SOCIALIST REALISM SEEN IN MAXIM GORKY’S
PLAY THE LOWER DEPTHS

AN UNDERGRADUATE THESIS

Presented as Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Sarjana Sastra
in English Letters

By

AINUL LISA

Student Number: 014214114

ENGLISH LETTERS STUDY PROGRAMME
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LETTERS
FACULTY OF LETTERS
SANATA DHARMA UNIVERSITY
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A Sarjana Sastra Undergraduate Thesis

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Defended before the Board of Examiners
on July 30, 2009
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Dr. I. Praptomo Baryadi, M.Hum.
Happiness always looks small
while you hold it in your hands,
but let it go,
and you learn at once how big and precious it is.

(Maxim Gorky)
This Undergraduate Thesis is dedicated to:

My Dear Mom and Dad,

My Beloved Brother and Sisters.
LEMBAR PERNYATAAN PERSETUJUAN
PUBLIKASI KARYA ILMIAH UNTUK KEPENTINGAN AKADEMIS

Yang bertandatangan di bawah ini, saya mahasiswa Universitas Sanata Dharma:

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Demi pengembangan ilmu pengetahuan, saya memberikan kepada Perpustakaan Universitas Sanata Dharma karya ilmiah saya yang berjudul: “Socialist Realism Seen in Maxim Gorky’s Play The Lower Depths”, beserta perangkat yang diperlukan. Dengan demikian saya memberikan kepada Perpustakaan Universitas Sanata Dharma hak untuk menyimpan, mengalihkan dalam bentuk media lain, mengelolanya dalam bentuk pangkal dan data, mendistribusikan secara terbatas, dan mempublikasikannya di internet atau media lain untuk kepentingan akademis tanpa perlu meminta izin dari saya ataupun memberikan royalti kepada saya selama tetap mencantumkan nama saya sebagai penulis.

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Dibuat di Yogyakarta

Pada tanggal 27 Agustus 2009

Yang Menyatakan,

Ainul Lisa
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AINUL LISA. **Socialist Realism Seen in Maxim Gorky’s Play The Lower Depths.** Yogyakarta: Department of English Letters, Faculty of Letters, Sanata Dharma University, 2009.

This undergraduate thesis deals with Gorky’s play *The Lower Depths.* Here, the writer focuses on how the characters, Satin and Kostylyov, reveal the characteristics of socialist realism exist in the play. This play is chosen as it contains the characteristics of socialist realism, those are the reflection of reality and its revolutionary development and task to educate proletariat or working class.

There are two problems that will be analyzed in this undergraduate thesis. The first problem is how the main characters Satin and Kostylyov, are characterized in the play, and the second is how the characteristics of socialist realism are revealed by both characters.

To answer those problems, the writer applied library research using related books and internet resources as the method. This method was applied on this thesis since it helped the writer in collecting the data needed as related studies, theories, and appropriate approach. The appropriate approach for this thesis was Marxism approach since socialist realism is a part of Marxism’s thoughts.

From the analysis, the writer found out that Satin, the character who represents proletariat, and Kostylyov, who represents bourgeoisie, are reflection of life with truthfulness and revolutionary development. Kostylyov, who is the owner of a lodging house, uses his authority towards proletariat in order to get much profit. The crime of Kostylyov is lift up in the play to open the eyes of proletariat or working class to realize about the reality happening in their life. Satin, as a positive hero, is created in order to carry out the task as a teacher to educate the working class or proletariat. Satin’s thoughts can leave strong influences on the reader and help to rise up the class-consciousness.
ABSTRAK


Terdapat dua masalah yang akan dibahas dalam skripsi ini. Masalah pertama adalah bagaimana karakter Satin dan Kostylyov digambarkan di dalam drama dan yang kedua adalah bagaimana ciri-ciri realisme sosialis diungkap oleh kedua karakter tersebut.

Untuk menjawab masalah-masalah tersebut, penulis menerapkan studi pustaka menggunakan buku, artikel serta sumber-sumber online sebagai metodenya. Metode ini diterapkan pada skripsi ini karena membantu penulis di dalam mengumpulkan data-data yang dibutuhkan seperti tinjauan pustaka, teori-teori, dan pendekatan yang tepat. Pendekatan yang tepat untuk skripsi ini adalah pendekatan Marksisme karena realisme sosialis merupakan bagian dari pemikiran Marksisme.

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Literature is a picture of social reality. Many writers wrote literary works based on social phenomenon that happened in the real world. A literature writer relates it to not only a certain social system but also to political and economic situation at that time. Hence, it is the literature writer’s duty to explain and define the influence of society on literature and the position of literature in society (Wellek and Warren, 1962: 94-5).

The relation of literature and society cannot be split apart because literature reveals not only the social system and its revolution but also can be used to analyze the social system. It means that literature reveals how society should be and has a critical attitude towards social system that occurs at that time. It accords to Marxist critics’ study that shows what are social relations and implications of a writer’s work and what they ought to be (Luxemburg: 1989: 23-4).

Seeing the importance of literature, Lenin developed a vision of literature clearly and named it Socialist realism. He viewed that there is dialectic relation between literature and reality. One side, reality is reflected in literature, while the other side literature influences the reality and has a task as partner of communist party to develop a new society better (socialistic). Hence, Lenin views that socialist realism works have two different tasks. A socialist realism work should reflect the reality with its truthfulness, that reflects reality as expression of class
distinction; and educate proletariat or working class through political messages in order to gain socialism. Lenin concludes that literature is an important source in proletariat’s struggling againsts capitalism (Luxemburg, 1989: 25-6).

According to Lenin, as quoted by Peter Barry in *The Beginning Theory*, literature relates to different classes in society. They are: proletariat or working class and bourgeoisie. The differences between those classes will create conflicts. It is because there is an exploitation of one social class by another dominant class. As Barry said that the class struggle happens because there are competition for economic, social, and political advantage (2002: 157).

The writer finds a work of literature that is used as a mean to describe the literature vision, through the Russian play entitled *The Lower Depths* written by Maxim Gorky. Most of Gorky’s works presented characters of proletariat or the lower class to spread the ideas of socialist realism at his time. His play, *The Lower Depths*, first presented in 1902 is one of Gorky’s most famous plays. Through this play, Gorky used socialist realism method to represent reality in its revolutionary development, which will be linked to the task of ideological transformation and education of workers in the spirit of socialism.

*The Lower Depths* is the reflection of society at nineteen century in Russia that is the domination of bourgeoisie in capitalism in using their arbitrariness towards proletariat in order to get much profit. From this play, the writer of this thesis is intensely interested to the both main characters, Satin and Kostylyov in the story. Satin conveys opinions on the power of the truth to lift up the human values, and Kostylyov presents crime and authority as the owner of the lodging
house to stress the proletariat who hire his property. It is strongly expected that from those characters’ thoughts and behaviour, the characteristic of socialist realism can be gained.

Thus, it is worthy studying to analyze *The Lower Depths* through both main characters, Satin, who represents proletariat, and Kostylyov, who represents bourgeoisie. Both characters reveal the important characteristics of socialist realism, such as reflection of reality on Marxism point of view and task to educate proletariat or working class.

**B. Problem Formulations**

In developing the analysis of the play, *The Lower Depths*, the writer limits the discussion into two problems:

1. How are the main characters Satin and Kostylyov characterized in the play?
2. How do the characteristics of socialist realism revealed through both characters?

**C. Objectives of the Study**

The aim of this study is to obtain satisfying and reliable answer to the questions stated in problem formulations. There are some objectives the writer wants to reach through this thesis. First, the writer wants to comprehend how the main characters Satin and Kostylyov are characterized. Second, the writer wants to find out the characteristics of socialist realism in the play through both main
characters. These two objectives are related each other. Hence, they help the writer leads coherently to the topic discussed in this analysis.

D. Definition of Terms

In order to have a clear and accurate understanding in reading the analysis, there are some terms that should be defined so that the meaning of these terms can be limited. There are three terms that should be defined, they are socialist realism, proletariat and bourgeoisie.

1. Socialist Realism

      Socialist realism is a part of Marxism thoughts for Soviet literature. It demands of the artist the truthful, historically concrete representation of reality in its revolutionary development. Moreover, the truthfulness and historical concreteness of the artistic representation of reality must be linked to the task of ideological transformation and education of workers in the spirit of socialism (Toer, 2003: 28) [my translation].

2. Proletariat

      Proletariat refers to the subordinate class within capitalism. The proletariat has no productive property or assets except their own ability to labor (Edgar and Sedgwick, 2002: 47-313).

3. Bourgeoisie

      Bourgeoisie is the class of the owners of the basic means of production, which lives by exploiting the hired labor of the workers (Kew, 1963: 154). Another definition is stated by Edgar and Sedgwick that, Bourgeoisie are
opposition to proletariat. They are the dominant class in capitalist society and the
owners of productive property or assets (2002: 47-313).
CHAPTER II
THEORETICAL REVIEW

A. Review of Related Studies

_The Lower Depths_, is a best-known play. It was so successful and the printed version of the play became a bestseller with fourteen editions printed in 1903. This play have already discussed by many people. However, most of them analyze the theme in _The Lower Depths_, while the others discuss about the unconventional structure and lack of plot.

Barret H. Clark in his book, _The Continental Drama of Today_, praises that in the _The Lower Depths_, people will find out some inherent interest that may be in various characters with their motives and thoughts and the acts. Nevertheless, Clark criticizes that _The Lower Depths_ is plotless; the four acts run more or less disjointed [incidents](http://www.theatredatabase.com/20th_century/maxim_gorky_002.html).

While, in article titled _Drama for Students_, Jennifer Lynch assumes that the play _The Lower Depths_ is characteristically a masterpiece. However, Lynch argued that the play is imperfect in Gorky’s certain characters, Luka and Satin. For her, they are ambiguous characters. She found out that there are inconsistencies in Luka’s behavior. While Satin as a speaker for truth and mankind’s potential previously seems as a minor character. It is because he comes so late in the play to give his advocacy [http://www.enothes.com/lower-depths/flawed-nature-gorkis-characters].
The same critique on Gorky’s characters is from Anton Chekhov. In *Letters on the Short Story, the Drama and other Literary Topics*, his letter to Gorky dated 29 July 1902, stated that he had read Gorky’s play and he commented that it was new and mistakably fine work. He did not only criticize Gorky’s characters but also the acts in the play. Below is his comment:

> The second is very good; it is the best, the strongest, and when I was reading it, especially the end, I almost danced with joy…… you left out of the fourth act all the most interesting characters (except the actor) The act may seem boring and unnecessary…" (http://www_imgination.com/moonstruck/clsc6w1.htm).

From his comment above, Anton Chekhov emphasized characterization over plot. He confessed that the second act is the most interesting act. However, the fourth act is confusing as the Actor hangs himself. For him, this act becomes useless because it is harmed by Actor’s action.

The truth versus a consoling lies in *The Lower Depths* is the theme of Gorky's play. Cynthia Marsh in article *Truth, lies and story-telling in the Lower Depths*, states that Gorky represents two main characters who have different points of view. Satin is the hard realist and pessimist. He accepts and deals with whatever life offers and tries to lift up the human values. He embraces the idealist view of unifying the human race. Meanwhile, Luka is the consoled and optimist who gives comfort by offering hope that life will improve. He bends beliefs to suit his own purpose betraying an underlying pessimism. He explains that things (including God and stories) are true if people believe in them. Some people despise the offering of consoling lies while those who face the problematic life
accept the consoling lies to cure their suffering
(http://findarticle.com/p/articles/mi_qa3763/is_200012/ai_n8916940/pg_10).

Gorky in his Selected Short Story states that the theme of his play entitled
*The Lower Depths* is about people who are the outcasts of bourgeois society. He
shows that their hatred of the bourgeois way of life became a hatred of all forms
of society organization, and their contempt for property became a contempt for
labour (1903: 13-4).

There have been many studies related to Maxim Gorky’s *The Lower
Depths*. Being different from the previous studies that discuss *The Lower Depths*
from the views of the lack of structure and theme, this thesis will discuss the play
to find out the characteristics of socialist realism from Marxism view. The writer
focuses on the both main characters Satin and Kostylyov who reveals the
characteristics of socialist realism.

**B. Review of Related Theories**

There are several theories used in this analysis to help the writer makes the
analysis reliable and well-focused.

1. **Theory of Character**

Character is one of the important elements in the play. Therefore, the
writer will use some theories of character to analyze how the character of Satin
and Kostylyov described in the play. In fiction, characters do the interacting as
well as in the real life. They show particular character’s traits to one another in the
story. Abrams in *A Glossary of the Literary Terms* says that:
Characters are the persons in a dramatic or narrative work, endowed with moral and disposition qualities that are expressed in what they say i.e. the dialogue, and what they do i.e. the action. The grounds in a character’s temperament and moral nature for his speech and action constitute his motivation (1981: 25)

Abrams’s definition of character is clear enough, that is, a person presented in a dramatic or narrative work who has moral; certain type of person or quality of the person. This moral and qualities are represented in their speech and action on the story. Therefore, the characters are alive through what they do and speak on their interaction with the other characters.

Meanwhile, Roger B. Henkle in his book *Reading the Novel*, divided characters into major and minor characters. The characters that are observed most often in the story can be considered as major characters. The major characters perform as the key structural function in the story. Hence, the reader will give his fullest attention to these major characters in order to understand the story presented. Meanwhile, minor characters or secondary characters in the story perform more limited functions. They can function in various ways: as elements of society that develop the human context or human condition being issued in the work; as an ordinary character; as a character which is very contrast to the major characters or they can be symbols or aspects of something (1977: 100).

In the book *Understanding Unseens* (1972: 161-173), M.J Murphy writes that there are many ways in which an author tries to make his characters understandable to, and come alive for his reader. The following are the ways:
a. Personal Description

The character is described through the author’s description, the character’s appearance, clothes, etc.

b. Character as seen by another

The character is described through the eyes and opinions of the other characters.

c. Speech

The character is described through the conversations he or she does with the other characters in the book. Whenever he or she speaks or in a conversation with another, his/her characteristics of this character can be seen.

d. Past Life

Past life of a character can help the reader lead to an event or events that shape the character to be who he or she is now. This can be done by the description by the author, through the person’s thoughts, through his conversation or through the medium of another person.

e. Conversation of Others

This description of a character can also be gained through the conversation of other characters and the things they say about him or her. People do talk about other people and this often gives clues about a person’s description.

f. Reaction

How a character reacts to various situations and events can also describe his or her characteristics.
g. Direct Comment

In this part, the character is described through the comments given by the author directly.

h. Thoughts

The author describes the character through how a character thinks or the thought of character.

i. Mannerism

A character is given a description through his or her habits and manners.

2. **Theory of Socialist Realism**

Socialist realism emerged for the first time in Russia. It is Marxist thoughts about the functions of literary works to support the development of socialism through didactic use of literature. In *Fundamentals of Marxist-Leninism*, Kew said that in Marxist theory, the historical mission of the working class is the leader of the great movement for emancipation of the oppressed and exploited people. Thus, Marxist viewpoint opens up marvelous hopes to workers in the arts and literature. It directs their creative efforts towards a deeper reflection of reality through artistic media (1963: 18-9).

The definition of socialist realism is from the statute of the union of Soviet Writers in 1934. It is stated that Socialist realism is a basic method of Soviet literature and literary criticism; it demands of the artist the truthful, historically concrete representation of reality in its revolutionary development. Moreover, the truthfulness and historical concreteness of the artistic representation of reality
must be linked to the task of ideological transformation and education of workers in the spirit of socialism (Toer, 2003: 28) [my translation].

In *On Literature, Selected Articles*, Gorky described the characteristics of socialist realism. They are:

1. A reflection of social life with its truthfulness and revolutionary development.

The reality of life with truthfulness and its revolutionary development departs from the condition of society itself. In reality, people were divided into two different classes. However, the slave labour was caused to be meaningless by their explorers and their private lives were defenseless and at the sympathy of arbitrariness. Bourgeoisie, who are the source of all social evil, must be destroyed by heroes of labours. They struggle against the crimes of bourgeoisie for refashioning of life. Representing as depiction of the bourgeoisie on working class lives, this literature of socialist realism contributes to spread of Bourgeoisie’s crimes in order to reflect the reality with truthfulness (Gorky, 19XX: 234-8).

In *A History of Soviet Russia*, Gorky stated about socialist realism:

Its has tasks as “not only to present critically the past in the present, but also to contribute to the strengthening of the present of what the revolutionary had achieved, and to shed light on the goals of the socialist future” (Rauch, 1957: 145).

Gorky’s statement above stressed that socialist realism has a great function to tell and criticize what has happened in the past. Besides, it is also used as a means of power to obtain a better future.

Gorky’s notion is derived on Marxism point of view. According to Marx in the book *Literary Criticism*, the concrete process for producing, distributing, and consuming goods becomes more complex when the society progresses from
feudal system to a market-base economy (capitalism). Thus, people’s functions within that economic system become differentiated in which people can be divided into different social classes. This phenomenon of the various social classes will cause a class conflict. Marx believes that the class conflict in society leads to a radical change in the society’s economic base from feudal system in which power is based on inherited wealth and status to a capitalist system of power based on the owner of private property (Bressler, 1998: 212). It is clear enough that capitalism developed by destroying the feudal mode of production and replaced it with the system based on absolute private property and market. The tension between capitalist and worker happens because the profit of production is increasing: the capital of production becomes concentrated in private hands, while workers have nothing to sell but their labour (1998: 211-2).

The class conflict, within Marxism, is understood in terms of the conflicting interests of classes. On one side, the interest of the dominant class (bourgeoisie) is to keep the domination of class and to continue the existing economic relations. On the other side, the subordinate classes’ interests are to see the ending of those relations (Edgar and Sedgwick, 2002: 65). While, Marx and Engel declare that the dominant class, capitalist or the bourgeoisie, had successfully enslaved the working class or the proletariat, through economic policies and production of goods. Therefore, the proletariat must fight against the bourgeoisie’s economic and political government, who practically distribute the people’s wealth or assets. Marxist details a plan for changing the world from a place of prejudice, hatred, and conflict due to class struggle to a classless society
where wealth, opportunity, and education are accessible for all people (1998: 212).

In presenting the reality of social life, Georg Lukacs who is a Hungarian philosopher and Marxist, develops his idea that the reality which is presented in art does not copy the reality like a photo, but describes the reality a truer, more complete, more vivid and more dynamic reflection. Within reality, there are the important aspects of human development problems. He mentioned that the truthfulness of society as a whole is presented by the characters, situations, and specific events (Saraswati, 2003: 41-2) [my translation]. He adds that realism where social reality is presented, has nearness with condition of society itself. He sees that bourgeoisie and capitalist is primary enemy. Thus, literature of Socialist realism is needed to describe the reality with its truthfulness and spread the protest towards capitalist system (Kurniawan, 2002: 52-6) [my translation].

Meanwhile, Mato in his article, Socialist Realism, states that in socialist realism works, the true reflection of life in its revolutionary development seeks not only to reveal the principal processes of life, but also to express what is new and revolutionary in order to show the struggle against capitalist. Socialist realism shows the birth of new socialist elements in social life and in the consciousness of people, the bitter struggle between the socialist and the capitalist. The description of the people is made as critical realism. It puts at the centre of its works oppressed and exploited people for whom we must have pity, people who rebel only as individuals, people who are incapable of changing their life, of building a new society (http://www.revolutionarydemocracy.org/rdv6n2/socialreal.htm).
2. A task to educate lower class or the proletariat.

The role of a socialist realism work here as a teacher to educate the proletariat or working class. Socialist realism seeks the relation between true reflection of life to the tasks of educating the workers. It has important tasks to show about social life, attack the remnants of the past in the consciousness of masses of the people and educate the workers to become warriors for the construction of socialist and communist society. The task to educate the workers through the socialist realism works is needed to develop the worker’s minds, talents, and abilities, therefore, they can cognize life, refashion it, and improve condition of work (Gorky, 19XX: 265).

Literature of socialist realism is used to teach society in seeing the reality with its truthfulness accords to Marxism view. In achieving the goals of socialism, the characters in the literary works are created as the positive hero who must give rise to hope and faith in the direction of society’s development towards everything right and better. The character depicts the people’s life, circumstances, goals, and role, and then the characters’ emotions and thoughts in literary works can leaves strong influences on people (Gorky, 19XX: 239). The positive hero has purpose to deliver political messages such as exposing the crimes of capitalism in order to raise the class-consciousness. Lenin said,

Further, the worker’s class-consciousness means their understanding that the interests of all workers of any particular country are identical, that they all constitute one class, separate from all the other classes in society. Finally, the class-consciousness of the workers means the workers’ understanding that to achieve their aims they have to work to influence affairs of state….” (Kew, 1963: 166).
Lenin’s thought about is clear enough that the workers should understand that the only way to improve their conditions and to achieve their emancipation is to conduct a struggle against the capitalist factory-owner class through class-consciousness.

3. A spirit or partisanship of Communist party

According to Lenin, “Literature must become an instrument of the party” (Barry, 2002: 160). The socialist realism was used for revolutionary activities in the form of communist partisanship. The main goal of socialist realism lies in inspiring a socialistic, revolutionary world view, or world sense. The works should be created to inspire readers and viewers to stand up for revolution, with a burning righteous mind.

Gorky in his *On Literature, Selected Articles*, stated that literary has an important role as supporting in communist party’s activity. He stated that literature writers who are party members must not be only teachers of the ideology that organizes workers for the struggle for freedom, but they must be a morally authoritative force. While, Soviet literature must be organized as a mighty weapon of socialist culture (19XX: 263)

B. Theoretical Framework

Many theories that have been stated in the previous sub chapter are essentially needed to support the writer in making this analysis reliable. Theories about character are taken from Abram’s, Henkle’s, and Murphy’s theories in order to understand the main characters. Moreover, it is important to know the
characteristization of the main characters, Satin and Kostylyov since they carry the characteristics of socialist realism in the play. The last, the theories about socialist realism will be used to help the writer answering the second problem formulation. Socialist realism theories are taken from Maxim Gorky’s, Pramoedya’s, Bressler’s, Edgar and Sedgwick’s, Rauch’s, Kew’s book, and Mato’s article in (http://www.revolutionarydemocracy.org/rdv6n2/socialreal.htm).
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

A. Object of the Study

The object of the study in this thesis is a play entitled *The Lower Depths*. That play was first published in 1902. In this thesis, the writer took the play from Gorky’s *Short Plays*, page 127 until 218. This play was published by Foreign Languages Publishing House Moscow in 1930. The author of *The Lower Depths* was Maxim Gorky whose real name is Maksimovich Peshkov. He is one of the socialist realism pioneers whose nation’s life period was intensely interwoven with the chaotic revolutionary. The play *The Lower Depths* became one of Gorky’s best-known plays. This play gained a huge success from its first performance and was soon played in Western Europe and the United States. This play was also made into a French film in 1936 by Jean Renoir, a Chinese film in 1948, and a Japanese film in 1957 by Akira Kurosawa.

The play, *The Lower Depths*, is a story about a lower class group in a poor lodging house. It is a portrait of Russian life which Gorky lived in. In this play, Gorky represents the terrible living conditions of working class or proletariat who live in a bad lodging house and the lodging house owner who tries to stress the proletariat in order to get profit as much as possible. It shows us that there are injustices of capitalist to proletariat in society which Gorky describes in his play. Gorky also stated two main characters, Satin, who is from proletariat and Kostylyov, who is from bourgeoisie. Satin, a gambler and drunken who has own
opinions to accept and deal with whatever life offers. He tries to lift up the human values. While, Kostylyov is the corrupt owner of the lodging house. He uses some tricks to get profit as much as possible from inhabitant who live in his bad lodging house. In brief, this play contains the characteristics of socialist realisms which will be revealed by the both characters.

B. Approach of the Study

In analyzing a literary work, certain approach is needed. Through an approach, our view on a literary work will be based on. The writer uses Marxism approach to analyze the play, *The Lower Depths*. This thesis deals with the characteristics of socialist realism, therefore Marxism approach is used to describe the social reality in the play and explore the educative values within the play in order to achieve class-consciousness.

Marxism provides a worked-out theoretical basis for socialists to carry on the struggle of the proletariat or lower class to achieve a better future and to strip the injustice of bourgeoisie. Marxism also views literary works as reflections of the social institution, as Gorky states, “the primarily social conditions determining the character of literature are and that literature itself reflects the structure of the society to which its authors belong” (Corstius, 1968: 65). It means that Marxism sees the dialectic relation between literature and reality. Therefore, the literary work was created as a representation of life’s condition, while the other side literature influences the reality to develop a new society better (socialistic).
X.J. Kennedy and Gioia in *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama* states an idea about Marxism approach. According to them, Marxism approach is more reliable in analyzing the political ideas in fiction better than other approaches. It is because Marxism approach is more focus on the economic and political elements which explains the changes and developments in society as the result of opposition between the social classes. Hence, Marxism is often emphasizing the ideological content of literature (1998: 1955).

In another source from the book *Literary Criticism*, Charles E. Bressler states,

> By claiming to furnish us with a coherent, clear, and comprehensive worldview, Marxist asserts that it can provide answers to many of the complex questions concerning life experiences and challenges other ideologies to provide answers for these same concerns....Marxism declares that it provides a comprehensive, positive view of human life and history and attempts to show humanity how it can be save itself from a meaningless life of alienation and despair (1998: 211).

It can be seen from the statement above that typically aims of Marxism approach is not only revealing and clarifying ideological issues but also correcting social injustices.

**C. Method of the Study**

To make an analysis a worth-studying, it needs much information as the source. In analyzing the play, *The Lower Depths*, the writer used library research. The writer collected many data to have the research understandable. The writer divided them into two categories; primary data and secondary data. The primary data was the play itself, which published by Foreign Languages Publishing House Moscow in 1930. Reading the play, *The Lower Depths*, was not easy because this
play had no plots and there were disjointed incidents in some acts. The writer had to read this play many times until the writer got the main point of the play.

After getting more understanding on the content of the play, the writer then looked for several books fitting the topic discussed that would be used as the sources of the analysis. The secondary data were needed to support the writer in analyzing the play. Realizing that reading some books only would not fulfill the writer’s needs in analyzing the play, the next step was browsing in internet. Through internet browsing, the writer could find other data, some critiques, and many references to both the play and its author to complete the data available. In analyzing the characters, the writer used references from Abram’s *A Glossary of Literature Terms*, Henkle’s *Reading the novel*, and Murphy’s *Understanding Unseen*; while to analyze the characteristics of socialist realism in the play, the writer used Gorky’s *On Literature: Selected Article* and *Selected Short Stories*, Pramoedya’s *Realisme Sosialis dan Sastra Indonesia*, Saraswati’s *Sosiologi Sastra, Sebuah Pemahaman Awal*, Bressler’s *Literary Criticism*, and Edgar and Sedgwick’s *Cultural Theory*, Rauch’s *a History of Soviet Russia*, and Mato’s *Socialist Realism*.
CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

In answering the two problems discussed in this analysis, this part will be divided into two sub-chapters each of which explains the problems one by one. The first sub-chapter will discuss the description of both characters, Satin and Kostylyov, and the second one will point out the characteristics of socialist realism found in the play revealed by both characters.

A. The Characteristics of Satin and Kostylyov

1. Satin’s Characteristics

To be able to find out more about the characteristics of Satin, the writer applies the theory from Murphy in Understanding Unseens. There are seven ways which are frequently used to describe the characteristics of Satin. They are from the description through the personal description of the author, habits or mannerism, past life, thought, speech, conversation of other characters and character as seen by another.

The personal description of Satin is stated at the introduction of the list of characters. Gorky mentions that Satin is forty years old and has no job (p. 128). Nevertheless, there are not other specific details to describe Satin’s look like or appearance.

Past life is one of many ways to know a person’s character. Something about a character’s past life can give us a clue to events that have helped to figure out Satin’s character. Satin was quite attractive when he was a young man, as he
states, “I was amusing when I was young. Nice to recall those times. A rakish lad, I was. Danced superbly, acted on the stage, was always making people laugh. A charming young fellow (Act III, p. 195-6). Satin’s statement shows that his performance on the stage always succeeds to attract people. The success is a proof that Satin is a talented man.

The conversation below can be a clue to show Satin’s characteristic,

SATIN: I love odd, incomprehensible words. When I was a boy working in a telegraph office I did a lot of reading.
BUBNOV: Were you a telegraph operator, too?
SATIN: I was. (gives a little laugh.) There are some fine books, and a great many curious words. I was once a well educated man, did you know that?
BUBNOV: Heard it a hundred times (Act 1, p. 135).

The quotation above shows that Satin knows many different words he gets from his experience of working in a telegraph office. Reading many books in the past life shapes him as a clever man who has broad knowledge, especially about unfamiliar words.

Satin’s bitter experience in his past life also confirms his character,

SATIN: It was jail did it, granddad. I spent four years and seven months in jail, and nobody will have you after a jail sentence.
LUKA: Oho! And what were you put in jail for?
SATIN: For killing a rascal. I killed him in a burst of wrath and indignation…
LUKA: did you kill him on account of a woman?
SATIN: On account of my own sister… And that all happened long, long ago. My sister died. Nine years ago. She was a lovely sister. (Act III, p. 195-6).

Satin’s conversation with Luka shows that Satin is a loving brother who cares of his sister. He gets in jail in consequence of killing someone for his lovely sister.
Character’s mannerisms, habits, or idiosyncrasies may tell us something about a character. The conversation below will describe the character of Satin through his habit or mannerism.

TATAR (shouting): Aha! Put card up slave!
BARON (in some embarrassment): Well, where do you expect me to put it—up your nose?
ACTOR (convincing): You’re mistaken, Asan. No one has ever—
TATAR: I see! Cheat! I no play!
SATIN (gathering up the cards): All right, get out, Asan. You know we were cheats. Why did you start playing with us?
BARON: Lost twenty kopeks and makes a noise like three rubles! …
TATAR (angrily): Gotta play fair!
SATIN: What for?
…
(The Tatar splits in anger, the others laugh at him.) (Act II, p. 158).

The conversation above shows that Satin used to play cards, gamble, and cheat in the game with his other male friends. Another conversation also shows his habit,

SATIN (raising himself on his bed): Who gave me a beating last night?
BUBNOV: What difference does it make to you?
SATIN: None, I suppose. But what did they give me a beating for?
BUBNOV: Were you in a card game?
SATIN: I was.
BUBNOV: That explains the beating (Act I, p.132).

The conversation between Satin and Bubnov above explains that Satin is in cards game. The beating that Satin gets, explains his bad habit: cheating in game. It can be concluded that from his habit, Satin is a card player and cheater.

Satin is not only playing cards but he uses money to gamble in the game. He cries, “Winning—fifty-three kopeks”! (Act II, p. 160). Another conversation between Satin and Bubnov also explains his character,

BUBNOV: Everything I have? This very minutes? Hah! Here you are—a ruble…another…twenty kopeks…chicken feed….
SATIN: That’s enough. It’ll be safer with me. I’ll gamble with it (Act IV, p. 214).
It is clear enough that knowing the habit or mannerism of a character can give a clue to describe the character. The conversation above explains Satin is a gambler.

Describing a person’s character seen by another character through the eyes and opinions of another can figure out a person’s character. Luka, the pilgrim, has his own opinions towards Satin. It is shown by Luka’s speech to him, “You don’t take life so hard” (Act III, P.196), “You’re a gay fellow, Konstantin, and a pleasant one” (p. 195), and, “…when I look at you, I don’t understand a thing. You’re a good fellow … and a clever one …” (p. 195). From Luka’s speeches describes Satin’s character that Satin is not only an easy going to pass the life, a good, attractive but also clever man.

The clues about a person’s character can be got through the conversations of other characters and the things they say about him. Pepel, the thief, Bubnov, the hatter, and Kleshch, the locksmith, have their own opinion towards Satin,

**PEPEL (instructively):** You’re a fool, Andrei! When it comes to conscience, you’d do well to listen to Satin—or even Baron.
**KLESHCH:** There’s nothing they can teach me.
**PEPEL:** They’ve got more brains than you have, even if they are drunks.
**BUBNOV:** The man who’s drunk as well as wise, has won himself a double prize (Act. I, p. 142).

According to Pepel and Bubnov, Satin is a clever man if talking about conscience. Nevertheless, Satin being clever when he is in under the influence of alcohol. Pepel and Bubnov’s opinion indicate that Satin is a drunkard. While Kleshch has no impression at all towards Satin.
Thoughts of a person’s character can also give us direct knowledge of what a person is thinking about. Satin states his opinion against Luka’s thought about consoling lies.

SATIN: …Lots of people lie out to pity for their brothers. I know. I’ve read books. They lie beautifully, with inspiration, stirring you up. There are lies that console, that reconcile a person to his lot. Lies find an excuse for the weight that smashed the worker’s arm: lies blame a man for starving to death. … Only those who are faint-hearted or live at other people’s expense have need of lies. Some people are supported by lies, others hide behind them. But the person who is his own boss—the person who is independent and doesn’t suck other people’s blood—what need has he of lies? Lies are the religion of slaves and bosses! Truth is the god of the free man! (Act IV, p. 206).

Satin’s speech shows that he is a clever man. He has read many books that make him have a broad minded. Satin’s thought also shows that he is a moderate and respectable man. He understands what Luka has done is because his affection to the people at the lodging house who is suffering in their life. Luka offers his consoling lies to help people to forget their problem. Nevertheless, Satin has his own opinion that lies are a form of slaves and masters. Lies are only for somebody who is not brave enough to face the hard life. Satin states that people who are self-governing man can take the condition of life whatever it is and do not need lies and accept the truth of life whatever it is. His point of view is not just an opinion which is out from his head but based on some books he read. From his thought, it shows that Satin is broad minded and realist.

Satin speech below explains his character,

SATIN: Fine. A person can be a believer or not, just as he pleases. That’s his business. A person’s free to choose. He pays for everything himself: for believing, for not believing, for loving, for being clever. A person pays for everything himself, and that’s why he’s free… (Act IV, 211).
Satin’s thought signifies that Satin is a moderate man. He understands that people is free to decide something they like. It is because decision of something is part of human’s right.

Another thought is stated by Satin,

SATIN: Stop it! Don’t touch her. You mustn’t hurt people…. You mustn’t hurt people! But what if they hurt me—hurt me so bad I’ll never get over it? What then? Am I supposed to forgive them? Never! Nobody! (Act IV, p. 209).

Satin speech above indicates that he is a peace lover. He agrees that everybody must love and not hurt one another. Nevertheless, Satin has own thought that he will never forgive if somebody hurts him. Satin’s thought means that somebody does not hurt another if he or she does not want to be hurt. From Satin’s thought above, readers will understand that Satin is a resentful person. He will revenge to somebody who hurt him badly.

The speech is another way for readers to understand a character in the story. He declares, “I love odd, incomprehensible words” (Act 1, p. 135). His speech is clear enough to explain that he really likes inexplicable words and is familiar with many curious words.

Another his speech,

ACTOR (climbing down off the stove): …. (Proudly.) My organism is poisoned with alcohol. SATIN: Organism…. Organon….

…

SATIN: Just for fun. I’m sick of all our words! I’ve heard them all a thousand times! (Act 1, p. 133-4).

The Satin’s speech shows that he has and states many unfamiliar terms or vocabularies, which the others do not know the meaning of those words. However, he mentions those words for joke. It indicates that he is a word player.

2. Kostylyov’s Characteristics

From Understanding Unseens, there are four ways, which are frequently used to describe the characteristics of Kostylyov. They are from the description through the personal description of the author, speech, thought, and character as seen by another.

Mikhail Ivanovich Kostylyov is explained as fifty-four years old. He is Vasilisa’s husband and the owner of a lodging house (p. 128). His personal description is stated by Gorky at the list of characters.

Through the eyes and opinions of another character, the character of Kostylyov can be figure out clearly. Below is Satin’s and Actor speeches towards Kostylyov, his landlord,

ACTOR: A rapscallion, that’s what you are, old man!
(Goes out into the kitchen....)
KOSTYLYOV (to Satin): The scraper here, he ran away. Hee-hee! He don’t like me.
SATIN: Who but the devil could like you? (Act 1, p. 138).

Kostylyov is inhabitants’ most hated property owner. It is proved by Satin’s speech. It indicates that there is nobody who lives in lodging house like Kostylyov. Kostylyov himself sees that Actor does not like him.
Not only the inhabitants of the lodging house like Kostylyov, his wife, Vasilisa, also dislikes Kostylyov. To Pepel, she explores her husband’s cruelty towards people.

VASILISA: No, I don’t. I just tell the truth. Think, Vasya. Twice they threw you in jail on account of that husband of mine—on account of his greediness. He sucks my blood like a leech—been sucking it for four years. What kind of a husband is he? And he keeps squeezing Natasha out, nagging her, calling her a beggar. He’s poison for everybody (Act II, p. 170).

Vasilisa’s confession explains clearly that Kostylyov is greedy and evil husband. Kostylyov has no love to everybody, even if to his wife, Vasilisa. Nevertheless, he treats his wife and sister in law badly.

Another opinion about Kostylyov is stated by Luka,

LUKA: …That sister of yours is a wicked beast. And as for her husband—the old man is worse than any words can say, and so is this whole life here… (Act III, p. 190).

Luka’s speech above indicates that Kostylyov is a bad landlord. Luka does not like Kostylyov and stresses his opinion by saying that he cannot describe Kostylyov by any words because there are not any suit words can represent Kostylyov’s badness.

While Pepel’s conversation with Medvedev below also describe the character of Kostylyov,

MEDVEDEV: Just wait! I’ll catch you, all right. And soon!
PEPEL: If you catch me, it’ll be the end of this little nest of yours. Do you think I’ll keep my mouth shut in court? …They’ll ask me: Who taught you to steal and showed you where? Mishka Kostylyov and his wife! Who handled your stolen goods? Mishka Kostylyov and his wife! (Act II, p. 164).
Kostylyov is not only gets profit from his lodging house but also a person who receives stolen goods. From Pepel’s speech above describes that Kostylyov is a bad man.

A character’s speech can help us figure out the character. Kostylyov’s conversation with Kleshch below may describe Kostylyov’s character,

KOSTYLYOV (stealing toward the door to Pepel’s room.): You’re talking up a lot of space for two rubles a month, aren’t you? A bed, and a place to sit besides. Hm. Worth at least five rubles. I’ll have to throw on another half ruble (Act I, p.137).

Kostylyov’s statement above shows that he is a greedy landlord. He uses his authority as the owner of lodging house and does extortion of some extra money towards the inhabitants of lodging house. He calculates every single thing of his property which is used by the inhabitants. He uses it as the reason to lift up the cost of his lodging house.

Kostylyov’s speech below clearly explains his own character,

KOSTYLYOV: It’s me, just me. You two here—alone? Having a little talk? (Suddenly he stamps his foot and begins to screech.) God damn you, Vasilisa! You beggar, you! (He is frightened by his own shouts and by the frozen silence with which they are received.) … it’s high time you were in bed! Forgot to fill the icon lamp again, damn you! You pig! You pauper!.... (Act II, p. 170).

From Kostylyov’s speech shows that he is rude and easily being anger. He has not enough power to control his emotion. His bad temper makes him forget to respect his wife in front of other people.

His speech to Natasha can be a clue to describe his character,

Kostylyov’s speech to Natasha shows that he is unkind brother in law. He treats his sister in law as a servant. Moreover, he accuses Natasha doing something bad without knowing the fact.

The conversation below describes Kostylyov’s characteristic,

KOSTYLYOV: Sh-h-h! Don’t be angry, Vasya! The watch, it’s—
SATIN: Stolen goods.
KOSTYLYOV: I don’t handle stolen goods! How dare you— (Act 1, p. 139).

Kostylyov’s speech above explains that he does not want to confess to what Satin has said that he is the receiver of stolen goods is true. It indicates that is a liar and hypocrite property owner.

The conversation below also explains that he is a hypocrite,

KOSTYLYOV (playfully): Now why should you say such things to me! Me, as loves you all so! Don’t I know you’re all my brothers, my poor, unfortunate, fallen brothers? (Act I, p. 138).

His speech indicates that he is very full of love to everybody in his lodging house; nevertheless, he does not respect the people. He calls and mocks them by describing the people’s condition in bad words.

The conversation between Pepel and Kostylyov below describes how Kostylyov wants to keep the money from the selling of stolen watch from Pepel, the thief.

PEPEL (opening the door): Well? What do you come here bothering me for?
KOSTYLYOV (peeping into the room): I… you see… you…
PEPEL: Did you bring the money?
PEPEL: The seven rubles for the watch. Where is it?
KOSTYLYOV: What watch, Vasya? My goodness, you—
PEPEL: Careful, careful! People saw me sell you that watch yesterday for ten rubles—three rubles down, seven to come. Let’s have it. Why do you
stand there gaping? Hanging around disturbing everybody instead of going about your business! (Act 1, p. 139).

From the conversation above, Pepel asks Kostylyov to give him the rest of money from a watch selling. Nevertheless, Kostylyov tries to pretend in order refusing to give the money to Pepel. What Kostylyov does, shows that he is a corrupt and greedy man.

The conversation between Kostylyov and Kleshch shows that Kostylyov is a cold heart man.

KLESHCH: Throw on a noose and choke me to death! On your last legs, and still wondering how you can snatch another half a ruble!
KOSTYLYOV: Why should I choke you? Who’d profit by that? Live on, and may the Lord help you. But I’ll throw on that extra half-ruble just the same! I’ll buy some oil for my icon lamp and let it burn before the holy image, a sacrifice in retribution for my sins, and for yours too… (Act I, p. 137).

From his speech, he does not want to know and care of his inhabitants’ condition who have not enough money to pay for their dwelling. He forces to extort the extra money because of his greediness and ignores Kleshch argumentation to refuse Kostylyov’s new policy to lift up the cost of the lodging house.

Kostylyov always tries to find out people’s mistake to show that he is the holy one.

KOSTYLYOV: …You never think of your sins, do you now? Oh, it’s a wicked man you are, Andrei! Your wife has wasted away from your meanness. Nobody likes you, nobody respects you. Scraping away at that iron of yours, getting on everybody’s nerves—(Act I, p.137).

His speech shows that he is a hypocrite. He does not realize and mind his own mistakes which he does to his own wife and sister in law.
Thoughts of a person’s character also can give us direct knowledge of what a person is thinking about.

KOSTYLYOV: … a person ought to settle in one place. People aren’t supposed to live like roaches—scuttling here and there and everywhere. A person ought to make himself at home in some place and not be a stranger everywhere.

…

KOSTYLYOV: That means he’s a tramp and a useless creature. There has to be some use got out of a person. He ought to work (Act III, p. 192).

Kostilyov states his thought about Luka, the homeless man. According to him, people should not be a wanderer, as like Luka does, and people should have a work. Kostylyov’s speech shows that he is a disdainful man.

He criticizes Luka’s profession as a pilgrim arrogantly,

KOSTYLYOV: … What’s a stranger? A stranger’s a strange person, one who isn’t like others. If he’s a pilgrim with knowledge—that is, if he’s learned things—things nobody cares to know—not even if it’s the truth he’s learned, because—well, people don’t always want to know the truth—let him keep it to himself. If he’s a true pilgrim, he’ll hold his tongue, or else talk so that nobody knows what he’s talking about. And he shouldn’t want to change things, or interfere in anything, or upset people to no good purpose. It’s none of his business how people live. It’s for him to lead a pious life. He ought to live in a cave in the forest where nobody can see him. He has no right to mix in people affairs, trying to tell them what’s right and what’s wrong. But he ought to pray for everybody—for all our worldly sins—for yours and mine and everybody else’s. That’s why he renounces the vanities of this world—so he can pray. (pause.) But you—what kind of pilgrim are you? You haven’t even got a passport. A respectable person ought to have a passport. All respectable human beings have got passport…(Act III, p. 192).

Kostylyov’s speech above also shows that he is a disdainful man and arrogant. He really does not like Luka very much. He criticizes Luka bitterly about Luka’s profession as a pilgrim. The present of Luka makes him annoyed. Kostylyov alludes Luka through his preaching. He states that Luka should keep his tongue and do not interrupt others’ life. Kostylyov thinks that Luka is unrespectable man
because he has no passport. A person who has no passport can be identified as an escaped convict, as like what Vasilisa has said, “…who knows but you’re an escaped convict” (Act III, p. 193). Kostylyov and his wife boasts of property they have and humiliates Luka who is just a poor pilgrim and the lower class. Kostylyov’s speech also indicates that he is a hypocrite. He teaches Luka how a man should be; nevertheless, he does not realize that what he has said about Luka’s badness is exactly reflection of himself.

B. The Characteristics of Socialist Realism Revealed through the Characters’ Representation

In this thesis, the writer will analyze only two points of the characteristics of socialist realism. They are the reflection of life with truthfulness and its revolutionary development and tasks to educate the proletariat or lower class. This characteristics of socialist realism is based on Marxism’s point of view.

As a reflection of life with truthfulness and its revolutionary development, socialist realism works has duty to describe the condition of society as a whole. It describes the surface appearance, the elements, such as the characters, situations, and specific events. However, the writer limits the analysis through the behaviours and thoughts of characters of Satin and Kostylyov.

In Marxism, classes are defined in terms of the ownership of productive wealth or assets. Thus, class divisions happen while there are differences in power and culture in society. Gorky presents people in The Lower Depths as two different classes. Satin represents proletariat and Kostylyov represents
bourgeoisie. Their class divisions can be seen on differences of productive assets they have or not.

In *The Lower Depths*, Gorky sets Satin lives in bad lodging house. As proletariat, he has no productive assets or property. It can be seen in his speech, “Bubnov, lend me five kopeks!” (Act I, p. 135), and, “Vasya! Lend me five kopeks!” (Act I, 140). Satin’s speech shows that he has no money at all. However, he is ever being a working man.

Satin: …. When I was a boy working in a telegraph office….  
Bubnov: Were you a telegraph operator, too?  
Satin: I was… (Act 1, p. 135).

Satin’s speech above describes that he is from proletariat or working class who does not have any productive assets except his labour.

Satin is different from Kostylyov, the owner of the lodging house, who is from bourgeois class. Marxists called them bourgeoisie because they possess and control the society’s stock of economic resource. It can be showed in list of characters that Mikhail Ivanovich Kostyl yov is the owner of a lodging house, (p. 128). Kostyl yov is pure bourgeoisie because he has a lodging house as his productive asset. As his confesses his assets or property arrogantly, “It’s me who own this place… “ (Act II, p. 170).

As the owner of the lodging house, Kostylyov gains some rubles per month from the proletariat people.

Kostylyov (stealing toward the door to Pepel’s room.): You’re talking up a lot of space for two rubles a month, aren’t you? A bed, and a place to sit besides. Hm. Worth at least five rubles. I’ll have to throw on another half ruble (Act I, p.137).
Kostylyov’s speech above shows that he has controlled over the production process. As a dominant class in his society, he explores his inhabitants of lodging house to get profit as much as he can. While Satin says, “Work? Find me work it’s a pleasure to do…” (Act I, p. 141). Satin’s speech shows that he has no a work to do. Therefore, he has no income. It is because he has no productive assets which gives him wealth. From Satin’s and Kostylyov’s speech, the writer gets the point that proletariat and bourgeois class is shaped by the occupation or income background. It is clear enough that these groups are distinguished based on their economic position or wealth.

The differences in social classes create a tension between bourgeois and proletariat class. It happens when the profit of production was increasing and the owner of capital of production becomes concentrated in private hands to get profit as much as possible. The conversation between Kleshch and the owner, Kostylyov, below will explain it,

KOSTYLOV: … I’ll have to throw on another half ruble.
KLESHCH: Throw on a noose and choke me to death! On your last legs, and still wondering now you can snatch another half a ruble!
KOSTYLOV: Why should I choke you? Who’d profit by that? … But I’ll throw on extra half-ruble just the same! I’ll buy some oil for my icon lamp and let it burn before the holy image, a sacrifice in retribution for my sins, and for yours too…. (Act I, p. 137).

From the conversation above, the owner forces everybody to give him extra money for the lodging house every month. He counts everything which used by the inhabitants and uses it as the reason to lift up the cost of lodging house. Kleshch filed a protest towards Kostylyov’s new policy. However, Kostylyov does not care about the people’s objection presented by Kleshch. He does not care
about the condition of the inhabitants who face the bad life condition. Meanwhile, Actor, who rents the lodging house, feels that the owner of the lodging house is unfair with his new rule. As an exploited and powerless class, he can only strike against Kostylyov with throwing out a rough word, “A rapscallion, that’s what you are, old man”! (Act I, p. 138). Actor’s speech shows that he is so displeased towards Kostylyov.

From the speeches above, it can be gained that the conflict or tension between proletariat and bourgeoisie caused by the domination of bourgeoisie in economic position; and this domination will create exploitation towards proletariat class. It is because the bourgeois capitalist has own authority towards their means of production and are able to control it. While the proletariat class who have only their ability to labour, which they sell to the bourgeois capitalist in order to survive. From Kostylyov’s conversation with Kleshch above also indicates that Kostylyov uses his power to suppress inhabitants who have small income or poor properties with lift up the cost of lodging house. This Kostylyov’s policy indicates that he has exploited the inhabitant of lodging house in order to get much profit. It can be seen that the conflict for bourgeoisie is for keeping the domination of class and to continue the existing economic relation. As an exploitation class, the inhabitants must pay some extra rubles every month to their lodging house’s owner and cannot improve their bad condition indeed. It is because they will not have authority to control over the production process, therefore, they will not be able to maintain the full value of what they produce, or determine the product’s allocation and distribution.
The disappointment of the inhabitants emerge because they are pressed by their landlord. The pressure and disappointment will raise conflict or tension between the two classes. In the story, the conflict rises up greatly when Kostylyov brutally beats Pepel’s lover, Natasha. Pepel, the thief, gets anger with what Kostylyov has done. He comes to her defense and accidentally causes Kostylyov’s dead.

PEPEL: You old fornicator!
(With a great sweep of his arm he strikes the old man, who falls in such a way that only his head and shoulders can be seen from behind the corner of the house. Pepel rushes over to Natasha.) (Act III, p. 199).

Pepel has killed Kostylyov in order to save his lover. However, the other inhabitants are careless with their landlord’s dead. They follow to beat the Kostylyov body in order to release their disappointment.

(The commotion in the Kostylyov’s flat dies away as the people evidently move out into the hall. The old man is heard to cry “Stop!” A door slams, and this chops off the noise like the blow of an axe...Kleshch mutters something unintelligible which focuses into the following lines: “But how? A man’s got to live, hasn’t he?” [In a loud voice]: ... A man’s alone—all alone... That’s where the trouble lies. No one to help him”) (Act III, p. 197).

... SATIN: Call Vasya! Hurry! Beat him, Zob!

... KRIVOI ZOB (followed by Medvedev): Hah! I gave him a good one!

Those dialogues above describe how enthusiastic the inhabitants are to release their anger towards their cruel property owner. They beat Kostylyov’s dead body merciless. It is done because they cannot do anything to confront Kostylyov when he is still alive. It can be seen that the conflict for proletariat or working class is
seeing the ending of relation between bourgeoisie and proletariat or working class, that is to stop the cruelty of bourgeoisie towards the working class.

However, the conflict between the property owner and one of his habitants has ever occurred. Pepel, the thief, has tried to kill Kostylyov. It is because Kostylyov treats him with suspicion and Kostylyov always tries to confirm the suspected affair with his wife. Kostylyov’s bad treat and attempt make Pepel sick of Kostylyov’s deed.

PEPEL (in a strained voice): Get out, I say.
KOSTYLYOV: Don’t you dare! I’ll show you! I’ll—
(Pepel takes him by the collar and starts shaking him. Suddenly someone is heard to move about on top of the stove and to give a loud and long-drawn yawn. Pepel lets go of Kostylyov, who runs with a cry into the passage.) (Act. II, p. 170).

The conflict between them makes Kostylyov almost killed. Pepel tries to kick Kostylyov out from his room. However, it makes Kostylyov thinks that the place that Pepel live on is his own property and he has full authority towards it. Thus, Kostylyov threaten him. Pepel makes such a slip. Luckily, Luka makes a noise to stir up Pepel’s attention to kill Kostylyov.

The analysis of the people in the lodging house focused on the ugly realities of contemporary life which is described by character of Satin. While, the crime and authority of Kostylyov, the landlord, towards his inhabitants of lodging house creates a conflicts within those classes. It is a reflection of life about the time when bourgeoisie uses their authority over their productive assets or property in society.

Another characteristic of socialist realism is task to educate the proletariat or working class. Socialist realism plays a role as a teacher (didactic). Socialist
realism seeks the relation between the true reflections of social life to the tasks of educating the proletariat or working man. The task to educate the proletariat or working man through the socialist realism works is needed to develop their minds, talents, and ability; therefore, they can open their eyes to see the lacks in society which caused by bourgeoisie. It can help them to cognize their life, refashion it, and improve condition of work.

The true reflection of condition of social life that happens in *the Lower Depths*, is the tyrannical of bourgeoisie towards proletariat or the lower class. Gorky describes the crime of Kostylyov as the owner of the lodging house towards his inhabitants of lodging house.

KOSTYLYOV: ... What’s a stranger? A stranger’s a strange person, one who isn’t like others. If he’s a pilgrim with knowledge—that is, if he’s learned things—things nobody cares to know—not even if it's the truth he’s learned, because—well, people don’t always want to know the truth—let him keep it to himself. If he’s a true pilgrim, he’ll hold his tongue, or else talk so that nobody knows what he’s talking about. And he shouldn’t want to change things, or interfere in anything, or upset people to no good purpose. It’s none of his business how people live. It’s for him to lead a pious life. He ought to live in a cave in the forest where nobody can see him. He has no right to mix in people affairs, trying to tell them what’s right and what’s wrong. But he ought to pray for everybody—for all our worldly sins—for yours and mine and everybody else’s. That’s why he renounces the vanities of this world—so he can pray. (*pause.*) But you—what kind of pilgrim are you? You haven’t even got a passport. A respectable person ought to have a passport. All respectable human beings have got passport...(*Act III, p. 192).*

Kostylyov’s point of view towards Luka who is one of inhabitants of lodging house, describes that Kostylyov does not respect to him. Kostylyov mocks Luka’s profession. Kostylyov’s deed is an implicit message that Kostylyov, as bourgeoisie, disdains Luka who is a proletariat. It shows that bourgeoisie are arrogant and feel that they can control proletariat life.
The act of Kostylyov to lift up the cost also becomes an important thing to expose the crimes of bourgeoisie in capitalism.

KOSTYLYOV *(stealing toward the door to Pepel’s room.)* You’re talking up a lot of space for two rubles a month, aren’t you? A bed, and a place to sit besides. Hm. Worth at least five rubles. I’ll have to throw on another half ruble.

KLESHCH: Throw on a noose and choke me to death! On your last legs, and still wondering how you can snatch another half a ruble! KOSTYLYOV: why should I choke you? Who’d profit by that? Live on, and may the Lord help you. But I’ll throw on that extra half-ruble just the same! I’ll buy some oil for my icon lamp and let it burn before the holy image, a sacrifice in retribution for my sins, and for yours too. You never think of your sins, do you now? Oh, it’s a wicked man you are, Andrei!

…..

KLESHCH *(shouting)*: Did you come here just to poison my life? *(Act I, p. 136).*

The conversation between Kostylyov and Kleshch above can open the eyes of readers, especially for a proletariat, to recognize how cruel the bourgeoisie in forcing the proletariat or lower class to give their money in order to help bourgeoisie get profit as much as they can. Nevertheless, Bourgeoisie does not care with the suffering which the proletarian face. The picture of the bourgeoisie’s evil should be created to inspire the readers and viewers to stand up for revolution, with a burning righteous mind. They should fight against struggle the crime of bourgeoisie who makes proletariat suffer.

The physical confrontation against the bourgeoisie in *The Lower Depths* can be seen in Act III,

Bubnov: I’m saying that somebody’s finished off the old man.

*(The noise on the stage goes out like a fire flooded with water. Separate remarks are passed in hushed tones: “Really?” “That’s bad.” “Hm.” ”Let’s get away from here.” “What the hell!” “Watch out!” “Beat it before the police come.” *The crowd dwindles. Bubnov, the Tatar, Nastya and Kvashnya rush over to the body of Kostylyov)* *(p. 200).*
The description of the brute deeds of the inhabitants of lodging house towards the dead body of Kostylyov, indicates the symbol of the bourgeoisie’s defeat. They do not show their respect to Kostylyov’s dead body at all. They beat it in order to express their disappointment. The landlord’s crime makes the inhabitants hate him. Kostylyov forced and pressed the inhabitants of his lodging house badly when he was still alive. It can be seen in this conversation below,

ACTOR: A rascal, that’s what you are, old man!
KOSTYLYOV (to Satin): The scraper here, he ran away. Hee-hee! He don’t like me.
SATIN: Who but the devil could like you? (Act 1, p. 138).

To open the eyes of proletariat or working class about the true reality in their society is not only to present the crime of bourgeoisie. The creation of a positive character in a work of socialist realism is also an important thing. It is to educate the proletariat or working class. A positive character will be a model to be followed by those who are proletariat or working class. The positive character is able to develop the proletariat’s mind, talents, and abilities, so that they can improve their life condition.

In The Lower Depths, Gorky creates character of Satin as a positive hero in order to educate the proletariat or lower class. The character of Satin gives rise to hope and faith in the direction of society’s development towards better future. Satin’s emotions and thoughts can leaves strong political messages on proletariat or working class people.
Satin’s thought about a job below contains a political message for proletariat or working class. His speech persuades proletariat or working class to realize that working should be a pleasant thing and not a required task to do.

SATIN: …When work is a pleasure, life is a joy. When work is a duty, life is slavery! … (Act I, 141).

Satin expresses his thoughts about the ideas of truth to respect man. He sees that man must be respected. Satin states his opinion about the equality of man:

SATIN: …A person’s free to choose. He pays for everything himself: for believing, for not believing, for loving, for being clever. A person pays for everything himself, and that’s why he’s free. … (Act IV, p. 211).

Satin’s idea is all man has his own right to decide. Man is free to do everything he likes because his actions were not restricted by the rules. It also indicates that the authority of bourgeoisie has restricted proletariat’s freedom and happiness. Satin’s speech persuades proletariat or working man to realize that they all have right to have good condition of life.

Carrying out the task to educate proletariat or working class, Satin is created as an educated proletariat,

SATIN: …. I did a lot of reading.

... SATIN: … There are some fine books, and a great many curious words. I was once a well educated man, did you know that? BUBNOV: Heard it a hundred times (Act 1, p. 135).

The conversation above explains that Satin has broad knowledge, especially about vocabularies. He is often said as an educated man. It implies that the character of Satin as an educated man is important to teach the proletariat or working man to realize that education is important thing to have. As a proletariat or working man,
they should have a good education to change the way of their thinking, to more creative and be a critical man towards their condition of life. Through a good education, proletariat or working class could improve their condition of life.

Satin, who has broad knowledge from reading many books, lifts up the issue about the importance of the truth. In the story, Satin is confronting Luka’s consoling lies offered to problematic people in the lodging house. Satin himself has a point of view about the truth to confront Luka’s consoling lies. It can be seen in Satin’s speech below,

Satin: …Man—there’s your truth! …..All things are part of Man; all things are for Man. Only Man exists; the rest is merely the work of his hands and his mind. How marvelous is Man! How proud the world rings—MAN! A man should be respected. Not pitied—pity is degrading. Respected! ….. (Act IV, p. 211).

Satin’s statement about the truth is clear enough that he opposes Luka’s thought about consoling lies. According to him, the truth is the human itself. Man has an honor on himself. Man takes a control over himself. It is because every man is free, independent and can stand up with his own power in order to face the condition of life. There is no difference between one and the others. Satin statement about truth is in keeping with political leaning in the sense that he credits the individual with the power to make change and overthrow the cruelty of bourgeoisie.

Another Satin’s thought about lies is that people needs not to be lied because lie or pity can humiliate human’s honor. Satin states the evil of lies below:
SATIN: ...Lots of people lie out to pity for their brothers. I know. I’ve read books. They lie beautifully, with inspiration, stirring you up. There are lies that console, that reconcile a person to his lot. Lies find an excuse for the weight that smashed the worker’s arm: lies blame a man for starving to death. ... Only those who are faint-hearted or live at other people’s expense have need of lies. Some people are supported by lies, others hide behind them. But the person who is his own boss—the person who is independent and doesn’t suck other people’s blood—what need has he of lies? Lies are the religion of slaves and bosses! Truth is the god of the free man! (Act IV, p. 206).

Satin’s statement above bears a function to deliver a political message. He describes the evil of the lies to proletariat or working class. He explains that lies are just needed by people who are cowards to face the bad condition of life. Dependent people need lies because instead of confessing the truth, they can blame something in order to solve the problem. This principle is used in the slaving and mastering. When the master makes a mistake, he will blame his slave. Thus, Satin stresses once again that truth is everything for free man. People do not need to hide themselves from the fact of life. Satin’s speech shows that every man should be a realist person who accepts and deals with whatever life offers. People should be brave, that is, one who accepts and deals with whatever life offers and tries to solve the problems or change the bad condition to better one.

Satin teaches proletariat or working man that Man is not bounded by rules because what man wants to do is his rights.

SATIN: ...How good to feel oneself a Man! Here am I—ex-convict, murderer, card-sharper—all of that! When I go down the street, people take me for a thief. They step aside and steal furtive glances at me. Often they call me a rascal, a faker! Work, they say! Work? What for? To fill my belly? (Laughs.) I’ve always despised people who think too much about their bellies. The belly isn’t the main thing... Indeed it isn’t. Man is superior to that. Man is superior to his belly! (Act IV, p. 211).
Satin’s statement above explains that the degree of man is greatly high no matter how bad he is. Man is more than everything. All Satin statements above have purposes to praise socialism. The equality over man is lifted up to respect the significant of human being where there is no exploiter and exploited or master and slave relationship. The role is required to open the eyes and mind of the readers and make them realize their power if they face something wrong in life, thus, they can fix up the life.

The character of Satin implies a political message about love. He teaches that everybody must not hurt each other. Everybody must love one another. Nevertheless, Satin states that,

SATIN: Stop it! Don’t touch her. You mustn’t hurt people…. You mustn’t hurt people! But what if they hurt me—hurt me so bad I’ll never get over it? What then? Am I supposed to forgive them? Never! Nobody! (Act IV, p. 209).

From his speech above, Satin teaches that when somebody hurts him so bad, he will never forget. He wants to take a revenge to his enemy. Satin’s speech indicates that proletariat or working class should fight against the crime of bourgeoisie, the source of all social evils, because they have caused proletariat or working class suffers.

Therefore, Satin’s speeches and the exposing of capitalist’s crime rely on the growth of the proletariat’s revolutionary consciousness. Satin, as a positive character teaches that proletariat should realize that they must be confident of our own strength and keep on developing it. The proletariat or lower class should
always concentrate on the potential of man and his ability to succeed and rise above.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

Gorky’s play, *The Lower Depths*, is one of his socialist realism works. This play is a fine example of how a work of literature can take part as a tool to describe not only the reflection of life with its truthfulness but also as a teacher to educate the proletariat or working class in order to win the socialism. These characteristics of socialist realism in the play are revealed by the characters of Satin and Kostylyov through their thoughts and attitudes.

The play, *The Lower Depths*, tells about two different classes which are represented by Satin and Kostylyov. Kostylyov is bourgeoisie because he has a productive property or assets, that is a bad lodging house for rented. As the owner of bad lodging house, uses his power to stress the inhabitants of his lodging house. He lifts up the cost of the lodging house to get much profit and forces the inhabitants pay him extra money every month without wants to know that the inhabitants of his lodging house face the hard life’s condition. While, Satin is an idle man who rents the bad lodging house. He presents proletariat or working class. It is because he has no any productive property or assets.

There are two characteristics of socialist realism in the play, *The Lower Depths*, revealed by Satin and Kostylyov. They are reflection of life with truthfulness and its revolutionary and a task to educate the working class or proletariat. These characteristics is based on Marxism ‘s view. The both characters contribute the reflection of society at nineteen century that is the domination of
bourgeoisie in capitalism in using their arbitrariness towards proletariat in order to get much profit. The difference of classes will create some conflicts within them. The crime of the character of Kostylyov as a bourgeoisie is lifted up in this play, *The Lower Depths*, in order to open the eyes of proletariat or working class to realize about the reality with its truthfulness that happen in their life. The true reality in their social life that is the bourgeoisie has pressed and made them suffering.

Satin, as a positive hero, is created in order to carries out the task as a teacher to educate the proletariat or working class (didactic). Satin’s has a role to raise up the class-consciousness. His influence of political messages can teach proletariat or working class to realize that they must be confident of their own strength and keep on developing it. They should always concentrate on the potential of man and his ability to succeed and rise above. His important political massage also teaches proletariat or working class to fight against their enemy that is the crime of bourgeoisie in capitalism.

Analyzing the characteristics of socialist realism through the both characters, Satin, who represents proletarian or working class, and Kostylyov, who represents bourgeoisie, in this play, *The Lower Depths*, can help readers understand the reality with its truthfulness in the nineteen century. The characters in the play depicts the people’s life, goals, and role; and the characters’ emotions and thoughts can leaves strong influences on the reader. It also can help proletariat or working class strengthen their struggle against their enemy that is the crime of bourgeoisie in capitalism. In achieving the goals of socialism the workers through
the socialist realism works is needed to develop the worker’s minds, talents, and abilities, therefore, they can cognize life, refashion it, and improve their condition of life.
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APPENDIX

Summary

Act I

The play, *The Lower Depths*, is opened with the conversation between Kvashnya and Kleshch. Kleshch argues that Kvashnya lies when she says that she will marry a policeman. Meanwhile, Baron mocks Nastya about her book entitled “Fatal Love”. The dying Anna complains and asks them to leave her alone so that she can die in peace. Satin gets up from sleeping. Kleshch commands Actor to tidy up the stove and sweep the floor but Actor protests that it is Baron’s turn. Baron refuses it because he is going to market with Kvashnya. Baron asks Nastya to do that work but Nastya refuses it. Actor gives the reason why he refuses to sweep the floor. Listening to a word “organism”, Satin starts to play the word with change it into “organon”. In on going debate between them, Satin many times throws out odd and incomprehensible words which he got from reading a lot and working as a telegraph officer. Bubnov tells his past. He had ever worked as a furrier. Anna moans to her husband that she cannot breathe. Kostylyov comes to search his wife, Vasilisa. Pepel asks him about the rest money which will be given to him from the selling of stolen watch. Later, Natasha comes in with a new lodger, Luka. Nathasha urges Kleshch and the others to have compassion to Anna because she comes close to death. Then, Pepel, Baron, and Luka involved in a conversation about despair. Luka states that all men are equal. Alyoshka enters then moans that the policeman, Medyakin just threw him out of the station because he is drunk. Vasilisa enters and tries to kick him out. Vasilisa goes over to the Pepel’s room. Bubnoff tells her that Pepel is not around. She asks Nastya about her sister, Natasha. Nastya says that she does not see her. Medviedeff enters and tells Bubnov that he had took Alyoshka to the station. Then he asks Bubnov about the gossip between Pepel and his niece, Vasilisa, but nobody explains it to him. Kvashnya enters and says she will marry Medvedev. Then noise and stifled cries are heard as Vasilisa beats Natasha. As the others move to intervene, Anna and Luka make acquaintance.
Act II

At evening in the same scene, Tatar, krivoi Zob, Baron, and Satin are playing cards and gambling. Luka is sitting beside Anna. He tries to comfort her while she moans about her misery life. In the card game, the players are cheating except Tatar. Tatar is angry and wants the fair game. Then he goes out with Krivoi Zob. When Actor tells Luka about his organism was poisoned by alcohol, Luka advises him to go to a place where he himself does not know the name and the location, to cure him. Pepel asks Medvedev about Nastasha’s condition, nevertheless, Medvedev does not give his attention on him because it is his family affair. Then Luka advises Pepel to run away to Siberia, a fine place. Pepel accuses what Luka says is a lie. Luka responds him that the truth will turn out to be an axe on his neck. Vasilisa enters and goes to Pepel’s room. There is something she wants to talk to Pepel, about love. Pepel makes clear that he does not love Vasilisa. Vasilisa tries to accept the truth and asks him to be with Natasha if Pepel can help her get rid of her husband, Kostylyov. Pepel refuses it. Kostylyov enters searching for his wife angrily. Pepel shouts to kick Kostylyov out from his room. Then Pepel takes him by the collar and start shaking him but it is interrupted by noise that Luka makes from his hiding place. Pepel lets Kostylyov go. Luka advises Pepel to keep away from Vasilisa and refuses to help her get away from her husband. He also urges him to go away with Natasha. Their conversation is interrupted by Anna’s death. Natasha enters and goes to Anna’s bed. She finds Anna has dead. The players enter and make callous comments about the dead body and death. Natasha gets angry and says that everybody must feel sorry for Anna.

Act III

Nastya tells the story of her lost love but Bubnov interrupts her because she always mentions her lover’s name differently. Luka points out that somebody has to be kind in this world. He tells a story about two thieves who tried to rob him. Bubnov argues that Luka is telling a lie. Kleshch jumps up and cries out his version of the truth; it is his terrible circumstance and he says that he hates everyone. Pepel enters and they continue the discussion about the truth. According
to Luka, the truth does not always cure a person’s ailments. He tells a story about a man who believed in a true-righteous land. Pepel declares his love to Natasha and asks her to leave with him. Luka advises Natasha to marry Pepel. Vasilisa has overhears the conversation. Kostylyov enters and gets angry to Natasha. Pepel defends her and goes out. Kostylyov and Luka are involved in a conversation which makes Kostylyov angry. He warns Luka to leave or he will call Medvedev, his uncle. Satin and Luka’s conversation is interrupted by Natasha’s crying. She is being brutally beaten by her sister. Actor gets out to find Pepel. Then a police whistle blows are heard. Tatar and Krivoi Zob enter, followed by Medvedev. Kvashnya and Nastya enter, taking Natasha between them. Pepel enters silently pushing everybody aside with strong vigorous movements, searching Natasha. Kostylyov orders Medvedev to catch Pepel. Pepel strikes Kostylyov. The striking kills Kostylyov.

**Act IV**

At night, Baron, Satin Nastya, Tatar, are discussing about Luka. Nastya says that Luka is a good man and she loves him though the others mock him. Tatar has the same opinion with Nastya then he talks about law. Actor says that he will leave to find a place where he can cure his organisms. Satin delivers monologues in which he appreciates Luka’s motive for his lies, but advocates that the truth is the god of the free man and the glory of man’s potential. Medvedev and Bubnov come in- both are slightly drunk. Kvashnya enters to find Menvedev. As Bubnov and Krivoi Zob sing a song about life as a prison, suddenly the door bursts open. Baron shouts from the doorway to tell them that Actor has hung himself.