

"TRAIN TO BUSAN" MOVIE: A REFLECTION OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS IN SOUTH KOREA



A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts in Korean Studies
Inter-Department of Korean Studies
GRADUATE SCHOOL
Chulalongkorn University
Academic Year 2019
Copyright of Chulalongkorn University

ภาพยนตร์เรื่อง “TRAIN TO BUSAN”: การสะท้อนปัญหาสังคมในเกาหลีใต้



วิทยานิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต

สาขาวิชาเกาหลีศึกษา สหสาขาวิชาเกาหลีศึกษา

บัณฑิตวิทยาลัย จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

ปีการศึกษา 2562

ลิขสิทธิ์ของจุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย

Thesis Title "TRAIN TO BUSAN" MOVIE: A REFLECTION OF SOCIAL
PROBLEMS IN SOUTH KOREA
By Miss Souwaluck Sungnoi
Field of Study Korean Studies
Thesis Advisor Associate Professor DUANTEM KRISDATHANONT, Ph.D.

Accepted by the GRADUATE SCHOOL, Chulalongkorn University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Master of Arts

..... Dean of the GRADUATE SCHOOL
(Associate Professor Associate Professor THUMNOON
NHUJAK, Ph.D.)

THESIS COMMITTEE

..... Chairman
(Associate Professor Buddhagarn Rutchatorn, Ph.D.)

..... Thesis Advisor
(Associate Professor DUANTEM KRISDATHANONT, Ph.D.)

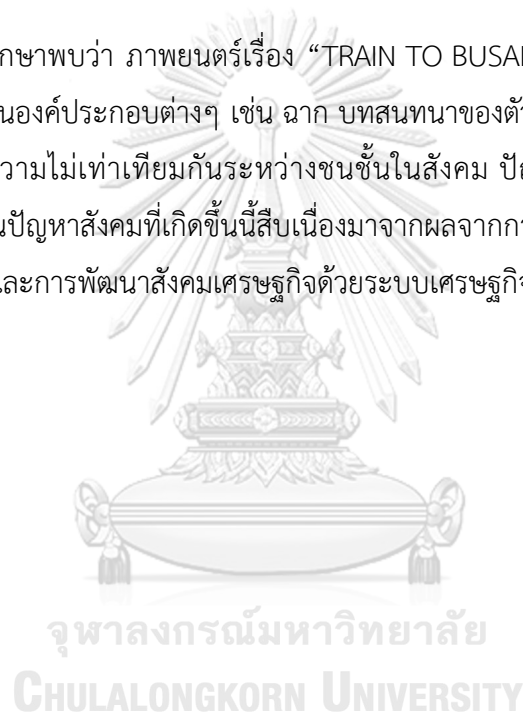
..... External Examiner
(Assistant Professor Wichian Intasi, Ph.D.)

CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY

เสาวลักษณ์ สังข์น้อย : ภาพยนตร์เรื่อง “TRAIN TO BUSAN”: การสะท้อนปัญหาสังคม
ในเกาหลีใต้. ("TRAIN TO BUSAN" MOVIE: A REFLECTION OF SOCIAL
PROBLEMS IN SOUTH KOREA) อ.ที่ปรึกษาหลัก : รศ. ดร.เดือนเต็ม กฤษดาธานนท์

งานวิจัยฉบับนี้มีจุดประสงค์เพื่อวิเคราะห์ภาพยนตร์เรื่อง “TRAIN TO BUSAN” และ
เป็นงานวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพ ผู้วิจัยได้วิเคราะห์ประเด็นปัญหาสังคมในเกาหลีใต้ที่สะท้อนผ่าน
องค์ประกอบต่างๆในภาพยนตร์ เช่น ฉาก บทสนทนาของตัวละคร โดยใช้ทฤษฎีสัญญาวิทยาของ
Roland Barthes

จากการศึกษาพบว่า ภาพยนตร์เรื่อง “TRAIN TO BUSAN” ได้สะท้อนให้เห็นถึงปัญหา
สังคมในเกาหลีใต้ผ่านองค์ประกอบต่างๆ เช่น ฉาก บทสนทนาของตัวละคร ประเด็นดังกล่าว ได้แก่
ปัญหาครอบครัว ความไม่เท่าเทียมกันระหว่างชนชั้นในสังคม ปัญหาสิ่งแวดล้อม และ ปัญหา
การเมือง ซึ่งประเด็นปัญหาสังคมที่เกิดขึ้นนี้สืบเนื่องมาจากผลจากการเปลี่ยนแปลงทางสังคมอย่าง
รวดเร็วในเกาหลีใต้และการพัฒนาสังคมเศรษฐกิจด้วยระบบเศรษฐกิจแบบทุนนิยม



สาขาวิชา เกาหลีศึกษา
ปีการศึกษา 2562

ลายมือชื่อนิสิต
ลายมือชื่อ อ.ที่ปรึกษาหลัก

6087526920 : MAJOR KOREAN STUDIES

KEYWORD: "Train to Busan" movie, Social problems, Capitalist economic system,
Semiology

Souwaluck Sungnoi : "TRAIN TO BUSAN" MOVIE: A REFLECTION OF SOCIAL
PROBLEMS IN SOUTH KOREA. Advisor: Assoc. Prof. DUANTEM
KRISDATHANONT, Ph.D.

The purpose of this research is to analyze a reflection of social problems in
"Train to Busan" movie. The study is a qualitative research that uses Roland
Barthes's semiology to analyze the social problems which are reflected in the movie
through elements such as scenes, dialogues of characters

The results from this study show that "Train to Busan" movie reflects the
social problems in contemporary South Korean society through scenes, dialogue of
characters. These problems are family problems, social class and inequality,
environmental problems and political problems. The problems which occur in South
Korea are a result of the rapid change in contemporary South Korea society and the
adoption of the capitalist economic system to develop South Korea's economic
system.

จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย
CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY

Field of Study: Korean Studies

Student's Signature

Academic Year: 2019

Advisor's Signature

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my profound appreciation and gratitude to my advisor, Associate Professor Duantem Krisdathanont, Ph.D. for all support during my thesis process. Her kindness, encouragement and precious suggestion inspired me to achieve this thesis. Moreover, I would like to express my appreciation to my thesis committee member Associate Professor Buddhagarn Rutchatorn, Ph.D., and Assistant Professor Wichian Intasi, Ph.D. who provide precious comments and suggestions.

Most of all, my thankfulness to my beloved family, mother, father and brother for all support. Besides, my gratefulness also go to Miss Nongluk Boonthiem, a Korean study program coordinator for her helpfulness and encouragement.

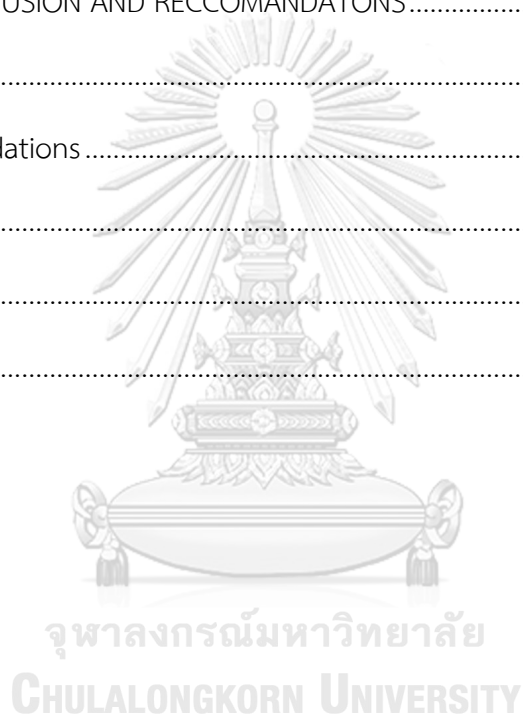
Souwaluck Sungnoi



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT (THAI).....	iii
ABSTRACT (ENGLISH).....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
LIST OF TABLES.....	viii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	ix
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Research Questions.....	5
1.3 Hypothesis.....	5
1.4 Objective of the Study.....	6
1.5 Significance.....	6
1.6 Scope of Study.....	6
1.7 Definitions.....	7
CHAPTER II CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW.....	8
2.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.....	8
2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	15
CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	37
3.1 Scope of the Study.....	37
3.2 Study Source.....	37
3.3 Sample Group.....	38

3.4 Information Gathering Tools	40
3.5 Information Analysis (Process of Study)	41
3.6 Information Presentation	41
CHAPTER IV ANALYSIS.....	42
4.1 Backgrounds and Plot Summary	42
4.2 The Analysis of social problems portrayed in “Train to Busan” movie	44
CHAPTER V CONCLUSION AND RECCOMANDATONS.....	82
5.1 Conclusion	82
5.2 Recommendations	87
5.3 Discussion.....	89
REFERENCES	91
VITA.....	97



LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1 Class and Class Distribution in South Korea	35
Table 2 The Details of “Train to Busan” movie	38
Table 3 Train to Busan’s background 1 (Korean name, Director, Producer, Writer, Cinematographer, Release Date, Run time, Genre, Language and Country).....	42
Table 4 Train to Busan’s background 2 (Cast and Role).....	43



LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1 The South Korean society in the capitalist economic system.....	46
Figure 2 The advertisements in the magazine reflected that the society is under capitalist economic system	47
Figure 3 The forgotten birthday present for the daughter	48
Figure 4 The absence in crucial moments of his daughter	49
Figure 5 Divorce rates according to number of married years in South Korea	51
Figure 6 Percentage of Korean females who never get married aged 30-34 in South Korea	54
Figure 7 Two senior sisters).....	56
Figure 8 When older sister passed away	56
Figure 9 South Korea's rapidly aging population (world's most aged country in 2050)	57
Figure 10 Total Fertility Rate (Birth Per Women) in South Korea, by Year.....	60
Figure 11 The mysterious fish death at Jinyang reservoir news	62
Figure 12 The people infected by the mysterious virus	65
Figure 13 The people infected by the mysterious virus	65
Figure 14 Blood stains on Seok-Woo's clothes and hands	67
Figure 15 The announcement of the government about.....	68
Figure 16 The video clip that showed the chaos in other areas.....	70
Figure 17 The information that the citizens received.....	70
Figure 18 The representation of the lower class.....	72
Figure 19 The homeless man was affronted by the upper-class people.	73

Figure 20 The sacrifice of the lower class to help others 75

Figure 21 The social responsibility of the working class 76

Figure 22 The representation of the upper class 78

Figure 23 The upper class exercising the power to control others 79

Figure 24 A girl and a pregnant woman survive and appear at the end of the cave. 80



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

South Korea has been devastated by Korean War and became the poorest country in the world during 1950's. After the war, South Korea was greatly revived owed to the efforts made by the Korean president then, Park Chung-hee, aiming specifically at improving the country's economy. Considered a remarkable leader, Park Chung-hee initiated capitalist economic system to make a drastic development to the country. During that period, the development of the capitalist economic system was managed and controlled by the Korean government in pursuance of those ambitions. South Korea transformed itself to an industrial society in a short time and marked a significant South Korea's economic development, the success of which became a phenomenon called "the Miracle on the Han River".

President Park Chung-hee's major priority remained economic development as seen from the Economic Planning Board (EPB) which drafted the five-year plans for Korea's economic development. The first and second development plans focused on light industries and export-led industrialization while the third and fourth development plans emphasized heavy industries and chemical sectors, which subsequently transformed South Korea into industrial society. (Kamon Butsaban, 2017) Globally perceived as a developed country, South Korea's leading industries are vehicle production, electronics, shipbuilding, steel, chemical and telecommunication, with

many large companies listed the top ranks in the world. Examples are Samsung Electronics, Hyundai Motor, Posco, etc. Not only Korea developed its economy rapidly and became a complete industrial society, it also rose the export earning that increased per capital income of Korean people. Apparently, capitalist economic system contributes to South Korea's economic development a great deal.

Capitalism came to Korea around the 18th Century during Yi dynasty period. The first period of Yi dynasty society adopted capitalist system in agriculture, craftsmanship industry, and commerce. In 1876, after Korea had established trade relationships with modern powers, the rapid growth of traditional Korea capitalist and economy became controlled by foreign capital, especially the Japanese. (Lee Sung-nyong, 1970)

Not unlike any other capitalist countries, South Korea achieved economic success at a great level, but the capitalist economic system gradually affected social structure and caused certain social problems in society. To illustrate, in the past, Korean people worked hard in agriculture, but when Korea was changed into industrial society those people must struggle to attain high status in the society. They sought to work for large companies so they could earn high salary and acceptance in the society. Korean society saw a rising number of middle class and social stratification. The rapidly development of Korea economic affects the changing of Korean society in other side. Certain social problems were found in Korean society as a result from the change in economic system. For example, modern lifestyle required people to devote a majority of their time for work and that deprived their time from their family. What tended to

follow were family problems such as divorce, child upbringing and cohabitation. Moreover, as Korea became industrialized country, it certainly caused lots of environmental problems.

There are some problems caused by large companies that affected Korea's people and the environment. The irresponsibility from those large companies had an impact on people's well-being. Recently, there was news in South Korea stating that "Samsung Electronics excusing for factory cancer cases". Samsung Electronics excused to workers who developed cancer after working at its semiconductor factories. Firm's co-president Kim Ki-nam said that "We sincerely excuse to the workers who suffered from illness and their families". (New Straits Times, 2018) These problems in South Korea society are important and it is interesting to study the social problems in South Korea society. Because these problems affect directly people's lives in society, and it is still not addressed. There are many situations or issues that occur in Korean society, most of which are perceived through the media.

In our society the media such as news, television, radio, movie and others play an important role by informing people of various events in daily life or keeping people updated with information around the world. Moreover, the media can help in entertaining and make people aware of the current situation in society. (Nity&Gaurav Singh, 2017) In media studies, movie is one type of the media that effectively reflects the society. According to Vikas Shah , movie is the reflection of society. The innovations of movie must pursue society, movies are stories that people want to tell something

to others by communicating through the movie. The stories are not necessarily current phenomenon, but they can portray where society has been before. Moreover, the stories mirror the culture, economy and various problems that are related and crucial to people in each society.

Social life or social problems can be learned through the media as the media can reflect the current views of the society on in a direct and indirect way. Movies are not only used in order to entertain people, but also serve as a tool to represent social problems in each society at that time. According to Kaul Vineet, the primary purpose of movie is entertainment, raises social awareness and consciousness. Moreover, the movies offer the interpretation of the issues in society.

“Train to Busan” features a story about a main character; the fund manager Seok-woo who is a divorced workaholic man and has not much time for his daughter, Soo-un. On her birthday, she wants to see her mother in Busan, so he offers to take her on the KTX train to see her mother. While the train departs, a girl is infected with the virus that was spreading rapidly. Seok-woo, Soo-an and the other passengers on the train must fight for their lives.

“Train to Busan” movie reflects the social problems in contemporary Korean society. When people in society encounter bad situation, they only think about themselves first and ignore to help other people around them, despite that they seem to have power that can help others. Besides, this movie reflects the inefficiency of Korean government when taking actions to address and control the situation.

Believed that it can reflect some social problems in contemporary Korean society, “Train to Busan” was chosen and used to study and analyze the aspects of the occurred social problems in this study. The semiology theory of Roland Barthes is used in order to analyze signs and interpret visual signs hidden or embedded in the movie. The theory of Roland Barthes focuses on the use of images. The interpretation of meanings of signs consist of two parts: Denotative meanings and Connotative meanings. Therefore, in this study, visual signs from “Train to Busan” will be examined in order to analyze the meanings of signs that reflect social problems in contemporary South Korean society.

1.2 Research Questions

1.2.1 How “Train to Busan” movie hide the signs that connect with South Korean society?

1.2.2 Based on “Train to Busan,” how does Capitalist economic system present the problems that affect the city life of human beings?

1.2.3 How were social problems in contemporary South Korean society presented through the movie “Train to Busan”?

1.3 Hypothesis

1.3.1 “Train to Busan” reflects the social problems in contemporary Korean society.

1.3.2 The social problems in “Train to Busan” were presented through elements of film.

1.3.3 “Train to Busan” reflects social problems in contemporary South Korean society such as family problem, environmental problem, political problem and social class or inequality caused by capitalist economic system.

1.4 Objective of the Study

To study and analyze signs in the film “Train to Busan,” which reflect social problems.

1.5 Significance

1.5.1 To find out the social problems in contemporary Korean society.

1.5.2 To understand the effects of capitalist economic system in contemporary Korean society.



1.6 Scope of Study

“Train to Busan” was chosen in order to study and analyze the aspects of social problems that are believed to occur in contemporary South Korean society. In the study, the analysis of visual sign is the object of study. Also, the semiology theory of Roland Barthes is used in this study in order to facilitate the interpretation of the visual signs, which leads to the understanding of underlying meanings.

1.7 Definitions

1.7.1 Sign: A sign is something such as image, word, people, situation and so on which stands for somethings else in some meaningful way. In this study, the focus is on visual signs from “Train to Busan” movie in order to analyze and comprehend those meanings.

1.7.2 Capitalist economic system: The economic system adopted in South Korea that influences people’s lives and portrays dark side in South Korean society.

1.7.3 Social Problems: The various problematic situations that affect a large number of people in contemporary South Korean society.

1.7.4 Elements of film: In this study, elements of film are centered on the visual signs in the scenes, and dialogue of characters. These elements are important as they communicate with viewers and they are tools to reflect social problems in contemporary South Korean society.



Agreement

“Train to Busan” was Korean movie released in July 2016 which was directed by Yeon Sang-ho. In this study, the researcher selected “Train to Busan” movie from Netflix which is an electronic resource in order to use it as a source in analysis.

CHAPTER II

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is the study of Semiology and capitalist economic system is conducted under the related concepts as follows:

2.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1.1 Semiology Theory

In this research, the semiology theory is explored and used to analyze signs and interpret hidden visual signs in the movie “Train to Busan”. With the semiology as an analytical tool for media studies, this study will focus on the visual signs in the movie upon which the analysis is based. It is expected that when the signs can be interpreted, the deeper meanings which point to contemporary South Korea’s social problems will be revealed.



2.1.2 Defining Semiology

Semiology is the study of ‘signs’ that the prefix “*sem*” is the word comes from the Greek, meaning ‘sign,’ and the suffix *-ology* demonstrates a relational principle and order to explain a phenomenon. In the field of media studies, semiology is profitable for studying the process of media communication, in which the information passes from one person to another. (Paul Long and Tim Wall, 2009)

In Yoshiko Okuyama's view, "semiotics is the study about system of signs to find out how symbolic meanings are created through the using of words, notions, pictures and other elements. He defines a sign as something that mean for something else in some meaningful way. The sign consists of a signifier, which is expressed in a physical form, and signified is a meaning of the signifier, which represents a material or conceptual thing". In addition, Okuyama explains semiotics that it is a tool that helps people to see what is not so obvious and recognize what is crucial yet inconspicuous. (Yoshiko Okuyama, 2015)

Tony Schirato and Jen Webb explain that the "semiotics" is an analytical method and a research methodology that inspects the using of what are called signs in society. A sign is a basic unit of communication and it is something that has some meaning for someone. It is important to recognize that a sign can connote different meanings, not always restricting only to one thing. (Tony Schirato and Jen Webb, 2004)

Semiotics and semiology are used interchangeably and have the same meaning, which refers to the study of signs. As for 'semiology' originates from the recommendation of Ferdinand de Saussure whereas Charles Sanders Peirce called his work 'semiotics' (Paul Long and Tim Wall, 2009), the term of which is preferred by many writers.

Semiotics became a theoretical framework developed by Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) and Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914). Both of them regard the sign as central component of their studies. The differences of their studies are that the

work of Saussure focused on a linguistic study. He concentrates on writing and speaking language, in order to explain how words are used as signs. He further explains that signs could consist of two aspects: signifier and signified. The signifier means to the physical properties or aspects of sign that led them to understand in some way. And the signified is the conceptual aspect of the sign that is the idea created by our perception of the signifier. (Paul Long and Tim Wall, 2009) In Charles Sanders Peirce's study, a sign has certain meanings to someone and stands for something in his or her mind. According to Peirce, signs consist of icon, index and symbol. In Saussure's work index signs are not focused, but his work is rather concerned with words, which are referred to as symbolic signs. (David Crow, 2016)

The semiologist's idea, a sign must consist of 2 parts; The signifier and the signified. The signifier is the form which the sign takes and the signified is the concept it represents. Meanings can be perceived through individuals' interpretation and creation of signs. According to Charles Sanders Peirce, signs take form of images, word, sound, acts or object, but such things have no intrinsic meaning. They become a sign when we give them with meaning. Moreover, he stated that "Anything can be a sign as long as someone interprets it as 'signifying' something - referring to or standing for something other than itself. (Daniel Chandler, 2017) According to Saussure, a sign is the results from the association between the signifier and the signified and the relationship between the signifier and signified is referred to as "Signification" (Daniel Chandler, 2017)

2.1.3 Types of Meaning

Roland Barthes (1915-1980) was a French literary critic and theorist whose approach to semiology has been applied to mass media and everyday culture. (Paul Long and Tim Wall, 2009) Barthes developed Saussure's concept to consider the part played by readers in the exchange between themselves and the content. In Barthes' view, semiology is the study of sign that is not only restricted to the construction of word, but also extends to other things that can be signs that refer to meaning more than itself. For the semiotic meanings, Barthes described complex associations of signs that are embedded in entertainment, ritual and social conventions. Though these components may not be adequately described as language system, they serve as system of signification. (David Crow, 2016) Barthes pointed out that the signification has two different levels: denotation and connotation. For instance, a photograph of child represents a child that is the first level of signification, the denotation. It refers to the physical reality of the object. The second level of signification was called connotation. When the image of child is presented through the different film, lighting or framing, the perspective in which we interpret such image will change. Barthes pointed out that the reader is playing a part in this process by applying Knowledge of the systematic coding of the image. The meaning of image is, therefore, constituted by the background of the viewer. (David Crow, 2016)

Daniel Chandler stated that in semiotics, Denotation and Connotation are terms describing the relationships between the signifier and its signified. In terms of Saussure's study of linguistic signs, the denotative meaning is what the dictionary attempts to provide. But for the art historian Erwin Panofsky, the denotation of a representational visual image is what viewers from any culture and at any time would recognize the image as being depicted. On the other hand, connotation is used to refer to the socio-cultural and 'personal' associations (ideological, emotional etc.) of the sign. (Daniel Chandler, 2017)

Roland Barthes is a semiotician who studied semiotics in the aspect of signification and describes "The order of signification" in his book: "Introduction of Communication Studies." John Fiske explains Roland Barthes's concept that the order of signification consists of two parts: Denotation and Connotation, and these orders of signification are the way in which denotation and connotation are central to the way we read or interpret signs. Roland Barthes refers to the first order of signification as denotation; the one which is studied by Saussure. It describes the relationship between the signifier and signified within sign. Denotation describes as the definition literal, obvious or common sense meaning of a sign. Connotation occurs when sign meets the feelings or emotions of the user and the values of culture and when meanings move towards the subjective or intersubjective. (John Fiske, 1990) For instance, the interpretation of photographs. Roland Barthes explains that, in photography, the difference between denotation and connotation is clear. Denotation is the mechanical

reproduction on film of the object to which the camera pointed. And connotation is the human part of the process; it is the selection of what is included in the frame such as focus, aperture, camera angle, quality of film and etc. Denotation is what is photographed whereas connotation is how it is photographed. (Jonh Frick, 1990)

2.1.4 Semiology and Media

The vital roles of media are not only giving the real information or situation in everyday life such as news, but also reflect the social, cultural, political phenomena and any other aspects which occur in every society. More often than not, the media do not adequately represent what the reality, but for the audience to fully grasp the messages conveyed, it is highly crucial to analyze the components constructed in media. As a widely or globally used type of media, movies are chosen to serve as a tool to represent social issues. Movies communicate with the audience by telling them stories, the process of which carries numerous hidden signs, which contain deeper meanings. In other words, we can interpret a story in the movie deeply and understand what is real meaning that movie want to tell us.

In this study, the semiology theory of Roland Barthes will be applied to analyze the movie “Train to Busan” focusing on images as major objects in order to analyze and interpret meanings of those images. The first level of meaning is what is seen in the image that Barthes called it denotative meaning. The second level of meaning is the meaning of image that is associated with society and culture, and this meaning

depends on perspective of the readers. Barthes called it connotative meaning. In “Train to Busan” the images will be analyzed and the signs will be deciphered and interpreted in relation to and in the context of contemporary South Korean society.

Moreover, the capitalist economic system, which causes different social problems in contemporary South Korean society, is depicted by images, scenes, characters and dialogue in the movie.

Capitalist economic system develops and advances many countries, and it is obvious that through capitalist economic system countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Ireland, Singapore, Japan, and others progress rapidly. The advantage of the capitalist economic system is the economic growth of the country can be boosted while improving other aspects of the country whether they be foreign trade, high per capita income, the efficient development of technology and industry. On the other hand, capitalist economic system has certain disadvantages that affect the society and become social issues. In other words, capitalist economic system influences social structure. In explaining how capitalism influences social structure and leads to social issues, Daniel Murdock, reasons that the competition is vital for capitalism as it encourages innovation and economic growth. The capitalism also provides many societal benefits such as increased prosperity and improved living standards, despite the inequality of benefit distribution. There are many countries that have experience in capitalist economic systems with a great deal of social and economic inequality. Capitalism also impacts social structure in many ways. For

example, the competition in the labor market encourages workers to move to areas that have more employment opportunities and more rewarding jobs, hence, the relocation of population, migration, and urbanization. Moreover, capitalist societies that have high levels of inequality can also lead to increased residential differentiation and also, inevitably, wider gap of social classes. (Daniel Murdock, 2003-2019)

2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.2.1 Capitalist Economic System

Capitalism is an economic system in which capital goods are owned by private individuals or businesses. The production of goods and services is based on supply and demand in the general market rather than through central planning. (Jim Chappelow, 2019). The capitalism is an economic system characterized by private ownership of production, especially in the industrial sector. Thus, in many advanced countries the capitalist system is used to develop country's economy because it provides advantages particularly to the economic system; more efficient, less bureaucratic and more innovative. On the other hand, there are certain problems that occur as a result of capitalist system, which leads to social problems and affects people's lives. According to Tejvan Pettinger, stated that the problems of a capitalist economic system comprise of three aspects: inequality, monopoly and environmental problems. In terms of inequality, the capitalist economic system brings about inequalities of income and wealth; on the other hand, this inequality provides

economic growth. In part of monopoly, the capitalist economic system provides corporation could gain monopoly power over consumers and workers. Although, the capitalist economic system takes the decision to maximize economic income in the short term, the effect environmental problems take in the long term.

South Korea is one of the countries in East Asia, where the capitalist system is adopted and practiced to drive the country's economy. From the period of Yi dynasty, the beginning of the eighteen-century, capitalism rises in Korean peninsula. During Yi dynasty, capitalism began to manifest in forms of agriculture, manual industry, and commerce. In 1876, after Korea has established trade relationships with the modern powers, the rapid growth of traditional capitalism and Korean economy was gradually controlled by the foreign Japanese capitals. After that, Korea was annexed by Japan. Korea was dominated by the Japanese colonialization and Japanese capital totally took control of Korea's economy. Though the Second World War came to its end and Korea became independent from the colonialization, the independence was only political, not economic. (Lee Sung-nyong, 1970)

The economic system of Korea during Yi dynasty was strictly controlled by the government, especially in commerce and industry. At the beginning of Yi period, manual industry and private commerce were not outstandingly successful, up until the middle of Yi dynasty. Korea's economy dramatically changed in the second half of the dynasty; the system of commerce and government manual industry collapsed and the influences of civilian commerce and manual industry gained a stronger power.

In other words, the old economic system of Korea slowly disappeared while capitalist economic system began to be fully embraced. (Lee Sung-nyong, 1970)

After the end of dynasty, it seems that the capitalist system of Korea has made great process after the opening of ports in 1879. At the end of the nineteenth century, there were some merchants who played an important part in foreign trade. In of the realm of industry, modern machines were imported and new companies were set up. In 1909, there were new factories where power-driven machines were installed. That expedited the process of developing the economy of the country during that time. Moreover, the government took part to modernize the industry by installing special offices, and introducing measures for industrial promotion for machines, textile goods, paper, mining, tobacco, wine, food, and silk. Furthermore, Korean economy progressed via contact with advanced capitalist economies, which helped Korean government and the economy to grow quickly toward the independent establishment of capitalist economic system. (Lee Sung-nyong, 1970) The capitalist economic system has influenced Korea for a long time, from the period of the Yi dynasty, and has continued to be the current Korean economic system.

2.2.2 Capitalist Economic System in South Korea

During 1950-1953 South Korea was devastated by the Korean war, the effects the war cause South Korea becomes one of the poorest countries in the world in 1950s. (Uk Heo and Terence Roehrig, 2010) In 1956, after the Korean War, South Korea

economy began to recover gradually with the aids of America. (Lee Sung-nyong, 1970)

South Korea gradually changed its industrial structure and attempted to transform itself from a poor agricultural country into a global leader in advanced industries. South Korea decided to achieve rapid development of the country by emphasizing heavy and chemical industries such as shipbuilding, electronics, steel, machinery and petrochemicals. As a result, South Korea became a developed country in a short time. (Hwy-Chang Moon, 2016) Korean government was ambitious to implement the economic development plans to drive the country. Within 50 years, South Korea was able to develop its industrial structure, transform itself from a poorest country into a global leading country.

The Korean government played a vital role to bring about the successful economy. During 1960s, under the administration of President Park Chung-hee, the government created the Economic Planning Board (EPB) which drafted five-year plans, and the first plan in 1962 consisted of two crucial principles: 1) Republic of Korea needs to develop towards the industrialization, with capitalism as the tenet of achieving this goal, 2) South Korea's economic system target in the final stage is the industrialization. (Pisish Kuntatip, 1994) To elaborate, the plan in 1962 focused on light commodity industry including the manufacture of textiles, wigs, shoes and clothes. And the second development plan focused on export-led industrialization by cultivating its chemical, iron and steel and machine industries and adoption of new technology. In 1970s, South Korea's third development plan aimed to promote heavy and chemical sectors such

as iron and steel, machine, electronics, shipbuilding and petrochemical industries while upgrading its industrial bases. (Kamon Butsaban, 2009) Moreover, the Korean government concentrated on private sector and large business groups that have close relationship with the government, which were called Chaebol. The important Chaebols were Samsung, Hyundai, Daewoo, and Lucky Gold Star. The government would support these large corporations by giving low-price credits and financial support to decrease the production cost when they achieved the export goal set. At that time, the per capita gross nation income (GNI) share of economic growth rose from \$85 in 1961 to \$1,709 in 1979. (Youna Kim, 2017) And real gross national product growth was around 10% per year until 1979. (Donald Stone Macdonald, 1998). Park's period showed South Korea's economic success and it became the phenomenal success called "the Miracle on the Han River."

South Korea became an advanced industrial country since 1990s as the Korean government still accelerated open-door policies in various areas for industrial development. In 1992, South Korea's capital markets were first opened to foreigners. In 1995, South Korea joined the World Trade Organization (WTO), and joined the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in following year. Although during 1997 South Korea encountered with the Asian Financial Crisis, it can manage and overcome the financial crisis and maintain strong economic growth up till this day. Nowadays, South Korea is one of the G20 countries leading the global economy. (Hwy-Chang Moon, 2016)

The rapid development of South Korea indicated that the Korean government have an important role and duty leads countries achieve economic development and become an advanced country. According to Kamon Butsabab, the success of economic plan depended on the high command by the government that signified and trusted in the guidelines given, motivating the people and private sectors to have faith in its determination and cooperate with the government with full consent.(Kamon Butsabab, 2009)

Although South Korea is successful in developing its nation, it becomes inevitable for the country to encounter the social changes resulted from the transformation from a poor agricultural country into a leader in multiple industrialized country. South Korean people are exposed to some social problems caused by capitalist economic system. Therefore, changing in people's lives is unavoidable and it becomes a part of social problems in Korean society. It is perceivable that the capitalist economic system does not always give benefits for the adopting countries, but there are adverse effects that the society has to endure. Quite often, those adverse effects transmute themselves into the social problems such as deteriorated environment, social inequality, family problems and so on.

Although movies are perceived as a form of entertainment for the audience, they capture stories that can reflect many social problems in the society. "Train to Busan" is one of the Korean movies that incorporates social issues such as family, environment, political, and inequality and these problems are considered the themes

of the movie. The beginning of the movie points out a chemical leak from the biotech industry which becomes a source of a virus that kills many people and causes chaos in the capital city of South Korea. "Train to Busan" allows the audience to explore the chaos or social problems that occur in contemporary Korean society, which are the results from the capitalist economic system.

2.2.3 The Effects of Capitalist System on Korean Society

According to Kyong Ju Kim, South Korea's rapid process of industrialization caused complex social changes. The reaction of Korean people to these changes can be explored in many ways; people are in search of security as well as opportunities for social mobility. Moreover, the economic growth has become a powerful social and cultural force that reform almost every aspect of South Korean society. (Kyong Ju Kim, 2006) During the 1960-1980s, the economic development plan contributed to the high rate of economic growth. The exports grew from \$30 million in 1960 to \$30 billion in 1985 and the per capita clearly showed the economic growth increase. (Donald Stone Macdonald, 1998) On the other hand, the rapid economic growth is not suggesting that there are only the bright side, but it also causes many problems occurred in Korean society.

There are economic and social problems that are caused by rapid economic growth. According to Lee Sung-nyong, the high rate of economic growth during 1960s

gave rise to problems. Examples can be the problem about the tendency of high consumption, the widening gap of the balance in trade, the emergence of incompetent enterprises, and the widening of gap between the rich and the poor of urban and rural communities. He further explains that the gap between the rich and the poor, between urban and rural area, is the result of the increase rate of wages and capital income in manufacturing industry, that is not only greater than wages and fees in agricultural area but also larger. Thus, the difference of income and consumption of the urban workers and the rural workers is becoming much more prominent. For instance, in 1968, the income and consumption of urban workers were ₩36,956 and ₩34,016, while those of rural workers were ₩16,860 and ₩15,349, respectively. (Lee Sung-nyong, 1970) This disparity became the social problems found in South Korea society in the past until now. Gradually, this difference of income and wages between urban and rural area leads to the inequality and social classes in the society. According to Kim Kyong Dong, the rapid industrialization changes social structures, cultural characteristics and human relationships. Korean people continually sought large-scale economic growth, the society became more commercialized, the people became more interested in individual and entrepreneurial benefits than human relations. (Kim Kyong Dong, 1986)

South Korea became an industrialized country driven by the Korean government, shifted from a predominantly rural, underdeveloped agricultural economy to capitalist, industrialization, high-income economy with highly developed heavy industry and manpower planning. (Kim H. and Sorensen C., 2011) Although South

Korea has rapidly transformed to capitalist industrialization, the capitalist economic system leads to some social problems in the society. According to Denny Roy, South Korea is encountering problems after became an industrial societies, such as a gap between the rich and the poor, social polarization, social welfare issue, and environmental degradation. (Denny Roy, 2019) Also, family problems and political problems become more dominant and severe in contemporary Korean society.

2.2.4 Major Problems in Contemporary Korean Society

2.2.4.1 Family Problems

South Korea has been encountering with modern problems such as late marriage, aging society, the increasing number of single-person households, and rising statistics of divorce. These problems can be traced to the economic development and the rapid social changes that affect Korean families. During 2003, announced by National Statistics Office, South Korea had become “a nation in crisis” because the fertility rate had declined to as low as 1.17 children per a female citizen. (Youna Kim, 2017) It is common that news report continued to inform Korean people that people in the new generation do not want to get married and thus leading to low childbirth in each family. The reason that can explain this situation is the changing Korean attitude as Norimitsu Onishi, stated that the rapid social changes affect Korean attitude toward family issue such as divorce, childbearing and cohabitation. These issues indicated that South Korea is stepping closer to become similar to Westernized society.

In modern South Korean society, divorce is one of the important social issues and there are many reasons that people consider to live separately from each other. Joseph Shin stated that during 1980s and 1990s, the main reason for divorce was husband's domestic violence, but in 2010 onward, it has changed to discords between spouse, like 'difference in personality' (Joseph Shin, 2016) According to the Korea Legal Aid Center for Family Relations, the analysis of the statistics of divorce in each decade showed different reasons. For example, during 1970s, the reason of divorce is conflict between husband and wife (21.8%) and the percentage increased for 5.4 percent in the previous two decades. In the 1980s, the major reason for divorce was that wives neglected husbands (35.2%) and in the 1990s the main reason was spouse's mistreatment (33.5%) Changing awareness among women the 1990s, divorce was used as an option to escape abusive situation. Especially, in the 2000s the percentage of spouse's mistreatment was still further increased. Later, due to the financial crisis, women became more economically active and gained more authoritative position in family. Recently, in the 2000s and 2010s, the reasons for divorce became more difficult to prove; the reasons were described broadly such as lost affection, lack of communication and difference in characteristics. (Joseph Shin, 2016)

Nowadays, Korean people seemingly consider their work more important than any other aspects of life. Moreover, as the result of the capitalist economy that created a culture of hard work, long hours, and dedication to one's job, South Korea has gone through a remarkable transformation over the last 50 years, from developing country

to one of the world's biggest economies. (Simon Maybin, 2018) Therefore, it became inevitable for South Korean society to encounter family issues such as rising divorce, late marriage, low fertility. These problems will be discussed thoroughly in the subsequent section, using “Train to Busan” as the reflection of these problematic issues.

2.2.4.2 Environmental Problems

Five-Year Economic Development plan was implemented to develop the country during the 1960s when poverty and unemployment were most pressing national issues. In response to that, the Korean government assertively supported growth-oriented economic policies through the introduction of foreign capital. In the 1970s, the Korean government shifted the focus of its economic development policy and began to establish industrial complexes which fostered heavy and chemical industries. While the Korean people's standard of living improved greatly, economic success also entailed costs. Rapid industrialization, urbanization and increasing consumption has inevitably given rise to environmental pollution on a scale unprecedented in South Korea. (Kim Hyung Yoon, 1998)

Kim Yung kwon stated that South Korea rapid economic growth, with its concomitant industrialization and urbanization, has had harmful effects on the environment, especially, in the cities, rivers, and coastal waters. The Han River is a vital river of the capital city, but it has been polluted by Seoul's seven million population,

who released 1.5 million tons of municipal sewage into the river each day. Another environmental problem caused by Korea's modernization is air pollution. In capital of city, Seoul, records indicate that the incidence of respiratory diseases is six times higher for city dwellers than for rural inhabitants although pollution levels have tended to be significantly lower in the residential areas than in industrial areas. (Kim Yung kwon, 1978)

South Korea remains an environmentally unsustainable growth-first and car-first society. Environmental policies are currently insufficient to protect the environment or preserve the sustainability of resources. Environmental problems are very serious, particularly with regard to air quality. In 2016 Yale Environmental Performance Index, Korea was ranked 80th out of 180 countries overall, falling to just 173rd place in term of air quality. The level of atmospheric PM2.5 – tiny air-pollutant particles small enough to penetrate deep into the respiratory system and can cause a variety of illnesses such as cancer. In 2017, there had been 85 fine dust warnings in Korea, more than twice the number of the previous year. While some of this pollution originates in China, most is homegrown, with source including vehicle emissions, industrial sited and power plants. (Thomas Kalinowski and Sang-yong Rhyu, 2018)

David Goldblatt, stated that environmental problems that people experience are regarded as injustices or as disturbances of life support activities. The environmental injustices appear as an economic damage, a demographic change, a health problem and much more. South Korea's turning to heavy-chemical industries

has led to more environmental pollution as Jungjun Lee, noted that due to the economic plans, labour intensive light industries have been deployed in cities since the early 1960s; and since the 1970s, capital-technology intensive heavy-chemical industries have been established in the newly developed coastal areas or near cities. The production of heavy-chemical industries such as steel, petrochemicals, machinery, shipbuilding and electronics has been prevalent in the Korean economy and these industries discharge more pollutants, use more energy and deepen more environmental pollution than other industries do. (Jungjun Lee, 1994)

Since 2000, South Korea witnessed the irresponsible actions of various corporations as a result of industrialization and those actions affect people's lives and the environment.

For instance, in October 2012, there was a news report stating "South Korea has designated an area around a plant where an explosion led to a toxic chemical leak a special disaster zone." (BBC NEWS, 2012) The explosion and leak occurred when workers unloaded acid from a tanker. The leak of acid made withered plants and trees in some areas and also affected livestock. Hydrofluoric acid is corrosive and can cause burns to the eyes and skin. It can also irritate the respiratory system and is very toxic if swallowed. The explosion has five people died and since then some 3,000 residents have attempted treatment for nausea and other ailments. The government began a formal investigation when many residents reported having been affected by the blast. They designated the area a "special disaster zone". This was not the first

industrial accident of this magnitude that has taken place in Gumi. But in 1991, a factory storage tank leaked phenol into the local water supply. The water was then consumed in households nearby, causing thousands to become seriously ill. Another example that reveals the irresponsibility of major corporations and how they cause health issues among people who work in factories that they develop cancer and even fatality. For instance, in November 2018, a news report stated that “Samsung Electronics apologized to workers who developed cancer after working at some of its factories, finally ending a decade-long dispute at the world's top chipmaker.” (BANGKOKPOST, 2018)

Samsung Electronics is the world's biggest mobile phone manufacturer and chipmaker and the flagship subsidiary of the Samsung Group, by far the biggest of the family-controlled conglomerates that dominate the South's economy. At the present time, Samsung operates huge semiconductor production compounds in Suwon as well as the cities of Hwaseong and Pyeongtaek in the south of Seoul. In 2007, the scandal emerged when former workers at its semiconductor in Suwon, south of Seoul, and their families said that staff had been diagnosed or died of various forms of cancer. Campaign groups reported that about 240 people have suffered from work-related illness after being employed at Samsung semiconductor and around 80 of them are young women.

The cancer scandal of Samsung is one of the worst instances of industrial harm in the South, where safety standards sometimes belie its advanced technological

status. It can be seen that people are exposed to chemical hazards related to the industry and the ecosystem or the environment are greatly impacted by the harmful problems which occur in industrial areas. It is undeniable that the rapid economic growth and industrialization in South Korea pose a serious situation of environmental degradation and people's health and well-being.

2.2.4.3 Political Problems

Since the end of the Korean War, the Korean government has played an important role in driving the economy's country to an industrialized country. The Korean government supports business groups in the country like Chaebol. However, behind the relationship between Chaebol and the Korean government, this is a suspicion of unethical act such as corruption given the situation that they both benefit each other. The corruption problem in South Korea society may begin long time ago. According to Chang Yun-Shik, corruption problem in Korean society is a phenomenon deeply embedded in Korea social norms, based on a personalistic ethic and the obligatory exchange of favors derived from interpersonal relationship. Korean people believed in a complex web of loyalty to a person or a group of people. Corruption has been prevalent at all levels of public official, institutions and individual groupings making up the patronage networks. The corruption cases in South Korea reveal that it is not an insignificant phenomenon, but an endemic social problem that is even institutionalized. The corruption found in Korean history can stem from factors such as

the long monarchical rule, the vestiges of Japanese colonial rule, the past military regimes' relentless pursuit of economic growth, and the manipulated application of Confucian principles. (Kyong Ju Kim, 2006)

South Korean society has continually faced corruption issues between the government and group business. The Korean state was never autonomous; business with its corrupt ties, in form of bribery, cronyism, rent-seeking, nepotism, political funding – with the state always having made inroads, influenced state policy and obtained vital finance, policy loans, bank credit with little or no collateral and at low interest rates among other government privileges. (Hee-Yeon Cho, 2013) In 2016, South Korea saw the massive corruption scandal involving its politics and business. The corruption involved with relationship between former president Park Geun-hye and her friend Choi Soon-sil. This scandal, which spread through South Korean society, generated huge protests and brought down the first female president. This case clearly indicates the patronage relation in Korean society. It was found that president Park Geun-hye has close relationship with Choi Soon-sil and she was impeached for illegal attempt to access the government secret information. And she has influence political decision and government policy. Moreover, through personal relationship, Choi Soon-sil intervenes the government administration and many of large business groups get the benefit from this relation.

Inefficiency of government's administration became a serious political issue in South Korea in this recent decade. In 2015, during President Park Geun Hye's

administration, the spread of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) or so call “Virus MERS” in south Korean. The breakout of MERs affect Korean people, 186 have been infected and 36 have died. Therefore, Korean people during that time worries about the spread of virus. While Korean government warned Korean people not to panic about the situation. However, a number of infected people increased. The government of President Park Geun-hye was accused of not doing enough to contain the outbreak and of endangering the public by withholding information about it (Choe Sang-hun, 2015) From the scandal that occurred with president Park Geun Hye cause the large rallies, which resulted in the impeachment of President Park Geun Hye and was held continuously for five months started from October 29, 2016. This rally is one of the vital protests in South Korea that is different from the previous ones because this rally is free of violence, and Korean people gather peacefully to request President Park Geun Hye to step down by using the LED light as a symbol in the rally. Therefore, this rally was called “the candlelight rallies” in South Korea. (Park Tae Gyun, 2016)

From the situation and chaos that occurred during Park Geun Hye’s government, Yeon Sang-Ho, the director of “Train to Busan” (2016), was inspired to present his work which is related to the outbreak of virus MERS in 2015 and the Korean government’s inefficiency to control situation. When he was interviewed, he stated: “That’s the world we live in right now. We are deluged with information, much of which conflicts itself. Also, the government is portrayed sardonically in the film

because the Korean government has yet to properly handle a major disaster.” (Jang Sung Ran, 2016)

2.2.4.4 Social Class and Inequality in Society

The capitalist economic system has a huge impact on people’s lives in Korean society, leading to other important issues such as social class, social inequality. Although the economic success is rapidly achieved, there are other social changes, for examples, an increasing competition among people in society, differences in education, work position, income, and livelihood. The Korean government’s policy is believed to be a cause of social inequality because during the economic boom from 1986-1988, with low oil prices, low interest rates, and low dollar exchange rates, the Korean government shifted to open-door policies, with the liberalization of imports and overseas travel started in 1989. The economy expanded, economic structure advanced, employment increased, and incomes significantly increased. Yet, the imbalance between large conglomerates and medium and small enterprises worsened, and income inequality increased. (Daeho Kim, 2018)

Kwang Yeong Shin remarked that studies about social inequality in South Korean contemporary society remained the most under studied problem in Korean academia in the 1990s. While people in Korean society believe themselves to be sensitive to social inequality and having a strong sense of egalitarianism, there have been few empirical research studies of social equality in Korea. The economy is one

of the important factors that affects Korean society and causes social inequality. In late 1997, during financial crisis, South Korea reformed the structure of income inequality, the production system, altering employment structure, job opportunities, and economic compensation mechanisms. The financial crisis led to massive unemployment; more than one million became unemployed in 1998 and there was a rapid rise of irregular workers. The long-term effect of the crisis was the worsened economic inequality and polarization of income and asset ownership. Moreover, the Korean government encountered with the aggressive demands of IMF, adapted a high interest rate policy, which contributed to the unexpected increase of wealth for the rich, and, consequently, widened the gap between the poor and the rich. (Kwang Yeong Shin, 2013)

It can be said that the differences between the classes in Korean society are caused by the income gap between the rich and the poor. The inequality in society can be explained by economic inequality based on the social division of labor. Wright argues that income inequality and wealth is one of the central factors of social classes and social conflict economic inequality in industrial capitalism, which is a result of the structure of the inequality-generating mechanisms based on different types of the ownership such as ownership of capital assets, ownership of organization assets or simply authority, and ownership of skill assets or credentials. Owners of capital assets hire other employees or can be self-employed without hiring other employees. In industrial capitalism, those who own productive property and hire other people can

monopolistically appropriate outcome of economic activities of employee as profit. Those who do not have productive property are employed to get material resources as a different form of wages. However, there is class differentiation among employees associated with the different types of productive assets ownership. Those who have authority, scarce skills, and expertise can get monopoly rent which refers to premium, which is beyond the market wage. Monopoly rent is a social surplus by scarcity in the labor market because there are systematic barriers in the way of increasing the supply of scarce resource to meet the demand of employing organization.

For the last four decades, South Korea society has experienced huge structural changes in industry, occupation, and economy. The rapid industrialization has transformed the agricultural section into an industrial one. The industrial class constitutes the largest proportion of wage earners among the workforce whereas the agrarian class structure makes up the largest proportion of the rural petty bourgeoisie including small peasants. The working class make up 52.8 percent of the labor force, while the petty bourgeoisie is continuously declining mainly due to the reduction of farmer in rural areas. The proportion of farmers in the total workforce decreased from more than 60 percent in 1960 to almost 10 percent in 2003. (KNSO 2003, 189). This showed that different classes of South Korea's society are formed or structured by the economic development.

Social class distribution of the labor force in South Korea can be divided into 7 classes as Wright (1997) illustrated by the table below.

Table 1 Class and Class Distribution in South Korea

CLASS	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	PROPORTION OF FEMALES
Owners				
Capitalists	0.9	1.1	0.6	31.3
Small employers	8	7	9.1	51.7
Petty bourgeoisie	24.3	25.9	22.3	41.7
Non-owners				
Expert managers	3.4	5.8	0.5	6.5
Non-expert managers	5.8	9	2.1	16.2
Expert non- managers	2.8	2.9	2.7	43.1
Workers	54.8	48.1	51.9	62.7
Total	100	100	100	45.3

Source: A Contemporary South Korean Society: A Critical Perspective (p.55), by (Hee-Yeon Cho Lawrence Surendra and Hyo-Je Cho, 2013)

The table 1 shows that the working class is the largest proportion of the labor force whereas the capitalists is the smallest proportion of the labor force. While the proportion of the working class is quite similar to other industrial countries, the

proportion of the capitalist class is relatively lower than in any other countries. However, the proportions of the petty bourgeoisie of Korean class distribution lies being much higher than in any other industrialization country. And the proportion of petty bourgeoisie in Korea standing at 24.3 percent, which is three or four times as high as that of US, Canada, Britain, or Sweden. This is considered exceptional in comparison to other industrialized countries. Furthermore, Table 1 also shows unequal class distribution by gender as female employees are extremely small in number among the social classes. By the proportion of women is lowest among the managers. The ratio of women among expert managers is only standing at 6.5%, far below the proportion of women in the total sample, 45.3%. Women make up only 16.2% of non-expert managers. On the contrary, the proportion of women is higher than that of men in the working class. While there is only a small difference between men and women as owners, there is a striking difference between the genders among the ranks of employees. (Kwang Yeong Shin, 2013)

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

“Train to Busan” movie: A Reflection of Social Problems in South Korea is a qualitative study, which attempts to analyze a South Korea-related movie within the context of social problems that occur in contemporary South Korea society. The semiology theory of Roland Barthes is used to analyze signs and visual signs hidden in the movie will be interpreted. As a mirror, the movie, when analyzed, will reveal social problems of South Korea.

3.1 Scope of the Study

In this study, the points of focus are the aspects of social problems in contemporary South Korea as portrayed in “Train to Busan” with the application of the semiology theory of Roland Barthes.

3.2 Study Source

3.2.1 Electronic Resource

“Train to Busan” movie is available in various online media platforms such as Netflix, AIS PLAY, and in DVD format.

3.3 Sample Group

Table 2 The Details of “Train to Busan” movie

Movie	Social problems in the movie	Released Movie Years	Popularity or Awards
Train to Busan	<p>According to Jack Buchanan said that “Train to Busan” movie is a searing social commentary that critiques the South Korean social hierarchy. He also analyzes that movie provides a space for a socially diverse group in South Korea society. Social hierarchy in South Korea is particularly complex and ruthless. Conformity and social expectations, place of birth, job, place of residence, accent, and clothing all factor into the endless judgement of status in the country</p> <p>(Jack Buchanan 2018)</p>	July 2016	<p><u>Popular:</u> This film was ranked Korea’s top grossing movie of 2016. Including \$4.29 million from the previous week’s preview screenings, the NEW release has accumulated \$38.6 million from 5.31 million admissions. Among its records are one for the highest single day gross \$9.90 million from 1.28 million admissions in Korean history (Variety, 2016)</p> <p><u>Awards:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Blue Dragon Film Awards 2016 2. Buil Film Awards 2016 3. Fangoria Chainsaw Awards 2016 4. Korean Association of Film Critics Awards 2016 5. Saturn Awards 2017

			6. Baeksang Arts Awards 2017
			7. Chunsa Film Awards 2017

“Train to Busan” movie was released in July 2016, directed by Yeon Sang Ho. The movie first premiered in the midnight screenings at the 2016 Cannes Film Festival and has received good feedback from foreign audiences and many awards domestically and internationally. Moreover, “Train to Busan” movie also has been declared as one of Korea’s top grossing film of 2016. It recorded \$83 million in the local box office and \$45 million worldwide. This movie is currently available on Netflix in the US and there is also a plan to have an English-language remake of the Korean version. (Jessica Rapir, 2018)

3.3.1 The Director of the Film

Yeon Sang-ho is both the director and script writer of “Train to Busan” and the response is phenomenal in South Korea and abroad. The movie is acclaimed and given numerous awards from various fields because of its unique and outstanding qualities of Yeon Sang-ho’s production.

Born in Seoul in 1978, Yeon Sang-ho is well-known as a director and script writer. He graduated in Western Painting from Sangmyung University and began his film work since 1997 with a short film entitled “Megalomania of D,” followed by “D-Day” in

2000, *The Hell* (2003), *The Hell: Two Kinds of Life*(2006), and *Love is Protein* (2008). He then expanded his expertise into animation movies such as *The Window* (2012), *The Fake* (2013), and *Seoul Station* (2016). In retrospect, Yeon Sang-ho's films had contents and aspects which satirized the society, and thus presented the differences and uniqueness, driving his works into a great success and social appeals among South Korea's film industry.

Yeon Sang-ho's films often deal with social or problematic issues. Apart from "Train to Busan," an animation movie called "Seoul Station," which also serves well as the original background leading to the development into "Train to Busan," effectively reflects the social disparity in South Korea. The animation itself depicts the story of homeless people living in Seoul, South Korea. Addressing social issues through movies is an ingenious approach to expressing the producers' ideas or viewpoints to urge the audience or the society to be aware or contemplate the social issues occurred in that period of time.



3.4 Information Gathering Tools

The semiology theory of Roland Barthes will be used as a tool for analysis of "Train to Busan" deciphering the social problems in contemporary South Korea society such as family problem, environmental problem, political problem and social class or inequality. Moreover, the information of the capitalist economic system in South Korea is also used in the analysis of this study.

3.5 Information Analysis (Process of Study)

Certain scenes from “Train to Busan” movie will be selected as they contain crucial signs that are worth analyzing, using the semiology theory. Scene and dialogues of characters will be the components to be examined in relation to South Korea’s social problems.

3.6 Information Presentation

The information of this study will be explained in the style of analytical descriptive research, which will be showed in the following chapters:

Chapter 4: Analysis of film: Sign and Social Problems in Contemporary Korean society in “Train to Busan”.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations and Discussion

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

“TRAIN TO BUSAN” MOVIE : A REFLECTION OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS IN SOUTH KOREA

This chapter is the analysis of “Train to Busan” movie which reflects social problems of South Korean society.

This chapter consists of 2 parts.

4.1 Backgrounds of the movie and plot summary

4.2 Analysis of social problems as reflected in “Train to Busan” movie.

4.2.1 Analysis of family problems

4.2.2 Analysis of environment problem

4.2.3 Analysis of political problem

4.2.4 Analysis of social class and Inequality

4.2.5 Hopefulness



4.1 Backgrounds and Plot Summary

The details of “Train to Busan” movie

Table 3 Train to Busan’s background 1 (Korean name, Director, Producer, Writer, Cinematographer, Release Date, Run time, Genre, Language and Country)

Name in Korean	Busanhaeng (부산행)
Director	Yeon Sang-Ho (연상호)

Producer	Lee Dong-Ha, Kim Yeon-Ho (이동하, 김연호)
Writer	Park Joo-Suk, Yeon Sang-Ho (박조숙, 연상호)
Cinematographer	Lee Hyung-Deok (이형덕)
Release Date	July 20, 2016
Run time	118 min.
Genre	Action/Thriller/Horror
Language	Korean
Country	South Korea

Table 4 Train to Busan's background 2 (Cast and Role)

Cast	Role
Gong Yoo (공유)	Seok-woo (A fund manager)
Kim Soo Ahn (김수안)	Soo-an (Seok Woo's daughter)
Jung Yoo Mi (정유미)	Sung-gyeong (A pregnant wife)
Ma Dong Seok (마동석)	Sang-hwa (A working class man)
Kim Eui Sung (김의석)	Yong-suk (A rich CEO)
Choi Woo Sik (최우식)	Yong-guk (A baseball student)
Ahn So Hee (안소희)	Jin-hee (A cheerleader of the baseball team)

Jang Hyuk Jin (장혁진)	Ki-chul (a train's staff)
Choi Gwi Hwa (최귀화)	A homeless man
Ye Soo Jung (예수정)	In-gil (An older sister)
Park Myung Sin (박명신)	Jong-gil (An older sister)
Jung Suk Yong (정석용)	A KTX train's captain

4.1.1 Plot Summary

“Train to Busan” movie depicts a story of a father, who rarely spends time with his family, He is going to Busan with daughter by KTX train. While on board the, a horrible and dangerous situation arises inside the train and outside. The central theme of the movie is the outbreak of a mysterious virus that makes people become zombies. Therefore, the passengers in the train have to struggle for their survival.

4.2 The Analysis of social problems portrayed in “Train to Busan” movie

Data and Analysis

In this study, the researcher uses the semiology theory in order to interpret visual sign in “Train to Busan” movie and the focus is on social problems in contemporary South Korean society. The movie is considered an interesting reflection of many aspects of contemporary social problems in Korea such as family problem, environmental problem, political problem and social class. These problems have been influenced by various factors. However, the capitalist economic system seems to be one of the most important factors causing numerous social problems in South Korea.

Therefore, this study will attempt to interpret scenes or visual signs in order to grasp the understanding of social problems as portrayed by the movie and these problems are inevitably associated with the situation in contemporary South Korea society at that time.

4.2.1 Family problems in South Korean society

“Train to Busan” movie begins with the revelation of family issues in South Korean society. As narrated in the movie, the main character is a workaholic father, who is unable to spend enough time taking care of his family, especially his daughter. His wife wants to end the relationship with him. The struggle with workload seems to be a result from the economic system; people in the society value working and perceive it as a means to take care of themselves and their families. Hard work and sacrifices for career gradually replace the time reserved for family.

The capitalist economic system can provide benefits for capitalist society, but, at the same time, it can also affect social structure, especially the people in the society, who find it hard to avoid the struggling in highly competitive society. Kyong Ju Kim, states that South Korea’s rapid process of industrialization had caused complex social changes. Korean people react to these changes in different ways, whether in search of security, opportunities, or social mobility, that their lives seem to be driven by these forces. Due to the economic factor, social problems in Korean society seem to ensue. For example, people must go out to work and their career becomes the

primary focus that deprives the time for their families, leading to family problematic phenomenon such as divorce, childbearing and cohabitation.

4.2.1.1 The visual signs in the selected scenes

The visual signs reflecting contemporary society of South Korea

This crucial scene is selected as it exhibits a vital sign reflecting how South Korean society is progressing under the capitalist economic system.

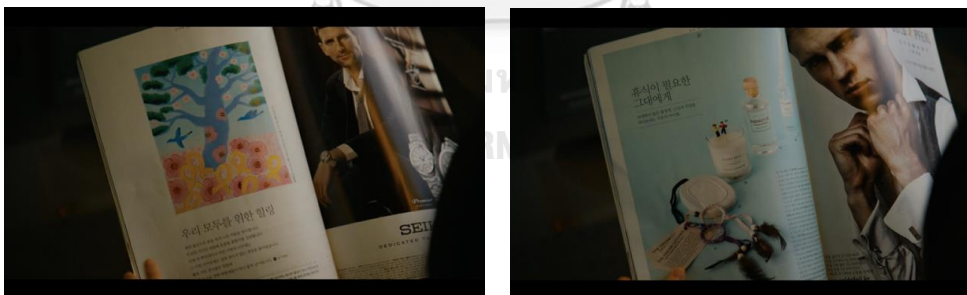
Figure 1 The South Korean society in the capitalist economic system



From this scene, the images of American brand fast food “Burger King” Seok-woo is having for his lunch time are shown. Hamburger can be interpreted as a sign referring to the capitalism hidden in this scene. This sign seems to echo a high degree of capitalism adopted by the South Korean society. As a convincing sign of American fast food, hamburger is fast and easy for people who do not have enough time for slow and comfortable eating. In the other word, hamburger is used as a symbol of freedom market that is concept of capitalism. According to Rockwell mentions that the achievements of private enterprise are most evident in the marvels we take for granted. For example, the institution of fast food as a bureau of hamburger production,

it is citizen of every social and economic standing have daily access in minutes to balanced meal. There is one of millions of the marketplace. The great challenge of economies from the early time was to get everyone, not only the rich, access to food. Otherwise, a large and growing population could not be sustained. Only the advent of capitalism, particularly in America, made this possible, and fast food has played a key role in our times in making it so. Moreover, the glorious thing of hamburger is it combines meat, grains, cheese, and vegetables into a simple, delicious package for quick and enjoyable consumption. It seems to easy, yet the efficient production of the hamburger. In all its detail is vast complexity. Only the coordinative powers of a market economy could possibly produce it.

Figure 2 The advertisements in the magazine reflected that the society is under capitalist economic system



The capitalist economic system permeates the daily life of people in the society as seen from the images shown above. In this scene, Kim Soo-an, the daughter of a main character, is flipping through the magazine that consists of images of fashion product advertisements depicting the western models. The magazine and the ads serve as signs that can be interpreted in connotative meaning; that is a symbol

reflecting the openness and acceptance of South Korea towards the influence of western culture. Magazine is tightly associated with the media through which people in society receive information, and thus it impacts people's lives as it encompasses various aspects of lifestyle such as trend fashion, culture, food, and travel. What is interesting from this scene is that the girl, who is reading the magazine, can be a representative of a young generation that is exposed to capitalism and economic system. It can be interpreted that children and the youth are equally affected by capitalism.

The visual signs reflecting family problems in South Korean society

The family problems in South Korea society can be revealed through the following scenes, which exhibit worth-pondering signs. These scenes allow us to comprehend South Korean society in contemporary capitalism, as portrayed by a main character.

Figure 3 The forgotten birthday present for the daughter

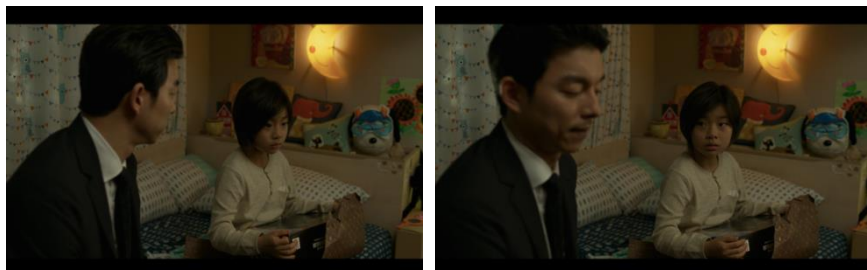


Figure 4 The absence in crucial moments of his daughter



Seok-woo, the main character, has his career life that can be a representative of many Korean people under capitalist economic system. As a fund manager, he works for large firm and manages sources of investment funds in order to gain the most value and benefit to organization. This part of the movie shows the relationship between father and daughter which is quite distant. Seok-woo is a workaholic and divorced who do not have much time for his daughter. On the contrary, he devotes himself for his work and naturally ignores his family's well-being. Unable to attend special events his daughter involves and giving late birthday present to her are evidences that point to the living condition under the capitalist system, in which Korean people find it almost impossible to avoid working hard. As such, personal life or family relationship has been abandoned, causing other social problems such as a family issue, divorce, and violence in family.

Among various factors caused by the social changes that affect people's life, economy is one of such strong factors. Under a capitalist society, people must struggle and attempt to improve themselves, they work so hard and long hours in order to have a good life or support their family. Yet, for such an intense working lifestyle, most people do not have time for family and the consequences of that can be divorce,

problems related to childbearing and cohabitation. The divorce problem is highlighted by a dialog of characters; Seok-woo and his wife, revealing conflicts ¹about legal issues and raising their child.

Ex-wife : *Let's not waste time suing each other*

Seok-woo : *I do not care what you do with your time.*

: I am raising Soo-An

Ex-wife : How are you raising her?

: Do you even talk to her?

: She wants to come here tomorrow by herself!

: Did you know that?

Seok-woo : Stop this bullshit!

Ex-wife : You call yourself father?

Seok-woo : A child cannot go alone

Ex-wife : You know it's her birthday tomorrow, right?

In contemporary South Korea, the divorce rates are increasing and young people slow their marriages while many prefer to stay single. South Korea, as a consequence, encounters with lowest fertility rate. Recently, there is a report about

¹The English-subtitle translated by Haei-Ji(하이지) “Train to Busan” movie on Netflix

the increasing divorce rate among elderly couples in South Korea as shown in the following table.

Figure 5 Divorce rates according to number of married years in South Korea

	Less than 5 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15-19 years	More than 20 years
2009	27.2	19.1	16.1	14.8	22.8
2010	27.0	18.8	15.9	14.5	23.8
2011	26.8	19.0	15.2	14.2	24.8
2012	24.6	18.9	15.5	14.6	26.4
2013	23.7	18.7	14.6	14.9	28.1

Source: HANKYOREH (2014)

From the figure 5, it is evident that the divorce rates as well as the number of elderly divorces in South Korea have been steadily growing. There were 28,261 in 2009, 27,823 in 2010, 28,299 in 2011, and 30,234 in 2012. The percentage of total divorces among the elderly couples has risen over the past five years from 22.8% to 28.1%. From the information, it can be seen that elderly divorces in Korean society has a steadily increasing trend and, consequently, leads to legal conflicts related to divorces.

According to Kyung-mi, people decide to get divorced because they no longer believe they have to just go away from spouses, and they feel a stronger desire to seek a new life in their old age. Women are found to have a greater motivation to go ahead with divorce. Moreover, there is a study by the Korea Legal Aid Center for Family Relation, which explained the reasons for divorce in South Korea. The study analyzed a number of pre-divorce counselling cases from 1956 to 2015, and found that historical

events and social aspects of each decade, such as the Vietnam War and 1997 Asian Financial Crisis, affected spouses' decisions to end their relationships.

Between the 1950s and 1960s, 11 percent of Korean who received helps from the Korea Legal Aid Center for Family Relation were those who desired to end their marital relationships. Since the Korean War (1950-1953), the proportion of those who contacted the institution intending to end their common-law marriages was the highest during this period. In the 1970s, the reason for people who want to end their relationship was because their spouses had been missing more than three years, which was the most evident among all decades since 1950s. At that time, all of Korean men who got help at the center and wanted a divorce because they cannot locate their missing spouses was at 6.2 percent while Korean women who contacted the center were experiencing same, at the rate of 2.6 percent. Due to the Vietnam War (1955-1975), there have been a great number of missing people after being sent to the war and there have been also a high number of people who got separated with their spouses during the Korean War. In the 1980s, there was 35.2% of Korean men who contacted with center and gave the reason that they wanted a divorce because their wives "neglected their spousal duties" and many of them escaped from home while 31.3% of Korean women reasoned that they were abused by their husbands. Meanwhile, in the 1990s, the proportion of women who wanted a divorce because of domestic abuse was the highest at 33.5 percent. The women who got help at the center was at 21.8 percent in the 1970s, and 31.3 percent in the 1980s, and 31.7

percent in the 2000s. It can be deducted from the statistics that “Korean women perceived domestic violence differently in that specific time period; more women decided not to tolerate abuse by their husbands”. Interestingly, in the 2010s, the highest proportion of both of women and men were 50% as they said that the reasons for divorce were not infidelity, spousal neglect, physical and emotional abuse and disappearance of spouse. In fact, the real reasons for getting divorce were personality clashes, basic unhappiness and incompatibility. Moreover, the conflicts with spouses were centered on financial support, which are expected to be given to their parents, as this trend increased by 3.6 times, from 44 in 2005 to 158 in 2015. In the 2010s, the highest proportion of those who contacted at center for bankruptcy counselling reached at 6.9 percent. (Claire Lee, 2016)

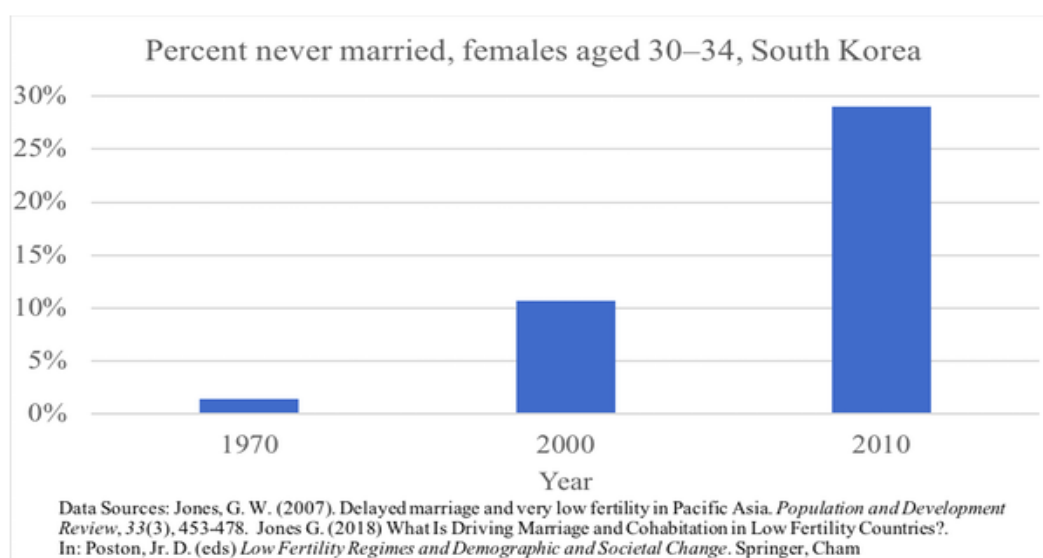
Besides, South Korea is encountering with low fertility rate because the citizen in new generation decide to stay single rather than getting married. Perhaps, a speech of Lee Won-hong given at Nation Assembly may adequately reflect the propensity of Korean people in current society.

“These days, young generation do not get married. They are selfish and do not want to get married. When they do get married, they get divorced, and have no children. That is the reason why contemporary Korean society has the lowest birth-rate in the world. And there are more elderly people. I wonder what will happen to the country if we

continue this trend. It seems like the most basic social unit, the family, is crumbling". (Youna Kim, 2017)

The speech above explains the changing social structure among young Korean people or people in new generation; they do not want to get married, but rather want to stay single. If they were married, they decided not to have children. In Yue Qian (2019), "Today, many refer to young Koreans as the *"sam-po generation"* or the *"three-giving up generation"* because they have given up on these three things: dating, marriage and children". Further evidence can be seen from the statistics shown below, presenting the percentage of Korean women who never married at aged 30 to 34 years in South Korea from 1970 to 2010. The statistics also reveal total fertility rate in South Korea from 1960 to 2016.

Figure 6 Percentage of Korean females who never get married aged 30-34 in South Korea



Source: The Conversation, Academic Rigour, Journalistic Flair (2019)

According to Figure 6, the proportion of Korean women who never married has increased continuously. In the 1970s, at 1 percent, and in the 2000s at 11 percent, and surprisingly, in the 2010s at 29 percent, which was the highest number.

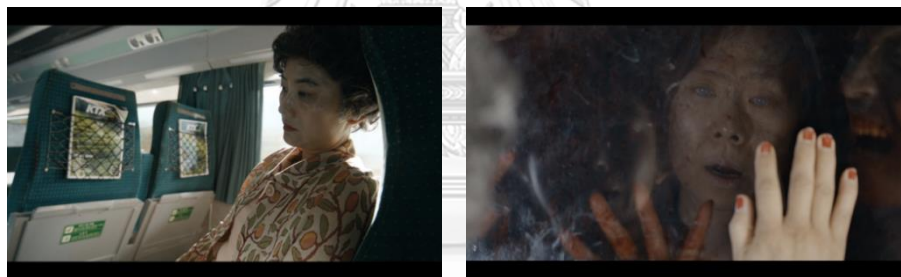
The problems that occur in Korean society involve aging society, low fertilities rate, and aging marriages. However, these problems are not impacting Korean society only, but to the world at large. Japan, for example, is one of the countries that has the highest number of the elderly. A relevant report suggests that there is a few countries, such as Japan and Italy, that a large proportion of their citizens are aged over 65 years. Japan has the oldest citizenry in the world, the percentage of population being 65 years of age was about 27%, and in the 2014, the percentage was about 25.8%, which shows that the number is continually rising each year. Nowadays, Japan more than one fourth of people in the country are over 65 years old while the country's population aged between 15 and 64 fell by 4% between 2000 and 2010. Moreover, there are other countries that have seen the rising number of older people, such as Finland, Germany, Bulgaria, Sweden and Malta. Their statistics show that 21%, 21%, 21%, 20%, and 19% of their respective populations are 65 years old. (Faraz Haider, 2017)

The visual signs that reflect the elderly society in contemporary South Korea

Figure 7 Two senior sisters)



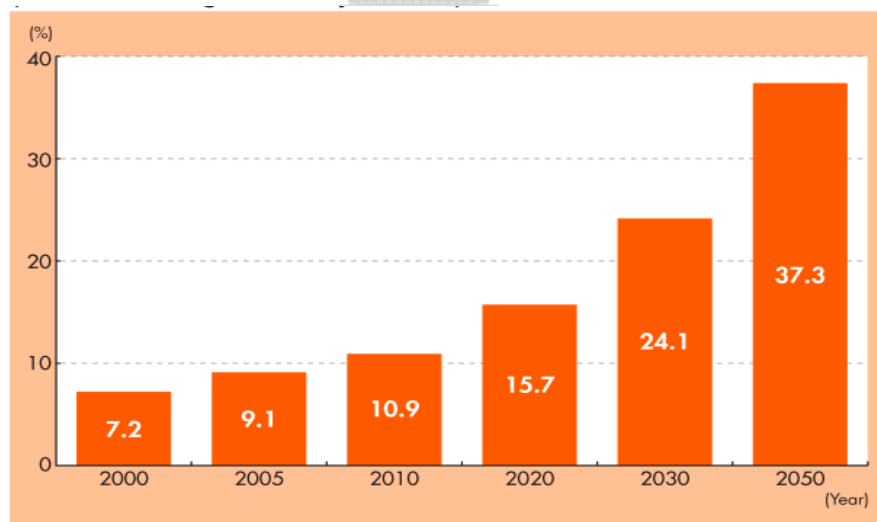
Figure 8 When older sister passed away



“Train to Busan” exemplifies the changing social structure of South Korea in a way that it becomes an aging society, with low fertility rate. The selected scene in figure 8 can be viewed as a sign that South Korea is entering the elderly society. The movie carefully shows how two older sisters looking after each other while they are on the train to Busan. It can be interpreted that women in Korean society nowadays intend to be celibate or prefer to live with their kin. The movie shows the tragic scene when one of the sisters who was about to pass away, the other one cannot cope with such a loss that she chooses to end of her life, right after her sister.

Previously, the researcher mentioned the changes in social structure of contemporary South Korea and one of the changes was the social value among the new generation called “*sampo generation*” or the “*three-giving up generation*.” It became apparent that less and less of young Korean people decide to get married, and hence having delayed children and low birthrate each year. These factors have contributed to the change of South Korea into the senior society in such a short period. Studies showed that South Korea is facing the problem of senior society since 2000. The following graph will illustrate the projection of increasing rate of the aging population in South Korea in the future.

Figure 9 South Korea’s rapidly aging population (world’s most aged country in 2050)



Note: Figures denote percentages of people aged 65 or older per the total population

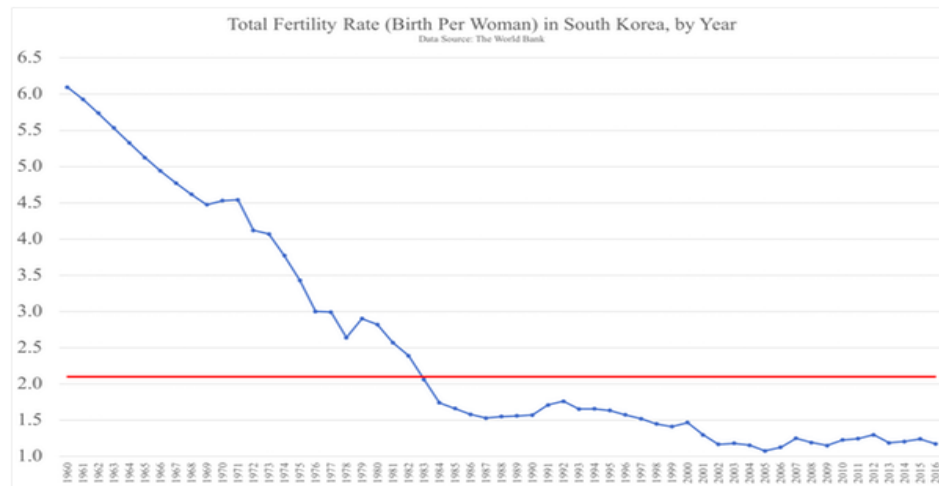
Source: Pyo Han-hyung Global Aging Challenge & Opportunity

The bar graph above clearly shows the percentage of people aged 65 or over per the total population. From the year 2000, the number of the elderly was accounted for 7.2%, in 2005 at 9.1%, in 2010 at 10.9%, and in 2020, the number may rise as high as 15.7%. Furthermore, the projection of percentage in the next 2-3 decades tends to confirm the dramatic increase of aging population in South Korea. Concomitant with Pyo Han-hyung, it was estimated that the average lifespan of South Korean population will rise to 76 years old in the year 2000, from 62.3 years in 1970. The estimation of lifespan is 83 years old in 2030 and 86.0 years old in 2050. The number of people aged 65 or over will grow from 3.4 million in 2000 to 11.8 million in 2030, and 16.16 million in 2050. Meanwhile, the number of infant populations per year is expected to drop from 640,000 in 2000 to 350,000 in 2030, and even lower to 230,000 in 2050. Clearly, South Korea is facing such a challenging problem as the entering to a complete aging society, with steady declining birthrate. This seemingly alarming problem is awaiting to be solved by South Korean government, which is expected to be equipped with proper and effective measures and policies.

Other changes in family structure that can be observed are Seok-woo's condition of having the only child, or the obscurity of number of children the pregnant woman has had. These aspects seem to suggest that the Korean society is facing with the aging society, low fertility rate, and choice of celibacy, which invariably are tied with economic condition.

Another problem which can evolve into a crisis for South Korea is the astonishingly declining birthrate. Numerous factors influence the decision-making process of many families concerning having children, and the consequence is the gradually declining birthrate. Economic factor, for example, has impacted the majority of people to consider their readiness for having children. As such, many families decide not to have children, or delay the process of having children. Another significant factor is the changing social values of new generation. Examples of those values can be women preferring to remain single, no definite plan for getting married, or even those who got married decide not to have any children or having only one child in the families. For better comprehension on this subject, the researcher herein presents a graph showing the birthrate of women in South Korea during 1960 -2016, which seems to emphasize the alarming drop.

Figure 10 Total Fertility Rate (Birth Per Women) in South Korea, by Year.



In Korea, the average births per woman were slightly above one in 2016, down from 6.1 in 1960 and 4.5 in 1970. Author

Source: The Conversation, Academic Rigour, Journalistic Flair (2019)

Figure 10 shows the severity in the average births per Korean women, from 1960 to 2016. In 1960, the average births per Korean women were at 6.1, in 1970 at 4.5, and slightly above 1 in 2016. The extreme decline of birth rate in contemporary South Korea has become a vital issue, similarly to the becoming of ageing society. It is official that South Korea has the lowest fertility rate in the world. In 2017, South Korea had 360,000 babies per year, which was the first time ever recorded that the country has below 4000,000 births. (Greer Brodie-Hall, 2018) There is a study that shows the reasons why young Koreans give up on dating, getting married and raising kids. The study explains such trend that it is because of the growing economic uncertainty and financial hardships. Many young Koreans are also having precarious jobs, with low pay and low security. Another interesting reason which affects young Koreans' decision to give up on dating, getting married is the culture of long working hours. Among the OECD

countries, South Korea has embraced the practice of the longest work hours. In 2017, Korean's average work hours were 2,024 hours per year, 200 hours less than they did in the previous decade. Because of this way of living, they do not have enough time to spend with family and many decide not to get married. To address the low birth rate issue, the Korean government tries to increase the rates, announcing a policy that all the lights in the offices should be turned off at 7 p.m. sharp once a month, with hope that workers would get off work and early go back home to produce more population. (Yue Qian, 2019)

4.2.2 Environmental problems in South Korean society

When South Korea becomes an industrialized country, the changes brought about opportunities for improved jobs and life quality, but what was inevitable was the ever-increasing devastating effects on the environment. Economic development is progressing, with the cost of environmental degradation, as evidenced from industrial pollution such as sewage, dust, fumes, toxic gas emission. The results of polluting industries have not become harmful in our ecosystem and environment, but also jeopardize people's health in the society. According to Brett Smith, environment issue of South Korea has occurred since the 1970s under the president Park Chung-hee's administration. During that time, unfortunately, he concentrated only on industry and manufacturing, but the protection ecosystems country was remote second priority as compared to improving the economic development of country.

4.2.2.1 The visual signs in the scenes

“Train to Busan” movie uses the problems of environmental issues as the starting point of the story. The environmental problems, such as polluted waters, are used as one of the vital points in the movie.

The visual signs that reflect polluted water in South Korea contemporary society

Figure 11 The mysterious fish death at Jinyang reservoir news



The selected movie scene demonstrates how the capitalist economic system is linked with the environmental problems in Korean society. This scene shows the news of mysterious deaths in a reservoir in Jinyang City, which develops into the starting point of epidemic that spreads rapidly and kills a lot of people. As shown in the movie, the beginning of problem is the negligence of the company’s social responsibility. The company’s poor management causes the leak of chemical into the waters, and later on, the deaths of animal and people. The problem converts itself into the massive violent situation in which the pestilence takes lives of people. The movie showed the results of the company’s lack of social responsibility and, because

of that, Korean people suffer from mysterious virus, which spreads rapidly. Once infected by the virus, they will become a zombie and die finally.

South Korea is one of the countries that have seen environmental problems for long time, which is the result from the transformation into developed country. The serious environmental problems include water pollution and air pollution. In terms of water pollution, the famous Han River in Seoul city, in the past, was a glorified sewer whose main purpose was carrying the unsightly effluence of South Korea's development into ocean, including chemicals and waste from mills, factories, home, and the city's sewage system. Because of this pollution in the river, the fish and other living organisms die finally. (CHOSONPATH, 2015) Furthermore, in recent years, South Korea has been troubled with the degrading water quality in the Nakdong River, which is the longest river (510km) in South Korea and a vital water source on the peninsula, passing through the two biggest cities, Daegu and Busan. it was reported that some parts of the river had the decreasing flow speed and that was detrimental to the water quality. With the construction of eight reservoirs across the river, it became difficult to control toxic substance from contaminating with underwater organisms, especially fish. The toxin also affected the fishing industry in the country; in the recent years the fishery has declined severely. Unfortunately, the remaining fish are polluted with microcystin, which can lead to liver disease, and thus became difficult to be sold. (Lina Jang, 2016)

The water pollution is not the only type of pollution in South Korea that has massive impact on people. not only that is a massive problem. Nowadays, South Korea is encountering air pollution problem. According to Brett Smith, in recent years, South Korea has become one of the most polluted countries in the world in terms of air quality. A recent study found that the result of air pollution in South Korea is a result of emissions from both industrial sites and power plants present within the country. (Brett Smith, 2015) In addition, air pollution is not a problem for South Korea only, but other countries are facing this severe problem. For instance, information from the World Health Organization in 2017 reported that a total of 92 countries had the highest number of PM 2.5. Those countries include Pakistan, Afghanistan, Qatar, Mongolia, Kuwait, Nepal and United Arab Emirates. The pollution in these countries are the by-products of combustion, from vehicles, operating a power plan, the burning of fossil fuels in factories and so on. (World Population review, 2018) The negative effect of air pollution is hazardous for environment as land and water can also be polluted. This can be caused by the mishandling of chemical disposal by industries. The pollution is harmful to animals, trees, and plants, and leads to deteriorating health for human.

The visual signs that reflect a dreadfulness of the capitalist economic system

Figure 12 The people infected by the mysterious virus



Figure 13 The people infected by the mysterious virus



The selected scenes shown above are important for the interpretation as they show the connection between the capitalist economic system that is hidden in South Korean society with the people. The infected people who are turning into zombies and are eating their fellow humans can be viewed as denotative meaning. Presented as dead human bodies who no longer have souls and emotions, the zombies are also the traces of the capitalist economic system dominating people's lives in the society. The capitalist economic system is served as the tools to give massive benefit or profit for organizations or countries. The movie uses the frightening soulless zombies devouring other human beings. It can be likened to the symptoms caused by the capitalist economic system, either directly or indirectly, which, more often than not,

focuses on profit only, regardless of dangerous or harmful effects, whether the people's life quality or environment.

The visual signs that reflect the lack of morality and responsibility to society

In the film, the outbreak and severity of the mysterious virus disease causes a wide impact on the society, developing into a crisis depriving lives and properties of people considerably. The root cause of the epidemic can be traced back to the unethical and irresponsible acts of a corporate for which Seok-woo works, who later discovers that his work and the decision of his company truly leads to the loss of many lives, as seen from the following dialogue. The dialog between Seok-woo and his colleague discussing the plan that is the cause of all hazardous situations seem to best capture the essence of this immorality and irresponsibility.

Kim : Busan succeeds in primary defense.

Seok-woo : What? Are you sure? Where did you get that news?

Kim : *Sir, this was started at YS biotech where was the firm of our plan!*

Sir, this nothing to do with us, right?

We only did what we were told. Is this my fault?

Seok-woo : It is not your fault.

Even though Seok-woo's actions were only motivated by his attempt to protect the interests of his organization, his actions turned out to be a big mistake that had devastating effects on the lives of many people in the society. Not only the society at

large that was affected by his decision at that time, his beloved family also inevitably faces such devastating consequences. Witnessing horrendous situation, Seok-woo clearly realizes the results of his own actions, which put all the lives in grave danger. The following scene shows what the protagonist Seok-woo has to face from his actions. In order to survive and protect others, he has to fight and kill fellow humans because they have turned into zombies. Yet, it becomes the stigmata in his life as he is fully aware that all calamities were caused by his mistakes and immorality, as shown through the images of the blood-stained marks on his hands and body.

Figure 14 Blood stains on Seok-Woo's clothes and hands



The signs of the society being domineered by capitalist economic system are shown in the scene that Seok-woo is trying to wash the zombies' blood off his hands. This scene also presents a sign of his guilt for his actions in dangerous situation. It can be connoted that to live under the society driven by capitalist economic system, people must do the things against their wills that are sometimes wrong or immoral. The blood stains on his hands that he is trying to wash off can be seen as a sign of the guilt from his company's greediness that it becomes a dangerous situation affecting other people in the society. Finally, even his family cannot be spared from his

company’s action. The lack of morality and responsibility to society brings about a massive loss and damage to people.

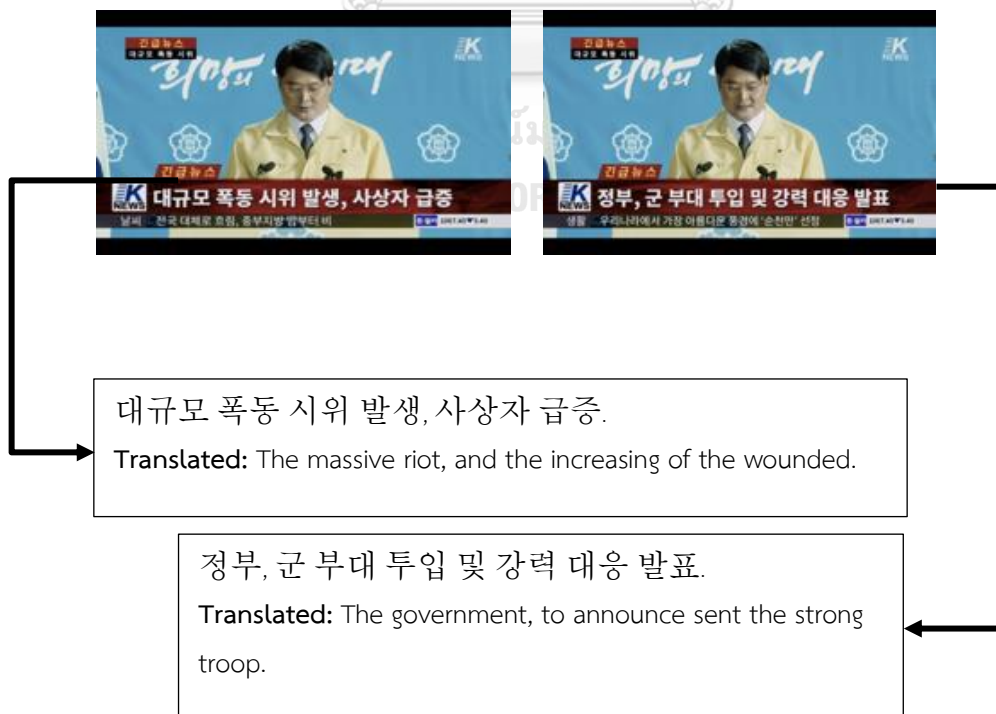
4.2.3 Political problems in South Korea society

In certain parts of “Train to Busan,” the political issue and the administration of the Korean government at the time were revealed. The ineffectiveness and late addressing of the government of the spread of virus causes irreversible damage to people’s lives.

4.2.3.1 The visual signs in the scenes

The visual signs that reflect political problems in South Korea contemporary society

Figure 15 The announcement of the government about an emergency situation



The selected scene as shown in figure 14 highlights ineffective management of the Korean government when a news report was on air, announcing a strategy for dealing with the harmful and urgent situation caused by mysterious virus outbreak. The scene can be a sign of failure because of the corruption issue. In the movie, a certain part of the announcement was made as follows:

“My fellow citizens violent riots have broken out in a number of our major cities, resulting in multiple civilian and police injuries. These riots have led us to shut down a number of major districts, in an effort to defeat those trying to destroy or take over government property. For this reason, we are declaring a state of emergency in order to stabilize and control the current situation. Because of our government’s rapid response, a number of outbreaks are being contained. Fellow citizens please avoid from reacting to baseless rumors zombie and stay in the safety of your homes. We must stay calm and trust our government as we all work together in fact this current crisis. To the best of our knowledge, your safety is not in jeopardy.”

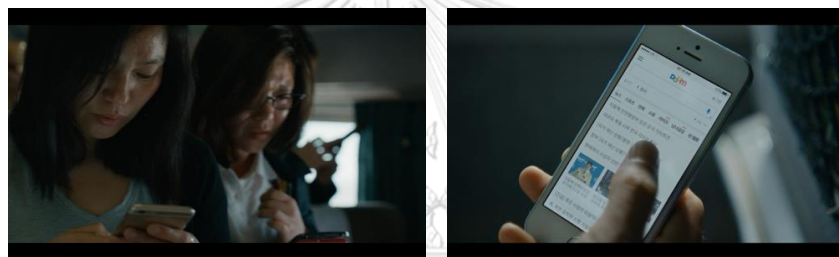
The statement of the government and message on news television are highlighting the government’s attempt to handle the apocalypse that is happening. The movie has straightforward presentation about the image of government as a satire on political issues how the government conceals the information regarding the management of situation. The announcement from the government tried to assure the citizens that the situation is in control, but the reality was being presented by the movie.

The visual signs that reflect the failure of the government's keeping order

Figure 16 The video clip that showed the chaos in other areas



Figure 17 The information that the citizens received



The contrast between the reality of the zombies' attacks and chaotic escape and what was informed to people was presented. Media apparatus are the signs suggesting differences of reality; the video clip captures the real situation that the government cannot control while the government's updates are the distorted information. In figure 16, the virus outbreak is rapidly spreading over in other cities killing many lives. However, figure 17 reflects that the citizens confront with the confusion about received information versus real situation.

The underlying message as reflected through the movie concerning political issue was probably related to the Korean government's scandal. In 2016, during president Park Geun-hye's regime, there was massive corruption scandal involving

politicians and businesses. The corruption involved with relationship between former president Park Geun-hye and her friend Choi Soon-sil. It was found that president Park Geun-hye have close relationship with Choi Soon-sil and she was impeached for illegal attempt to access the government secret information. And she has influenced the political decision and government policy. Moreover, Choi Soon-sil used her connection with the premier then to intervene the government administration and many of large business groups received the benefit from that relation. Moreover, there is the spread of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) or “Virus MERS” in south Korean during Park Geun-hye’s regime. The outbreak of MERs affected Korean people and the number of infected people kept increasing. While Korean government reminded its people not to panic about the situation, President Park Geun-hye was strongly criticized for inability to limit the outbreak and for endangering the public by withholding information. The scandal around president Park Geun-hye caused the large rallies, which brought about the unprecedented protests in South Korea; the rally was free of violence and Korean people gathered peacefully asking President Park Geun-hye to step down from her position. In the rally, the LED lights were used as a symbol, so it was called “the candlelight rallies” in South Korea.

4.2.4 Social class and inequality in South Korean society

Social class discrimination or the prevalence of social inequality is one of the most important issues that affect Korean society. Social inequality is influenced by

several factors, but, the capitalist economic system seems to be one of the contributing factors. Zhengyio Zhang (2017) stated: “The unequal environments of economic inequality likely have important consequences for relationships of the people at the upper and lower of the class hierarchy. Social class has then become the main reason to influence the daily life of South Korean people and lead to various problems such as job discrimination, workplace bullying, gender stereotype and class discrimination regarding marriage and relationship”.

4.2.4.1 The visual signs in the scenes

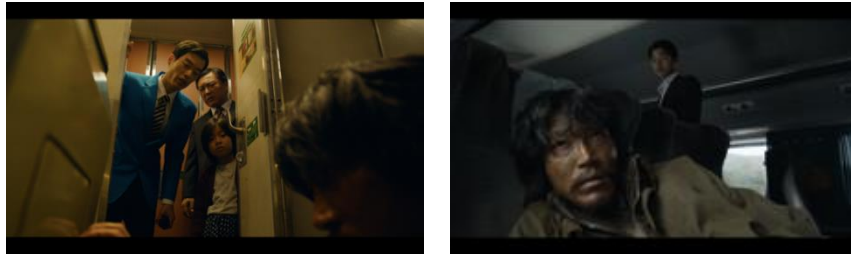
The visual signs that reflect the lower class and the condition of social inequality in South Korean contemporary society

Visual signs that point to the situation of social class and inequality in South Korean society were observed and presented through the important characters; a homeless man and a rich CEO of a corporation. This part of the movie clearly shows the contrastive image between the upper and lower class in Korean society.

Figure 18 The representation of the lower class



Figure 19 The homeless man was affronted by the upper-class people.



The above scenes of “Train to Busan” seem to vividly present the social inequality. The homeless man, one of the critical characters, was presented as a fraction or a part of South Korean society. Although South Korea has become a developed country long ago, there are still a number of lower-class people, who have no careers, no regular income, and no residence. These people are unable to voice their opinions and needs, and are not provided with proper welfare by the government. In short, they are not welcomed by the society. In the movie, the homeless man was affronted and was treated differently by other upper-class people. He was treated by other well-to-do people as if he was ostracized. His decision to be on board of the train was only to seek refuge from the chaotic situation happening on the outside, yet he was seen as a strange person and was given scornful and offensive words. The conversation between the train staff and the homeless man, as shown below, seems to capture this point being discussed.

Staff : Sir, Excuse me? May I check your ticket?

Homeless man : All dead

Staff : *Sir, if you do not have a ticket, you will be escorted off at the next station*

Homeless man : Everyone's dead!

CEO : Hey Kiddo! *if you do not study, you will end up like him*

Soo-an : Mom told me that whoever said that is a bad person.

CEO : Your mom must have flunked school.

Staff : *Pardon! Sir, please come out. We will move to the back*

From the above conversation, the ticket collector's action seems appropriate in the normal situation. Yet, in the event of crisis, his protocols of checking ticket and asking the homeless man to leave if not being able to present the ticket is viewed as rather discriminatory or even inhumane. There was a voice stressing the consequence from not having education, using the homeless man as an example. All these are indicators of social inequality and clear division of social class. The lower-class, as implied in the movie, is the group of people who are given the least attention, frequently rejected, and are not given helps which are supposed to be available among normal people in the society. The movie seems to stress that this problematic issue still persists in the South Korean society.

The visual signs that reflect the sacrifice of the lower class in society

Figure 20 The sacrifice of the lower class to help others



What is interesting in the movie is an attempt to present that although the homeless man, in this case a representative of the lower-class people, seems incompetent to protect himself or to survive in the crisis, he becomes a person who reaches out to help and sacrifices himself when needed amidst the escapes of other people. In Figure 20, a young girl and a pregnant woman are in grave danger, being chased by zombies. The homeless man decides to fight the zombies and sacrifices his life so that the two women can escape. The “problematic” or the “unwelcomed” whose human dignity is rarely acknowledged by the society can be, as the movie suggested, kind and helpful for others.

A homeless man's sacrifice in this film can reflect that, in today's South Korean society, there is still a group of people who may be perceived as incompetent or

incapable enough to be able to equally contribute to the society as other groups do. Yet, it can be observed from this film that the lower classes or marginalized people can actually support or benefit the society, similarly to a group of people who have power or have money. Moreover, these people seem to exhibit the self-sacrifice to help others in the society. The movie may attempt to present the views of people from these groups in Korean society that are often overlooked or not treated as equally as others in the society.

The visual signs that reflect the working class and social responsibility

Figure 21 The social responsibility of the working class



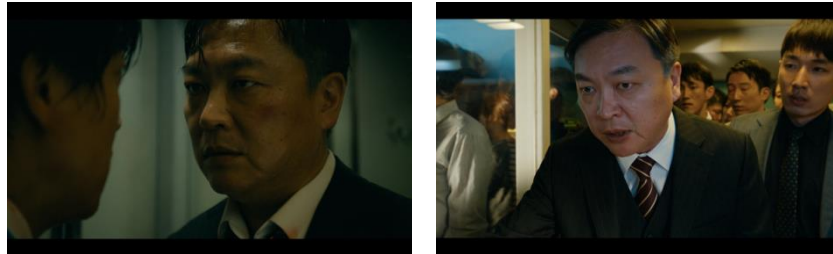
The movie portrays the working class through the characters Sang-hwa and Seong-kyeong, a husband and a wife, transporting the train while the chaos is uncontrollable. Their action mirrors the social responsibility and empathy towards others who are in similar trauma. Figure 21 shows the couple's selfless action when they are helping people who are bitten by zombies. The husband tries to protect other people, knowing that he may not be able to see his wife and unborn child. In exchange with the survival of many other lives, he sacrifices his life. The movie seems to give a

hopeful view that there are a certain number of people who are socially responsible or considerate, and who are taking actions for collective benefits rather than individual's.

“Train to Busan” depicts a group of powerless people who do not possess a great amount of money in the society. People from the working class, as reflected through the actions of the characters Sang-hwa and Seong-kyeong, a husband and a wife, and a homeless man from the lower class are portrayed as sacrificial and kind for other people in the society. Though generally viewed as incompetent or powerless, compared to the upper class, the lower class or marginalized people demonstrate the high degree of social responsibility by not abandoning or neglecting people around them. In the worst situations, these people can help others and are ready to sacrifice themselves for the society, even at the cost of their own lives. This is different to aristocrats who seem to have more power and money than any other social classes, but instead focus on seeking benefits from others for their own survival, which is considered a lack of social responsibility. One of the representatives of the powerful upper-class people, as shown in the movie, is Yon-suk, a CEO of a large corporation.

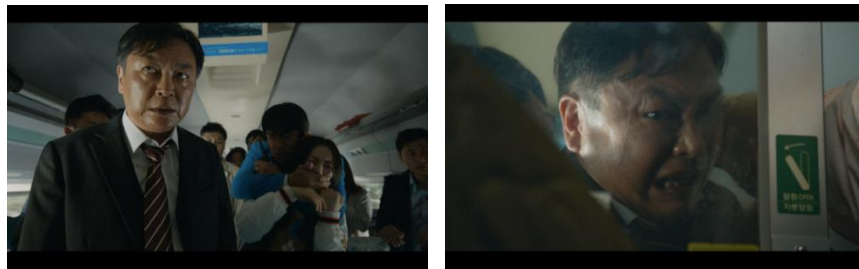
The visual signs that reflect the upper class and their powerful status in South Korean society

Figure 22 The representation of the upper class



“Train to Busan” presents the upper class as the wealthy and highly acceptable people in the society. Yon-suk, a CEO of a large corporation, is one of the passengers on the train heading to Busan. Yon-suk is portrayed as a symbol of heartless cruelty that exists in the society, seeking mainly for benefits from others for his own survival. Though in horrible situation, he proves himself as the most powerful person and uses that power related to his status quo to give orders to other people so he can achieve what he desires. This seems to reflect that the upper class of South Korean society can exert their power to control or to demand other people to attain their goals. Yon-suk is the epitome of how capitalist system functions, how people are controlled, and how people are influenced by the benefits-oriented mental attitudes.

Figure 23 The upper class exercising the power to control others



The power to control of the upper class is still strong as Yon-suk, in Figure 23, gives order to the passengers around him to block the passage of another group of passengers, who are also escaping from zombies, to enter into his safe zone. The escapees who are not the danger can be saved and allowed to be safe in his bogey, but they are left outside to die because of Yon-suk's fear and selfishness. It is interesting to see that the movie presents the view that the powerful people choose to ignore and not to give hands to others in times of need. It is also observed that the movie presents the lower class as the kind and social-concerned. Perhaps, a message conveyed is that the dark side in human hearts has nothing to do with social classes or status quo.

4.2.5 Hopefulness

4.2.5.1 The visual signs in the selected scenes

“Train to Busan” movie is closed by the scene at the tunnel through which the train brings the survivors towards their destination at Busan city safely. The survivors or the escapees of the extreme crisis are the two main characters: a little girl and a

pregnant woman. They are representatives of the survival from chasing zombies and all horrific situations.

The visual signs that reflect hopefulness in the contemporary South Korean society

Figure 24 A girl and a pregnant woman survive and appear at the end of the cave



The signs of hopefulness in this scene are the little girl and the pregnant woman. They are the signs of the future or new beginning of South Korea. Children are universally representative of purification and innocence. They have not been heavily tarnished by the effects of capitalist economic system and other social norms, unlike adults who are almost completely controlled by the system and practices. In the movie, the uncertainty of the future awaits the young girl, who will continue to live her life according to her chosen direction. This supports the viewpoint that young generation will take over the country and the direction of its future. Likewise, the pregnant woman is also a sign related to the newborn or new generation. She is a sign of the “mother of the country” or “mother of the earth.” Despite all the calamity or disastrous events that took place, “mother” remains the hope of life and new births. Also interesting is that the movie chooses the female figures to end the story, so it can

possibly be interpreted that the South Korean women have a shifting role, which can decide the future of the country.

The image of a pregnant woman and a girl emerging from the cave can be interpreted that a new thing is about to happen. It is likened to stepping into a new world after going through terrible events and situations. The pregnant woman and the girl survive from all kinds of danger and they are the only two survivors who reach the destination or this cave. The emergence from the cave can be comparable to the moment that a human being is getting out of the mother's womb, which is apparently a sign of new arrival from the future or new beginning of lives. According to Harold P. Blum , stated that the interpretation of the cave is symbolic of the womb, the birth canal, and the primal cavity of self-object relationship. It was created in identification with pregnancy and birth. A possible interpretation from the ending scene of the movie is therefore the new hope for new beginning that may lead South Korea to a brighter future, or freedom from being enslaved by capitalism.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECCOMANDATONS

5.1 Conclusion

it is undeniable that the capitalist economic system is one of the most vital factors contributing to prosperity and great success in the economic sector in many countries that they gradually became more advanced countries. South Korea has one of the most successful economy in the world. Although encountered with the Korean War in the past, South Korea was capable of developing the country rapidly because of the Korean government's strong commitment to shift the direction from agriculture to industrialized country. Because of the capitalist economic system, South Korea has become an advanced country in which there are nowadays many large world's leading companies. At the same time, the Korean social structure has also gone through tremendous changes as a result from the effects of capitalist economic system. Changing in people's lives is unavoidable and it becomes a part of social problems in Korean society. It is, therefore, perceivable that the capitalist economic system does not always give benefits for the adopting countries, but there are adverse effects that the society has to endure. Quite often, those adverse effects transmute themselves into the social problems such as deteriorated environment, social inequality, family problems and so on.

This study intends to analyze and understand the social problems in contemporary South Korean society believably caused by capitalist economic system through "Train

to Busan” movie. As the tool of the study, the Semiology theory is used to analyze and interpret the visual signs hidden in the movie.

The results of the study indicate that “Train to Busan” movie quite vividly reflects social problems in contemporary Korean society, which are interpreted through the elements of film such as scenes, and dialogues of characters.

Thus, the analysis encompasses four aspects of social problems in contemporary Korean society and a sense of hopefulness, detailed as follows;

5.1.1 The analysis of family problem

5.1.2 The analysis of environmental problem

5.1.3 The analysis of political problem

5.1.4 The analysis of social class and inequality

Hopefulness

5.1.1 The Analysis of Family Problem

When focusing on family problems, “Train to Busan” movie shows the family issue through the main character; Seok-woo. There is an important scene effectively portraying that the capitalist economic system is a cause of family problem in South Korean society. The scene shows the image of Seok-woo having a Burger King for his lunch. In this scene, the burger which is fast food, can be a symbol reflecting that the Korean people’s lives are under the capitalism. The main character; Seok-woo must work hard due to the necessity to support his family and, because of that, he does

not have much time with his family, and, thus, the family problems. Moreover, the family problems are presented through the dialogue between Seok-woo and his ex-wife about their conflict within family, which brings about suing and divorce issue. From the movie, the family issues occur as a result from the changing social structure and the effects of capitalist economic system, in which people are struggling for having good lives. In this sense, the movie seems to reflect very clearly that, for the material success or achievements, people choose to ignore and neglect their families.

5.1.2 The Analysis of Environment Problem

The environmental issue marks the beginning of the chaotic, tumultuous, and dismal situation in the movie. “Train to Busan” reflects the issue through the crucial scene that shows the image of online news about mysterious deaths in a reservoir in Jinyang City, which is the beginning of the virus outbreak and dangerous situations in many cities. Then, the movie reveals that a lack of corporation’s social responsibility and poor management are the fundamental causes of the adverse effects in the society. Moreover, there are the dialogues between Seok-woo and his colleague that reaffirm the fact that all horrendous situations occur from the corporation’s immorality and irresponsibility. From the movie, it seems that the capitalist economic system is mirrored as one of the factors precipitating environment issues in society. In other words, through the industrialization process, many countries seem unable to protect the ecosystem from deterioration, and from that, other environmental issues such as

sewage, toxic dust, will follow. These issues ruin individuals' health and quality of life of people in the society.

5.1.3 The Analysis of Political Problem

As regard to political issue, "Train to Busan" reflects the Korean government's procedures that fail to deal with emergency situations. The movie demonstrates through the scenes how the government handles a massively impacted situation. There is the government's statement that the movie uses as the sign in order to reflect the government communicating with the citizens. The statement shows that the government tries to resolve the hazardous situation and confirms that they can control the situation, asking the citizens to believe in government's ability. However, the government's communications and the real situations that are happening are mismatched, and that causes confusion among the citizens who receive the information from the government. It shows that the government's working process in handling the situation is actually a deficiency. In the movie, a great number of citizens in many cities are in grave danger and are gradually dying because of the government's failure to solve the problem. The movie presents a perspective or perception that Korean government then was lacking transparency and was operating in untimely fashion, leading to loss of lives and people's properties.

Political issues that are seemingly communicated through "Train to Busan" are relevant to the situation in South Korea in 2015. During the MERS epidemic, President

Park Geun-hye, at that time, was involved with corruption, investigated during her administration, triggering a massive rally against her presidency. Park Geun-hye was forced to step down and that protest was one of the biggest political moments in South Korea. In the interview, the director of “Train to Busan” admitted that he was inspired by the circumstances occurred in South Korea at that time.

5.1.4 The Analysis of Social Class and Inequality

Social class and inequality are central themes reflected through “Train to Busan” movie. Driven by capitalist economic system, South Korean society experiences disparity and social class division, that people perceive the inequality in their living conditions, their rights, and social opportunities, which are supposed to be equally distributed to the people. The movie depicts social class issue while presenting the natural instincts of human beings when exposed to life-threatening situations. A homeless man, symbolizing the lower-class people, manages to escape from violence and danger from the outside, but is refused to be on board and is not welcomed to join in the same train as others. Through the conversation took place in the train, the homeless man is looked down by the higher social class people. He is branded as uneducated and person of no future. Another essential scene in the movie presents the darker nature of human beings when the lower-class people are in trouble similarly to others, they are generally ignored and refused to be helped. A character representing the upper-class in the movie is Yun-suk, a CEO of a large firm, is portrayed

as greedy, authoritative, and benefit-seeking oriented. In terrible situations, he only thinks about himself and how to survive without considering the condition of others. The movie, on the other hand, presents the lower-class, who seemingly appear to be powerless and the least potential, but dedicates his life for the survival of the society at large.

Hopefulness

At the end of the movie, there are only two survivors; a young girl and a pregnant woman. These two main characters were able to escape from the danger and zombies. Children can be interpreted as innocent and untarnished, or at a deeper level of analysis, as the uncontrolled by capitalism. The pregnant woman is the herald of new birth or new beginning. The movie, using these signs, seems to project that South Korea may finally survive from capitalism, and the new lives which are the hope of the country will bring about positive changes in the future.

5.2 Recommendations

When studying South Korean issues, movies can be very helpful and comprehensive source to provide understanding. Though generally viewed as a source of pleasure or entertainment for audience, movies have the qualities from which the outsiders can gain knowledge and understanding about social or cultural phenomenon. Many movies incorporate social issues and present them in such very interesting and

refreshing manner. Using “Train to Busan” as a source of study, various issues in contemporary South Korean society, such as family issue, environment, politics, and social class and inequality, are revealed. The researcher is of the view that there are still many other interesting aspects that are emerging in current South Korea. Those aspects are educational system, domestic violence, and homicides in South Korea. It would be, therefore, worthwhile to study other movies related to South Korea, which have the potential to provide understanding of those aspects. With thorough analysis, the study of those movies and those social aspects will offer benefits and lay the foundation for current South Korean studies.

The movie "Train to Busan" has been well received in the global film industry and generates highest revenue from the first day of its premiere in South Korea. The movie is internationally acclaimed as it has been arranged for license for the American version. Not only serving as a source of entertainment, this movie effectively and tactfully reflects the dark side of the society by revealing the true state of human lives under terrible circumstances. With all these qualities, the researcher is of a view that the movie “Train to Busan” can be deemed as a great success. Meanwhile, for the Thai film industry, there have not been many action or horror films that can substantially reflect the society. Therefore, it would be worthwhile and beneficial for Thai film industry to contemplate or analyze the concepts and elements embedded in “Train to Busan” for further development of film production in Thailand.

5.3 Discussion

An analysis of “Train to Busan” reveals different social issues, whether they be family problem, environmental problems, corruption, or social disparity, caused by rapid social change and the capitalist economic system which South Korea had adopted to propel the country’s development. However, the impacts from capitalist system, as portrayed in the movie, cannot be entirely held accountable for causing the social problems in South Korea. It is interesting to observe that South Korean government is not oblivious to all the problems occurred, but, instead, makes efforts to alleviate those problems. Social disparity, for instance, is tackled by a policy which supports the unprivileged people. During Park Chung-hee’s administration, a plan called *Saemaul Undong* (새마을 운동) was designed to develop and enhance the poor and those who need helps, especially people in the remote areas. The goal is to reduce the social gaps between the urban society and the country society, by strengthening people’s morale to be self-reliant as possible, with the government’s supports in terms of well-being aiming to achieve social equality. As for the environmental problems, the government launched a policy to monitor and solve the problems, whether they be pollution or wastewater. A clear evidence can be seen from a project established to protect the environment, widely known as “The institutionalization of Green Movements in Korea.”

Another social problem in South Korea such as declining birth rate has made the country become an ageing society. The current government also develops a policy

to tackle this problem by providing welfare for families with child support, and reducing work hours so that people can have more time with their families. Therefore, it is interesting to note that, despite the various social problems that occurred, South Korea's government promptly solves them and helps the people with its full capacity.



REFERENCES

- BANGKOKPOST. (2018). Samsung Electronics Apologizes for Factory Cancer Cases.
- BBC NEWS. (2012). South Korea Designates Chemical Leak Area 'Disaster Zone'.
Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-19867454>
- Brett Smith. (2015). South Korea: Environmental Issue, Policies and Clean Technology.
Retrieved from
<https://www.azocleantech.com/article.aspx?ArticleID=552&fbclid=IwAR0rSeTxrNdDmvJdlvt-6KqoSFtE5WVxl58nBtBlnDj3UAm9ohoMGhwKbl0>
- Chang Yun-Shik. (1991). The Personalist Ethic and the Market in Korea Comparative Studies in Society and History 106-129.
- Choe Sang-hun. (2015). MERS virus Kills two more in South Korean outbreak. Retrieved from <https://www.ocregister.com/2015/06/04/mers-virus-kills-two-more-in-south-korean-outbreak/>
- CHOSONPATH. (2015). The Han River: Following The Currents of Korean History.
Retrieved from <https://chosonpath.com/category/south-korea/>
- Claire Lee. (2016). Reasons for divorce have changed since '50s in South Korea: Study.
Retrieved from
http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20160617000753&fbclid=IwAR2ZyTb0P8fPb20djrOI7_EibzPiN2B0Dfxl_8b-YwX2na2VPlp9Nh7_YxO
- Daeho Kim. (2018). Changes in Korean Society Since 1980 in: "Media Governance in Korea 1980-2017. p.21-29
- Daniel Chandler. (2017). Semiotics for Beginners.
- Daniel Murdock. (2003-2019). How Economic Systems Influence Social structure.
Retrieved from <https://study.com/academy/lesson/how-economic-systems-influence-social-structure.html>
- David Crow. (2016). *Visible Signs: An Introduction to Semiotics in the Visual Arts*. 50
Bedford. Square London: Bloombury. p.62-63
- David Goldblatt. (1996). Social Theory and the Environment.

- Denny Roy. (2019). Economic and Social issue in South Korea. Retrieved from <https://www.eastwestcenter.org/research/visiting-fellow-programs/posco-visiting-fellowship-program/economic-and-social-aspects-of-korea-related-issues>
- Donald Stone Macdonald. (1998). *The Koreans Contemporary Politics and Society*. the United States of America by Westview Press.p.188
- Faraz Haider. (2017). Countries with the largest aging population in the world. Retrieved from https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/countries-with-the-largest-aging-population-in-the-world.html?fbclid=IwAR3OgaqN8Xdw6w_Cm-85n-A5tN62G0TE-dp5bA6p4hUc4v4BebMLOGs_FCU
- Greer Brodie-Hall. (2018). The Sampo Generation: Why We Are Seeing The Lowest Fertility Rate Of All Time? Retrieved from <https://www.theobserver-qiaa.org/the-sampo-generation-why-we-are-seeing-the-lowest-fertility-rate-of-all-time/>
- HANKYOREH, H. C. K. (2014). Divorce rate increasing among elderly couples. Retrieved from http://english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_national/661559.html?fbclid=IwAR1cpr_iGuycPSPFOWKGx7ymKdToW-kUgMr3fdCHt4Xfq8v9797E3pkjk-w
- Harold P. Blum. (2011). The Psychological Birth of Art: Psychoanalytic approach to Prehistoric Cave Art. Retrieved from https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0803706X.2011.597429?fbclid=IwAR0jmuDITx8GZIP6_vKu4dIBP2lulb7lyRnaelRwBJxKF1dm0vDcXC5peNc
- Hee-Yeon Cho Lawrence Surendra and Hyo-Je Cho. (2013). *A Contemporary South Korean Society: A Critical Perspective* the USA and Canada.
- Hee-Yeon Cho, L. S. a. H.-J. C. (2013). *Contemporary South Korean Society: A critical perspective*. the USA and Canada Routledge 711 Third Avenue, New York,,p.55-154
- Hwy-Chang Moon. (2016). *The Strategy for Korea's Economic Success*. the United States of America: Oxford University Press.p.9
- Jack Buchanan (2018). Train to Busan- A Masterpiece of Social Commentary. Retrieved from https://www.filmosophy.co.uk/train_to_busan_social_comemetary.html
- Jang Sung Ran. (2016). 'Busan' Director reflects on film's wild ride: Yeon Sang-ho's first live-action movie was a historic success. Retrieved from <http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/article.aspx?aid=3022477>

- Jessica Rapir. (2018). 'Train to Busan 2' Already In The Works; Gong Yoo & Other Original Cast Members Not Part Of The Sequel. Retrieved from <http://en.koreaportal.com/articles/46071/20180814/train-to-busan-2-already-in-the-works-gong-yoo-other-original-cast-members-not-part-of-the-sequel.htm?fbclid=IwAR2tCkDmDefRiZYy2f7ZFqphCcER-zPhVHIY8ekGig6yTzJ4mvs2WAO50XE>
- Jim Chappelow. (2019). Capitalism Economic system. Retrieved from <https://www.economicshop.org/blog/glossary/capitalist-economic-system/>
- Jonh Frick. (1990). Introduction to Communication Studies.
- Joseph Shin. (2016). Evolution of Divorce Culture in South Korea. Retrieved from <http://koreabizwire.com/evolution-of-divorce-in-korea>.
- Jungjun Lee. (1994). Green Economics. p.321-330
- Kamon Butsaban. (2009). *Strategy of the Economic Development Between South Korea and Thailand During 1960s-1980s*. (Graduate School). Chulalongkorn University, p.53-96
- Kamon Butsaban. (2017). A Comparative Study of Economic Development Planning Organisations of South Korea and Thailand during 1960-1980. *Journal of Social Sciences, Faculty of Political Science Chulalongkorn University*.
- Kaul Vineet. (2014). Representation of Social Issue in Films. *Academic Journal Article Madhya Pradesh Journal of Social Sciences*. Retrieved from <https://www.questia.com/library/journal/1G1-436230259/representation-of-social-issues-in-films>
- Kim H. and Sorensen C. (2011). *Reassessing the Park Chung Her Era 1961-1979: Development, Political Thought, Democracy, and Cultural Influence*: University of Washington Press.
- Kim Hyung Yoon. (1998). *A HANDBOOK OF KOREA*. Seoul, Korea: Korean Oversea Culture and Information Service, p.370
- Kim Kyong Dong. (1986). One Generation in Korean Society. *Korean Journal* 10-22. p.141
- Kim Yung kwon. (1978). *A Handbook of Korea*. Seoul Korea: Korean Overseas Information Service, Ministry of Culture and Information Sejongno 1. p.731-732

- Kwang Yeong Shin. (2013). *Contemporary South Korean Society; A critical perspective*. the USA and Canada Routledge.p.51-55
- Kyong Ju Kim. (2006). *The Development of Modern South Korea State formation, capitalist development and nation identity*. the USA and Canada: Routledge. p.96-110
- Kyung-mi, L. (2014). Divorce rate increasing among elderly couples. Retrieved from http://english.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_national/661559.html?fbclid=IwAR1cpr_iGuycPSPFOWKGx7ymKdToW-kUgMr3fdCHt4Xfq8v9797E3pkjk-w
- Lee Sung-nyong. (1970). Korean Studies Today Development and State of the Field. *the Institute of Asian Studies*. p.290-310
- Lina Jang. (2016). South Korea's Longest River Suffers from Pollution and Declining Fish Stocks. Retrieved from <http://koreabizwire.com/south-koreas-longest-river-suffers-from-pollution-and-declining-fish-stocks/62973?fbclid=IwAR0XVtq-KUH6UpLRU7Vv9bWDzaSCOiUKfX6ROiNSzFbnKR0Ylf44xYZCC0>
- New Straits Times. (2018). SamSung Electronics apologises for factory cancer cases. Retrieved from <https://www.nst.com.my/world/2018/11/433799/samsung-electronics-apologises-factory-cancer-cases>
- Nity&Gaurav Singh. (2017). *Role and impact of media on society: A sociological approach with respect to demonetisation*. Ambedkar University, India.
- Norimitsu Onishi. (2003). Divorce in South Korea: Striving a New Attitude. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2003/09/21/world/divorce-in-south-korea-striking-a-new-attitude>.
- Park Tae Gyun. (2016). Three Decisive Scenes from the Candlelight Rallies in South Korea, 2016-2017.
- Paul Long and Tim Wall. (2009). *Media Studies Texts, Production and Context*. Italy: Rotolito Lombarda p.37-45
- Pisish Kuntatip. (1994). *Legal dimension of national economic and social development plan,* Master dissertation. (Master). Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. p.222
- Pyo Han-hyung. (2009). South Korea's Looming Aging Crisis Demographic Change & Challenges of Graying Ahead. 26-27.

- Rockwell, L. H. (1997). Capitalism and the Burger Wars. Retrieved from https://mises.org/library/capitalism-and-burger-wars?fbclid=IwAR0-Lt-0rA-gFEb6rJZlj7VWkfkxjT1oM821o9aAsvXO5WW_ImXRdu88J_E
- Simon Maybin. (2018). Why I never want babies. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/stories-45201725>
- Tejvan Pettinger. (2017). Problems of Capitalism. Retrieved from https://www.economicshelp.org/blog/77/economics/problems-of-capitalism/?fbclid=IwAR3x6LsZynvhsI0wj9ZCEaj0D9pz-gyv5D-OcnsE_y8iKY_Oh7hMLWL9zss
- Thomas Kalinowski and Sang-yong Rhyu. (2018). South Korea Report. p.16-17
- Tony Schirato and Jen Webb. (2004). *Understanding the Visual*. Australia: 83 SAGE Publications Ltd, Alexander Street CROWS NEST NSW 2065.
- Uk Heo and Terence Roehrig. (2010). *South Korea since 1980*. the United States of America: Cambridge University Press.p.78
- Variety. (2016). Korea Box Office: Runaway ‘Train to Busan’ Smashes Record. Retrieved from <https://variety.com/2016/film/asia/korea-box-office-train-to-busan-smashes-records-1201821937/>
- Vikas Shah. (2011). The Role of Film in Society. Retrieved from <https://thoughteconomics.com/the-role-of-film-in-society/?fbclid=IwAR1cphmYrDjiWLVlnx05JjD3D9Bgg06h--GZo5lX81fTFKBYmZn4T7HL88>
- World Population review. (2018). Most Polluted Countries 2020. Retrieved from <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/most-polluted-countries/>
- Wright, E. O. (1985). *Classes*.
- Yoshiko Okuyama. (2015). *Japanese mythology in film: Japanese mythology in film a semiotic approach to reading Japanese film and anime*. the United State of America: Lexington Book. p.3-4
- Youna Kim. (2017). *Routledge Handbook of Korean Culture and Society*. New York, NY 10017, British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data: Routledge.p.63
- Yue Qian. (2019). Why young people in South Korea are staying single despite efforts to spark dating. Retrieved from <https://theconversation.com/why-young-people-in-south-korea-are-staying-single-despite-efforts-to-spark-dating->

[111486?fbclid=IwAR0PQ_RhrniKgyZxkAml9mqbvB0giPkGxBHu99MiW9B0M1jpoEZXYnt31M](https://www.facebook.com/IwAR0PQ_RhrniKgyZxkAml9mqbvB0giPkGxBHu99MiW9B0M1jpoEZXYnt31M)



จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย
CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY

VITA

NAME Souwaluck Sungnoi
DATE OF BIRTH 29 Sep 1994
PLACE OF BIRTH Trang
INSTITUTIONS ATTENDED Prince of SongKla University Hatyai Campus
HOME ADDRESS 689/1233 Supalai Veranda Ratchavipha-Prachachune
Prachachune Road Prachachune District Bangkok10800

