

# MARXISM REPRESENTATION IN MANGA (JOHN FISKE SEMIOTICS ANALYSIS ABOUT MARXISM IN SHINGEKI NO KYOJIN MANGA)

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## Abstract

*This research is the study of Marxism Representation In Manga (John Fiske Semiotics Analysis About Marxism in Shingeki No Kyojin Manga). This study used a qualitative method with semiotic analysis of John Fiske. The purpose of this study was to dismantle Marxism that contained in Shingeki No Kyojin manga. This manga tells about struggle of humanity to deal with titan and also government that tortured people by the capitalist system. By the level of reality, Marxism in Shingeki No Kyojin manga represented by five types of code. The fifth code are clothing , behavior, speech, body gestures and expression. By the level of representation, Marxism in Shingeki No Kyojin manga represented by the image size, point of view, lighting and dialogue. Image size that are commonly used in this manga are Close Up, Medium Shot and Long Shot using Eye Level point of view. Dialog analysis is used to prove the character of Marxism through words. By the level of ideology, Marxism in Shingeki No Kyojin manga by class system, capitalism and Marxism-Communism. In the end, the result of Communism doesn't end well. Communism that has un-transparent system could create a certain ambition on the new king.*

**Keywords:** *Marxism, comics, manga, Shingeki No Kyojin, semiotics, John Fiske*

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## 1. Introduction

Comics are world famous light-book. On Japan, they named comics as *manga*. According to Poitras (2008 : 49), Manga are complex when compared to the US comic that dominated by superhero story. Printed on monochrome, manga featuring education and training, romance, action, humor, history, or even violent pornography themes.

*Manga* dialogue and illustration are more complex than American comics, it's seen by unusual panel images, details on the image to strengthen the story, variety of viewpoints, and integration of Japan and Latin script to add to the effect of the story. About two billion copies manga produced each year. Some manga even printed more than one million copies in every week. (Ashkenazi, 2002:34)

In the United States, the growth of the *manga* market is very impressive. A leading trade journals, ICv2 Guide to *Manga* at 2007 estimated that the market potential of *manga* in the American North at 2002 reached 60 million US dollars, and at 2006 growth reached 190-250 million US dollars, exceeded 5,000 copies printing. (Poitras 2008:49)

*Shingeki No Kyojin* is one among the many types of manga that represents some kind of ideology and propaganda in the story. Released at September 2009, *Shingeki No Kyojin* tells the struggle of human beings who are on the verge of extinction due to the threat of man-eating giant. Living inside the walls that protected mankind from the threat of giant, mankind began to feel the impact of the very isolated life.

Human settlements that limited, food shortages due limited land, conflicts between humanity as a result of the class system in the society, chaotic government systems, and the presence of a leader who is only concerned with its own interests and battle with the giants will be a major plot storyboard on *Shingeki NoKyojin manga*. Eren Jaeger as the main character will living his hard live with his two friends, Mikasa Ackerman and Armin Arlert until they are accepted as a member of the military division to deal directly with giants.

Researchers found *Shingeki No Kyojin* very interesting to study. While other manga competing to produce manga that tells the story of romance and adventure, *Shingeki No Kyojin* reveals the Marxism ideology, and attractively packaged to captivate readers with technology development in ancient time. Marxism on *Shingeki No Kyojin manga* could be analyzed using John Fiske semiotics which use ideology as a key third-level analysis.

## 2. Theories and Methods

### 2.1 Comics

Comics defined as illustrated stories in magazines, newspapers, or books, which are generally easy to understand and funny. The definition is true, but it becomes less precise sense especially for comics that featuring the seriously story. (Sobur, 2013: 137)

Will Eisner used the term sequential art. More specificall, according to Eisner comic is the arrangement of an image or images and words to narrate a story or dramatize an idea. (Eisner, 1985: 5)

Scott McCloud enhanced Will Eisner definition of comics as a pairing pictures and other picture deliberately sequentially, to convey information and produce an aesthetic response from readers. (McCloud 1994: 9)

In defining the comic, we also have to separate form and content. Comic is the form or medium of an artwork that holds ideas and images. Content of ideas and images will according to comics creators wishes and readers interpretation of comics content. (McCloud, 1994: 5)

### 2.1.1 Comics Structure

Generally, comics consists of panels, the image viewpoint, the size of the image in panel, text balloons, narrative box, typography, motion lines, and emanata .

Panel has an important role. Transition at the empty space between one panel to another panel is the reader imagination space. The transition is called the Gutter. There may be a difference in each reader 's imagination , the interpretation depends on the experiences of each individual .

There are five kinds of comics viewpoints. There are Bird Eye View, High Angle, Low Angle, Eye Level ( Eye View), and Frog Eye. Bird Eye View shows the standpoint of altitude and the environment widely, such as a portrait of the city that shows the contents of tall buildings, hustle and community activities. High Angle has a shooting angle of the top of an object or a character's head . Low Angle is the opposite of High Angle, Low Angle has a viewpoint with spotlight picture below eye level. Eye Level ( Eye View) is a normal picture angle and equal to reader eye view, it's giving an impression that the characters has the same height with the object. While Frog Eye has similarities with Low Angle but more extreme, causing the impression that the images taken from the ground.

The size of the image in panel enables comic artists in giving certain meaning to a scene in the comic. Size images in a comic panel include Close Up, Extreme Close Up, Medium Shot, Long Shot, and Extreme Long Shot. Close Up display images from the head to the shoulders. Extreme Close Up display images that are closer than Close Up, it's showing the eyebrows, eyes, nose, and mouth of characters. According Nataadjaja, Setyawan, and Limantara (2005: 154) Medium Shot provide more detail on humans image, because it's show parts of the body from the waist up, so it's reveal the details of whole body more clearly. This image typically presented how humans interact with other people in his life. Long Shot is captures the entire scene in a story while the Extreme Long Shot has a broader scope than Long Shot and exposing a part that are not exposed to the Long Shot.

### 2.2 Manga

Manga are Japan original comics . Printed on monochrome and featuring education and training , romance , action, humor, history, or even violent pornography themes. (Poitras 2008 : 49 )

### 2.3 Marxism

Marxism is Karl Marx philosophy about his protest against the capitalist system and oftenly associated with the class struggle. Karl Marx also expressed the opinion that the state is only a means of oppression the people residing in the lower social classes and the system can be set up by the bourgeoisie.

According to Hobden and Jones in Baylis and Smith (2001: 204) class or strata has an important role in the analysis of Marxism. Contrast with liberal who stated that there is a harmony in diverse social groups. Marxism stated that the community is prone to conflict of interests of the class. In the life of a capitalist, a major conflict occurred in the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The bourgeoisie are the ruling class that controls the economy of production systems, while the proletariat is a group of workers who are exploited by the bourgeoisie.







The essence of Marxism that made by Karl Marx is a revolution of the working class, to raise the proletariat to ruling class position. To win the democratic, the proletariat will use its political power to seize the capital from the hands of the bourgeoisie. (Marx & Engels, 1959: 26)


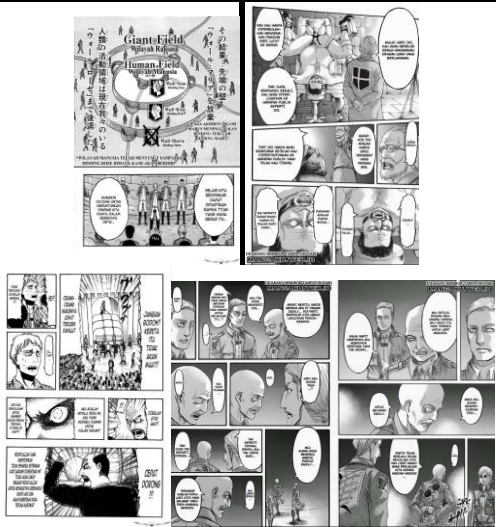
### 2.4 John Fiske Semiotics

<b>First</b>	<b>REALITY</b>
	In the written language, such as documents interview transcripts and so on . In a television, like behavior , makeup, clothing, speech, gestures and so on.
<b>Second</b>	<b>REPRESENTATION</b>
	In a written language such as words , propositions, phrases photos, captions , graphics, and so on . In the television, like camera, music, lighting and others . These elements are transmitted to the representational codes that incorporate whom described how objects (characters , narrative, setting, dialogue, and others)
<b>Third</b>	<b>IDEOLOGY</b>
	All the elements are organized in coherence and ideological codes, such as individualism, liberalism, socialism, patriarchy, race, class, materialism and so on.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1 Unit of Analysis

No.	Page Description	Display
1	Jean Kirstein tells his discomfort to stay in Wall Maria, the outer wall .	
2	Parents and children, Shigansina refugees farming day and night to supply the food needs of refugees and city society. While the Brigades Military Policeofficer who lives in the deepest walls sputter due lack of food supplies.	
3	Bertolt Hoover told himself as a coward by chasing the position of Military Police Brigades to enjoy the luxury and all privileges.	
4	Erwin Smith, Survey Corps leader invite Dot Pixis, Garrison leaders to overthrow the government in order to gain power.	
5	Dot Pixis say that the proletariat has a very small amount. Limited land, the high tax, the impropritylabor and the destruction of 20 % of the proletarian population residing in the outer wall would prevent the coup d' etat.	
6	Scenario by Erwin Smith and Dot Pixis to disseminate false news that Wall Rose had been pierced by a titan. The nobles advisor decided to close Sina gates so that refugees can not go in and let the human population has declined again.	
7	Dot Pixis said that if the nobility and the royal party only prioritize personal assets compared to the human population, the military will not take a blind dedication to support them.	

		
8	<p>The following pages reflect the ideology that builds Marxism. On the first and second pages, there is an image of walls that separate classes of society as well as the statement of the former royal party who deepens class differences. On the third page there is an image of capitalism and the fourth till fifth pages there is an image of communism action on interim government system.</p>	

### 3.2 Reality Level of Marxism on *Shingeki No Kyojin Manga*

Overallly the dress code, behavior, speech, body gestures, and expression represented the reality level of Marxism on *Shingeki No Kyojin manga*. Clothing is the most common codes for researchers to categorize and differentiate the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the *Shingeki No Kyojin manga*. Communities with innappropriate clothes identical with proletarian people and people who use the bourgeois luxury clothing will be related with bourgeois peoples. Behavior and manner of speaking can also categorize proletariat and the bourgeoisie in this *manga*, when Jean Kirstein showed polite behavior and ways of speaking that seemed messy, he will easily classified as a proletarian people. While bodily gestures and expressions useful for displaying character impressions of Marxism.

### 3.3 Representation of Marxism on *Manga Shingeki No Kyojin*

Image size, viewing angle, lighting and dialogue influence Marxism on *Shingeki No Kyojin manga*. Angle images that are commonly used in this *manga* are Close Up, Medium Shot and Long Shot using Eye Level standpoint that opinion leads the reader to feel the intimacy of the characters talks. Analysis of the dialogue between the characters is also necessary to know the sentence related to Marxism and its elements .

### 3.4 Ideological of Marxism on *Manga Shingeki No Kyojin*

Class systems are pictured by three walls that limited human life, namely Wall Maria, Rose Wall, and Wall Sina. On Wall Maria are where proletarian society life as farmers, factory workers and unskilled laborers. In Wall Rose there are also proletarian society who have jobs as farmers, unskilled laborers and small traders. While the Wall Sina which is the inner wall of a residence for the royal and nobility that has a higher power than the proletarian social classes. In Wall Sina which is the capital of the kingdom there is a center of government where the national government creates rules and legislation .

The facilities of the third wall are different from each other. The bourgeoisie who live in the inner wall would get a very luxurious facilities compared to the first and second walls. *Grundzatzte des Kommunismus* described by Marx and Engels (1959 : 26 ) on points 9, which stated "Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries; gradual abolition of all the distinction between town and country by a more equable distribution of the populace over the country".

On Capitalism ideology, which shows at analyze unit number 8. The trade monopoly in Wall Rose district monopolized by Rod Reiss. Capitalist system is forcing only one trader that could be survive. Traders who has more capital or strength in the eyes of the law will get a chance to survive as the sole ruler of trade. This is a reflection of capitalist society that contained in the Communist Manifesto written by Marx and Engels (1959: 18), that the capitalist system created by the bourgeoisie cause damage to the market system. Modern industrial change small workshops into a large factory in the industrial capitalist. Recruitment of workers massively and factory managed militarily. Small industries that owned by the people would go bankrupt due the lack of capital to revolutionize their business become a huge industry. In addition to a lack of capital, knowledge and expertise

factors to discover new ways of production has a big influence in the collapse of the middle and lower industry. A huge needs force middle down society into the proletariat.

Viewed from Marxism-Communism, Marxism in *Shingeki No Kyojin manga* initiated by the military division Survey Corps, commanded by Erwin Smith. Marxism is motivated by a class system which is very uneven and prioritize some party. In *Shingeki No Kyojin manga*, exclusivity is portrayed through the bourgeois class privilege in their daily life. Starting from the luxury that bourgeoisie get till high level of security when titan attack. In addition, the bourgeois parties which are on the side of government is also implementing a high income taxes in the middle of the crisis of the proletarian lives.

Utopian society or socialist society that communist party want to realized could be ineffective. The new leader that promoted after the transition government system will be controlled by the proletariat. In addition to the absence of a track record of leadership, the leader of the proletariat based also have the possibility to bring their personal ambitions in leadership. Revenge against the bourgeois who had tortured them during the period of capitalism is also potentially damaging to the leadership of the proletariat. He would choose to focus on torture bourgeoisie than to straighten out a new system of government.

Lack of transparency in the relationship between government and society in the communist system also has the potential to cause a gap for new leaders to take control of state property, take into the account that the private ownership of land will changed to government hands. Then corruption and focus on personal interests will happen again even likely worse than the capitalism era .

#### 4. Conclusion

1. By the level of reality, Marxism in *Shingeki No Kyojin manga* represented by five types of codes. The fifth codes are clothing, behavior, speech, bodily gestures, and expression. Generally, clothing that being used consists of slum proletariat clothes and fancy clothes that used bourgeoisie. Behavior and speech can be seen by the difference of proletarian and bourgeois society, judged by the decency and the tone of voice. Body gestures and facial expressions are used to see the public reaction of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the coup or Marxism ongoing action .
2. By the level of representation, Marxism in *Shingeki No Kyojin manga* represented by image size, viewing angle, lighting and dialogue. Angle images that are commonly used in this manga are Close Up, Medium Shot and Long Shot using Eye Level viewpoint that leads opinions of the reader to feel the intimacy of the characters dialogues. The dialogue analysis between the characters is also necessary to know the sentence related to Marxism and its elements .
3. By the level of ideology, Marxism in *Shingeki No Kyojin manga* represented by the code of system class, capitalism, and Marxism-Communism. Class system and capitalism is forming element of Marxism. Communism as the result of Marxism doesn't end well. Immaturity preparation of coup d' etat to guard transition government system doesn't always end perfectly and the classless socialist society that Marxisme want to realized couldn't happened. Untransparent system by communism could create a certain ambition on the new rulers .

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