

Making Decision: Masculine Women in Indonesian Movies

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Abstract

Gender is understood as a cultural concept that seeks to make a distinction in terms of roles, behavior, mentality, and emotional characteristics between the sexes of men and women. In society, gender tends to implicate feminine traits in women and masculine traits in men. One of the fundamental but significant masculine traits is the courage to make decisions. Courage in decision-making is often associated with local cultural norms. People living in urban areas normalize differences and the courage to express opinions on both men and women. In contrast to communities in suburban/rural areas where decision-making is usually in the hands of parents and or community leaders, while women are only asked to follow directions without any space to express opinions and make their own decisions. The research aims to find out the representation of masculinity of female actors in Indonesian movies i.e. Yuni and Penyalin Cahaya. This study uses the semiotic method of Roland Barthes by observing signs, codes/systems, and culture. This research found differences in the characteristics of Yuni and Suryani's courage in making decisions to express their opinions. Even though Yuni has the courage to refuse marriage proposals, she who lives in the suburbs of Banten cannot openly express her opinion on her life choices. In contrast to Suryani, who lives in Jakarta, she is brave and insists on continuing to fight for the truth of the sexual case that happened to her, even though she is under pressure from outsiders.

Keywords: Masculinity, Women, Movies, Indonesia, Decision

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Introduction

Being one of the creative industries, the Indonesian film industry is starting to be taken into account in its own country and in the global film scene. One of the latest that grabbed the attention of the public in 2021 is the film "Like Revenge, Longing Must Also Be Paid in Full" which won the highest award at the Locarno International Film Festival. The film successfully won the Golden Leopard, the main prize from the international competition session (Concorso Internazionale) at this festival held in Switzerland (Nariswari, 2021).

With so many Indonesian films produced by Indonesian filmmakers, the diversity of genres, stories, and perspectives raised in films is increasing. In the Indonesian film scene, we recognize the Indonesian Film Festival (FFI), an Indonesian film award event. In the FFI, Garin Nugroho, a veteran filmmaker explained that the organization of the FFI is not just a competition but also builds a film ecosystem and reads a map of the dynamics of Indonesian cinema. When the associations do the judging, they provide notes on the problems, challenges, and current trends of Indonesian films which will produce a summary that will be a big homework for FFI. Garin explained that when selecting films, it is not merely good and bad films, but also fosters diversity, both in age and theme (Fathurrozak, 2021).

To further revive the Indonesian film ecosystem, the diversity of film story themes is needed to continue to revive the industry, from filmmakers as producers as well as stimulate and attract more Indonesian audiences to become loyal viewers of their own country's films. Yuni and Film Penyalin Cahaya are two films that successfully attracted attention during the Indonesian Film Festival in 2021.

Kamila Andini's film Yuni (2021), which is attached to women's issues, shows the issue of patriarchy that is inherent in Indonesia, especially in rural areas. The film also features issues of underage marriage, sex education, and LGBT. Domestically, at the 2021 FFI event, the lead actor Arawinda Kirana successfully brought home the Citra Cup for the "Best Female Lead" category and also the Snow Leopard for "Best Actress" at the 2021 Asian World Film Festival (Larissya, 2021).

Next is the movie Penyalin Cahaya (2021) which tells the struggle of Sur (played by Shenina Cinnamon) who seeks justice for the case of spreading photos of her while drunk. The film Penyalin Cahaya broke the record as the film that won the most Citra trophies in the history of Indonesian cinema, namely up to 12 trophies, which previously also received the most nominations, namely 17 nominations. (Camelia, 2022).

The word masculinity is often associated with the male gender but actually, masculinity is a gendered practice resulting from social construction. According to Thomas Carlye, masculinity is associated with independence, strength, and action orientation, so researchers are interested in analyzing the representation of masculinity of female actors, namely the character Yuni in the film Yuni and the character Sur in the film Penyalin Cahaya, needs to be presented when in an environment full of patriarchal nuances. Based on the description of the background of the problem above, the research question is "How is the representation of masculine women in the films Yuni and Penyalin Cahaya?"

The research conducted in this paper is descriptive research with a qualitative approach and constructivism paradigm. Researchers use semiotics from Roland Barthes who sees the meaning of signs from two stages of signification, namely denotation meaning which is seen

from the signified and signifier of the sign which is real and objective and the second stage is connotation meaning which gets elements of culture and myth. researchers will make observations on signs of masculinity in female characters, namely Yuni in the film Yuni and Sur's character in the film *Penyalin Cahaya*.

a. Yuni Movie

The first movie that is the object of research in this paper is the movie Yuni.

Scene 1. 20.03 – 20.42



Figure 1: Scene 1. 20.03 – 20.42

Denotation

Sometime earlier, Yuni and her family received a visit from Iman and her parents in order to propose to Yuni. The incident circulated to her neighbors. Yunipun also received information about a scholarship offer to continue her studies from her teacher's mother but on the condition that she was not married. Then, one afternoon, Yuni, accompanied by her friend Sarah, still wearing her white and gray uniform, went to the person who had previously proposed to her named Iman at her work location in a factory area. In the field, Yuni asked the reason why Iman wanted to marry her. Instead of giving an answer to that reason, Iman responded that Yuni was in a hurry to know the reason, which she would find out after marriage. This made Yuni make a statement that she could not marry Iman. Then she immediately left Iman and left the location.

Connotation

In the scene, Yuni shows courage by going directly to Iman at her work location and making a statement that she cannot marry Iman without prior discussion with her parents. This shows masculinity in the form of Give em Hell which shows courage, and aggression and is able to take risks from the rejection statement.

Scene 2. 24.53 – 26.18



Figure 2: Scene 2. 24.53 – 26.18

Denotation

During a lesson at school, the martial arts coach offers who will practice dueling. Then Yuni raised his hand directly. Then the silat coach offered to other students, who would be his opponent. Several names of male students were mentioned. Then Agung came forward after his name was called by the Silat Coach. Then they both practiced dueling.

Connotation

Although the scene in the scene is not a fighting scene, in this case, Yuni shows courage to practice dueling, even without being appointed. Moreover, it can be seen when she is not afraid when her opponent is a male student. So it shows Give em hell which shows courage which can take risks and be Sturdy Oak Yuni feels she has strength and does not show weakness in facing silat duel training with male students.

Scene 3. 1.01.09 – 1.03.40



Figure 3: Scene 3. 1.01.09 – 1.03.40

Denotation

After Yuni went directly to Iman to say that she rejected Iman's proposal, after a while Mang Dodik came to the house and said he wanted to propose to Yuni. He had even given some

money in advance for Yuni to buy jewelry. Mang Dodik also said that he would give an additional 25 million if Yuni proved to be a virgin on the first night. When Yuni heard this, and felt sad because she could not voice her opinion to her family. So, Yuni went to Mang Dodik directly at his workplace to return a wad of dowry money wrapped in a brown envelope that had been given at the beginning when proposing and also stated that she could not accept Mang Dodik's proposal. At first, Mang Dodik thought it was because the dowry was not big enough. But Yuni then explained that she was no longer a virgin and hoped that this would not be told to others, especially her family. After listening to Yuni's reasoning, Mang Dodik was initially shocked and hoped that Yuni would pray a lot after this incident.

Connotation

In the scene, Yuni is able to show courage by going to the person who proposed to her herself to reject her proposal. She realized that there would be consequences that might occur for the rumors circulating that people who reject the proposal for the second time are Pamali and are considered to find it difficult to get a mate in the future. This shows Yuni's masculinity in the form of Give em Hell where it shows courage, and aggression and is able to take risks from the rejection statement, including being talked about in the surrounding community.

b. Penyalin Cahaya (Photocopier) Movie

The second movie that will be the object of research in this paper is the movie Copyist of Light.

Scene 1. (19.15 – 21.22)



Figure 4: Scene 1. (19.15 – 21.22)

Denotation

Last night after attending a theater event, Suryani apparently went home unconscious. Which then made her wake up late and attend her scholarship interview. Upon entering the room, there were four male lecturers at the front, two to the right, and one lecturer to Suryani's left. Suryani was still wearing the green kebaya and batik cloth that she had worn the night before. This was also a concern for the lecturers during her scholarship interview. Moreover, Suryani looked surprised when Lecturer 1 showed on the LCD screen that Suryani was taking a selfie with a drink and uploading it on her social media. Moreover, the examiners questioned whether the clothes she was wearing and the ones in the photo were the same. Suryani tried to convince the examiners that she was not aware of taking the photo and uploading it on social media. She also pointed out that she still met the criteria for scholarship acceptance by meeting the IP numbers and class attendance. Due to the long discussion with Suryani and also the interview duration for Suryani's session had run out, the decision to accept the scholarship awaited the results of the discussion from the lecturer examiners.

Connotation

In this scene, Suryani looks unprepared as she enters the interview room for the scholarship. She herself had been drunk the night after the theater show and woke up in the morning without showering or changing her clothes and went straight to the campus. When she arrived at the campus, it turned out that the interview time for her was almost up. When the examining lecturer showed a photo from Suryani's social media that showed her drunk, she tried to explain that she was not the one who took the photo and uploaded it to social media. At that time, regardless of the truth of the photos, uploads, and drinking behavior the night before, Suryani was seen trying to continue to give reasons that she still deserved the scholarship because academically she still met the requirements or criteria for receiving the scholarship. This shows the courage of Give em Hell where even though Suryani's face looks pale she shows an aura of courage and aggression and is able to take risks even though it might mean that her scholarship will actually be revoked.

Scene 2. (33.40 – 35.15)



Figure 5: Scene 2. (33.40 – 35.15)

Denotation

After the drunken photo on Suryani's social media that caused her to lose her scholarship, Suryani tried to figure out how she got home at 3 am, then realized that her underwear was

black and upside down and also wanted to find out more about what happened that night. Because she was kicked out of the house by her father, she went to stay overnight at the photocopier where Amin (her childhood friend) worked. Suryanipun took a long cable from the first floor and pulled it up to the second floor where she would steal data from theater friends who would print from Amin's photocopier. Initially, Suryani's idea was opposed by Amin, not only because he thought she was insane for taking other people's data but also because they were unmarried men and women who would live together for several days in one room.

Connotation

After receiving a letter from her university that Suryani would no longer receive a scholarship for not behaving well, she was kicked out of the house by her father. She continued to feel that there was something wrong with the events of that night. Knowing that Amin's photocopier had a lot of theater kids who often printed, including for visa needs to Japan. So Suryani had the idea to steal the data from the flash disk of the theater children to find out the sequence of events that night. This shows courage (Give em Hell) and also Suryani realizes the consequences of her actions. While she herself was still a junior in the theater group, she was not afraid to face the consequences if she was found out.

Scene 3. (35.30 – 38.11)

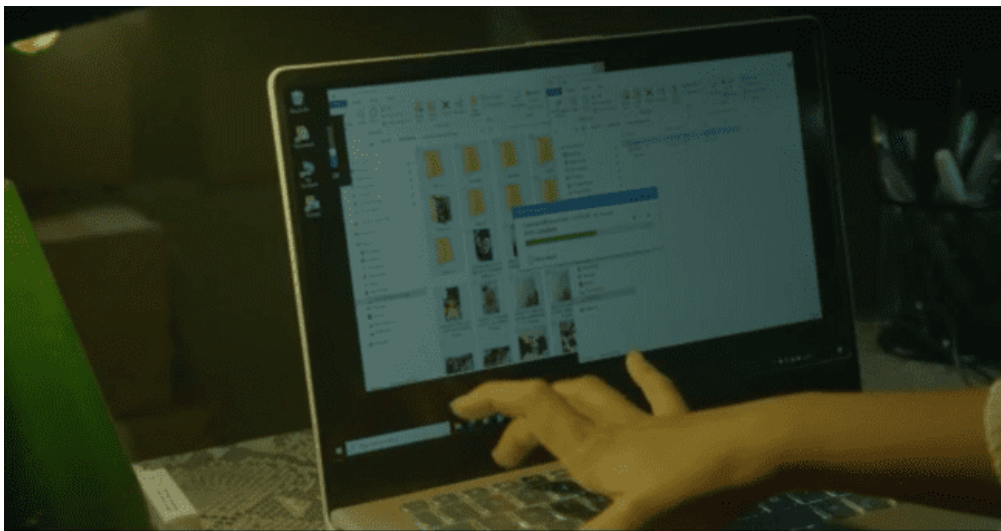


Figure 6: Scene 3. (35.30 – 38.11)

Denotation

Assisted by Amin, Suryani began her action of secretly taking data from the flash disks of theater members who stopped by Amin's photocopier place. Initially, she tried in student 1, but apparently, the print process was too fast so Suryani had not finished copying the data. So Suryani added a code that when a dangdut song was playing, it meant that Suryani had not finished copying the data, but when a rock song was playing, it meant that she could unplug the flash disk. This finally began to be tried on student 2. When student 2 had finished copying the data, and was about to unplug the pendrive, but Suryani had not finished copying Suryani immediately increased the volume of the dangdut song. Amin also immediately prevented Student 2 from unplugging the flash disk on the pretext that it needed to be cleaned using antivirus first. Once Suryani had finished copying the file and the rock song was playing, Amin allowed student 2 to unplug the flash disk.

Connotation

The idea to take data secretly from the theater kids who stopped by Amin's photocopy began. Starting from student 1, which turned out to be too fast, she began to use a bolder method by giving codes in the form of dangdut and rock songs. This code shows Suryani's courage in seeking information, even though there is a possibility that other people will start questioning why the wifi is broken. Give em hell's character further shows the courage in taking risks in student 2 when Amin is seen stalling student 2 to pull out his flash disk on the pretext of providing anti-virus.

Scene 3. (41.45 – 46.26)



Figure 7: Scene 3. (41.45 – 46.26)

Denotation

After Suryani had previously heard from Farah about the irregularities in the process of sending Suryani home using Netcar even though the access to Rama's house was not easy, Suryani and Anggun went to the Netcar customer service office to ask about the Netcar driver tracking process that night. While talking to the customer service officer, Anggun explained why the process of delivery duration to the destination was delayed rather long. And it was true, according to the recording of the Netcar driver tracking process that night, the driver stopped for a long time at the Kendil park point. Then the Netcar officer called Mr. Burhanuddin. Shortly after, Mr. Burhanuddin came. He explained that that night because the

tire was leaking, he needed time to change the tire himself. They also went to Mr. Burhanuddin's car directly and saw the flat tire that was replaced at that time.

Connotation

Suryani needs to find out more about what happened that night until the delivery process that night. Despite inviting Anggun as the person who ordered Netcar that night, Suryani tried to find out more about the tracking driver that night. Give Em Hell, in this case, Suryani also shows courage by continuing to ask and find out even with external parties, in this case, the Netcar office.

Scene 4. (01.18.28 – 01.21.23)



Figure 8: Scene 4. (01.18.28 – 01.21.23)

Denotation

After Suryani saw Rama's installation design, which she felt was similar to the birthmark on her back, she felt the need to find out information and data about Rama. So she asked Amin to invite Rama to come to Amin's photocopy place so that Suryani could access data from Rama's email. The email data and Rama's password had already been obtained by Suryani from the previous data collection in order to create emails for members of the Matahari Theater. Rama finally went to Amin's photocopy place. When Rama logged into her email, there was a notification on her cell phone to confirm and Rama confirmed it. Then when Suryani entered her email and password, a security alert notification appeared, Rama already looked suspicious and then screenshot his cellphone screen. Suryani began to get nervous because the security alert was not immediately confirmed, even though it sounded like Rama was about to go home, then Suryani turned off the electricity switch and one room on the first and second floors where Amin's photocopies were off.

Connotation

Unlike before when she took data from other theater students by copying and pasting data from their flashdisks, this time Suryani tried by entering Rama's email. This is of course with the suspicions and allegations that are getting closer to Rama. However, Suryani's boldness this time was not quite successful, because Rama had apparently smelled something odd when he got two security alert notifications on his cell phone for accessing his email.

Scene 5. (01.28.43 – 01.30.02)

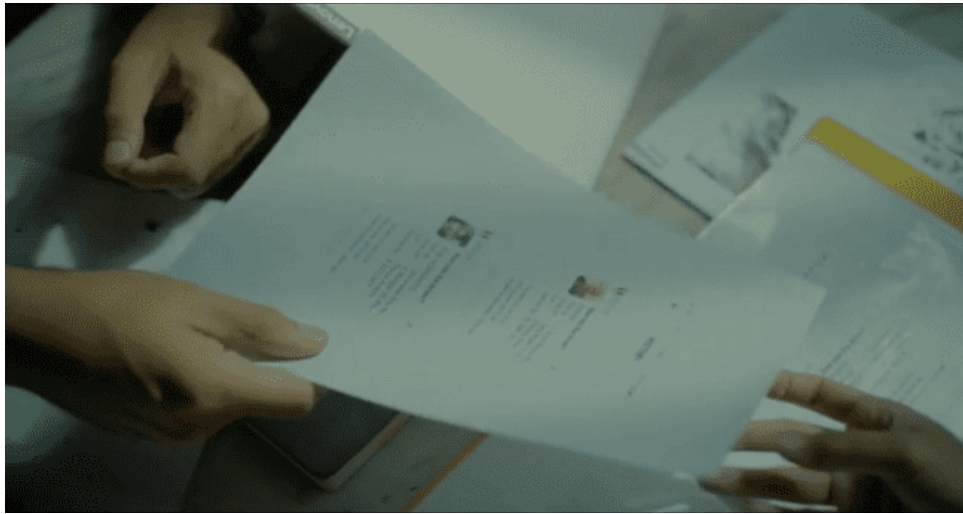


Figure 9. Scene 5. (01.28.43 – 01.30.02)

Denotation

After Suryani got the data about Rama's installation photo, Suryani's back photo and the data file of the location where the photo was taken in Kendil park, Suryani reported it to the Code of Ethics Lecturer at her campus. There she wanted to find out how to report Rama for this. Suryanipun hopes that her identity will be hidden from other parties.

Connotation

Armed with a lot of data that she had collected, Suryani conveyed it to the code of ethics of her campus. Previously, Suryani had met with Farah to jointly complain about this, but Farah refused. So it was only Suryani who came to meet with the Code of Ethics lecturer. Suryani's courage is seen in how she collected so much data and also went alone to meet with the lecturer when it was in order to report Rama for alleged indecent acts. Give Em Hell's characteristics show that she is brave but also aggressive to continue believing what she feels is right to report something that is not right.

Scene 6. (01.35.30 – 01.37.00)





Figure 10: Scene 6. (01.35.30 – 01.37.00)

Denotation

Like an anticlimax, the file sent by Suryani to the Code of Conduct lecturer that should have been kept confidential was shared with several people. In the end, Suryani, her mother, and Mr. Suryani were summoned by the faculty as well as Rama and his lawyers. In the forum, Suryani seemed not to be given space to speak the truth, and also by her father and the campus Suryani was asked to apologize. Which, afterward, in front of Rama, the legal authorities, recorded by her father and in front of some of her friends, Suryani finally apologized with a pained face for the accusations she had made to Rama Sumarno and the parties related to the allegations. The video was also played on a television in the campus area and was also witnessed by other students.

Connotation

The apology made by Suryani is not something that shows weakness. What she did was courageous and also showed a person who has strength and has the trait of being a Sturdy Oak. Even though she knew she was right, at that time the situation could not support the truth she believed in. At that time, he realized that there were no colleagues who supported him, his father and the campus continued to try to pressure him to settle in a family manner. Rama and his lawyer also said that an apology was enough, but if it was not done, it would be taken to legal channels. In this situation, Suryani tried to remain strong. She was not seen crying or showing excessive emotion. She tried to act calmly in the situation. In addition, Suryani also shows her No Sissy Stuff trait where she avoids things related to women such as whining or crying.

Discussion

We know that the concept of gender, in this case, the terms masculinity and feminism, is associated with the cultural concepts that prevail in the environment. Masculinity is a construction of maleness for men. Men are not just born with masculine traits naturally, masculinity is shaped by culture. What determines the nature of women and men is culture (Barker). The nature of maleness is different in every culture. Masculinity itself is constructed by culture. The concept of masculinity in Eastern cultures such as in Indonesia is influenced by cultural factors.

The concept of masculinity at that time was often associated, no longer always with someone who was male but also female. In this case, to see that the concept of masculinity in culture seems to be slowly also carried out and practiced by women as well. For example, in the two movies above, namely the movie Yuni and the movie Copyist. Yuni, is a movie that tells the story of a woman named Yuni who actually has the desire to continue her dreams in college but her environment and family urge her to get married immediately. In this case, Yuni shows courage by rejecting the proposal to the man directly. Which, this has the consequence of being talked about and talked about in the neighborhood that Pamali women who reject proposals twice will find it difficult to find a mate. In addition to the context of the insistence on marriage, in the movie, the issue of virginity is also an issue raised, where it was also said by the man who proposed to Yuni that he would add some money if it was proven that during the first night, she was still a virgin.

Masculinity is often associated with the strength and courage to do something. What Yuni did when rejecting the proposal by meeting the men directly showed masculinity. Without thinking too much about the consequences of being talked about by neighbors, Yuni dared to say directly that she could not marry the man. Yuni felt unprepared and uncomfortable marrying someone, especially when she knew she would become a second wife. But what Yuni felt she could not reveal to her family or friends because it seemed to be taboo.

The second movie is titled Copyist of Light. In this film, the story is about a woman named Suryani who feels inappropriate treatment but she needs to find out about what really happened to her on the night of the theater party. Armed with her computer skills, she did many things including illegally accessing the data of her theater friends. She did this because she found it difficult to find out the truth about what she had received. Suryani's courage became an anticlimactic story when she finally had to make a video apology to Rama for her inappropriate accusations. But at that moment, there was a strength where she believed that the data and facts she found were true. And after that incident, finally, some friends came and helped him find out more about what the deeper story was about the incident that night.

Masculinity in the movie Penyalin Cahaya is seen in how Suryani uses many ways, including illegal ways, to get information and data about what happened to her. When she asks people, she is often underestimated and considered too complicated and fussy. The masculinity seen in this movie does not look like a heroic superhero movie story, but it seems that the perceived masculinity is actually closer to real-life stories. Masculinity that is close to courage is often still filled with fear, but also filled with curiosity, including trying to break down some of the more dominant or powerful parties materially or positionally. Courage in this case is the nature of Give em Hell but often he does it apparently leads to masculinity that can produce strength, namely Be Sturdy Oak and No Sissy Stuff. Despite being under pressure from various parties, Suryani tried to remain strong and unemotional and did not cry.

Films with depictions of female masculinity such as the two films above need to continue to be produced and watched by audiences because the implementation of gender regarding how men and women interact and treat each other can be different from one culture to another. Without the need to homogenize the treatment of men and women, we need to understand that this gendered context also needs to be updated according to the times and how women also need space to move and develop according to what they want, not just what the environment wants the concept of gender.

Conclusion

There are two movie objects in this research, namely the movie Yuni and the Light Copier Movie. After conducting the corpus selection process in the movie scenes, it resulted in the following conclusions:

The movie Yuni represents masculine women who show courage in this case showing the nature of Give Em Hell where she dares to meet directly with men who have previously proposed to her. In this case, she dared to take risks for what she did. She also shows Be a Sturdy Oak by daring to try a duel with her opponent a male student.

The film Copyist of Light represents a masculine woman who shows her courage, namely the Give em Hell trait where she continues to stick to her principles to find out about what happened on the night of her theater party and what happened to her at that time. Her courage also remained firm when she was in a situation where the file that should have been included in the Code of Ethics Board's investigation was deliberately distributed and Suryani was pressured by her father, the faculty, and Rama and his attorney to settle the matter in a family manner or proceed to court. Finally, Suryani had to make a video apology. However, this is not a weakness but instead shows the strength or nature of being Sturdy Oak because in these conditions he looks strong, looks calm, and does not get carried away by emotions.

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