

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

SpongeBob SquarePants is a cartoon created by animator Stephen Hillenburg and produced by Nickelodeon since 1996. When it was broadcasted for the first time, this cartoon was created for kids. However, since the second season, the stories have changed. It is for all ages, as seen in episodes such as Rock Bottom, Ugh, Patrick's Staycation, Plankton's Robotic Revenge, and Drive Thru. Cartoon like SpongeBob episode: Drive Thru, is in the form of film. The film has a long enough journey to eventually become like a film today that is rich in effects, and very easy to obtain as a medium of entertainment. The development of the film began when the use of a kinetoscope invented by Thomas Alfa Edison at that time was used by individual audiences. The initial film is still mute and colorless. According to Albornoz, (2016 p. 28), "the most-viewed feature films in theatres globally during 2012 and 2013 reveals, once again, the strong dominance of blockbusters from large Hollywood production and distribution companies." So, screening of films in theatres for the first time was done in the 20th century, and the Hollywood film industry was the first time, even today, dominating the film industry globally accessible.

From the episodes above, SpongeBob SquarePants episode Drive Thru goes deeper in describing events where the high-class society oppresses the low-class society; a condition commonly addressed by Marxist criticism which is dealing with

the social changes occurred in industrial society. In this study, the writer's interest goes to SpongeBob SquarePants Episode: Drive Thru that offers an interesting material to analyse when viewed through a Marxist perspective.

The episode starts with a scene at the Krusty Krab where SpongeBob takes note that Mr. Krabs is filling a hole in the wall with toothpaste. The toothpaste starts dribbling and causes the hole to crack, making an even greater crack in the wall. A fish and his children come to the Krusty Krab and orders from the hole, considering it a drive thru window. This incident gives Mr. Krabs a thought to establish a Krusty Krab drive thru. To start the drive thru, SpongeBob brings in equipment from the restaurant, but Mr. Krabs ignores SpongeBob's attempt and simply write down the menu on the napkins and use tin cans for the microphone.

A customer soon orders from the drive thru but SpongeBob has trouble getting the food out of the window. Then Mr. Krabs breaks the wall and makes a bigger hole. In one occasion, Larry, the Lobster who is addicted to body-building and lifting weight, comes with his S.U.B. (Sports Utility Boat). SpongeBob has trouble getting the food to him since Larry's S.U.B's window is so high above the drive-thru hole. The problem forms a long line of customers through the entire town. To speed the service, Mr. Krabs makes the second drive thru by breaking the other side of the wall. As a result, SpongeBob and Squidward desperately try to give food to all of the customers at both sides. Out of greed, Mr. Krabs breaks another hole and says "More money!" and the Krusty Krab cracks and falls apart into a pile of dirt. SpongeBob jokingly attempts to fix the restaurant with toothpaste

while telling Mr. Krabs that they may need to buy more. The episode ends with Mr. Krabs crying.

This episode is fascinating because it portrays Mr. Krabs exploiting his employees; the practice that is commonly done in capitalistic industry. Capitalist is the suitable word for Mr. Krabs who makes his employees work harder than ever to get money for his own good. D'Amato, (1999 p. 30) stated that "Capitalism is a society based on the exploitation of the many by the few. Because it is founded on massive inequality, it requires various means to oppress and keep down the working class and the poor." In the capitalistic society, the owner of the capital, the rich, controls the working class, the laborers, by means of oppressions. Oppression is central to the capitalistic industry. Coulter (2004, p. 335) states that "Oppressions enables those in charge to have access to control resources and choices while making those labelled as inferior vulnerable to poverty, violence and early death."

1.2 Field of the Study

The field of this research is literature, especially the popular culture of cartoons, which focuses on the gender studies of Marxism.

1.3 Scope of the Study

This research covers only the episode of Drive Thru in SpongeBob SquarePants film.

1.4 Problem Formulation

The writer formulates the problems of the study of this research as follows:

1. What are the oppressions exercised by Mr. Krabs in *SpongeBob SquarePants* Episode: Drive Thru?
2. How does Mr. Krabs represent the existence of the bourgeoisie while *SpongeBob* and *Squidward* are the proletariats?

1.5 Objectives of the Study

With regards to the problems mentioned, this research is conducted to achieve these following objectives:

1. To find the oppressions exercised by Mr. Krabs in *SpongeBob SquarePants: Drive Thru*.
2. To reveal the representation of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in *SpongeBob SquarePants: Drive Thru*

1.6 Significance of the Study

To the reader, particularly those coming from the Faculty of Language and Arts in Soegijapranata Catholic University, the research will be especially significant for students of popular culture, gender studies and literary cultural criticism because students can learning how to enrich their knowledge on the practice of oppressions and class conflict known by Marxism critics.

1.7 Definition of Term

1. Marxism

Marxism is an ideology based on Karl Marx's concept, which is composed of three major theories related to economic, social and political system (Hira, 2017 p. 3).

2. Capitalism

Capitalism is an ideology that is believed that the owner of the production can do their effort to get a big profit (Yaris, 2014, p. 17).

3. The Bourgeoisie

Bourgeoisie or upper class is the first-grade class in capitalist society because they are the owner of means of production and they have big financial or economic power, education and political power. (Yaris, 2014, p. 24).

4. The Proletariat

Proletariat or lower class is the people who worked for upper class. They don't have social status, less financial. (Yaris, 2014, p. 27).