

**TENSION BETWEEN LOWER AND UPPER CLASS IN
ESCAPING FROM DISASTER IN ROLAND
EMMERICH'S 2012 MOVIE (2009):
A MARXIST APPROACH**



Research Paper

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Classes often have a distinct lifestyle that emphasizes their class. The most powerful class in a society often uses markers such as costume, grooming, manners and language codes that mark insiders and outsiders unique political rights such as honorary titles; and, concepts of social honour or face that are claimed to only be applicable to the in group. But each class has distinctive features, often becoming defining elements of personal identity and uniting factors in group behaviour. French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu suggests a notion of high and low classes with a distinction between bourgeois tastes and sensitivities and the working class tastes and sensitivities.

The social structure of the United States is a vaguely defined concept which includes several commonly used terms that use educational attainment, income and occupational prestige as the main determinants of class. While it is possible to create dozens of social classes within the confines of American society, most Americans employ a six or five class system. The most commonly applied class concepts used in regards to contemporary American society are Upper class and Lower class.

Upper class has great influence, wealth and prestige. Members of this group tend to act as the grand-conceptualizes and have tremendous

influence of the nation's institutions. This class makes up about 1% of the population and owns about a third of private wealth. Lower class includes the poor, alienated and marginalized members of society. While most individuals in this class work, it is common for them to drift in and out of poverty.

2012 is a science fiction disaster film, directed by Roland Emmerich and released in 2009. The film stars John Cusack, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Amanda Peet, Oliver Platt, Danny Glover, Thandie Newton and Woody Harrelson. It was distributed by Columbia Pictures. Filming began in August 2008 in Vancouver. The first release of this movie is in Belgium, November 11, 2009. The next releases in Australia, Brazil, United State, Egypt, and other countries. This movie tells about discrimination for lower class so that cause the tension between upper and lower class in escaping from disaster. *2012* movie has running time 158 minutes or around 2 hours 38 minutes. This movie is made in thriller and drama genres. During this movie released, it got \$165,552,847 box office total. This movie is set in English language and takes setting in united state in early twenty first century.

Roland Emmerich was born on November 10, 1955 in Stuttgart, Baden-Wurttemberg, West Germany. He has nickname Das Spielbergle aus Sindelfingen in German dialect. Emmerich began his career in his native Germany. In his youth, he pursued painting and sculpting. While enrolled in the director's program at film school in Munich, his student

movie *Das Arche Noah Prinzip* (1984) went on to open the 1984 Berlin Film Festival. The feature became a huge success and was sold to more than 20 countries. He has several great works as long as his carrier such as *Independence Day* (1996), *The Poseidon Adventure* (1972), *The Towering Inferno* (1972), and *Earthquake* (Internet Movie Data Base. Com).

2012 movie is begun when an American geologist Adrian Helmsley (Chiwetel Ejiofor) travels to India to meet his friend Satnam, who has discovered that neutrinos from a massive solar flare have penetrated the Earth and are causing the temperature of its core to increase rapidly. Adrian returns to Washington D.C. to inform White House Chief of Staff Carl Anheuser (Oliver Platt) and US President Thomas Wilson (Danny Glover) that this will instigate a chain of events that will bring about the end of the world. At the 36th G8 summit in 2010, other heads of state and heads of government are made aware of the situation. They collaborate to begin a secret project intended to ensure the continuity of human life, strategically choosing 400,000 people for admission on a series of gigantic arks to be constructed in the Himalayas. To help fund the venture, additional individuals are allowed to purchase tickets for one billion euros apiece.

Jackson Curtis (John Cusack) is a writer in Los Angeles who works part time as a limousine driver for Russian billionaire Yuri Karpov. Jackson's former wife, Kate (Amanda Peet), and their children Noah and Lily live with her new boyfriend, plastic surgeon and amateur pilot

Gordon. Jackson meets Charlie Frost, a radio show host and conspiracy theorist. Charlie supports a theory that suggests the Mayans predicted the world would come to an end in 2012, and claims he has knowledge of the ark project and possesses a map of the arks' location. Jackson believes he is a rambling drunk and leaves.

As millions begin dying in apocalyptic earthquakes worldwide, the group flies to Yellowstone to retrieve Charlie's map. The group narrowly escapes as the Yellowstone Caldera erupts. President Wilson remained in Washington D.C. to address the nation one last time. He is soon killed by a tsunami that sends the USS John F. Kennedy crashing into the White House. With the Vice President dead and the Speaker of the House missing, Anheuser appoints himself acting Commander-in-Chief.

Yuri, who has purchased ark tickets for himself and his sons, deserts the Curtis family, Gordon, and Tamara upon arriving in China. However, the abandoned group is picked up by Nima, a Buddhist monk. Together, they begin sneaking onto an ark through its hydraulics chamber with the help of Nima's brother Tenzin, a welder for the ark project. In his last moments, Satnam calls Adrian to inform him that a tsunami is engulfing India and heading towards the arks. Learning of this, Anheuser orders the arks be sealed before the boarding process is complete, trapping thousands outside. Adrian manages to convince the other G8 leaders to let the remaining people on board.

As the ark's tailgate is lowered, Gordon is killed when he falls in between the gears, followed by Tenzin's large electrical power drill. Yuri sacrifices his life to get his two sons on in time, but the obstruction prevents the gate from closing, rendering the ship unable to start its engines. The tsunami arrives and begins to flood the ark, drowning Tamara and setting the ark helplessly adrift. Jackson and Noah work together to free the drill and its cable from the closing mechanism. The gate closes and the crew regains control of the ark, preventing a fatal collision with Mount Everest.

There is controversy from society for this movie. Many people are interested in this movie because it is one of popular movies that is waited the release since several time. *Rotten Tomatoes* reports that 39% of 212 critics have given the film a positive review, with a rating average of 5.1 out of 10. Mark Pfeiffer said that 2012 is reminiscent of yesteryear '80s shlock-tastic blockbusters, total popcorn entertainment with ridiculous dialogue and impossible situations and special effects that will boggle the brain for a good two-plus hour.

In addition, this movie gets for society such as *The Washington Post* writer Joel Achenbach that takes an opposite viewpoint. He says that misinformation is a big part of the 2012 movie controversy and doomsday myth.

As long as 2012 movie released, this movie got several nomination and awards such as the nominated of *Black Reel Award - Best*

Supporting Actor, Broadcast Film Critics Association Awards - Best Visuals Effect, Image Award - Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Motion Picture, and Golden Reel Award - Best Sound Editing-Music in a Feature Film. This movie is the winner of *Satellite Award in Best Sound (Mixing and Editing)* and *Best Visual Effects categories* (Internet Movie Data Base, 2010).

There are three reasons that make this movie interesting to be analyzed. Firstly this movie is popular with the controversy about judgment day. This movie is regarded as the description of judgment day. 2012 full of controversy about Mayan calendar's prediction about doomsday that will happen in year 2012. Many people are interesting to view this movie because they embittered for the events in this movie. Parts of them believe that the prediction is true but in other hands, many people only regard it to increase the rating of this movie.

Secondly this movie illustrates the great disasters. 2012 movie describes about the great disasters. It is the greatest disaster in long time. In this movie is illustrated the natural disaster such earthquake, tsunami, and volcano that happen in similar time. Earthquake destroys many big buildings and houses, tsunami delivers big ships from sea to the land, and volcano causes fire in several places. Many people try to survive and avoid the disaster. In all of areas in the world are not avoided from the natural disasters. They try to search safety places where the disasters do not happen there.

Thirdly this movie reflects upper class and lower class in survive of their self from the great disasters. Upper and lower always has contradiction in several problems. In this movie, upper class that has wealth has ability to avoid the great disaster by their wealth. They can spend their much money to survive from disaster. It is contrast with the lower class that do not able to release much many so that they only can receive the bad condition. There is discrimination for the lower class to survive from the disaster. The rescue from disaster is based on the wealth not on human side.

According to those reasons, the researcher would like to explore analyze tension between upper and lower class in *2012* movie based on the Marxist Perspective and the title is **TENSION BETWEEN LOWER AND UPPER CLASS IN ESCAPING FROM DISASTER IN ROLAND EMMERICH'S *2012* MOVIE (2009): A MARXIST APPROACH.**

B. Literature Review

As far as the writer knows, there is no researcher who have conducted the study of *2012* movie directed by Roland Emmerich in Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta.

C. Problem Statement

The problem of the research is “How is tension between lower and upper class in escaping disaster reflected in *2012* movie directed by Roland Emmerich?”

D. Limitation of the Study

The writer focuses on analyzing the tension between lower and upper class in escaping disaster reflected in *2012* movie directed by Roland Emmerich based on Marxist approach.

E. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follow:

1. To analyze the structural elements in *2012* movie.
2. To analyze tension between lower and upper class in escaping disaster in *2012* movie based on Marxist approach.

F. Benefits of the Study

The study of tension between lower and upper class in escaping disaster reflected in *2012* movie has two benefits.

1. Theoretical Benefit

This research will improve the study of literature and give more information about the study of *2012* movie.

2. Practical Benefit

The results of the study will improve the writer's knowledge of tension between lower and upper class in escaping disaster reflected in *2012* movie.

G. Research Method

1. Type of the Study

The type of this research is descriptive qualitative. Descriptive qualitative is a type of research which result the descriptive data in the form of written or oral words from the observed object.

2. Type of the Data and the Data Source

a. Type of Data

The data of this study are scenes and dialogue in *2012* movie by Roland Emmerich.

b. Data Source

- 1) The primary data source is the movie and script of *2012* movie directed by which is related to the study.
- 2) The secondary data source is information theory related to term; biography of characters

3. Object of the Study

The object of this study is *2012* movie directed by Roland Emmerich.

4. Technique of the Data Collection

The method of data collection in this study is documentation. The writer views the primary data repeatedly to reach more understanding of source. Next, the writer takes, compares, quotes, and studies others data into some categories and develops them into a good unity.

5. Technique of the Data Analysis

The technique of data analysis in this study is descriptive, researcher uses Marxist approach and draws conclusion.

H. Research Organization

The researcher systematizes this research into six chapters. Chapter I is Introduction, which consist of background, literary review, problem statement, limitation of the study, objective of the study, benefit of the study, theoretical approach, research method, and research organization. Chapter II comprises of the underlying theory, which presents Notion of Marxism, Basic Concept of Marxism, Structural Elements of the Movie and Theoretical Application. Chapter III is Social Background of. Chapter IV is Structural Analysis of the movie, which involves the structural elements of narrative and technical elements and discussion. Chapter V is Marxist Analysis. Chapter VI is Conclusion and Suggestion.