

**LIVING A MEANINGFUL LIFE IN
WAYNE WANG'S *LAST HOLIDAY* MOVIE (2006):
AN EXISTENTIALIST CRITICISM**



RESEARCH PAPER

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By

WINASIH KUSUMANINGRUM
A 320 060 356

**SCHOOL OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF SURAKARTA**

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Last Holiday is a comedian movie in America which directed by Wayne Wang. It is an interest movie, because this is tells about the existence of a woman to make her life meaningful. It produced at 2006 in American and distributed by Paramount picture. *Last Holiday* released in January 13, 2006 and running time 112 min. The stars in this movie are Queen Latifah as Georgia Bird, LL Cool J as Sean Williams, Timothy Hutton as Mathew Kragen, and Giarcarlo Esposito as Senator Dillings. The original Last Holiday was made in 1950 which Alec Guinness as Georgia Bird. Unfortunately this project was canceled because the actor was death. Years later Queen Latifah's agent read this script and suggested they revise it to her.

Georgia Bird is an employee in cookware department store. She is a passive woman. Her activities are always same everyday. Actually, she has a lot of dreams in her life but she cannot reach them. The reason why she can not reach her dreams is because she does not have bravery. Everyday she just doing same activities for example goes to the church, go to work, and cook delicious food but she does not eat it. So she just takes a picture of her dreams and submits in a book which entitled "Possibilities". One day she gets an accident which makes her to faint. Than Sean who is Bird friend in the cookware bring Bird to the clinic. Bird panic, confuse, and does not believe that she get a dangerous disease. Dr. Gupta said that Bird can not live more than three weeks.

Georgia does not know what happen with her, she still cannot believe that she has a dangerous disease. In that time she confuses and tries to share with her sister but she does not respect to her. Georgia cry and said “God, why me?” After that she does not believe with God anymore. She thinks that God was dead, God is not fair, and God does not love her. Unfortunately she does not give up with her destiny; she wants to find the way how she can make her life meaningful. So, directly quits her job, liquidates her assets, and sets off on a dream vacation at the deluxe Grandhotel Pupp in the spa city of Karlovy Vary in the Czech Republic.

In the new place, Georgia becomes different person. She makes all of her dream comes true in this place. She fined someone, place, and facilities in her “Possibilities” book. She becomes an active woman which make all of people in that place respect to her. All of people think that is a business woman. She eats anything, she plays everything, and she touches everybody’s hearth. When she meets someone, she always gets an inspiration to that people to be a good person. For example when she meets the government official in her country she was sad because they did not taken care to their country but they made a party and forget with their duty. Georgia just said “What are you doing here? Are you remembering with your promise? Are you thinking about your society? Your happiness is not eternal; they will claim something from you?” with Georgia’s statement the official government knows that they left their responsibility.

In the new years night Georgia play gambler with her friend. She does not believe that her lucky come to her. She become rich woman, she gets a lot of

friends. Than she said “Thank you God, thank you”. At the same time someone said that Bird is not business woman, she just an employ in cookware department store, she lie. Unfortunately people does not hear that, they sympathy to Bird and respect to her. In that time Bird find her boyfriend he is Sean and Bird get good news that she does not ill. Dr. Gupta was wrong diagnosed Bird disease. Suddenly, Bird cry and said “God I find you anymore, I believe that you are true. Thanks God I love you so much.” She get her happiness and married with someone in her “Possibilities”.

There are any comments for this movie. From Hong Kong which written by Gordon said that he was pleasantly surprised by the quality of "Last Holiday". The film is uplifting and cheerful, he find Queen Latifah full of positivity which makes the film work. He applauds Georgia's character's positive vibe. There would probably not be any depressed people if everyone thought like Georgia. It is fun, touching and positive. He hopes it will be appreciated by more people. (imdb.2006)

The negative comment comes from Odin in Slovenia. He said that he couldn't be more disappointed. Corny and cheesy story, bad script, mediocre acting. This is one of those no-brainer, chick flicks where people knows right at the beginning every single twist and turn of the story. He does not know how they managed to pull a good actor like Gérard Depardieu into this. (imdb.2006)

In the market *Last Holiday* is into Box Office. In many countries it gets a good response USA, UK, and Netherlands. In opening weekend it was more than 2500 screens played in those countries. It played from January up to December

2006. In opening weekend *Last Holiday* gets \$ 12, 806, 188. Domestic total gross is \$ 38, 399, 361 and worldwide is \$ 43, 343, 248. (imdb.2006)

In 2006 become nomination at Black Movie Award in category Outstanding Performance by an Actress in a Leading Role and at Teen Choice Award in categories Movies – Choice Actress: Comedy, Movies – Choice Chick Flick, and Movies – Choice Lip Lock. In 2007 become nomination at Image Award in category Outstanding Actress in a Motion Picture, and at Taurus Award in category Best Specialty Stunt. (imdb.2006)

There are four reasons why the researcher chooses this movie. First is from character and characterization of the actors in this movie. Latifah is a unique person in this story. Her personality was change directly when she knows that she wills death. From a calm and passive woman change into exist woman and friendly.

Second is from the setting of the movie. The setting in this movie shows the different place which makes different perception. In New Orlean USA the audiences see the general activities in live. For example market, church, poor, employ, etc. But in Czech Republic the audiences can not find the general activities in live. In this place just for special activities in live because it is in deluxe hotel.

Third is the main point in this movie. In this movie show the way to living a meaningful life and how to become an existence person. The personality of bird was change in this movie. She becomes existentialist woman and gets her freedom in the end. It is so hard to do, when someone knows that she can not life

for a long time she try to get up and make her dream a reality. Existentialism is a philosophical movement which claims that individual human being has full responsibility for creating the meanings of his/her own life. (Kierkegaard and Nietzsche)

Based on the explanation above, the researcher interested to analyze how living a meaningful life in *Last Holiday*. The researcher purpose Existentialist Criticism to study this movie. The research entitled: **“LIVING A MEANINGFUL LIFE IN WAYNE WANG’S *LAST HOLIDAY* MOVIE: AN EXISTENTIALIST CRITICISM”**.

B. Literature Review

As far as the writer knows, the researcher of the movie *Last Holiday* has been conducted by reporter of The Orlando Sentinel Roger Moore (2006) which entitled “Q & A ‘*Last Holiday*’ Queen Latifah” (www.accessmylibrary.com). He tries to find the reason why Queen Latifah wants to take the character of Georgia Bird. Because in this story Byrd as a passive woman. Roger said that Byrd is a woman who always doing same thing everyday.

The second research is conducted by Johana Petsche (2007) which entitled “Religion, God and Meaning of Life of Georgia in *Last Holiday Movie* (2006)” (www.accessmylibrary.com). She wants to describe about the personal of Georgia in *Last Holiday* movie between God and sophisticated world. *Last Holiday* explores theme religion, God, and meaning of life.

The literature studies above have the same research which they analyze characteristic and meaning of life in *Last Holiday* movie (2006). In this opportunity the researcher decides to conduct a research on the major character's Georgia Bird to receive her destiny and try to find a meaningful life. Here the researcher uses existentialist criticism.

C. Problem Statement

The major problem of the study is "How living a meaningful life is reflected in the *Last Holiday* by Wayne Wang?".

D. Objective of the Study

Based on the problem of statement, the researcher arranges the objective of the study.

1. To find the structural elements of *Last Holiday*
2. To analyze the movie by using existentialist criticism

E. Benefit of the Study

This study will give many benefits as following:

1. Theoretical Benefits

To give additional information to literature research mainly the literally study on existentialist criticism.

2. Practical Benefit

To answer the researcher's curiosity about Wayne Wang's especially *Last Holiday*.

F. Research Method

1. Type of the Study

This study is a qualitative study, which takes the sources data from word and other texts.

2. Type of the Data and Data Source

The researcher uses two types of data. Those are text and image from the movie. And also these studies consist of two data sources:

a. Primary Data Source

The primary data source is the movie itself, *Last Holiday* by Wayne Wang.

b. Secondary Data Source

The secondary data sources are from the article, internet, book, and references which are relevant with this study. In addition there are also some important information such as comments, interest, essay, criticism, and other relevant information.

3. Technique of the Data Collection

The writer collects the data by taking notes for the texts and by capturing images for the image. She also uses library research in collecting data which involves several steps:

- a. Watching the movie repeatedly and understanding about this movie.
- b. Finding out the important data and identifying the relevant elements.
- c. Taking notes.
- d. Arranging data into several parts based on its classification.
- e. Developing data to get the last result.

4. Technique of the Data Analysis

The data are analyzed by using descriptive qualitative analysis and analyzing the structural elements of the movie.

G. Paper Organization

This research consists of five chapters. Chapter I is the introduction which contains background of the study, problem statement, objective of the study, benefit of the study, research method and paper organization. Chapter II deals with review of underlying theory that is existentialist theory. Chapter III is structural analysis, in this chapter the researcher explains the structural element of the study and discussion. Chapter IV is data analysis, which deals with the major character's problems based on existentialist theory. Finally, Chapter V is conclusion of the analysis and some suggestions.