebel in order to change their lives to a more decent life.

c. Population reduction

Population reduction is an attempt by the bourgeoisie against the proletariat to keep it low to ensure the ecological balance in the train. This can be seen from the scene below.

(*Snowpiercer*, 01 : 41 : 00)

Wilford : **We don't have time for natural selection – we would all starve waiting for that. The next best solution is to have individual units kill of other individual units. This is what i call man made natural selection.**

Curtis : We ?

If left unchecked, the ecosystem in the train will become more crowded and the bourgeoisie will not be able to meet the resource requirements, thus creating a reduction system in order to maintain the balance of power in the train. And because of the difference in social class on the train, namely between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, the bourgeoisie as the ruling class makes the poor proletariat victims of this ecosystem balance in order to maintain the balance of the train ecosystem.

As Wilford said **“We don't have time for natural selection – we would all starve waiting for that”** he talks about the fact that natural selection takes a considerable amount of time, and that it is very important to make another strategies to reduce human population in the train in this movie especially the population of tail section people or the proletariat people, and the supporting statement it can be seen through this dialogue **“individual units kill of other individual units. This is what i call man made natural selection”**.

Wilford of the bourgeoisie deliberately makes the people of the upper class kill the proletariat, or the people in the rear deliberately provokes the proletariat to make a movement that eventually falls into the trap of reducing the ecosystem.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the differences in social class in this case is that class differences in social class in this case is that there has been a population density in their train, and to trains and in order to preserve the ecosystem the bourgeoisie as the class of owners of capital and goods decide to carry out population reduction at the expense of which proletariat it is known that the proletariat is the lower class in the train.

V. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this research is the social system in society, in *the Snowpiercer* train, it divided into two main social groups or classes. Generally divided into; The Upper Class, namely the residents of the front section or the rich people, namely the bourgeoisie, then the Lower Class, which consists of the poor people living in the tail section, namely the proletariat. While the social class differences that arise between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are: The bourgeoisie in *Snowpiercer* is a people who live in luxury in a comfortable place with complete facilities and luxurious food, the bourgeoisie in *Snowpiercer* is also a people who have power so that they are used to ruling, committing violence, dominating, humiliating, and even exploiting labor, minors. Meanwhile, the proletariat is an oppressed group, such as not getting what they deserve, a dirty, cramped, dark place to live, not having freedom and being treated arbitrarily by the bourgeoisie. In *the Snowpiercer* movie,

researcher found the impact caused by differences in social class. Based on these social class differences, it raises a point of view on their lifestyle, behavior and personality. The impacts that exist due to social differences that are far from just and human are such as dirty, cramped living quarters, food made from cockroaches, physical violence, 58 exploitation, humiliation, arbitrary behavior, restrictive regulations and the absence of freedom.

This is in contrast to what is in the front section, a luxurious and comfortable place with complete facilities, which triggers several social impacts such as cannibalism, rebellion, to the reduction of the population of the proletariat for the sake of the balance of the train and at the end of the movie. It results in huge impact on both classes. Then it can be concluded that impact of differences or social class divisions in *Snowpiercer* Movie resulted in all the people from both classes, namely bourgeoisie and proletariat died as a result of tragedies of the impact of stemming from population reduction and rebellion.

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