

Marxist Study in *Arcane League of Legends* Movie Script by Christian Linke

DIMAS EKO SAPUTRO
Dimas.es.222@gmail.com
CAHYANINGSIH PUJIMAHANANI
cahyaningsih.pujimahanani@unitomo.ac.id

Abstract

This research focuses on *Arcane League of Legends* from a Marxist perspective. The researchers conduct qualitative research using the movie script of "Arcane League of Legends" as a source of data. They utilized Marxist theory by Karl Marx to aid in their analysis. Class conflict, stemming from economic, political, and power dynamics, is identified as a prevalent issue in society. This conflict is depicted not only in the real world but also in literary works. In "Arcane," Zaun, representing the lower class, initiates a revolution against Piltover due to the capitalist system and exploitation, resulting in Zaun's people enduring starvation and poverty. The root cause of the class conflict lies in the power dynamics, where Piltover holds authority to dictate their desires, leading to political motivations behind Zaun's revolution to elevate their people to the upper class. The consequences of this conflict include the downfall of the capitalist system, a decline in production quality, and a shift in the structural class hierarchy. As a result, Zaun becomes the ruling class, while Piltover becomes the lower class.

Keyword: Arcane League of Legends, Class Conflict, Marxist, Christian Linke

A. INTRODUCTION

Life is about how people group together in societies, but in societies, people are often differentiated based on what they have. Those who have everything will make them occupy a high place in the society, and those who do not have all the things they need often occupy lower group. In the class theory proposed by Karl Marx in his book entitled Manifesto of The Communist Party, the class is divided into two, namely the upper class or bourgeoisie and the lower class or proletariat. But in the social structure of class, there will be a production relationship for life and economic needs. Class that have limited access to the economic resources belong to the lower class and controlled by the upper class (Nurma, et al, 2021). The capitalist system will be born through the production relationship between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, where the bourgeoisie are in the upper class. The proletariat controlled by the bourgeoisie in the production system (Nurman,et al, 2021).

The upper class, which is in the highest position and authority, often uses this advantage as a tool to blackmail and exploit the lower class. Those who have this authority arbitrarily use it for greater profits while spending less. By exploitation, they can minimize their expenses and gain more profit, which is what happens in the capitalist system and have name exploitation. Exploitation occurs when those in the upper class increase the working hours of the lower class

with little pay for high profits so that the company can pay taxes and pay salaries. (Nurman, Et al, 2021)

The exploitation that occurs will invite class conflict caused by class differences which are triggered by economic deprivation. Class conflict occurs because of economic, political and power issues that are in two interconnected classes, namely the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The proletariat class who want to take their rights and make them the upper class, they will make a revolution to abolish the capitalist system and the exploitation that happens to them. Class conflict is politic, economic and power issue (Karl Marx, 1948).

In class conflict, it is not only based on economics, but how the proletariat can defeat its rival, the bourgeoisie (Sills, 1968:232). Class conflict occurs because of the unfair behavior of the upper class, so the lower class revolts to show their strength so that they can change their lives and become the ruling class. Literature, which is created by writers' investigation and contains imaginative work about human life, is a reflection of the real world. Imaginative art depicts society's view of human life and can be devoured by society (Pickering, James, and Hopper 1981). The confrontation between Piltover and Zaun, where a divide arises because of issues in both cities' economies, societies, and politics, serves as an example of class struggle in the movie Arcane League of Legends. The research paper's author decides to examine the class conflict in the Arcane League of Legends movie script. The first is that the movie starts off by explaining how injustice is taking place in this story. The Piltover city authority has even started to conduct study on the abandoned Zaun people. The second reason is how the citizens of the lower city lead a revolution to obtain justice that they have not recently received. This movie script is about Vi and Jinx in the middle of class conflict between Piltover and Zaun which is Piltover is the upper class and Zaun is the lower class. The research aim to know the cause of class conflict and the effect of class conflict.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

The researchers conduct qualitative research in which the research does not need number and tables (Marczyk, 2005:17) . The source of data is Arcane League of Legends movie script written by Christian Linke.

C. FINDIND AND DISCUSSION

1. The Portrayal of Class Conflict in Arcane League of Legends

Zaun is a lower-class city that suffers because it coexists with a lot of toxins and waste from Piltover. Due to the poor condition of the city of Zaun, even in his reign, it

was distant from receiving any care or protection. On the other hand, this is not a result of the Zaun people intentionally polluting and poisoning their land; rather, it is due to the elimination of the Piltover city. Even though these two cities are in the same province, Piltover is the only city where justice is consistently upheld and where profits are consistently higher.

Vi : Let's keep this our little secret. Mylo's wrong, powder. You're stronger than you think.

Vi : And one day...

Vi : this city's gonna respect us.(Linke, 2021:59)

Lower class do competition with the upper class just to make be respect by the upper class. By using the revolution the class conflict will happens and it will be the war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The piltover who just thinking about the huge profit, they almost does not respect to the worker. The worker who sitting in the lower class will do revolution to make them respected, and they will get their fairness. As the upper class, Piltover have much facilities and modern thing, it is different with Zaun people which is live in the poorest and weak, and they starving everyday. The government who sit in the Piltover and take a side in them, they don't respect Zaun city as their people, but the upper class always exploited the lower class. Piltover doesn't care about the starving and poisonous in the Zaun city, and still away from Zaun people.

Silco : The world's growing smaller every day, thanks to the Hexgates. And now, we're cut off. The topsider are leaving us further and further behind. (Linke, 2021:26)

Hexgates is the portal between Piltover and around the world, Hexgates used to trade a thing between the Piltover and the world. The problems is Piltover always thinking about a huge profit from the trade between the world, they don't think about Zaun who always starving everyday. Piltover, which advanced economically due to the hexgates as a way to trade, left behind Zaun, which did not advance due to lack of resources. Zaun's miserable life was not seen by the government in Piltover, so they abandoned Zaun and exploited it for Piltover's progress.

Vander: even with your monster, you won't win a war against Piltover.

Silco : I don't have to. I just need to scare them.

Silco : they won't dare set foot in the underground again. Vander: You'll get people killed. For what? Pride?

Silco : For respect. (Linke, 2021:14)

The struggle to make Zaun life better, they try everything even they know they can not win against Piltover. Due to Piltover have a political, economical, and power they can win against Zaun, that is why Zaun can not win against Piltover. Piltover who have government take a side with them, make Zaun don't have power to do revolution, but it is just a way they can do revolution because the injustice from government.

Vi : I'm gonna find her and erase whatever fucked-up delusions you put in Her head. But first, I'm gonna bring your bullshit empire down all around you.

00:28:39 : [Caitlyn grunts]

Silco : You don't know your limits, girl. It's what got Vander killed. (Linke, 2021:42-43)

In the quote above, it can be seen that Vi began to strategize to overthrow the capitalist system. The capitalist system that is very detrimental to Zaun makes the population begin to be angry with the system, this invites a revolution for welfare and becomes the ruling class. Piltover, who is in the upper class, is certainly a threat to Zaun with his ideology and politics that can brainwash every listener. It can be seen in the quote above how Vi wants to save someone from Silco's brainwashing. Silco who came from Zaun betrayed Zaun for the sake of everything Silco wanted such as freedom, money, and also the throne of power.

2. The Cause of Class Conflict in Arcane League of Legends

The main factor of class conflict is economic problem, However, there are other factors that cause class conflict, namely politics and power, these three basic issues will trigger revolutions and cause class conflict to occur.

a. Economics

There are two classes involved in class conflict: the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The bourgeoisie represents the upper class and controls everything, including politics. The proletariat, which is frequently exploited and falls under the bourgeoisie's dominance, Classes in Arcane League of Legends are built on associations between two cities: Piltover and Zaun. The disparity and contrast between the two cities, where the city of Piltover is referred to as a city of progress with wealth, power, and all the wonderful things. Even the authorities does not want to approach the city of Zaun, also known as the city below, because of its deplorable conditions, such as poisoned air

and dirty water. Piltover possesses all of the required resources, such as political power, money, and so on. The exchange between Claggor and Mylo in the excerpt below describes how great it is to live in Piltover.

Mylo : How can anyone have so much stuff?
Claggor: Simple, just get born lucky. (Linke,2021 13-14)

Claggor's confusion at why people in Piltover had so many precious goods when they sneaked into one of the huge mansions in Piltover is reflected in the following quote. They invade to hunt for stuff to eat because the underground city, or Zaun, is extremely poor and it is difficult to get food. They committed these crimes because of the enormous number of hungry and suffering individuals in Zaun.

Silco : Can you imagine what it's like? When your blood mixes with
the filth and the river toxins eat through your nerves. (Linke,2021:16)

Imagine how the city of Zaun and the residents who daily mix and coexist with toxins and pollution, with this situation even enforcers do not want to enter the underground or Zaun. Zaun, which is enveloped in many toxins, makes its inhabitants starve because of poisoned resources, from water to the wind they breathe to breathe. Life is miserable until every day there are many casualties, with the waste they receive from Piltover, making them live miserably and there is no sympathy from Piltover or the justice they should get. The very low economic situation makes Zaun the lowest class and many get exploited just to eat and survive, they work under the command of Piltover.

We can see how Piltover, who was even born as a baby, already has everything she wants, in contrast to Zaun, who lives with pollution and toxins every day. Zaun's constant hunger and Piltover's constant getting what they want could spark revolution and class conflict. Revolution does not happen because of economic greed but because of the unfairness of the economic division by the upper class, those who are concerned with personal profit always do not care about the people below them and will always exploit until someone eliminates it. With the revolution of class conflict, exploitation will be eliminated and the economy will be equally divided between the two classes.

b. Politics

Those with political authority may arbitrarily utilize that power for profit. According to the passage above, they discussed amending the rules so that people who share Councilor Talis' vision will have various advantages, and Councilor Bolbook

has other ideas regarding regulations that will make them more profitable than the rules introduced by Councilor Talis. Councilor Talis and Councilor Bolbook operate as the upper class who stand at the top and have the capacity to govern topics such as planning rules in a world of capitation.

Mel : councilor Talis is willing to reinstate former trade privileges to those who share his vision. Can we count you amongst them?

Amara : councilor bolbook seems to think other arrangements would be more profitable. (Linke, 2021:30)

As seen in the quotation above, people with the political authority can do anything with aim to get benefit for himself. Councilor Talis a man who will trade anything privileges to people who agree with his vision, with the political power he can make people stay in his side so he will always be the lead from the upper class. The existence of political power can make people do whatever they think is right, such as Councilor Talis' statement that he will give anything to those who agree with his vision. In this case Talis has committed corruption and with political authority Talis was not sentenced to any punishment. Talis who is a government is looking for ways to make him a leader such as offering benefits to those who agree with his policies.

With political power he can order his subordinates who have authority with weapons, such as the police. It can make orders freely in the name of politics and public welfare.

Vi : You enforcers are all the same. Just asshole criminals in fancy uniform.
Caitlyn: You know what? Find silco yourself. (Linke,2021:6-7)

Trust in the police will decrease if they do not apply justice between two parties, most of them will obey those who have high authority over them. Enforcers in the movie Arcane League of Legends, they are under the leadership of Silco who has an evil role, he can order severe enforcers to arrest anyone who is not in accordance with Silco's wishes. Because she is considered a criminal Vi is a fugitive for the Enforcers. As in the quote below, where the woman in question is Vi,

Chuck : Uh. Boss want us to grab someone up.
Jinx : someone? Anyone? Who are you grabbing? Some girls.
Chuck : I mean, I mean not... I'm not grabbing girls. (Linke,2021:12)

Enforcers who are supposed to behave fairly for both parties are instead only fair to the party with high authority, namely Silco, Vi, who fights for revolution and good for the people of Zaun, is considered a threat and a criminal to the Piltover

government because it will disrupt the structural order of the existing social classes, and the fear of not getting profit anymore.

Jayce: your people wouldn't stand a chance the Council couldn't care less.
(Linke,2021:23)

The government doesn't care about Zaun's situation, they only care about themselves. Considering that Zaun is starving and living side by side with poison, on the one hand the government sits back and doesn't even care about Zaun's situation. This indifference makes the people of Zaun want to revolt and make Zaun independent from the existing capitalist system and exploitation.

Vi : By the looks of it, no one down here lifted a finger to stop silco.
Babette: a few tried but Silco's got the muscle... and the money. He took over the last drop.
Vi : I saw. (Linke,2021:37-38)

Silco who used to be a resident of Zau is now a resident of Piltover and gets everything he wants, such as money, power, and authority. In the quote above, Vi says that no one can beat Silco because he has money and muscles, namely political power, with this making Silco have high authority over what he wants and says. With just an index finger he can order the Enforcers who work under him and get protection behind the politics and power he gets from the Piltover government.

c. Power

People who have a power will do anything what they want just for huge profit, as seen in Arcane League of Legends, power in the hand of Piltover so they have a big authority with what they say and want. The upper class frequently mistreats the lower class by abusing their position for selfish benefit. One of the features of class disputes is power. Exploitation is depicted in this movie script by the Councilor and Enforcers' forced labor on the lower class, notably the city of Zaun. Exploitation has a negative influence on the exploited lower class, which is frequently compelled for the goal of profit for the upper class.

Caitlyn: Councilor this is Vi. She was born in the undercity. you know what else reflects on the Council? it's citizens living on the streets.
wants to Being poisoned. having to choose between a kingpin who exploit them and a government that doesn't give a shit.
(Linke,2021:33)

The quote above shows how the council exploits them until they are poisoned and have nowhere to live. The conversation shows how bad the situation is for the lower

classes, but in this bad situation neither the upper classes nor the government cares about their situation.

Caitlyn: she risk everything to show me what life is really like down there. people are starving, sick, ravaged by shimmer they live in constant fear of the coordinated efforts of violent crime lords.
(Linke,2021:33-34)

Under these circumstances, Zaun, who has no power, can only do nothing while enduring hunger every day. Piltover who has power gets whatever they want and will not starve, the power that should be on both sides is unfair because of the greed of the upper class or the selfish Piltover.

Vi : You topsiders always find a way to screw us.
Caitlyn: I suppose topside is to blame for all your misfortunes. 00:17:43 :
[powder hums]
Vi : No, not all of them.(Linke,2021:24-25)

With the power residing in Piltover, they have every means to exploit Zaun. With Piltover at the top and Zaun at the bottom, Zaun has no power because all aspects of the economy and politics are in Piltover, and they only get the waste.

There are three metrics in the Arcane League of Legends script that contribute to class conflicts. As a result of the analysis, the authors of the paper found that economics is the main source of class conflict. The main cause of class struggle is the economy, and economic problems arising in the lower classes lead to conflicts between the upper and lower classes. A lower class economy that has no such thing as an upper class can wage war because it is unfair to the lower class.

3. The Effect of Class Conflict

Class struggle always has a negative effect, as victims are lost and many lives are lost. For freedom and justice to protect. The following quote shows the many sacrifices made in the revolution for justice.

Ekko : I got one more thing to show you. 00:12:19 : [mysterious music]
Ekko : This is everyone we've lost. The price of our freedom.
(Linke,2021:21-22)

Ekko explains about the many casualties due to class conflict and the poison that controls the city of Zaun. There are many children who are victims of the violence of the capitalist system, Ekko, who is one of the revolutionary troops, sees for himself what happens to the victims who fall.

In addition to the victims, the effect of class conflict is the structural change of social class where those who are in the lower class will become the upper class and gain the power to regulate the class. The upper class that loses the revolution will become the lower class, indicating that the effect of the upper class is to change the social class structure.

Victor : Jayce has brokered a peace with Silco. In exchange for the undercity's independence.

Kiraman: What? Nonsense! We have procedures...(Linke,2021:32)

In the quote above, it can be seen that Talis, who was then president and had high authority, decided to give independence to Zaun and make Zaun equal to Piltover. With the class conflict, Zaun finally became independent from the capitalist system and exploitation.

Zaun's independence came about due to pressure from the people of Zaun, where Piltover was experiencing a decline in the quality of magic products that could have been sold throughout the world. This decline was characterized by several companies closing and ceasing operations. As seen in the quotation below,

Silco : You want peace, this is the price.

Jayce : You'll discontinued the production of shimmer?

Silco: Half there already. (Linke, 2021:21)

Silco's words above indicate that the magic company that produces Shimmer is partially out of operation, which will have an impact on the quality of the products produced. This is one of the effects of class conflict, where companies close and stop operating due to demonstrations and defiance from workers. Revolutions succeed when the capitalist system is lost or destroyed.

00:37:04: [Explosion] (Linke, 2021:49)

The fall of the capitalist system meant that the revolution had succeeded. A bomb launches directly to where the Councilors are meeting to discuss Zaun's independence, Talis who has high authority over Zaun's independence decision of course gets rejection from other governments. However, the high-ranking Talis could have a high impact on Zaun's independence because of his position, even though many of his cloth Councilors rejected Zaun's independence. The bomb launches and explodes destroying the building and the film ends. The bomb launching and exploding in the building signaled the fall of the capitalist system and the end of exploitation in Zaun. Zaun became independent and

Piltover lost the capitalist system and everything they had such as politics and power because of the bomb that exploded in the building where the councilors gathered.

D. Conclusion

Class conflicts also occur in literary works such as this movie script, not only in the real world, class conflicts also cause many victims to fall. Classes that are divided into two are like water and oil that will never merge. The bourgeoisie class that has everything such as politics that can manipulate the minds of the population, a high economy so that it will not feel hungry and the power to order and give orders at will instead become a weapon of destruction for Piltover itself. Zaun who has nothing and very little capital can bring down the capitalist system and eliminate the exploitation. The revolution by the people of Zaun is successful despite the casualties, but freedom without sacrifice is impossible.

References

- [1] David L Sills. 1968. *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*
- [2] Karl Marx. 1948. *Manifesto of The Communist Party*. International Publisher Co
- [3] Marczyk, G., DeMatteo, D., & Festinger, D. (2005). *Essentials of Research Design*
Nurman, Kuncara, Mujahid. 2021. *Class Exploitation in Ron Rash's Serena Novel: Marxist Criticism*.
- [4] Pickering, James, and Hopper. 1981. *Concise companion to literature*. New York ; Macmillan.