Salt of the Earth

Student’s Name

Institution
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The history of the United States of America is not that long but full of struggles against injustice and for equality of human rights. The movie *Salt of the Earth* is the manifestation of such strife. It is based on real events. There is shown the strike which took place in New Mexico in 1951. There are raised many problems existing in society at the end of the 19th century and in the 20th century.

**Alienation**

Regarding Karl Marx’s work “The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844”, this term may be defined as the process during which labors completely devote themselves to work but they receive almost nothing in return. Furthermore, he singles out three way of alienation:

1) From the production process itself, i.e. workers directly depend upon their working place. It gives them money and means for living. This factor is highlighted at the beginning of the movie. Esperanza tells that everything belongs to her nation, trees, mountains, flowers, except houses they live in. Houses belong to the company which can be considered as so-called colonizers of the mines. That is the way the first form of alienation is presented in the movie.

2) From the objects produced by labor. Goods are alien to workers. The same happens in the picture. Workers live in bad conditions, and they remain unable to use the fruit of their work.

3) From nature and the rest of humanity. Workers are suppressed by the owners of the mining company. Their demands and desires are not taken into consideration.

**Hegemony**
It is the process of domination and control over the group of people. This phenomenon is also presented in the movie as supervision over working Mexican inhabitants. It is reviewed as a fact that the owners of the mine do not rule it at New Mexico, but the head of the company is in New York and labors have never seen him. During their strike, the car arrives and Ramon thinks that the people in the car are the owners themselves, but he is mistaken.

**Indentured Labor**

People work under restrictive contract employment. They work hard nights and days but their rights are infringed. They do not have appropriate living conditions. Women often complain about sanitation. Neither men, nor children and women have a place to wash. Moreover, Esperanza is pregnant. Everything seems so bad to her that she even prays to the Virgin not to give birth to her third child and let it avoid sufferings of their lives.

At the very beginning of the picture, the woman Esperanza begs her husband not to commit strike because she is going to give birth to a child soon. She will need a doctor. When time comes bosses refuses to call company doctor.

**Patriarchy**

The social system showed in the movie can be considered as patriarchy. First of all, men are the primary persons not only in the family but in the social organization. Women do not take any part in the working process of the mine. They are also afraid of their husbands. Women do not interfere with them when men are playing cards. They think carefully before saying anything. They work all days doing households but husbands do not appreciate this.

*Salt of the Earth* is considered as the movie about feminist movements and it really is. Women struggle against unfair treatments of their husbands. The first step is made when they appear on meeting. The wives were really afraid to go there, but they know if there appears
only one of them, she will not change the situation. If the men see some of them, the women can be heard.

The woman who presents their demands is speaking rather quietly. It can be regarded as frightening in front of man and low level of self-consciousness and self-estimation. In spite of all the frightening to be not heard, the woman copes with the situation and speaks louder.

Their only demand is means of sanitation. They are not pleased with that.

The next step on the way of struggle against existing patriarchy for women’s rights is appearing of the old woman among striking men as a way to respect the memory of her husband. Later, other women bring coffee and tacos for their striking men. Esperanza does not do that for a long time, but she decides to act just to please her husband because he likes her coffee.

Women are presented rather weak but ready to struggle. Step by step, action by action, they try to do something to make some benefit for their community. At the same time, they become stronger. They settle their own rights and show that they are not only those who can do house work but they can also decide more important questions and be helpful. In such a way, they show that they are ready to take part in the social process of their lives.

There is a moment when people are celebrating. There are two holidays: Esperanza gives birth to her son, Juan, and her husband is set free from the jail. There is a party and everyone is having fun. She sees her husband dancing with other women but she says nothing. She is simply happy to see the smile on his face. It shows woman’s readiness for scarification. Man can neglect her feelings and enjoy his life.

At the party, women want to dance and somehow they try to do this, to relax and have pleasant time not only serving meal and observing their husbands playing poker.

**Racism**
It is regarded as a process of dividing people into races and treating them according to it. This process is brightly expressed in the movie. Workers are mostly Mexicans who make money for their living. Their needs and demands are not taken into consideration. As a result, it is the reason for their strike. They hold the following signs in their hands: “We want helpers for miners”, “We want equality”, “No dough, no show”. These signs show that the labors’ work is hard but they are remained underpaid because of their origin. The rulers are Anglicans. There is the moment when sheriff is observing all striking situation with a grin and even showing his gun. White policemen arrest Ramon, punch him, and bring to the jail.

Colonization

This process is very long and the whole history of the United States is connected with it. It dates back to the first settlers and continuous till now. Colonization is presented in the picture. There can be seen solitary, abandoned settlement in the deserted New Mexico. The settling of Mexicans is rather old. Ramon’s father and grandfather were the owners of the mine. Though the time changed, there appeared new owners, Anglo-Americans. About 200 years ago they appeared at this area conquering this territory, but now with the means of money. White people have installed their rules and neglected everything existed before their arrival.

Exploitation

It is the way of using something or someone in the cruel way. This phenomenon is also shown in the picture. The work of people is very hard. Everyday men go under the ground to make money for their families, though they have nothing in return. They are refused to give a doctor when Esperanza is giving birth to a child. They do not have appropriate living conditions; they are underpaid. Nobody cares about their working facilities. Laborers are only needed as a means of making money. This factor can be also considered as a cause of the strike. If the workers are pleased with everything, they will not
protest. Their beliefs and efforts as well as their wives support bring them victory over their bosses.

To sum up, the movie *Salt of the Earth* is rather educative. It shows the processes of establishing labor relations among native settlers and coming Anglo–Americans in the territory of the United States in the middle of the 20th century. There is also shown the historical process of struggling for women’s rights. It can be seen that many efforts are made for women to play the role in the society that is observed nowadays.

The name of the movie *Salt of the Earth* is taken from the Bible. It means that one privileges on others. Regarding movie, it is explained as the man who has money rules the one who is poor. Capitalism relation is shown.

From this movie, we can make a conclusion that all people are equal. This is the main demand people were struggling for. It is important to keep it in minds that we live on the Earth together. We are given the same rights and equally can use everything. People have to respect each other and avoid any kind of discrimination either racial or gender. There is no “salt of the Earth”, all are equal.