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THE PROBLEMS OF AMERICAN SOCIETY IN THE POST WORLD WAR II AND ITS IMAGINARY SOLUTION AS REFLECTED IN J. D. SALINGER'S THE CATCHER IN THE RYE

TESIS

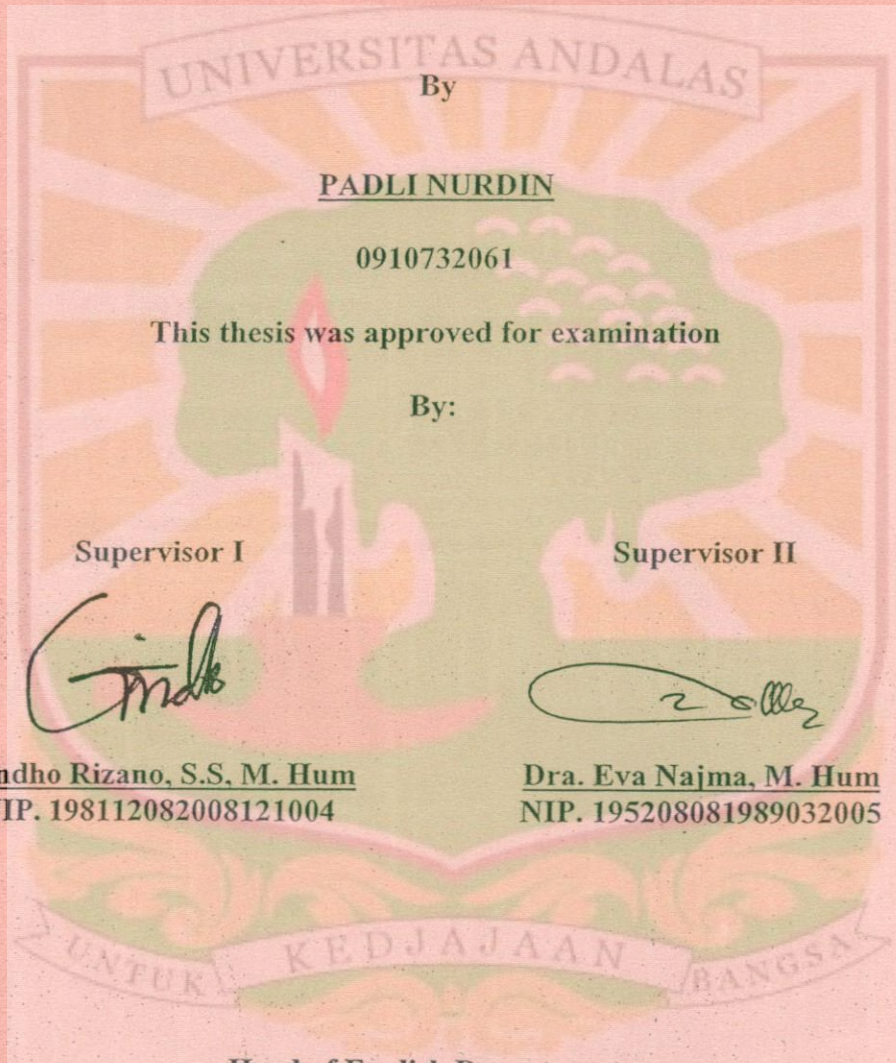


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THE PROBLEMS OF AMERICAN SOCIETY IN THE POST WORLD WAR II
AND ITS IMAGINARY SOLUTION
AS REFLECTED IN J. D. SALINGER'S THE CATCHER IN THE RYE



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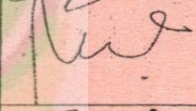

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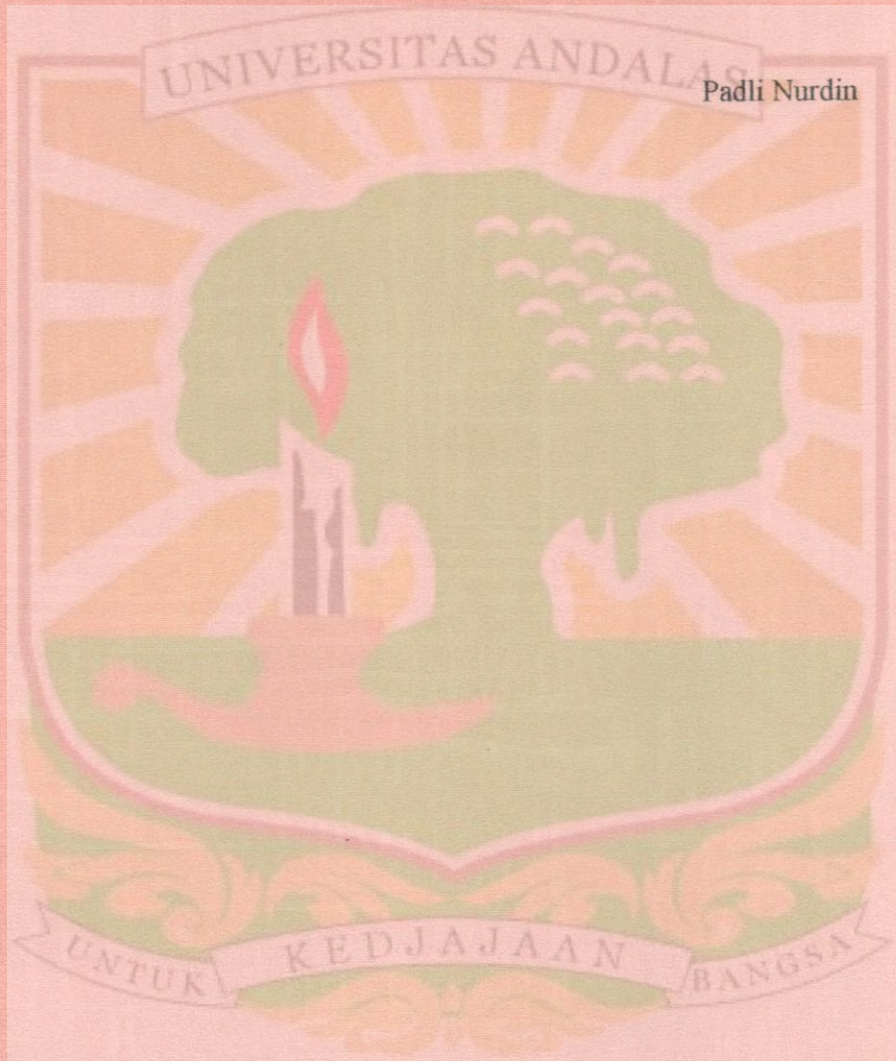


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Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been submitted yet neither in the same or different form. To my knowledge, there has not been any form idea written or published by others except who are referred to this thesis and mentioned in the references.

Padang, 2015



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For those who are believe in my existence in this world.

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ABSTRAK

The Catcher in the Rye karya J. D. Salinger diterbitkan pertama kali pada tahun 1951. Novel ini bercerita tentang seorang remaja yang dikeluarkan dari sekolah dan mencoba untuk lari dari kehidupan sosialnya. Penulis menduga dalam novel ini terdapat cerminan komodifikasi dan alienasi yang terjadi pada masyarakat Amerika pasca Perang Dunia ke-II. Untuk menganalisa novel ini, penulis memakai teori Marxis dari Karl Marx dan Utopia dari Fredric Jameson. Penulis menemukan bahwa karya ini mendeskripsikan komodifikasi yang terjadi pada masyarakat Amerika pasca Perang Duniake-II. Dari komodifikasi tersebut, berkembanglah alienasi yang terjadi pada sebagian besar masyarakat dewasa Amerika. Terakhir, novel ini juga memberikan solusi imajiner dari komodifikasi dan alienasi untuk menghasilkan masyarakat yang sempurna.

Kata kunci: *Post World War II, Commodification, Alienation, Utopian Impulse,*



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Background of the Research

Some literary theorists, such as Georg Lukacs or Friedrich Engels, agree that literary works are the reflection of what happened in the real world. The writer can bring people's life as a story with a different name of characters with different characteristic. Even though a lot of people say that the story just the imagination of the writer, undoubtedly, the story conscious or unconsciously represents the real life of the writer. With their story, a literary work can be used as a critique of the phenomena in their society. Their critique can be found in the literary works implicitly or explicitly in the story. Then, some of the literary works also have their own solution for the problems that they critique as the message or symbol in their writing.

As one of the literary works that reflects the real world, the Catcher in the Rye by J. D. Salinger illuminates the condition of the United States from the main characters' point of view as the teenager. Published in 1951, this book is one of the best influenced books in the United States. The book itself portrays American middle-upper class social condition in the 1950s, which is barely escaped from the Great Depression that happen in the United Stated until the 1940s. As a winner of World War II, America becomes one of the most powerful nation in the world. Despite their powerful economic development, there were some moral degradation

that occurs in their society and the most influenced is the teenagers. Keith Booker stated in his books The Post-Utopian Imagination: American Culture in the Late 1950s,

The greatest American fear of the long 1950s ... [are] feared the increasingly uppity children of blacks and poor whites, who seemed, in the guise of juvenile delinquents, to be more and more of a threat; and they even feared their own middle-class children, who were getting out of hand, held in thrall by such sinister phenomena as rock and roll music, with its suspiciously African American rhythms and its seemingly Satanic impact on the young. (7)

Using teenagers as the main character, this novel talk about teenager's behavior in the society of its time. Being expelled from his school, Holden Caulfield, the main character, goes to New York rather than going home to his house in Manhattan. In his journey from school and arrived in New York, he feels that many people that he meet was "phony". He found out that he has been surrounded by phony adults around him.

As his runaway continues, there are also many problems that he found due to his adulthood process. The problem sometimes happens because he realized the adult world that he found was so different from what they see when he was a kid; confusing, intriguing and –from his own language, "phony". Even though he wants to escape from the society that he thinks is phony, he still has to remain in the society, not just for himself, but also for his sister, to protect and prevent her to do so.

The writer chooses to analyze this book for some reasons; first, this book was the most well-known books by J. D. Salinger.”Within two weeks of its 1951 release, J.D. Salinger’s novel rocketed to No. 1 on the New York *Times* best-seller list.” (Time.com: 2008) This book is also widely known as one of the most controversial books in the United States and the world. Because so many prohibited words used, like bastard, goddamn, and even chrissake written in this book, made the book had been banned in United States. Bennet and Nicholas stated in their book, Introduction to Literature, Criticism, and Theory,

Similarly, J.D. Salinger’s novel *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951) was held responsible for the antisocial behavior of numerous young men in the United States in the 1950s and early 1960s who identified with the disaffected hero Holden Caulfield. The young, in fact, are often considered (by the old) to be in danger of mimetic dissipation, to endanger themselves, their families and society because they identify with and then copy the actions and attitudes of disreputable people in books or, more recently, in film and video. (63)

One library in the United States banned it for violating on “excess vulgar language, sexual scenes, things concerning moral issues, excessive violence and anything dealing with the occult” (Time.com).

Second, the writer assumes that the Catcher in the Rye reflects the social condition of the United States in the era when the story has been made. The novel portrays the social condition in the beginning of 1950s. This novel becomes one of

the witnesses of the peak American economic condition after winning the World War II.

Third, this novel considered as a critique of the society itself. Later on, the writer assumes that this works criticize the capitalist ideology which occurs in American society. Based on the main reason above, this research is entitled **The Problems of American Society in the Post World War II and Its Imaginary Solution as seen in J. D. Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye**.

1.2 Identification of the Problem

The Catcher in the Rye portrays the middle-upper class society in the United States with the main characters' point of view as teenagers. In his perspective, this world is full of phonies' people; people who are doing something not because they like it, but because they must do it.

This research focuses on analyzing the commodification in society as reflected in the novel and how the condition can affect alienation to Holden Caulfield and some characters besides him. Then, the writer assumes that this novel has Salinger's thought of commodification in the Holden Caulfield's mind, the imaginary utopia from the symbol of the catcher in the rye.

1.3 Scope of the Research

Based on the problems explained above, this research focuses on answering these questions:

1. Commodification in society as reflected in The Catcher in the Rye.
2. The effect of commodification to the society as seen in The Catcher in the Rye.
3. The imaginary utopian symbol in The Catcher in the Rye.

1.4 The Objective of the Research

This study is aimed to examine how commodification in society as seen in the United States' society and how commodification in the American society post World War II affect the main character. Then, the writer analyzes how Salinger symbolizes the imaginary utopia of the commodified society from the main character's mind.

1.5 The Review of Previous Studies

In conducting the research, the writer uses some references to strengthen to analyze of the novel. There are some previous studies that can be used. First, is Mona Putri Rahmi's thesis, a student of English Department Student from Andalas University, titled "Commodification by Bourgeoisie Class as Seen in John Steinbeck's The Pearl: A Marxist Study" (2004). This thesis analyzes the impact of commodification in Mexican society in the late 1930s. The writer found that commodification in Mexican society had the negative effect to the proletariat, or Indian which is commodified and later adore the commodity (or the pearl). From this thesis, we can focus on the commodification that happened in the society.

Then, Renée R. Curry, Professor of English, Dean of the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences at California State University, Monterey Baywrote an essay titled Holden Caulfield is not a Person of Colour. Curry focused on a new

study called 'critical whiteness study'. In her essay, she stated that Holden Caulfield could represent the 'American youth in American society' with his juvenile delinquency and the 'drop-out' mentality, but in the end, he cannot represent universal youth from every youth around the world. He just represents American youth from his experience in his white body. This essay will help us know about Holden Caulfield and his own perception about American society from teenagers' perspective.

Other essays like an article titled Trauma, Mourning and Self-(re)fashioning in The Catcher in the Rye by Dennis Jonnes. He is Professor of English and Cultural Studies at Kitakyushu University, Japan. This essays talk about the trauma that Holden's get when he lost his little sister when World War II. Jonnes analyzes Holden's trauma as the reflection of Salinger's trauma of World War. In the end, Jonnes concluded that Holden is Salinger's runagate from his own trauma and how he responds to his deep sense of loss situation. Then, it can be related into his utopian impulse thought in The Catcher in the Rye.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

This research will focus on mimetic theory; a literary work is a reflection of the real world. In M. H. Abram's Glossary of Literary Terms, he stated that, "In his *Poetics*, Aristotle defines poetry [literary work] as an imitation (in Greek, mimesis) of human actions. (See criticism.) By "imitation" he means something like "representation,"" (123). Aristotle define the literary works as the imitation of the real

worlds. Then, we can compare the literary works with the worlds as the witnesses of the society itself.

Hence, the writer applies Marxist criticism as the basic criticism to the novel. Marxism sees class struggling, in this case when Salinger tried to suppress his thought facing the common ideologies that believed in his society, the ideologies of capitalism. Peter Barry states in his book, Beginning Theory, Marxist sees literary works that:

...constantly formed by their social context in ways which they themselves would usually not admit. This is true not just of the content of their works but even of formal aspects of their writing which might at first seem to have no possible political overtones (158).

Marxist theory sees the literary works influenced by the social condition of the author, even though the critique seems invisible at first. Influenced by this theory, this research uses Jameson's same perspective of seeing a literary work; where the literary work is a critic of the common ideological in the society. In his book, Political Unconscious, he states that "...certain text have social and historical – sometimes even political resonance" (1). The writer sees the Catcher in the Rye as Salinger's reaction to the ideologies that restraining him.

Furthermore, in this research, the writer will analyze the commodification that occurs in the society by using Marxist theory. Commodification is making something becomes commodity. Marx defines in Capital: A Critique of Politic Economy, that

human labor who becomes commodity "...has value only because abstract human labour is objectified [vergegenständlicht] or materialized in it" (129). The commodification happens because capitalism ideology wants to see humans as the object to be used or materialized.

The commodification brings negative impacts to the society. Marx also states in his book, Economic And Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, that "In the conditions dealt with by political economy this realization of labor appears as a loss of reality for the workers; objectification as loss of the object and object-bondage; appropriation as estrangement, as alienation" (71). Alienation commonly occurs in the capitalist country which human labor be restrained from the product that they made, "... the worker becomes a slave of his object" (72). Marx classifies alienation into four parts; the worker alienation from the work, from the working activity, from himself as the maker of the product, and the alienation nature potential as human beings. People are not seeing each other as a human being, but as the object, "Hence, within the relationship of estranged labor each man views the other in accordance with the standard and the position in which he finds himself as a worker" (79).

Aside from the problem description, the writer also analyzes the symbol of imaginary utopia which is considered as the imaginary solution to the problems above. Utopia is the term that firstly used by Thomas More in his novel, Utopia(1551). Utopia is a place builds by General Utopus where there are no wars; a peaceful place that people lived peacefully even when they have a different religion. And the using utopia as a term in Marxism as brought by Ernst Bloch, a German

Marxist philosopher who introduced the critique that demonstrate the error of the bourgeois culture and ideology. His book, the Principle of Hope (published in 1954), describes the utopian concept of ‘something better’ from what we see in our real life; focused on social and political utopians, including technology and ideology. It is same with Jameson thought in his books, Marxism and Form:

For Utopian thinking may be said to unite both the philosophical and the artistic impulse.... The impulse of fantasy, in which alone the pleasure principle remains pure and unrepressed, now negates the existing real world... (111)

Jameson sees literary works as the reflection of the perfect works that people wanted: the things that barely or never existed in the real world. The writer escapes from real work and try to find the utopia from their writing. Like what Terry Eagleton and Drew Milne says in their books, Marxist Literary Theory (1996), that “interpretation grasps literary works as symbolic practices which provide imaginary and ideological solutions to otherwise unresolved socio-political contradictions” (1). The literary works critique the society and produce their own analysis on what is the perfect society.

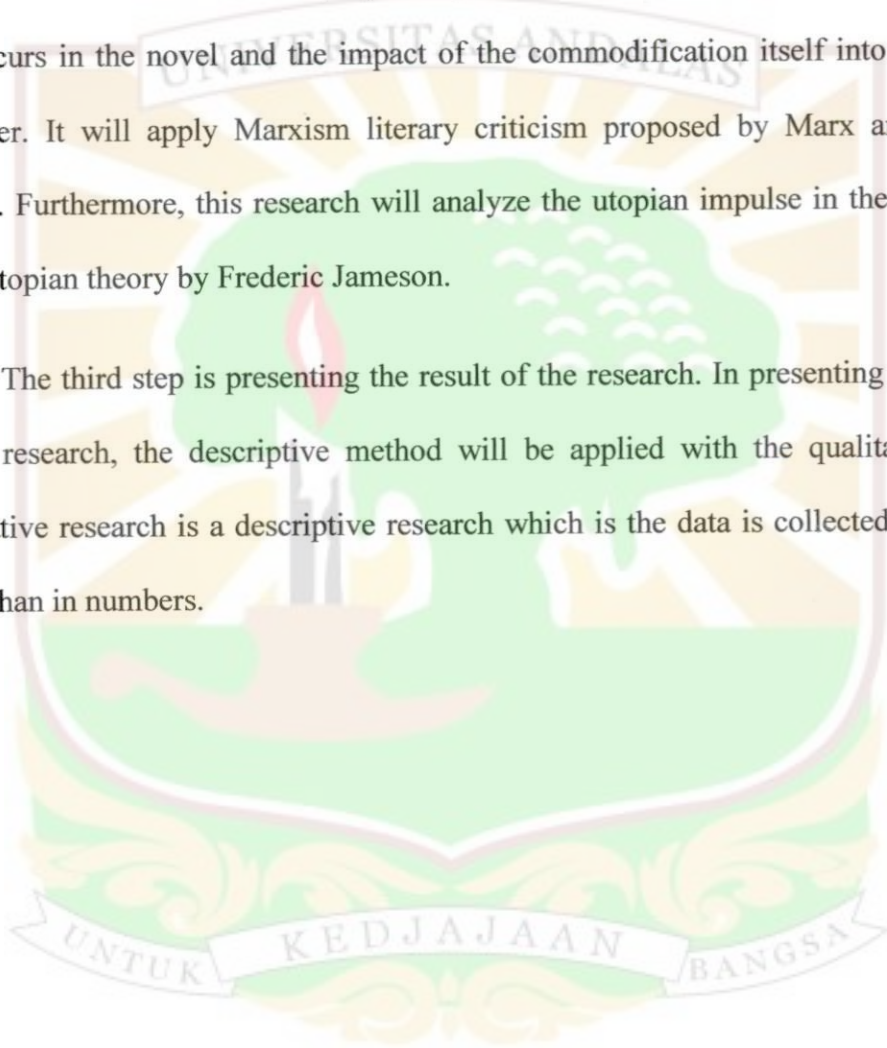
1.7 The Method of the Research

In conducting the research, there are some steps to be followed. First is collecting the data. The primary data from this research is the narrative data from The

Catcher in the Rye novel. And the secondary data are taken from literary theory books and article related to this study. These data are collected by reading the books, articles, and browsing the internet.

The next step is analyzing the data. The referential method will be used to identify some Marxism's issues, especially from the commodification in the society that occurs in the novel and the impact of the commodification itself into the main character. It will apply Marxism literary criticism proposed by Marx and Georg Lukacs. Furthermore, this research will analyze the utopian impulse in the novel by using utopian theory by Frederic Jameson.

The third step is presenting the result of the research. In presenting the result of the research, the descriptive method will be applied with the qualitative one. Qualitative research is a descriptive research which is the data is collected in words rather than in numbers.



CHAPTER II

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS: THE INTRINSIC ELEMENTS OF

J. D. SALINGER'S THE CATCHER IN THE RYE

Literary work has both intrinsic and extrinsic elements that have been made up to build the story. Both of the elements also can be used to make people understand the story and interpret the literary works properly. Then, the interpretation of the literary works can be seen through the intrinsic elements of the works first. The understanding of the intrinsic elements can lead us to know better about what the literary works mostly talk about.

Later on, this chapter will present about the preliminary analysis of the intrinsic elements of J. D. Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye. It focused on the plot, character, setting, point of view, and the theme of the story to get the main analysis relating to the theory and approach used.

2.1 Plot

Plot is the logical interaction of the various thematic elements of a text which lead to a change of the original situation as presented at the outset of the narration. Klarer divided the plot into four parts, exposition, complication, climax and resolution(15). The plot can be divided into what happen in the beginning of the story, the action when the story runs into climax, and the ending of the story where the situations are changed from the beginning.

The story takes place around the 1950s in the United States, before Christmas, a Saturday afternoon when there is a football game in Pencey Prep. This is a school where Holden Caulfield, a sixteen year old teenager, our main character who narrates the whole story. He comes from middle and upper class society and based on the school that he attends is mostly a prestigious school. The story develops where he is dropped out because he failed in four of five subjects that he took, except English.

Being expelled, then he goes to Manhattan, where he sees many of the people that he met were full of falsities; the prostitute that he met, his old teacher, Mr. Antolini, and his own brother; D.B. has been changed into a phony person. Because he thinks most of the adults that he met was phony, his lack of trust to the adult has been grown. He totally found himself built a wall of defense of his own environment in his adulthood. In this part, Holden's believe that every adult is phony.

His distrust of adult makes him want to run away from the real world. He wants to run away from his life, but suddenly his sister, Phoebe wants to go with him. He takes Phoebe to the park, and when Phoebe wants to ride a carousel, he bought a ticket for her. The climax is when the rain pouring, Holden sits on the couch in the park and sees Phoebe who is happy riding a carousel. His mind is changing, from a teenager who wants to go from his own life, suddenly he realizes what he should do; became a guardian for his sister, Phoebe. He must be a guardian who keeps her from a negative impact of adulthood, which is being a phony like many adults do.

The resolution is when Holden goes back home. He is getting sick because of rain and keep asked by a psychoanalyst about when he will go to school again. He feels like he doesn't only think about himself, but also about others where he found out that he sort of miss everybody that had been told in the story.

2.2 Characters

Characters can be a human or a figure. M. H. Abrams in the book A Glossary of Literary Terms explained that,

“Characters are the persons represented in a dramatic or narrative work, who are interpreted by the reader as being endowed with particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities by inferences from what the persons say and their distinctive ways of saying it—the dialogue—and from what they do—the action (23).

Lyman A. Baker is dividing character into static and dynamic characters. He defines a static character as “...the one that does not undergo important change in the course of the story, remaining essentially the same at the end as he or she was at the beginning” (Static" and "Dynamic" Characterization). Dynamic character based on Baker is “...one that does undergo an important change in the course of the story” (Static" and "Dynamic" Characterization). Furthermore, he explained that the dynamic character, not only change in circumstances, but also in some sense within the character or commitment, in value.

2.2.1 Holden Caulfield

Holden Caulfield is the main character of the story. The story involves on his journey and his own opinion about what happened in his society. Grown up from a high-middle class environment, dropped out from school four times and he also dropped out from Pencey prep because of failing four of five subjects. He comes from an upper middle class society where some the school that he attend isa prestigious school in America.

Then, He has some difficulty of making a relationship to other people, where he thinks lots of adults is a phony. This prejudice rises because he sees people pretend to be who they do not like because they have to. Such as his brother, become a “prostitute” in Hollywood, while Holden’s believe that his brother loves to write short story, or his headmaster who is being nice only to the rich parent that he met.

Later on, he also criticizes people who make a relationship not because of they want, but because they have to. He is a man who admires a pure relationship, a relationship that when you leave, you know that you leave them. Like what he says,” I mean I’ve left school and places I didn’t even know I was leaving them. I hate that” (4).

But, in the other side, he likes to talk with Ernest Morrow’s mother because he felt that she cares about him even they just met at that moment, when she sees Holden’s nose bleeding, he feels touched. He enjoyed talking to her, “I said I’d enjoyed talking to them a lot, too. I meant it, too. I’d have enjoyed it even more

though, I think” (112). Then after all, the person he liked too much is his sister, Phoebe, who always make him smile when he talk about her. He even started to cry when Phoebe lends him all of her money even she has few of money (179).

Based on the fact above, we surely know that Holden is a boy who prefer to talk and has a good chat with other people and shows their true self rather than being phony and do whatever they do not want to do. Besides, he likes any human relationship. He does not differentiate human to other human or making friend just because of money or reputation.

2.2.2. Phoebe Caulfield

Holden's sister who become his favored after his brother Allie died. She is a kind girl who cares so much about Holden. When she heard that Holden dropped out from school, she gets angry, because she knows that their parents will be mad. “You did get kicked out! You did!” Old Phoebe said. Then she hit me on the leg with her fist” (165). Later on, when Holden wants to borrow some money, where he says he only needs two bucks, Phoebe gave all of her money, eight dollars and sixty-five cent, and she says that she does not need it all, and Holden started to cry (179).

It indicates how Phoebe can change Holden when we see that she is the person who can make him cry. And in the end, Phoebe is the reason why Holden can be mature, where Phoebe looks like the innocent one, she can be a good sister that helps Holden when he need something. He unnerved by Phoebe's kindness and he

thought that was great, where people can help others rather than they keeps everything by themselves.

2.2.3. Allie Caulfield

“My brother D.B.’s a writer and all, and my brother Allie, the one that died, that I told you about, was a wizard. I’m the only really dumb one.” (67). He is Holden’s brother, two years younger than him, but died on July 18 1946. In his opinion, Allie is the “fifty times as intelligent” as he is, he keeps adore him. Even, he broke the windows until his fist cannot feel anything to wreak his anger because of Allie’s death (38-39).

In the story, Allie is the one who Holden thought is the best. He is not phony, and he is the nicest with everything he did. “He never got mad at anybody” (38). He can laugh where that makes Holden laugh too. Holden sounds excited when he talked about Allie, it felt in the way he talks about him. In the end, Allie is the primary reason why Holden thinks he should take care of Phoebe; he does not want to lose someone that he likes anymore.

2.2.4 D.B

D.B is a script writer in the Hollywood. He is Holden’s brother who first was a writer who made a short story, the Secret Goldfish that Holden like. In the beginning, Holden talks about him, where he likes his brother when he became a writer, but hated him when he became a “prostitute” as a scriptwriter in the Hollywood.

He is a good brother, he usually drives Holden home. But Holden suddenly does not like him so much because his job in Hollywood, because Holden knows that he like to be a writer than a scriptwriter. He is the person that Holden dislike, doing something because of he must to, not because he like to. D. B is the first person that Holden thinks is phony, to do anything that he does not like because of money.

2.2.5 Jane Gallagher

She never appears in the novel, but just from Holden's viewpoint that tell her as a great girl who he likes. But Holden likes her not from a romance aspects, it is because she is smart and attractive. The thing that he does not like is the fact when Jane goes out with Stradlater and the possibility of her just being used because Stradlater does not love her.

2.2.6 Stradlater

He is Holden's roommate in Pencey prep. He is one of the guys who are good in sport and becomes famous in the school. Holden dislikes him because he dated a girl that he likes. In fact, Stradlater dated her because he just wants to have sex with her, which is what Holden hate the most. Even Holden himself admits Stradlater sex appeal as "sexy bastard", he dislikes his attitude that just wants to have sex because he can.

2.2.7 Sally Hayes

She is Holden's old friend. From the novel, we can see that he likes Sally because he stated "I used to think she was quite intelligent. ...because she know quite a lot about the theater and plays and literature and all that stuff" (105). But later in the novel, he already thinks that Sally is the same phony people like others. She just wants to see the theater because she wants others knows how she knows quite a lot about theatre and literature.

Besides his dislike to Sally, he thinks "She gave me pain in the ass, but she was very good looking" (106). In the story, she is the one who Holden wants to be with in his run away from the city. He asks Sally to be with him to go away, find a job, and later going married. But unfortunately, Sally does not want to go with him.

2.3 Setting

The term "setting" denotes the location, historical period, and social surroundings in which the action of a text develops (Klarer: 25). The setting of this novel is around the 1950s in the United States. The story involves into some domain in the United States, such as New York, Manhattan and Pennsylvania. Even though four schools that had been dropped out Holden have not been named, his current school is in Pennsylvania, in Pencey Prep.

The story tells about a young United States teenager who represents the teenagers in 1950s era. Takes place after World War II where the United States had built up their own economic aspect. The story describes what happen in the era, the

degradation of morality, especially from the adults where the main character found that many people who are phony. Use New York as the setting of the place in the novel strengthen the indication of the degradation of morality in a big city that described by Salinger. As a big city, the society, especially the teenager snared of freestyle of living; free sex, alcohol and prostitution. This idea occurs in the novel where surrounding with the controversy of the teenagers on coming of age in the United States.

2.4 Points of View

“The term point of view, or narrative perspective, characterizes the way in which a text presents persons, events, and settings” (Klarer: 20). Salinger use “first person point of view” for this novel from a sixteen old year Holden Caulfield point of view. Be a teenager, Holden talks about his society from his own opinion in a way of a teenager from that era speak. Even though be a controversy around the country, but by using many of prohibited words, such as bastard, goddam, and even the “F” word, Salinger surely put the representative characteristic of a troubled teenager in that era.

Based on the point of view itself, he put his own thought as the way of Holden’s thinking about his society. Where the thought is from the teenager, it is different when the speaker was from the adult. Because the adult will be make many refutations of what other adult do, such as because of their environment which make them become phony.

The using of teenagers, more like a child than a growing teenager, point of view will make opinion come from the innocent thought of a human who see another human as a living creature, not as a tool for getting money. We see that a teenager, in this case, Holden, he has no interest of getting money. Later on, we can say that the using of first person point of view in this novel used to strengthen the opinion of the writer himself, who see the human relationship as pure relation from human to another human.

2.5 Theme

Theme is a main idea of the story. Childs and Fowler in the Routledge Dictionary of Literary Terms, said that,

“A theme is always a subject, but a subject is not always a theme: a theme is not usually thought of as the occasion of a work of art, but rather a branch of the subject which is indirectly expressed through the recurrence of certain events, images or symbols” (239).

The *Catcher in the Rye* mostly talks about a teenager who sees the world by his own opinion, found out that mostly adult act phony in their life. Phony as the society makes people do something that they do not like.

In his opinion, he felt that the society cannot prevent people from being phony, mostly the adult. He sees many people pretend to be good just in front of some people. They do not want to show their own self to others. So, the central theme of the *Catcher in the Rye* is “teenager’s rebellion from adulthood.”

Chapter III

The Problem of American Society Post World War II And

Its Imagery Solution as Seen in the Catcher in the Rye

The Catcher in the Rye talks about the teenager who want to run away from his life which is surrounded by the adult that he thinks is phony. The story revolves around Caulfield's surroundings which are coming from the middle-upper class society. The phoniness that happens in the society makes the main character realized the problems. Later, he realized that the adult world that he found was so different from what he see when he were a child; it is confusing and has many intrigues. In the adult world, it is common for people having a relationship based on how others can be used for their own benefit. We can consider it as a commodified society; the condition where the value human being just as object for others.

This chapter will point out J. D. Salinger's The Catcher in the Rye as the reflection of the American society post World War II. It represents the social condition of the United States around the 1950s where the United States uprising from its Great Depression. Consequently, the novel embeds the problem that occurs in the American society post World War II and the imagery solution that has been symbolized from the main character who want to be the catcher in the rye. The problem that will be discussed is the commodification and alienation that develop in the American society.

We can see how this novel points out the commodified society. From a teenager's perspective, we can analyze how it describes the problem in the American society and in the deeper scale reaches utopia of what the society should be from the symbols of the catcher in the rye.

3.1 Commodification in the American Society Post World War II as Seen in the Catcher in the Rye

Survived from the Great Depression, America improved its economic development after winning World War II. Americans reached their supreme economic prosperity at that time. Keith Brooker explained in his book, The Post-Utopian Imagination: American Culture in the Long 1950s, about the social condition of Americans after World War II. He described,

... Emerging from the World War II as the most powerful nation on the earth, America occupied a position of global prominence it had never had before. ... For another, the new prosperity of the 1950s occurred within the context of a consumerist ethic that derived its energies from the creation of a never-ending and unquenchable desire that, by its very nature, made true satisfaction impossible. However, wealthy it might have appeared to be, America at the time was beset with a panoply of anxieties, arising from a set of social, economic, and political problems the increasing complexity of which rendered them more and more intractable” (1-2).

Furthermore, undergo the shocking of different economic condition, from the Great Depression to the most powerful nation makes the Americans just focused on their own wealth. Moreover, by Brooker own perspective, "...arising from a set of social, economic, and political problems the increasing complexity of which rendered them more and more intractable" (2). Their ego and individualism increasing and it makes the society individualistic and people often competed each other to get the wealth. As Martin Halliwell stated in his book, *American Culture in the 1950s*, "But many of the debates in the 1950s revolved around different levels of culture, with the term 'mass culture' suggesting that 'consumption' had replaced 'activity' as the dominant mode of cultural behaviour" (13).

Capitalist ideology, undeniably, becomes the one of the seed of humanity problem. The commodification in the society develops from the economic system that forces people to compete each other. Dowling stated in his book, *Jameson, Althausen, Marx: Introduction to Political Unconscious* that the economic system, "...Determined the particular system of social relations that characterizes each stage of historical development: the relations constituting the capitalist system in which we now live" (46) represent the social relationship as the commodity.

Hence, we can see the representation of the commodification in the society, especially in the American post World War II in J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*. It infiltrates the society in many aspects. This sub chapter will divide the commodification that occurs into the changing of human relationship and love being a commodity.

3.1.1 Human Relationship as a Commodity

As the reflection of the Americans post World War II society, this novel represents the social condition which people are being individualistic. The relationship becomes a tool that can be used in one's necessity. Based on the main character's point of view, this work shows the people who gain benefit from their relationship. In the story, based on Caulfield's opinion, lots of the adults in the society are a phony. Instead of doing something because they want to, they do it on purpose to get advantages. They befriend with others because they have a hidden intention; to gain the profits and utilizing their friends just an object to reach what they want. Their relationship becomes a commodity; people talk to you as you are their object, not as a human being.

Commodification takes everything as an object. Zitta analyzes Lukacs thought about objectification in his books, George Lukacs Marxism Alienation, Dialects, Revolution: A Study about Utopia and Ideology discusses on:

... how objectification prevents human reason from penetrating to the essence of phenomena to perceive them as creatures of man. Man, who rationally grasps the laws of environment, grasps them only in a contemplative manner, and ignores that they are but human activity (155).

Lukacs criticizes how people divided other people just as a thing to be used, not as their existence as a human being. Zitta also explains the commodity structure of capitalism ideology that "... depersonalizing and dehumanizing character, because

human beings are derogated in it to mere objects, subjected to a system of a-human commodity exchange” (173). Human relationship changes from pure knowing—befriend into using other as objects. He stated that,

A man in this system, Lukacs might venture to claim (as Marx did before him), who happens to be making a living as an insurance salesman, for example, is compelled, because of the 'intervention' of reification into his consciousness, to perceive his human and interpersonal relationships as relationships between objects, between prospective clients for his products; he sees and seeks even friends not as friends and persons as prospects, as victims of an eventual transaction (173).

Salinger criticizes the human relationship which sees others as an object. As the narrator, there are so many evidences from the objectification of human relationship that be stressed by Holden. First, he tells us about his headmaster of his former high school, Mr. Haas.

One of the biggest reasons I left Elkton Hills was because I was surrounded by phonies.... For instance, the had this headmaster, Mr. Haas, that was the phoniest bastard I ever met in my life.... Old Haas went around shaking hands with everybody's parent when they drove up to school. He'd be charming as hell and all. Except if some boy had little old funny-looking parents (13-14).

Any human relation has turned into a relationship that people act just to gain profit from others. Mr. Haas, he has been kind just to whoever he thinks is rich or

wealthy. When he feels the parents are “corny-looking” or has “an unfashionable suit”, he just says hello and go away. Furthermore, it also can be seen when Holden goes to the pub and talk to the bartender. He describes the bartender as follows,

He didn't talk to you at all hardly unless you were a big shot or a celebrity or something. If you were a big shot or a celebrity or something, then he was even more nauseating. He'd go up to you and say, with this big charming smile, like he was a helluva swell guy if you knew him, “Well! How's Connecticut? (142).

The bartender and Mr. Haas see people as an object; if they are rich, he will go close to them, but if they do not, he does not want to talk to them. We can assume that their motif be friend with someone because they expect that they will enhance their image if they knows or be friend with a famous or rich people. They find everyone as a gadget that can be used to increase their popularity: how they be friend with someone who is rich or famous.

This tendency also can be identified when Holden calls the friend of his friend, Faith Candefish. First, when Candefish answers the call and do not know who is on the phone, he is arrogant and cranky. After Holden says that he knows Candefish from someone in Princetown, the high school where a lot of wealth's kids learn, she changes her tone into sweet and friendly. “He's a grand person. What's he doing now?’ She was getting friendly as hell, all of a sudden” (65). We can assume

this reaction as phony. People change depends on whomever they met. If the person is famous or rich, they will be friendly and warm.

Furthermore, the relationship among human can be seen with the property or the attribute of someone instead of the characteristic or the quality of the person as human beings. The work criticizes how people keep separating each other because they do not as good as them. Moreover, in the society, the item is showed about how precious we are is the stuff that we have; our clothes, jewelry, trousers, and other stuff that we own. Based on Holden's opinion, Dick Slagle, his roommate is a funny guy. The problem is, he has inexpensive suitcase whilst Holden has an expensive and from Slagle opinion, "bourgeois". Then, he keeps his own suitcase under the bed and put Holden's suitcase in the rack. While Holden tries to hide his suitcase under the bed, Slagle put it back to the rack. The truth is Slagle wants to make people think that Holden's suitcase is his.

He borrowed it off me all the time, but it was bourgeois anyway. ... At first he only used to be kidding when he called my stuff bourgeois, and I didn't give a damn—it was sort of funny, in fact. Then, after a while, you could tell he wasn't kidding any more (108).

Holden claims that it is filthy when people befriend with someone because what they have, such as money, wealth, or their reputation. They are pretending, lying, and be fraud so they can reach the 'upper-class' image. This condition is what

Holden calls 'phony'. In this novel, people brand others not as a human being, but as the object that they used.

Likewise, we can observe the inequality here. "The guys that are on the basketball team stick together, the Catholics stick together, the goddam intellectuals stick together, the guys that play bridge stick together" (131). People are making a bound each of them, and choose the friend that they want to stick off. Our main character experienced this relationship in his previous school,

And they had this goddam secret fraternity that I was too yellow not to join. There was this one pimply, boring guy, Robert Ackley, that wanted to get in. He kept trying to join, and they wouldn't let him. Just because he was boring and pimply (167).

People analyzed the appearances as the indicator to befriend. In this case, the friendship based on the object that they have; the thingifying. "This turning of everything into a commodity, which is something particularly evident in the worlds of art and culture, is precisely reification, the thingifying of all human creative and relational abilities." (Robert: 40). The friendship could not be seen as the human relationship, but human to object that they played.

They think that people should choose their friends. The reason is when someone is popular; the popular ones should not be playing around with unpopular kids. In fact, the friendship is the way for people to assure their image. We cannot

freely choose our friends; the friendship becomes a commodity to increase our prestigious image. We should choose the rich and reputable person to be friends with.

In conclusion, Salinger shows us numerous of fake relationship that occurs in the society; friendship of a teenager whom want to obtain the reputation or an adult to grab a position. We could figure it within Holden's interaction with others. He points out how the phony's society trying to approach him.

3.1.2 Love as a Commodity

Commodification in the society is not only influence about how people befriend or about the relationship between work partner, but also the relationship between lovers. Love, which is acknowledged as the purest things in human life, has been turned out to become a commodity in the society. The society is not seeing love as the pure relationship between human and other human; they turned it out into the relationship between human and their object. The common case is when a man treats women as an object of their lust. As Robert stated in his books,

It is that actual human interaction is metamorphosed into commodities: that society moves towards the position that, for example, the only way one human being can express love for another human being is by entering into the whole world of commodities, by buying things from small gifts all the way up to houses (so that purchasing a house is seen as a 'sign of commitment' rather than what it actually is, the reification of the love itself) (41).

Nevertheless, a relationship because of money often happens in the society, whereas people have a one night stand with the prostitutes. People see the prostitutes as the object of their lust. They pay and do them. Women as an object can be bought too. Once we hire a prostitute, we can buy love. Holden has stated, "In New York, boy, money really talks- (69).

Love, which is an abstract thing, modified into material object that can be traded and bought with money. Furthermore, love can be symbolized as having sex. People can hire a prostitute. This description shows us that the relationship among human which is not caring other human, in this case, the position of woman as an object of man's lust.

Another example is when he talked about Jane Gallagher with Stradlater. He feels upset when Stradlater does not even care about Jane even when they are having a relationship. He says, "You don't even know if her first name is Jane or Jean, ya goddam moron!" (44). He is angry because Stradlater just repute Jane or any other girl just an object that he can use for his own lust.

Holden said, "I think if you don't really like a girl, you shouldn't horse around with her at all, and if you do like her, then you're supposed to like her face," (62). People who like each other purely will appreciate others and do not want to do bad things to people that they love. They have a meaningful relationship that makes them taking care of each other; they just want to use other people for their lust.

Anyhow, both of the examples can be concluded as the impact of commodification. In the examples, it represents the people who buy love. Society sees women as an object for sex instead of as a human being. It also happens to the relationship between Stradlater and Jane, but the difference is when Holden hires a prostitute, he provides the money. Stradlater falsify his feeling and uses Jane as an object of his lust.

3.2 The Alienation as the Impact of Commodification

The term of 'alienation' by Marx in his works can be referred to the alienation of a human to the society. The object that human made become a subject and made human lost their natural position as the subject that made the product. And we will discuss about the alienation of human from their true self, from their natural position; a human.

Human alienation occurs when people did not perceive each other as human, but as an object for them. The relationship happens because they want to take advantage, like to escalate their prestige or image for having a relationship with a rich and reputable person. Sometimes, they also pretend to be prestige and emphasize the image that they use; their clothes, jewelry, cars, prestige high school. They are pretending to be others.

The human relationship also makes people take out their own self and pretending to be someone that maybe they do not like it. Some people are being

alienated to themselves and some people alienated themselves from the corrupt society.

3.2.1. Alienation from Human's Own Potential

The alienation itself commonly refers into people who are being alienated into their own's need. People who act to do something that they did not want to be are called "phony". Phony in Holden thought is doing what they do not want to do. They were not being themselves and should pretend to be or like something. He alienated himself from the school where he thinks that "Even the couple of nice teachers on the faculty, they were phonies, too.... I just didn't like anything that was happening at Pencey" (168-169). In this state, he is tired of everything that happens in his school, where people in the school being phony. Holden stated,

But you should've seen him when the headmaster, old Thurmer, came in the history class and sat down in the back of the room. ... After a while, he'd be sitting back there and then he'd start interrupting what old Spencer was saying to crack a lot of corny jokes. Old Spencer'd practically kill himself chuckling and smiling and all, like as if Thurmer was a goddam prince or something. (168).

Holden feels that we should do what we want to do. But when we are in our job, we should do something to get our boss' heart. Mr. Spencer is obligated to be friendly with Mr. Thurmer because he has a higher position than him. As Zitta said,

... He [Lukacs] shows that human constructs, such as laws, institutions, etc., become estranged from man, do not correspond to his inner need, and that this

leads man to long for different conditions, conditions more in harmony with his inwardness.³ In other words, human constructs become a kind of second nature which man can understand only as he understands nature (first nature) itself, namely through laws and rules that describe its a-human regularity and behavior (149).

A man has been alienated from their true needs, their true potential, and suddenly they should react to being something different from what they want to be. Zitta's description of "do not correspond to his inner need" is explained the alienation that occurs in some characters in this story. In conclusion, some people cannot do what they want, but repressed and should act as their environment want them to be.

People are being phony to reach what they want, even though being something that they do not like. The worst act that Holden hated is change yourself because of money and the job that he does not like the most is a lawyer. He stated,

Lawyers are all right... they're all right if they go around saving innocent guys' lives all the time... Even if you did go around saving guys' lives and all, how would you know if you did it because you really wanted to save guys' lives, or because you did it because what you really wanted to do was be a terrific lawyer, with everybody slapping you on the back and congratulating you in court when the goddam trial was over,... How would you know you weren't being a phony? The trouble is, you wouldn't (172).

This job makes you always defend your client even though you know your client is guilty. Otherwise, you will lose your job. It is Holden's rejection of his father, a lawyer, refers to his own opinion that believed when we want to save people

live, we should do it when we want to. This is the critique of the people who are being alienated into their job. As Marx stated,

This relation is the relation of the worker to his own activity as an alien activity not belonging to him; it is activity as suffering, strength as weakness, begetting as emasculating, the worker's own physical and mental energy, his personal life or what is life other than activity-as an activity which is turned against him, neither depends on nor belongs to him (75).

In this state, the worker is isolated into his own job (production activity). They are not doing something because they want to, but because their job orders them to do so. Also, Holden questioned about whether they like saving people or just the hunger to win the case and boost their image as the great lawyer.

He is proud of D. B. while he was a short story writer and he made a good short story that Holden liked, A Secret Goldfish. On the other side, he does not want his brother become a phony and life in the phony environment. We can pin point that he does not want to see his brother being phony where he sees his brother D. B. become the scriptwriter in a big phony life in Hollywood. Whereas people pretending in front of the camera and they become someone else; "being prostitute".

From his statement, he does not people pretending to like something if they do not like it; being phony. Thus, when he tries to horse around with Stradlater, he is mocking people that do everything while their parent constrains them to. "I'm the goddam Governor's son," I said. I was knocking myself out. Tap-dancing all over the place. "He doesn't want me to be a tap dancer. He wants me to go to Oxford. But it's in my goddam blood, tap dancing" (29).

This works excoriate people who enforce their children to go to a prestigious school, meanwhile their children have another intention that they like. Marx stated that,

Man's species being, both nature and his spiritual species property, into a being alien to him, into a means to his individual existence. It estranges man's own body from him, as it does external nature and his spiritual essence, his human being (77-78).

Their child has been alienated from their hobby to exhilarate their parent and promote their parent's image in society. The children have been alienated from their true potential, from the thing that they want to be.

3.2.2. Self-Alienation to Avoid Phoniness in Society

In the story, Holden always says that he does not like a people who are phony. Like when he says Ossenburger, the man who donates some money to designate his name as a name of the dorm in Pencey, "big phony bastard". Then, when he says his own brother, D. B. as a prostitute when he chooses to work as a script writer in the Hollywood, the place where there are a lot of phonies. He uses many offensive words to the people that he thinks is phony. This is his way to distinguish himself with the others.

Thus, as the commodification happens in the society, our main character, Holden Caulfield prefers to alienate himself from the society. Based on Richard Schacht, this is the other stated of alienation: when one is trying to alienate themselves from the society. This is the alienation where someone is not in a state of

being enemies with others, but keeps their distance each other (Alienation: 4-5). He kept at arm's length with the people, especially with the people that he thinks is phony that met in his life. Phony in his own thought is a person that just does something for their image in the society. They have been friend with others when they want to take advantage, not because they want to do it purely.

Hence, he finally chooses to leave the school that he thinks full of phonies. "One of the biggest reasons I left Elkton Hills was because I was surrounded by phonies. That's all" (13). His thought determines him to leave the school rather than stay and keep pretending that he likes everyone.

Another example is when he does not want to build a relationship with other people. He chooses to lie rather than becomes sincere; he hides himself from the society. Likes when he met Ernest Morrow's mother, at first, he knows that Ernest is a "doubtless the biggest bastard that ever went to Pencey" (54), but he still wants to have a conversation with Ernest's mother. Even though he lied about his name, his reason why he goes home, or lied about Ernest, it is because he does not want to build a relationship with Ernest's mother. He prevents himself to be close with others. He said, "... but I just thanked her and I told her I was going to South America with my grandmother. ... But I wouldn't visit that sonuvabitch Morrow for all the dough in the world, even if I was desperate" (58).

Later on, the way he asked Sally Hayes to go with him away from New York and live in the pedestrian, near the hills is his way to alienate himself from the phony society. He wants to "stay in these cabin camps... and we could live somewhere with

a brook and all and, later on, we could get married or something” (132). Founding lots of phony people in the city, he realizes that he must go away from the city.

In the end, he asks Sally to go with him, because “... you’re [Sally] probably the only reason I’m in New York right now, or anywhere. If you weren’t around, I’d probably be someplace way the hell off. In the wood or some goddam place” (131). He wants to go with someone he love and do something that he likes. From the story, like “playing bridge all the time, and going to the movies” (133) together.

Accordingly, this works shows us that alienation does not always means horrible. If the society itself is the one that teach us not to be a good human, we can avoid the society by alienating ourselves from the society. While society should be the one which teach us how to be a good human so we can respect other as the same human being. Away from the corrupted society is the best way to prevent us to be corrupted too. Finally, the hatred of the phony person is the reason why Holden chooses to go away from the city.

3.3 Utopian Impulse in The Catcher in the Rye

From the story, The Catcher in the Rye is not only brings the representation of the society itself, but also what people should do to repair the society. This setting happens as the reflection of the reality. This novel portrays the people who are not being influenced to the commodification. It also represents the utopian impulse of the commodification in the society.

The utopian impulse is happening because we are not satisfied with our real world. People are looking for the peace and well-balanced society to live. It also firstly formed by Moore because he felt that England at that time is miserable. Like Robert said in his book, "... indeed, that a Utopia like Thomas More's is actually a deliberate negation of all the features of More's England, a sort of anti-real world" (108).

Describing a lot of negative representation of American society post World War II, by show some people that believe money is everything or people who just care about themselves, Salinger also shows us his own thought about what this society should be.

Dennis Jones says in his essay, Trauma, mourning and self-(re) fashioning in *The Catcher in the Rye*, that we see, *The Catcher is the Rye* can be,

... read as exemplifying the post-war teenager's 'spiritual odyssey', an adolescent's quest for identity, or the uncertainties associated with youth in the Cold War era, it also attests to conditions – injury, illness, madness, suicide – which mark it as something more than a *Bildungsroman à l'américaine* (an American coming-of-age story) (104).

Therefore, the novel deeply indicate Salinger's post war trauma which represent what did he felt in the society after the World War. Thus, this novel can be the explanation for what Salinger's experienced in his life; hoping for a better society.

It can be observed in Holden's point of view about a good person and his own utopia about being the catcher in the rye.

3.3.1. Non-commodified People

Aside inform us about the problem that happen in the society; Salinger also gives his own opinion about what a better society should be. Surrounded by phonies, Holden observes, there are still pure human relationship around him. Even though they are not superior or kinds of big, a little action from his friend reminds us about how great human relationship is.

It is not about the image or the prestige in the society because in Holden's opinion, every human being is the same. So, people should not just be friend with one group and disparage other community.

... And everybody sticks together in these dirty little goddam cliques. The guys that are on the basketball team stick together, the Catholics stick together, the goddam intellectuals stick together, the guys that play bridge stick together. Even the guys that belong to the goddam Book-of-the-Month Club stick together (131).

Thus, the example is when he sees two nuns in the café. He feels like he wants to make a contribution, but the nuns asked if he has quite money with him. At first, they do not want to accept the contribution, but finally, they accept it and "[T]he both of them kept thanking me so much it was embarrassing" (110). But in the end, when he wants to pay their breakfast, they refuse it and said, "You've been more than

generous” (112). They feel enough when Holden made a contribution for them, so they did not want to accept when he pays their check.

Later, they said that they enjoyed talking to him. This feeling is what Holden require about the people that he likes. Even when we first met people, we can make good conversation with them. People are not concerned about their race, jobs, their background or their religion and talk freely with whoever we met. This work shows us that this is the true human relationship; the relation that help each other when they need. They befriend without thinking about money, reputation or popularity.

Then, human relationship is not based on any object. The thingifying that occurs in the society makes people do everything for money. What people care the most is money. Nevertheless, this novel shows us there are still people who do not care about money. Like the nun and also Phoebe when gives all of her money to Holden.

Hey, I don't need all this,” I said. “Just give me two bucks, is all. No kidding—Here.” I tried to give it back to her, but she wouldn't take it. ...

“Eight dollars and eighty-five cents. Sixty-five cents. I spent some.”

Then, all of a sudden, I started to cry (179).

Holden said that he sometimes feels touchy when he sees people help each other. And after he experienced his sister's kindness, he cried. It is very upside down

than what he experienced before; his headmaster, his friends, or even people that he discovers on his journey from school that full of phoniness and commodification.

Another state of example is when Holden's refers the good human relation to the kid's relationship. When we were kids, we did not pick up our friends. We befriend with everyone in our class. And sometimes, you accentuate your friend than yourself. Holden has stated, "I asked her if she'd care to have a hot chocolate or something with me, but she said no, thank you. She said she had to meet her friend. Kids always have to meet their friend. That kills me" (119). Kids are the only one who treats human as the human being and take a relationship without thinking about money or image. They befriend with whoever they like.

The kid way of thinking also can be analyzed in Holden's desire. He is a boy which is doing everything that he wants to do. Even it is not quite well-matched with his age. Like what he does when they horsing around and throwing snow. "We all started throwing snowballs and horsing around all over the place. It was very childish, but everybody was really enjoying themselves" (35).

3.3.2. The Catcher in the Rye as the Symbolic Utopia

Political unconscious concern about what the text bring as the solution from the society. The text is caused to presents the solution that did not happen in the reality, where the reality is so corrupt and full of unhappiness. In the reflection on the novel representing the commodification in society, Salinger made the symbolic utopia with the symbol of the catcher in the rye.

Anyway, I keep picturing all these little kids playing some game in this big field of rye and all. Thousands of little kids and nobody's around-nobody big, What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff-I mean if they're running and they don't look where they're going I have to come out from somewhere and catch them (173).

In his description, "little kids playing some game" is symbolizes the happiness that should have been reflected in everyone in the society. The relationship between them must be continually being what they like, so they are happy and playing around in the field.

Holden's description of "little kids" is basically because of the pureness of a kid which is so contradict from the materialism of adults. They are the pure-minded and they see the other because they are a human being, same as them. They are not seeing another as an object for themselves, or the things that they use for their own happiness. It is so different with adult who separate others based on their status, wealth, or their power in the society.

And he will "catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff", he reacts as the guardian who preventing them for breaking the boundaries, as we say, the boundaries of the society. In the other hand, the breaking of the boundaries will affect other kids who also want to break the boundaries and make they will be out of control. It will damage the perfect utopia that he dreamt about.

Furthermore, the alienation occurs in the society strongly "... within themselves the inequality, social fragmentation and individual alienation of high capitalism." (Robert: 91). The portray of little kids gathering around without somebody big symbolize that everyone in the utopia that is equal each other. He proposed a world of equality and people has the same way of thinking; playing around and in search of each other happiness.

Consequently, this kind of society is coming up in this novel; where people should be together and the relationship where as pure as the kid's relationship. And "nobody's around, nobody big" represent the society that does not be influenced by the phonies adult that befriend with other people because they want to exploit other or for their own image. Moreover, it also symbolizes there are no somebody that has more power than another, so they can live equivalently each other.

If we conclude, the rye is the kid's world or the pure world where people are still thinking as the human being. Everything outside the rye is the adult world which is full of phony and falsities where people competing each other even in the vicious way. The idea of utopia in Holden's mind is preventing people from the rye into going outside. Hence, people in the rye cannot be affected from the phoniness and falsities of the adult world.

Chapter IV

Conclusion

As the novel published after World War II, The Catcher in the Rye reflects the social condition that happens in American society in that era; the society where human relationship has grown to become more subjective. People see others as things that they can use to fulfill their needs; a society where everything has become a commodity; friendship and even love.

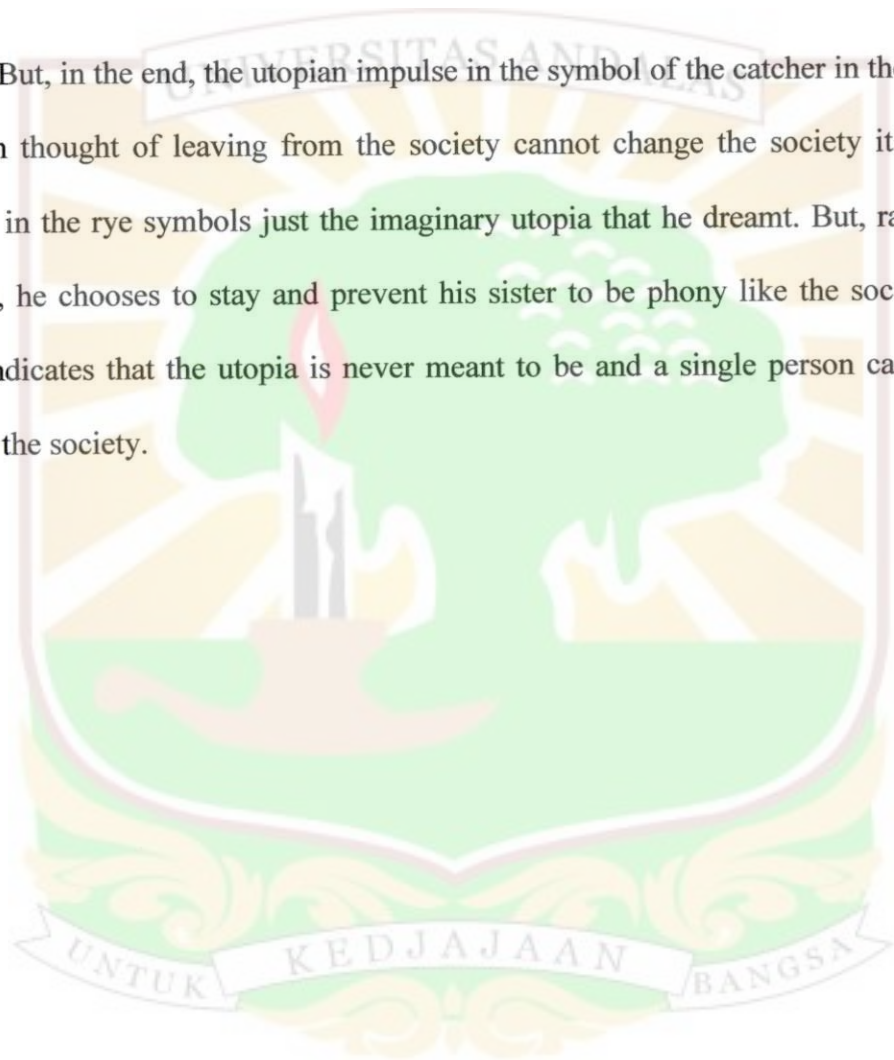
This novel point out the problem that happens; commodification as one of the biggest reasons the people be alienated from themselves, from their true potential. People see others as an object for their own benefit. They see their friend as an object to increase their popularity, their lover as an object of their lust, and their partner can be used to get more money.

Commodification in the society brings another problem, the alienation. People alienated from their potential. They must pretend to be someone rich, to be popular, and to like something that they do not like. The most important is to enhance their image. They are forced to be what they do not want to be to increase their value as a human.

But, in the story, the work shows us that the way to face this condition is to alienate our self from this kind of society. The condition refers to what Holden has done when he sees thereare something wrong that he felt in his own school. He chooses to go away and find a new society that will be the same with his ideologies.

So he will not become a phony that change from himself to be what society want him to be. It is as well as the symbolic Utopia of the catcher in the rye that he represents; a world like where people can do everything happily. People are equal and there are no reasons people should humiliate oneself or being threatened so they cannot express what they like to do.

But, in the end, the utopian impulse in the symbol of the catcher in the rye and his own thought of leaving from the society cannot change the society itself. The catcher in the rye symbols just the imaginary utopia that he dreamt. But, rather than leaving, he chooses to stay and prevent his sister to be phony like the society. The work indicates that the utopia is never meant to be and a single person cannot win against the society.



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