CLASS CONFLICT ANALYSIS IN *STEP UP REVOLUTION* FILM BY USING MARXISM LITERARY CRITICISM

A Thesis

Submitted to Letters and Humanities Faculty as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Strata One (S1)

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ABSTRACT


This thesis aims to observe social classes; Bourgeois and Proletarian, the conflict between them, and the struggle of Proletarian in *Step Up Revolution* (2012) film through Marxism literary criticism. This research uses qualitative method and descriptive analysis technique to analyze the social classes, the class conflict, and proletarian’s resistance with some other supporting theory such as theory of Emmet G. Price about hip hop culture and Howard Rheingold’s theory about smart mobs.

Research finding shows there are two main classes in the film; proletariat and bourgeoisie where there are two major characters as the representation of each classes; The Mob and the resident of Spring Garden district as the proletariat, Bill Anderson and his company as the bourgeois. Moreover, there is a conflict over a property between those classes. The bourgeois collaborate with the city council of Miami as the representation of the landowner to gain more power in order to win the conflict. As the struggle to win the conflict, The Mob uses graffiti and smart mob as protest art and makes it viral on social networks. As the conclusion, the performance of protest art successfully gets a lot of supports from social networks and helps the poor revolt against the capitalist.

*Keywords*: Class Conflict, Social Class, Marxism Literary Criticism, Bourgeoisie, Proletariat and Hip Hop Culture.
APPROVEMENT

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Submitted to Faculty of Adab and Humanities
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The thesis entitled above has been defended before the Letters and Humanities Faculty’s Examination Committee on 24th October 2018. It has already been accepted as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of strata one.

Jakarta, 24th October 2018

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which is substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other or diploma of the university or another institute of higher learning, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

Jakarta, October 2018

Oka Wahyu Prayuda
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The Writer
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Many films have some particular issues that are commonly found in society such as a conflict between the poor and the rich which is generally known as class conflict. Class conflict is defined as a conflict situation between different classes in a society which derive from different social or economic positions and reflecting opposed interest. Those classes are bourgeoisie and proletariat (Ritzer 61). Class conflict is also often called as class struggle since usually it pointed the struggle of proletariat to fight bourgeoisie. Class conflict can arise from political and economic situation, however according to Karl Marx, class conflict mostly occurs because of the economic organization in the most societies (Ritzer 62).

Films can also be studied in literary studies. Through film, people who have opinions or messages about anything, can convey it to the audiences through audio-visual. According to Bordwell and Thompson, film has a great power because it gives the image that can brings us deeper to understand about real life than other media (Bordwell and Thompson 3). Film and literary works are people’s creation that use language as its medium. They use films and literary works as media to express their feelings, ideas, or description of someone or something. Films and literary works have significant influences in the society. Moreover, film and literary works have potentials to make social construction of the people or the society. Film
and literary works can be used as an intellectual movement, entertainment, art symbols of traditions or beliefs.

One example of film that shows people about real life social issue particularly about class conflict is *Step Up Revolution*. It was released in 2012, written by Amanda Brody and Duane Adler, directed by Scott Speer, and produced by Summit Entertainment. The film is starring Ryan Guzman as Sean, Kathryn McCormick as Emily Anderson, Peter Gallagher as Bill Anderson, Misha Gabriel as Eddy, and Adam Sevani as The Moose.

The film is about a street dance group that get famous for creating flash mobs called “The Mob” which is led by Sean and Eddy. The Mob is trying to win Youtube competition to earn money. Then, Sean meets a girl named Emily who is the daughter of a successful hotel owner and developer. Emily’s father, Bill Anderson, is the owner of a hotel where Sean and Eddie work. Later, Sean shows The Mob to Emily that makes Emily interested to join it. Then, Emily figures out that her father plans to tear down the neighborhood where The Mob and the resident live. He plans that in order to expand and do some development for his hotel. Then, Emily tells Sean about her father’s plan and convince him that he should use The Mob to launch a protest in attempt to defend the neighborhood. Sean agreed with Emily, and the struggle of The Mob in order to get their rights back is started since then. The Mob and Emily interferes the meeting of Bill Anderson with his colleagues by doing a big flash mob dance in the middle of Anderson’s office building. The Mob and Emily keeps doing flash mob over and over again to interfere the progress of Bill Anderson’s plans.
The reason this research tries to investigate this particular film is because the researcher sees conflict between social classes is a major problem in society nowadays. Bourgeoisie with their power keeps spreading while the proletariat keep getting oppressed. In this film, the conflict between those classes is shown in modern society of Miami.

In brief, this research tries to analyze about how is the social class described in the film of *Step Up Revolution*. Next, how is the class conflict shown in the film. And the last is, how the struggle of the oppressed class described.

**B. Focus of the Study**

The focus of this thesis is about the issues of social class, class conflict between the poor and the rich and the struggle of the oppressed class. In *Step Up Revolution*, social distinction and how it leads to social conflict are described as the same as social issues in real life where rich people are able to control to everything at their will. Therefore, this thesis tries to understand more about social class and class conflict through this film.

**C. Research Question**

Based on the focus of the research above, the suitable research questions for this research are:

1. How is the social class described in the film of *Step Up Revolution*?
2. How is the class conflict shown in the film?
3. How is the struggle of the oppressed class described?
D. The Objective of the Research

Based on the research questions, the objectives of this research are:

1. To identify, describe, and explain about social class in *Step Up Revolution* and to differentiate between proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

2. To understand and reveal social conflict in this film.

3. To know and to explain what kinds of actions that The Mob as the representation of the poor struggle as the oppressed class.

E. Significance of the Study

As mentioned before in the background of the study, film has a great power as it gives the image that can brings us deeper to understand about real life than other media. In addition, films have significant influences in the society since it is easy to understand and it is the most enthused kind of literary work where the audiences can enjoy it through audio-visual.

Class conflict is a common issue in social environment where the poor always get oppressed and exploited by the rich. It is a prevalent phenomenon found in sociological and political sphere. However, class conflict also found in literary sphere since many of literary works such as poem, prose, drama and film tell stories about a conflict between classes in a social environment. One of examples of film that tells about a conflict between classes is *Step Up Revolution* film which is the corpus of this research. The film contains issue that are experienced by many people around the world where the rich arbitrarily evicts the poor away in order to expand their power.
Furthermore, there is something unique in *Step Up Revolution*. Generally, the struggle to protest the injustice of capitalist is usually followed by anarchy where the oppressed class start doing vandalism. However, this film is different from what typically happens in a protest. This film uses dance as a media or tool to protest the capitalist who treated their labors badly and violated their rights by trying to steal their home.

Therefore, by analyzing *Step Up Revolution* film, hopefully this research would be able to gives other researcher or readers about particular perception about class conflict in a film and about kinds of the poor’s resistance against the capital. Furthermore, the writer wishes that it can give contribution to other researchers in applying Marxism theory about class conflict in doing literary research especially in film analysis.

F. Research Methodology

The following section explains about the method used for this research, technique of data analysis, the unit of analysis, the instrument of the research and time and place of when and where the research was conducted.

1. The Method of the research

To answer the questions and solve the problems presented earlier, this research uses qualitative method in doing this research which is not using statistics or mathematical models. According to Kumar, qualitative research is concerned with qualitative phenomenon relating to or involving quality or kind the characteristic of qualitative method is its aims, which relate to understanding some aspect of social life, and its methods which generate words, rather than numbers, as
data for analysis. Qualitative method generally aims to answer questions about the ‘what’, ‘how’, or ‘why’ of a phenomenon rather than ‘how many’ or ‘how much’ (Kumar 8).

Therefore, in doing this research, researcher collects, classifies and analyzes the data and then make a conclusion. Researcher uses qualitative method to analyze the social class and class conflict between The Mob as the poor and Mr. Anderson and Trip as the rich. The data of research taken from dialogues and scenes from the film itself.

2. The Technique of Data Analysis

According to online version of Business Dictionary: Data analysis is the process of evaluating data using analytical and logical reasoning to examine each component of data provided (“Data Analysis”). The data from various sources is gathered, reviewed, and analyzed to form a conclusion. It is a process where researcher takes descriptive information and offers an explanation or interpretation. In a qualitative research, the forms of the data are non-numerical, images, videos, texts and people's written or spoken words (Kumar 15).

In this research, the source of the data is the film itself. The forms of data are words, dialogues and scenes. The collected data are analyzed qualitatively through the following steps: first, the data of dialogues and scenes related to the topic are analyzed. Next, the researcher gives an explanation about the data and analyzes the data by using the theory of film and Marxism theory. Finally, analysis is concluded to answers the research questions.
The conclusion was made by collecting, classifying, and analyzing related data. Qualitative method is conducted in order to analyze the conflict between the Mob as the poor and Mr. Anderson and Trip as the rich.

3. The Unit of Analysis

The unit analysis of the research is a film entitled *Step Up Revolution* film, written by Amanda Brody and Duane Adler, directed by Scott Speer, and produced by Summit Entertainment, and released on 27th July 2012.

4. Instrument of the research

The data are collected by the instrument of research. According to Parahoo, a research instrument is a tool used to collect data. An instrument is a tool designed to measure knowledge and skills (Parahoo 60). In qualitative research, the main methods for collecting data are; interviews, focus groups, and observation. In this research, the method for collecting data is through observation where the researcher observes the corpus and makes a written description about the data collected.

This qualitative research uses its own researcher himself as the primary data collection instrument for collecting qualitative data. The instrument does some actions in order to collect the data. First, by watching the film repeatedly to find dialogues and scenes related to the focus of this research. Next, quoting some dialogues and capturing some scenes related to the focus of this research. And then describing, explaining, and analyzing the data to answer the research questions. The last is concluding the result findings.
5. Time and Place of Research

This study is undertaken in 2017. This research is also conducted in several places, including: the library of State Islamic University Jakarta, the library of faculty of Adab and Humanities State Islamic University Jakarta, and some other places.
CHAPTER II
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. Previous Research

Other researches, articles, and other academic writings that use similar corpus and topic but with different point of view were found as the previous researches. There are other researches that use Step Up Revolution film as their corpus of research, there are also other researches that use Marxism and class struggle as the main topic of the research.

The first research entitled Postmodern Youth Body Construction in Step Up Revolution written by Haikal Pradana, a student of Sebelas Maret University. His research published by the faculty of Letters and Fine Arts of Sebelas Maret University in August 2014. His research is focused on examining American contemporary youth images in 21st century through postmodern body construction. It has two major purposes: first, to find out how postmodern youth body is constructed in the film and second, to examine how the politics of construction is revealed in the film. Haikal uses film semiotic theory, socio-cultural approach, postmodern theory, and posthuman bodies theory. To answer the research questions, Haikal’s study applies film semiotics theory, socio-cultural approach, postmodern theory, and posthuman bodies theory. The analysis finds a results that Step Up Revolution clearly and successfully proposes that there are many possible youth bodies which can be constructed. They have been capable to break the grand
narrative of youth body which only shares about the culture of white working class male youth.

The second research entitled *Marxism Social Ideology and Class Struggle in “Solidaritatslied” Poem by Bertolt Brecht* written by Sri Ayu Habibah from Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta. Her research is focused on describing the relation between Marxism Social Ideology and Class Struggle. Sri Ayu uses descriptive qualitative method and semiotic approach in her research. The result of her research is that the matrix of “Solidaritatslied” poem is proletarian’s revolt to tear down the capitalist.

There are differences and similarities from this research and those research mentioned above. The similarity in the first research is the corpus which is a film entitled *Step Up Revolution*, and the similarity from the second research is the topic which is about class struggle. Moreover, the difference between this thesis and Haikal Pradana’s research is that his research is focusing on how postmodern youth body is constructed in the film and how the politics of construction is revealed in the film, while this research focuses on the social issue in this film which is class conflict and the proletarian’s struggle. Meanwhile the difference between this research and Sri Ayu’s research is the corpus where she uses a poem while this research uses a film.

**B. Film, Character and Characterization**

The following part explain briefly about film, character and characterization. The explanation about character and characterization will be followed by aspects or ways in characterization such as characterization through
appearance, dialogue, internal action, external actions and through reactions of other characters.

1.) **Film**

Film is a young medium compared to most other media such as painting, dance and drama which has existed for thousands of years. Film came into existence only a little more than a century ago. Film or motion pictures communicate information and ideas, and they show us places and ways of life we might not otherwise know (Bordwell and Thompson 3).

Film is both an industry and an art form. Film can be called an industry or business due to its entertainment. The entertainment element of the film usually is the main reason that a producer or movie studio make a sequel or prequel of a film in order to earn more and more profit from that film. Film can also be called as an art form since most of elements of art can be found in a film. For instance, like paintings and photography, film exploits the subtle interplay of light and shadow. Like sculpture, film manipulates three-dimensional space. Like drama, film communicates visually and verbally (Boggs 3).

In analyzing a film, the challenge is that film or motion picture moves continuously in time and space. Once paused or frozen, a film is no longer a “motion” picture. Therefore, film analysis requires sensitive respond to the simultaneous and continuous interplay of image, sound, and movement (Boggs 5).

2.) **Character**

Character is the person in a work of fiction. In a story, there are some characters but usually the story focuses on two major characters; protagonist and
antagonist. Protagonist is the central of the story with all major events having some importance to this character. Antagonist is the character or person or force that oppose the protagonist (Gordon 95).

Despite there are major characters, there are also minor characters. Minor characters are the opposite of major characters who usually receive very little screen time and unlikely to be used as a viewpoint character (Gordon 97). Minor characters are not as important as the major characters, but still play a large part in the story which their actions help drive the story forward.

There are also some types of character in a story; rounded characters, flat characters, dynamic characters, and static characters. Rounded character is character that has many-sided and complex personalities that nearly like actual human beings. Flat character is character that their personalities are presented only briefly and not in depth. Dynamic character is like rounded character, it has many-sided personalities but those personalities are changing during the story, to become better or worse by the end of the story. Static character is the opposite of dynamic character, it has one or two characteristics that never change until the end of the story (DiYanni 54).

In brief, there are two kinds of characters in a story; major and minor characters where these two types of characters are both have possibilities that they considered as protagonist, antagonist, rounded, flat, dynamic, or static characters.

3.) Characterization

Each character in a story must have personalities or often called as characteristics. Based on online version of *Merriam Webster dictionary:*
“characteristics is something special that makes a character different from others ("Characteristic")).

A characteristic is able to make a difference between two characters even those characters look exactly the same. The way a writer makes a character in a story is called characterization. In addition, characterization is also a term of the act of describing the character. There are two main approaches of describing a character, direct characterization and indirect characterization (Gordon 95). According to Joseph M. Boggs, there are three aspects of direct characterization; characterization through appearance, through dialogue, and through external action. Meanwhile, there are only two aspects of indirect characterization; through internal action and through reaction of another character (Boggs 59).

a.) Characterization through Appearance

A major aspect of characterization is revealed visually and instantaneously. The moment we see the character on stage or on screen, we as the audience spontaneously make certain assumptions about them because of their physical features such as facial, dress, mannerisms and the way they move. Our first visual impression might be wrong as the story progresses, but it is certainly an important means of establishing character (Boggs 60). In short, even though there is a proverb said that “do not judge a book by its cover”, but we have to admit that the cover is the first thing we see and gives us the first impression about something or someone.

b.) Characterization through Dialogue

Dialogue is everything that a character said in a story. Characters in a fictional literary works naturally reveal a great deal about themselves by what they
say. But a great deal is also revealed by how they say it. Their true thoughts, attitudes, and emotions can be revealed in subtle ways through word choice and through the stress, pitch, and pause patterns of their speech (Boggs 61). Therefore, in order to know about certain character’s characteristic, we must be able to understand carefully not only what is said but also to how it is said.

c.) Characterization through External Action

The best reflection of the characters is the act of what they do. Although appearance and dialogue are important measures of a character’s personality, they both often misleading. In fact, some actions are more important in revealing character than others. Even the most ordinary choice can be revealing. Sometimes, the most effective characterization is achieved not by the large actions but by the small, seemingly insignificant ones (Boggs 62). For example, a guy dressed like a hobo with many tattoos and says excessive swear words stopped a man in a suit who tries to snatch a wallet from an old lady’s purse in a public transportation. That event clearly shows that even the appearance and the dialogue are important measures of a character’s personality, but they often misleading. In the end, character’s external action is more important in revealing their personality. In short, sometimes we have to listen to a proverb that said “do not judge a book by its cover”.

d.) Characterization through Internal Action

Inner actions occur within characters’ minds and emotions and consists of secrets, unspoken thoughts, daydreams, aspirations, memories, fears and fantasies. The most obvious way in which the filmmaker reveals inner reality of a character
is by talking to the audiences visually or aurally into the character’s mind so that the audiences are able to see or hear the things that the character imagines, remembers, or thinks about (Boggs 62).

e.) Characterization through Reactions of Other Characters

The way other characters view a person often serves as an excellent means of characterization. Sometimes, a huge amount of information about a character is already provided through other characters’ view even before the character itself first appears on the screen (Boggs 64). For example, in *Harry Potter* franchise, we already know about Voldemort’s characteristics before his first appearance because other characters in the whole story always talk about him.

C. Marxism Theory

Marxism is a scientific theory about society and action to change it (Eagleton 3). Marxism was founded by a German political, economic, and philosophical theorist and revolutionist named Karl Heinrich Marx (1818 – 1883). His impact on the world of thought has been extensive, embracing sociology, philosophy, economics, and cultural theory. With his collaboration with Friedrich Engels (1820 – 1895), Marx produced a critique of capitalist society based on a materialistic of history (Habib 527).

Marx said in *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) that “The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles”. He stated that history is mostly about the struggle between classes for dominance (Eagleton 3). It means that class struggle or class conflict is the key to understand the development of human history. According to Marx, history may be divided roughly into several
periods, for example, ancient civilization, feudalism, and capitalism. Each of these periods is characterized by a predominant mode of production and, based upon it, a class structure consisting of a ruling class and oppressed class (Bendix and Lipset 6). The struggle between these classes determine the social relations between people.

The key to understand Marx is his class definition. A class is defined by the ownership of property. Such ownership reinforces a person with the power to eliminate others from the property and to use it for personal purposes. In relation to property, there are three great classes of society; the Bourgeoisie (who owns the means of production and whose source of income is profit), Landowners (whose income is rent), and the Proletariat (who own their labor and sell it for a wage). At first, the interests associated with land ownership and rent are different. But as society matures, land ownership (bourgeoisie) and rent (landowners) are merged, causing society class divided into two main classes (Rummel 79).

D. Social Class

Marxism believes that class was produced by economy conflict and inherently class produces conflict. The class structure is shaped in capitalist mode of production, and then it is divided into two main classes: the capitalist or bourgeoisie and the labor or proletariat. Those classes are defined by the ownership of property. Whoever has the property has the power to control (Ritzer 58)
1.) Bourgeoisie

Bourgeoisie is Marx’s name for capitalists in the modern economy. Bourgeoisie are those who own the means of production and employs wage labor (Ritzer 60). They are the dominant class who dominate production and rules with the aim to exploit, and maintain exploits so that they can keep ruling (Habib 528). The bourgeoisie or capitalists produce money that produce more money. They do not have to work since they rule the workers who do all the works for them and makes them keep living and gets profit. The most obtrusive of the bourgeoisie is that they are the exploiters. They get the most profit and benefit of the production even they do not have to work for it. It is because they are the owner of production of property, and rules whoever works for them.

In bourgeois society, capital is independent and has individuality, while the living person is dependent and has no individuality. Marx stated that even the family cannot escape such commodification where for a bourgeois man, a wife is reduced to a mere instrument of production (Habib 534).

The nature characteristic of bourgeoisie is that they cannot exist without the need of constantly expanding market. Their target is to expand across all nations to cover the whole surface of the globe. In short, the bourgeoisie creates a world after its own image that will cause capitalism reduces all human relationship and turns it to “cash” relationship or commercial relation (Habib 528).

2.) Proletariat

Proletariat is the puny class in society class, the one that got oppressed, ruled, and exploited. Marx defines proletariat as the working class, a class of
laborers, who live only as long as they find work, and who find work only as long as their labor increases capital. These laborers, who must sell themselves fragmentary, are considered as a product. The proletarians own nothing but labor power, they have no resource than the capability to work with their physics and minds which is causing bourgeoisie exploits them in order to make profit (Habib 528). In short, anyone who sells their labor and do not own their own means of production are members of the proletariat. In capitalism, work and labor process are organized to proletariat remain property-less. This situation makes them keep on giving their power to bourgeoisie. That is how modern slavery created in this modern era.

Marx believed that proletarians would eventually lose their own skills as they increasingly services machines that had their skills built into them (Ritzer 59). Because members of the proletariat produce only for exchange, they are all also considered as consumers. They do not have the means to produce for their own needs, they must use their wages to afford what they need. Consequently, proletarians are completely dependent on their wages in order to live. This situation makes them dependent on those who pay for their wages.

3.) Class Conflict

The major class conflict in modern times is between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat or industrial working class. Marx assumes that it is actually the bourgeoisie itself which creates the instrument of its own destruction by doing capitalism, the proletariat, on the one hand, who will unite against it (Habib 530).
According to Charles Watkins, a conflict happens if there are two main things; obstruction and needs. First, a conflict could happen if there are at least two parties that can potentially obstruct each other. Potentially, they both have abilities to obstruct the opposite party. If both parties are unable to obstruct or they both assumes the opposite party is not an obstruction, then conflict will not happen. Second, a conflict could happen if both parties have a same target or needs but only one can have it (Chandra 21).

Marx defined class in terms of its potential for conflict. These two classes which already mentioned earlier are usually in a common conflict with others over the surplus value. Surplus value is defined as the difference between the value of the product when it is sold and the value of the elements and materials consumed when the product was being made (Ritzer 62). In capitalism there is a natural conflict of interest between bourgeoisie (who hire wage laborers) and proletarian (whose labor is turned into surplus value).

Based on Marx’s view, there are six elements of class conflict: The first is classes are authority relationships based on property ownership. Second element is that a class defines groupings of individuals with shared life situations, thus interests. Next is classes are naturally antagonistic by virtue of their interests. The fourth element is that imminent within modern society is the growth of two antagonistic classes and their struggle, which eventually absorbs all social relations. Fifth element is political organization and Power is an instrumentality of class struggle, and reigning ideas are its reflection. And the last element is that structural change is a consequence of the class struggle (Rummel 83).
Since classes are naturally antagonistic by their interests, bourgeoisie with proletarian determine class conflict will happen or not. If bourgeoisie monopolize the means of production and manipulate the proletariat, then class conflict will happen. Most important, the severest manifestation of class conflict has been existing through collective bargaining legislation and the legalization of strikes (Rummel 84).

This thesis tries to analyzes the conflict between the rich or the bourgeois and the poor or the proletariat in *Step Up Revolution* film. The analysis uses Marxism theory, film and character theory and other supporting theories in order to answer the research questions. The complete analysis and explanation about the social classes, the conflict between classes, and the struggle of the oppressed classes are presented in the next chapter.
CHAPTER III

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter discusses the topic and problems of this research by analyzing the data that are collected through research in order to answer the research questions. It starts from the first research question about social class, and continue to the second about the conflict between classes and the third is about the resistance of the oppressed class.

*Step Up Revolution* film is chosen as the corpus of research because it contains issue about class conflict which is experienced by many people around the world, where Bourgeoisie indiscriminately with their power evicts Proletarian away in order to expand their territory to improve their power. Another thing that makes the film is interesting to be studied is because the struggle of the oppressed class in this film is done in a unique way. They are struggling in attempt to get their rights back through dancing (smart mob) as symbol of protest art.

*Step Up Revolution* film tells about a street dance group who gets famous for creating flash mob dance called The Mob which is led by two guys named Sean and Eddy. In the film, The Mob tries to win a competition in Youtube to earn money. Even though The Mob is a group consists of professional dancers, however most of the crew are workers in a hotel in Miami called Dimont hotel, owned by wealthy developer, Bill Anderson and managed by Bill’s colleague, Trip. Later, Sean meets a girl named Emily who is daughter of Bill Anderson and fall for her. Then, Sean shows The Mob to Emily that makes her interested to join it. Emily becomes part
of The Mob and she practices with them, she performs with them, she even spends her time together with The Mob.

Later on, Emily figures out about her father’s plan about tearing down the neighborhood where The Mob and the residents live. He plans to expand and do some development for his hotel. At that point, Emily tells Sean about her father’s plan and convinces him that he and The Mob should launch a protest in attempt to defend the neighborhood. Sean and The Mob agree with Emily, and the struggle of The Mob in order to get their rights back is started since then.

In this film, the main characters who represent the poor or the proletariat are Sean, Eddy and Emily while the minor characters of the poor are all crew of The Mob and the residents of Spring Gardens district. In addition, the main characters who represent the rich or the bourgeois are Bill Anderson and Trip while the minor characters are Bill’s colleagues in his corporation, Anderson Global Properties.

Based on short synopsis above, there is a class conflict between The Mob and the Dimont hotel executives, Bill Anderson and Trip where they are trying to wipe out entire area where The Mob and the residents live. It means that Bill Anderson and Trip, with their power, oppress The Mob. The Mob as the representation of proletariat struggle to get their rights back. They struggle for their rights because of the conflict between classes where the rich or the bourgeoisie treats their labors badly and wanted to buy the residence which caused the poor or the proletariat feel oppressed and make them struggle in attempt to do revolt against the bourgeoisie.
A. Social Class in *Step Up Revolution* Film

As explained in the previous chapter, based on Marx’s point of view, in a social environment there are at least two different kinds of people where Marx classified those people into two social classes; bourgeois and proletariat (Rummel 79). In *Step Up Revolution* film, the social environment is a city of Miami. Obviously, there are also two different social classes that can be seen in the film, the rich or the bourgeois and the labor or the proletariat.

Broadly speaking, the bourgeois is the owner of capital, who dominates production, and who often oppresses weaker classes. The bourgeois has a nature in which they must extend, enlarge, and develop their ‘wings’ throughout the world. It is their natural desire to expand the market.

In contrast, Proletariat is a working class known as minority class, has no capital, often oppressed, and can only sell its own labor in order to survive because there is nothing else they can sell.

a). Bourgeois in *Step Up Revolution* Film

As stated before, bourgeois is the owner of capital who dominates production and who often oppresses weaker class (Ritzer 60). That means, those who own the capital and those who has power to oppresses weaker class are considered as bourgeois. In this film, there are at least two major characters who are categorized as the representation of bourgeois, Bill Anderson (right side) and Trip (left side) (see figure 1).
The first character described as the representation of bourgeois class is Bill Anderson, father of Emily Anderson, the CEO of Anderson Global Properties. The film describes Bill Anderson as a successful businessman who works as a property developer. As a successful property developer, clearly Bill has the power to build everywhere he wants since he has the money for it. The film also describes him as an uncaring person over smaller people. Bill does not care at all if the progress of his project will cause many people lose their home. He thinks that it is the price of progress that commonly happens in business. This can be seen when Bill tells his project to Emily about tearing down a neighborhood in order to do some development for his hotel.

*Emily*: Are you planning to build in the Spring Gardens District?
*Bill*: Why do you ask?
*Emily*: My friend, Sean. He lives there
*Bill*: This just keeps getting better. So you spent the night in a slum
*Emily*: It is not a slum
*Bill*: Emily ...
*Emily*: Daddy, I wish you could see it. There are families have lived there for decades
*Bill*: Everytime I build, something else got knocked down. Someone’s house, someone’s business, it’s the price of progress (47 : 58 – 48 : 30)

Bill Anderson is a character that represents bourgeois where he owns the capital and tend to oppress weaker or smaller people. Bill also shows the nature
characteristic of bourgeois which is the need of constantly expanding market. Bill’s primary mission is to do a development or expansion of his hotel in order to make the Dimont hotel become the best hotel in Miami.

The second character who represents the bourgeois is Trip, Bill Anderson’s Colleague who is also a General Manager of Dimont Hotel, one of Bill Anderson’s hotels. Tripp is described as a bossy, arrogant and high-handed person. As explained in chapter two, in bourgeois society, capital is independent and has individuality, while the living person is dependent and has no individuality. This statement about bourgeois is shown by Tripp in the following dialogue where he only sees his employees as his subordinate or a mere instrument of production.

*Trip:* Where are my waiters? I’ve got a two-top that’s been waiting for 10 minutes.

*Sean:* Two-top? Yeah, that’s mine.

*Trip:* Patrons do not wait at the Dimont.

*Sean:* You must be the new manager. I’m Sean.

*Trip:* I’m your boss, not your homie. Next time you leave customers waiting like that, you’re fired (6 : 32 – 6 : 55).

The characteristic shown by Trip is a substantiation that he is a representation of bourgeois where for them, capital is more ‘living’ than the actual living person who they see not more than a mere instrument of production.

It can be concluded that Bill Anderson and Trip as the representation of bourgeois in *Step Up Revolution* film are described as powerful people since they have money and superior position as their power where they use those power to expand or enlarge their market in order to earn more money.
b). Proletariat in *Step Up Revolution* Film

As mentioned before, proletariat is the working class or labor class who has no capital, often oppressed, and can only sell its own labor in order to survive because there is nothing else they can sell (Habib 528). Therefore, those who have no capital, got oppressed and has to sell its own labor are considered as proletarian. In this film, the representation of proletariat are people who live in Spring Gardens Districts and a dance group called The Mob.

The Mob is a name of a group of street dancers who gets well-known by creating Flash Mob. The mob is led by Sean and Eddy who are the main characters and the protagonist characters in this film. Eddy and Sean try to win a competition in Youtube. They want to earn money and to build fame for The Mob so The Mob can be famous and they can live their career as a dancer. Even though Sean, Eddy and their friends all are professional dancers, they have to work as waiters and hotel employee in order to fulfill their daily basis, as shown in figure 7 below that they are getting ready to work as waiters in the restaurant of the Dimont hotel.

![Figure 2 (5:48)](image-url)
In addition, they are also described as having oppression of their superiors by not receiving a worth salary and being treated inappropriately. This can be seen when Sean tells about his job to Emily.

Sean : You must be new here.
Emily : Sorry. What?
Sean : I said, “You must be new here.”
Emily : Sort of. Yeah
Sean : Well, I work here, too.
Emily : Really?
Sean : Unfortunately
Emily : Come on. It can’t be that bad.
Sean : The pay sucks, there’s no benefits, and the clientele treats us like crap (8:27 – 8:42)

Another addition, the Spring Gardens district, the place where The Mob lives, is also described as a place which somewhat less precise place to build a house. It is located under a bridge and on the side of the river bank, this can be seen from figure 9 and 10 below.

Figure 3 (39 : 50) Figure 4 (42 : 05)

None of the people who live in Spring Gardens District own a house, they are all rent houses in that district. This can be seen from a character’s dialogue named Ricky who gets a notification letter about Bill Anderson’s Project. Ricky says that he is like everyone in Spring Gardens District who only rents a place in that district. As mentioned in the previous chapter that proletarian owns no properties and owns
nothing but labor power. This means a character who owns no properties and owns nothing but labor power is considered as a representation of proletariat.

From those characteristics of The Mob and people of Spring Gardens District, it can be concluded that they are the representation of proletariat who has no capital, often oppressed, owns no property and can only sell its own labor in order to survive because there is nothing else they can sell.

B. Class Conflict in *Step Up Revolution* Film

As explained before, in this film, Bill Anderson is the capitalist because he is the owner of production. As the capitalist, he easily gets what he wants because he has a lot of money where indeed money is connected to power. It is an absolute fact that the one who has a lot of money can control anyone easily.

Class Conflict in the film started when Bill Anderson and Trip plan about a project to some sort of development of their business in Spring Gardens district. Spring Gardens district is a place in Miami located under a bridge and on the side of the river bank full of people’s home including The Mob’s home. Bill’s project will automatically destroy all of the houses and building in that area and take away a lot of the resident’s home.

The mob and the residents who live in Spring Gardens district as the representation of proletarian are not happy with this situation, especially Eddy
since the person who destroys his home is the same one who fired him at his work. Unfortunately, they are unable to do anything since they just rent a place in Spring Gardens District which make them powerless against Bill and Trip. This can be seen from the following dialogue.

Sean : What’s wrong?
Ricky : Ever heard of Anderson Global Properties?
Sean : Yeah. Why?
Ricky : This Anderson guy, he wants to build some sort of development. Luxury Hotel. Designer shops. He’s buying the whole strip on this side of the river. This bar, your home, the shop where your sister works, all gone. El Frente del Rio.
Eddy : Can you believe this? It’s the same asshole that fired me. This guy can’t walk in here and take everything we have.
Sean : Can’t you just say no, Ricky?
Ricky : It’s not my choice, Hi’o .. I’m like everyone around here. I rent. A lot of people are making a living on this strip, and now everything’s gonna be wiped out. Gone. (46:02 – 47:00)

As mentioned in chapter II, according to Charles Watkins, a conflict could happen if both parties have a same target of needs but only one of them can have it (Chandra 21). The example of that conflict can be seen where the capital and proletarian are in conflict over a property which is a neighborhood called Spring Garden district, Miami. However, that place is currently occupied by proletarian, but the capital with their power tries to forcefully take out and steal the place for themselves in order to expand their market.
In the previous chapter also explained that in relation to property, there are actually three classes of society; the bourgeois, proletariat, and landowner (Rummel 79). In this film, landowner actually takes a part in the conflict. The representation of landowner is the city council of Miami who legally own and lease the place to proletarian. Bill and Trip as the bourgeois try to instigate the city council to support and to approve their project so that Bill and Trip have more convenience to achieve their goal. This event is shown in the film where Trip presents about the development plan of Dimont hotel in front of city council in his office.

![Image](image)

Figure 6 (51 : 49)

At first, the resident of Spring Gardens district and The Mob are hopeless and ready to move out when they knew that the bourgeois try to tear down their home. However, Emily encourages The Mob and telling them that they actually have a chance to fight back. Emily realizes that every time The Mob performed, there are a lot of people who watch it and love the performance, it means that The Mob already has many audiences. Therefore, Emily convinces The Mob that they have to make their audiences hears how they feel, make them listen to their sound of rebel. The Mob agrees with Emily, and their struggle to defend their home is started since then.

In short, the conflict between classes in Step Up Revolution film can be seen from the following chart.
The chart tells about the proletariat who have a conflict against the bourgeois over a property, meanwhile the bourgeois is collaborating with landowner to gain more power so that they can take down the proletariat more easily and win the conflict.

C. Proletarian’s Resistance

Most of the protest of demonstrations to protest the injustice of capitalist usually ended by anarchy where the labors start doing vandalism. However, this film is different from what typically happens in a protest. The protest in this film is far from anarchy. The demonstrators speak louder to deliver their aspirations through protest art. The protest arts are dance and graffiti. The proletariat use dance and graffiti as a media or tool to protest the capitalist who treats their labors badly and violated the proletarian’s rights by trying to take over their home.
The resistance starts when Emily, daughter of Bill Anderson, tells and encourage The Mob to do protest art in order to defend their home. Even The Mob already gave up earlier when they received information about Bill Anderson’s project, they got their spirit back when Emily encouraged them. This event can be seen from dialogue below.

Sean : Emily’s got an idea for the next mob.
Eddy : I really don’t need Cinderella coming in here and messing with the program. We need to be working on the next mob, we’ve already got over 4 million hits.
Emily : So you got a lot of hits on Youtube. That’s great. Maybe you’ll win this thing, and you’ll win some money, but it’s not gonna change anything. Believe me, I mean, you have 4 million people listening, but you’re not saying anything that actually matters. It’s not okay to make art for fun anymore, and it’s not okay to make trouble either.
Penelope : So what are you proposing?
Emily : I’m saying enough with performance art. It’s time for protest art. Anderson Global Properties is pitching the project to the city council in a week. They have to have the council’s approval to move forward, so .. I think we should join them.
Penelope : So we’re gonna mob the meeting? (49:45 – 50:44)

Emily’s opinion successfully gives hope for The Mob. Even though they do not have a lot money and power like the capitalists, they keep struggling to get their right back by doing a protest through protest art, which in this particular case is through dance. It may sounds impossible to do a protest against capitalist through dance, but as Lanin (a Marxist) said that literature, as art, can be used to protest or against the injustices of capitalism and class differences (Barry 159). Based on Lanin’s statement, The Mob actually have a chance to fight back, since they do not only use dance as the media or tool to do protest, they also always leave a sign or statement written by graffiti every time they end their performance.
The first and the main tool or media to do protest used by The Mob is dance. The type of the dance particularly is flash mob. According to online version of *Merriam-Webster dictionary*: “flash mob is a group of people summoned to a designated location at a specified time to perform an indicated action before dispersing (“flash mob”).

As stated by Georgiana Gore in her book about *Flash Mob and the Territorialisiation of Urban Movement*, flash mob may be said to be a truly universal dance form, more flexible and versatile than tango, salsa or flamenco for creating ephemeral identification with communities of interest where the celebratory, political, and commercial become conflated in a mode of typical of twenty first century consumer capitalism (Gore 131).

At first, The Mob use flash mob with the purpose to win a competition in Youtube in order to build fame and earn money. Then, since the conflict between classes occurred, the purpose of the flash mob is to launch a protest against capitalist in order to defend a neighborhood where the proletariat live. With the changing of the purpose of the flash mob, the term itself is changing as well. In the beginning of the film, The Mob uses flash mob with the purpose of entertaining people in order to get more views in Youtube so they can win the competition. This purpose is the nature purpose of flash mob. As Zynep Oktem explains in his thesis quoting from Muse J.H’s book about *Flash Mob and the Diffusion of the Audience*, that flash mob is purposeless phenomena that are created for the purposes of entertainment (Oktem 13). However, the purpose of the flash mob is changed when the conflict begins. The term itself is changed as well from flash mob to smart mob.
As Howard Rheingold explains in his book about *Smart Mobs: The Next Social Revolution*, Smart mob is a group of people who mobilize themselves and their network for a cause where mobile technologies and social networks played an important role in the realization of these happenings. Rheingold stated that smart mobs were organized by artists in order to bring attention to their work or to a social–political issue. In short, what differentiates smart mob from flash mob is smart mob emphasis the mobilization for a cause (Rheingold 12).

Based on what Rheingold said, it can be said that The Mob uses smart mob to do protest against the rich. They do the smart mob as their tool or media to struggle against the bourgeois in order to defend their home. The following figure shows their smart mob in the middle of Bill’s office building where Trip presents about his project to his colleagues and the city council.

Figure 7 (54:07)

The intention of The Mob’s smart mob is to gather supports and bring attention to their issue, so that they have more chance to revolt against the capitalist. Their intention is fulfilled and successfully brought people’s attention toward their issue since The Mob recorded their smart mob and uploaded it to Youtube which made it viral. This proven Rheingold’s statement about smart mob that mobile technologies and social networks played an important role in it.
The next tool used by The Mob to launch a protest against capitalist in the film is graffiti. According to Emmet G. Price in his book about *Hip Hop Culture*, the term “graffiti” first used by archeologists to describe the system of communication and expression depicted by writings, drawings, and scribing on surfaces. Graffiti artists found that the use of spray paint on a wide surface area allowed them to create large, visible tags. Most of those graffiti tags had an underlying context conveying a social or political statement of criticism by the artists (Price 29). Emmet’s statement in his book is shown in *Step Up Revolution* film where The Mob uses graffiti to expresses their feeling and to fight against the bourgeois which can be seen from the following figure.
The figure above shows a sign or graffiti left by The Mob as they finished their performance. The performance itself held in the middle of Bill Anderson’s office building where Trip is doing presentation about the development of Dimont hotel project to his colleagues and the city council. The Mob’s performance is presenting an insinuation against the capital.

Many authorities and others considered graffiti tagging as vandalism. According to online version of Merriam-Webster dictionary:

“vandalism is willful or malicious destruction or defacement of public or private property (“vandalism”).”

However, in this film, The Mob makes the graffiti on an independent surface which they built themselves, for that matter, the graffiti made by The Mob is not considered as vandalism since the tag is not on public or private property. The example can be seen in figure 12 that the tag is on a briefcase held by a statue made by The Mob. It means that The Mob has successfully spoke their thoughts in a protest by doing a protest art without breaking any laws.

At the end of the film, The Mob and all residents of the Riverside do a massive smart mob as a protest in front of Bill Anderson and city council who are just wants
to start the development project. The protest successfully cancels Bill Anderson’s plan. This event shows the example about Lanin’s statement which already mention earlier that literature, as art, can be used to protest the injustice of capitalism and class differences.

To be summarize, in *Step Up Revolution* film, there are two main social classes; bourgeois and proletariat where there are two major characters who represents each classes. Moreover, there is a conflict over a property between The Mob and the resident of Spring Garden district as the proletariat, against Anderson Global Properties owned by Bill Anderson and managed by Trip as the bourgeois. In the conflict, the bourgeois collaborate with the city council of Miami as the representation of the landowner to gain more power in order to win the conflict. As the struggle to win the conflict, The Mob uses graffiti and smart mob as protest art and makes it viral on social networks. The protest art successfully gets a lot of supports from social networks and helps the poor revolt against the capitalist.
CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusions

Step Up Revolution film is written by Amanda Broody and Duane Adler, directed by Scott Speer, and produced by Summit Entertainment. It was released in 2012. The film is about a conflict between two main social classes, bourgeois and proletariat. The film is set in Miami where a well-known dance group called The Mob as the representation of proletariat tries to revolt against Anderson Global Properties owned by Bill Anderson and managed by Trip who tries to take out Spring Gardens district in order to develop their power. This thesis tries to analyze the conflict between classes in Step Up Revolution film starts from how each class described in the film, continue to how the conflict described in the film, then finally what kind of action does the proletarian do in order to revolt against the bourgeois.

Social classes in the film is divided into the bourgeois and the proletariat according to the ownership of property and each class has special characteristic and lifestyle. The representation of the bourgeois is Anderson Global properties which is owned by Bill Anderson and managed by his loyal colleague, Trip. Meanwhile, the representations of the proletariat are The Mob and the resident of Spring Garden district.

These two classes are conflicting over a property which is Spring Garden district. Each class has each own desire over the property. The bourgeois want to expand their market territory in order to gain more profit. Meanwhile the proletarian
who already live in Spring Garden district want to stop the bourgeois taking their home. Furthermore, the bourgeois collaborate with the city council as the landowner to gain more power so that they can take down the proletariat more easily and win the conflict.

To do protest and struggle against the bourgeois, The Mob uses graffiti and smart mob as protest art and makes it viral on social networks. The protest art successfully gets a lot of supports from the social networks. At the end of the film, The Mob and all residents do a massive smart mob as a protest in front of Bill Anderson and city council who are just wants to start the development project. The protest successfully helps the poor revolt against the capitalist and cancels Bill Anderson’s plan.

B. Suggestions

Based on the data that was found during the research, there are other topics which interesting to observed beside class conflict issues. One of them is how the characters’ cultures, ethnicities and races describes in the film, since The Mob is a dance group consist of many people with different cultures, races and ethnicities, this topic sure deserved to be analyze for future research about how the relation between cultures, races and ethnicities toward the characters’ role in The Mob.

For example, the DJ of The Mob is a Latin woman named Penelope, the position of white dancers and black dancers, male dancers and female dancers during the performance, the graffiti artist of The Mob who decided to never talk. All those roles represent something from each races and ethnicities that deserved to be analyze.
In addition, the music, the dance, and the graffiti in the film could be analyzed by future researchers who focuses in art and/or music major. For example, the difference between the music, dance and graffiti used when The Mob is trying to win Youtube competition with the music, dances and graffiti used by The Mob when they are trying to revolt.
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