



**REPRESENTATION OF CLASSES BASED ON *THE HUNGER GAMES'*
TRILOGY BY SUZNE COLLINS ON MARXISM PERSPECTIVE**

THESIS

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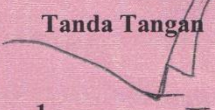
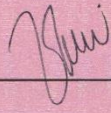
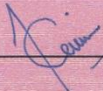
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THE REPRESENTATION OF SOCIAL CLASSES BASED ON *THE HUNGER GAMES*' TRILOGY BY SUZANNE COLLINS ON MARXISM PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

In this thesis, the writer analyzes about the representation of social classes based on The Hunger Games' trilogy by Suzanne Collins. The study has three purposes: (1) to describe the social classes that are represented in the Hunger Games (2) to describe how the oppression done by the Base in the Hunger Games (3) to describe how Superstructure rebel against oppression in the Hunger Games. In analyzing the novel, the writer applies Marxist theory by Karl Marx. The writer does close reading technique by analytic reading, which examining meaning in the way reread carefully and pay attention on the text to understand the central ideas and key supporting details as a whole. The writer does descriptive method to analyze the research by the letter instead number. The novel pictures the representation of social classes, those are Government, which is represented as the Base and the working class of districts which are represented as Superstructure. The representative of two social classes has a relationship in the form of oppression. The working classes are oppressed by Government and they reacted against the oppression by doing rebellion.

Keywords: Representation of Social Classes, the Base, Superstructure, Oppression, Rebellion

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Reason for Choosing The Topic

Literary works are not only the result of the author's feelings, but also a reflection of the phenomenon that happen in society. It is not surprising anymore in society we find the distinctions of people from many aspects. The distinction can be caused by the economy, such as rich and poor people, by race such as white people and black people, by gender such as men and women and other distinctions. These distinctions formed people into a strong group and a weak group. The distinction which is caused by economy becomes a phenomenon that it has been studied by Karl Marx that is famous with Marxist theory.

Marxist is one of literary criticism originating from the mid-to-late 19th century works of German philosophers Karl Marx. Marxist comes to change social classes become social classless. Because there are dominated classes or superstructure live under oppressed by the dominating class or base. As stated by Bressler "Marxism had already flourished in the nineteenth century as a pragmatic view of history that offered the working classes of society to opportunity to change their world and therefore their lives" (Bressler:211). Bressler also states,

Marxism concerns for the working classes and the individual, provides framework for understanding our world. Marxist believes and enables us to understand ourselves and how we as individuals relate to and are affected by our society, and we must help direct and change our

society, our culture, our nation, and our world by leading humanity toward an understanding and an acceptance of socialism. (210)

The Hunger Games, one of American famous literary works written by Suzanne Collins. *The Hunger Games* are a series of the trilogy entitled *the Hunger Games* (2008), *Catching Fire* (2009) and *Mockingjay* (2010). *The Hunger Games* gained many achievements and awards such as #1 New York Times Bestseller, #1 USA Today Bestseller, An American Library Association Top Ten Best Book for Young Adults Selection, etc. (suzannecollinsbooks.com)

The enormous success of *the Hunger Games'* trilogy brings Suzanne Collins to fame and got many awards and achievements. What makes Suzanne Collins greatly tackle like severe poverty, starvation, oppression and the effects of wars among other in the *Hunger Games'* trilogy because she is influenced by her father. Her father was career Air Force, a military specialist, a historian and a doctor of political science. Since she was a kid, she understood about certain aspects of life and about her father's childhood, which grew up during the depression and hard to find food on the table. The writer found that there is something special about the author the *Hunger Games'* trilogy that represented social classes' Marxism perspective.

The Hunger Games represent the social classes Marxism perspective, and the relationship between the Base and Superstructure. It tells about that the country was once called North America, which rose up out from the ashes and rebellion and becoming Panem, a shining and wealthy Capitol ringed by thirteen districts live in poverty. The uprising districts against the Capitol,

twelve of them are defeated, and the thirteenth was obliterated. Their rebellion gave them The Treaty of Treason, new laws to guarantee peace and yearly reminder that Rebellion must never be repeated, it gave them the Hunger Games, compulsory annual death match.

Every year, one girl and one boy from twelve districts are chosen and imprisoned in a vast outdoor arena to participate to fight to the death until the last tribute standing wins, only one of them from twenty-four tributes. Capitol depicts the rich who has wealth and dominate society, whereas the twelve districts are the poor who are working class and being ruled by Capitol and live under oppression. The common problem almost happens in twelve districts, starvation. It is probably the saddest thing to say that twelve districts have worked for their whole life and they still do not have enough food to eat, whereas people in the Capitol live in luxury and easily watch the compulsory annual death match, the Hunger Games as entertainment.

The distinctions forming people in Panem into strong and weak group based on economic power. People who have money can control people who have not. In this novel, Capitol represents 'the haves' and the working class of districts represent 'they have not'. This distinction has formed the people in Panem become strong and group. As said in the explanation above, the distinctions come from economic power. This novel represents politic as well as economic power, but the writer just focuses on economic power to analyze this research.

The writer found that *the Hunger Games* reflects scientifically important in Marxist literary criticism, the relationship between the Base and Superstructure classes as one of the many phenomenon in human society through *the Hunger Games*. Based on it, the writer would like to analyze the representation of classes in this story with the title Representation of Classes Based on *the Hunger Games*' Trilogy by Suzanne Collins in Marxism Perspective.

1.2 The Objective and Scope of the Study

The research deals with Marxism theory, the object of the research is the *Hunger Games* written by Suzanne Collins. The objective of the research is to analyze the representation of classes between the Base and Superstructure in capitalist society in Panem, a fictional country in *the Hunger Games*. Capitol, as the Base class who rules Superstructure classes. The research can be applied by depending upon Marxism theory. Shortly, there are three specific points of this research as follows:

1. To explain social classes that are represented in *The Hunger Games*.
2. To explain how the oppression done by the Base in *The Hunger Games*.
3. To explain how does Superstructure against oppression as seen in *The Hunger Games*.

1.3 Formulation of the Problem

The writer formulates her analysis that she thinks is so important in the novel, there are three research questions which can be used as follow-up action in digging up the data and carrying out the analysis, as follows:

1. What social classes are represented in *The Hunger Games*?
2. How does oppression done by the Base in *The Hunger Games*?
3. How does Superstructure against oppression as seen in *The Hunger Games*?

1.4 Theoretical Framework

A literary work is a reflection of the condition of the society. Marxism is one of many approaches in literature to criticize them. As stated by Bressler“Marxism had already flourished in the nineteenth century as a pragmatic view of history that offered the working classes opportunity to change their world and therefore their lives” (*Introduction to Literary Theory*:211).

Marxist analyzes two classes as stated by Louis Tyson in his book *Critical Theory Today*,

The “haves” and the “have-nots,” between the bourgeoisie—those who control the world’s natural, economic, and human resources—and the proletariat, the majority of the global population who live in substandard conditions and who have always performed the manual labor—the mining, the factory work, the ditch digging—the railroad—that fills the coffers of the rich. (54)

Thus, economics is *the Base* on which *the superstructure* of social/ political/ ideological realities is built” (54). Bressler also made point as he states in his book *An Introduction to Theory and Practice*.

Marx argues that the economic means of production within a society – what he calls the base-both engenders and controls all human institutions and ideologies-what Marx calls the superstructure, including all social and legal institutions, then, develop as a direct result of the economic means of production, not the other way around.(212)

Bressler also states the bourgeoisie, another name for the Base, and proletariat as another name for Superstructure.

It is the employers (the bourgeoisie) who have the economic power and who readily gain social and political control of their society. Eventually this upper class will articulate their beliefs, values, and even art. Consciously and unconsciously they will force these ideas, or what Marx calls their ideology, on the working class, otherwise known the proletariat or the wage slaves. In effect, the bourgeoisie will develop and control the superstructure. In such a system, the rich become richer while the poor become poorer and more and more oppressed.(213)

Seeing this, the Base puts its articulation on the working class, such as belief, values, art and much more. The Base class and Superstructure have a relationship in the form of articulation by the Base on Superstructure. The articulation as stated by Tyson is oppression based on economic power, “they are hardest hit by economic recessions and limited means of improving their lot” (55). In Marxist, bourgeoisie as the Base maintains its power to make the working class as proletariat under its control by getting and keeping economy. As stated by Tyson For “Marxism, getting and keeping economic power is the motive behind all social and political activities, including education,

philosophy, religion, government, the art, science, technology, the media, and so on”(54).

One of the ways to keep economic power is using warring factors to make no social change between the working class. As Tyson states “they usually permit differences in religion, race, ethnicity, or gender to separate them into warring factions that accomplish little or no social change” (54).According to Bressler in his book *An Introduction to Theory and Practice* in a capitalist society

There is an ideology will lead fragmentation and alienation to the working class as proletariat. They are no longer have contact with process of material goods and cut off from the value of their work.Capitalist society, Marx declares that such an ideology leads to fragmentation and alienation of individual, particularly those of the proletariat. As direct result of division labor within the capitalist society, workers no longer have contact with the entire process of producing, distributing, and consuming material goods. Individuals are therefore cut off from the full value of their work as well as from each other, each performing discrete functional roles assigned to him or her by the bourgeoisie. (213)

Seeing this, Marxism appears in the society to change capitalism toward communism, class society toward classless society. Marxist offered working classes as proletariat or part of superstructure opportunity to change their world and therefore their lives. They have to realize make contact with the value of their work. They have right to own their production and have contact with the entire process of producing, distributing, and consuming material goods. The working class should not cut off from the full value of their work as well as from each other.

1.5 Method of The Research

The writer expands the analysis with the close reading method. Close reading is analytic reading with examining meaning thoroughly and methodically, to read and reread deliberately, giving attention on the text to understand the central ideas and key supporting details. Reflecting on the meanings of individual words and sentences; the order in which sentences unfold; and the development of ideas over the course of the text, which lead to an understanding of the text as a whole (PARCC, 2011, p.7). This method gives the writer's attention to the text as a whole and focus on intrinsic elements such as character, setting, plot, point of view and so on. Together with Marxist Criticism, this method will sharpen the analysis. In brief, the writer reads the literary work first and then uses this method to find an object of analysis.

The first step that begins with close reading is choosing the literary work. The writer assumes that *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins contains a Marxist perspective. After reading the book, the writer finds there is a distinction of social classes which is suitable for Marxist study by Karl Marx. After that, the writer also finds how the representation of social classes has a relationship in the form of oppression. Superstructure classes are oppressed by the Base. The writer corrects the data and Marxist theory in a tentative outline as a guide based on the descriptive method that analyzes data by letters instead of numbers.

Then, the writer found the data which is suitable for Marxism perspective. The writers collect the data as scientific proof in this thesis. After clarifying the data, the writer makes the research questions as a limitation of the study. Research questions help the writer to make scope of this study. The Primary data is the novel and secondary are data which related to analysis, such as collected from the book, articles, documents and files that relates to analysis. Data comes from quotation which helps the writer to support the theory and the analysis.

1.6 Presentation

There are five chapters will define in this research. In chapter one, the writer discusses about the introduction of this research. They are like the reason for choosing the topic, the objective and the scope of the study, formulation of the problem, theoretical framework and method of the research.

Chapter two is about how social classes represented in the novel. It consists of Government as the Base and the working classes as Superstructure. Chapter three discusses about oppression done by the Base. Chapter four, the writer analyzes rebellion toward oppression. Then chapter five will conclude representation of classes and the oppression done by the Base, and rebellion toward oppression.