

**THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMAN EQUALITY AS SEEN IN
ELYSIUM MOVIE**

A GRADUATING PAPER

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Degree in English Literature



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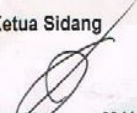
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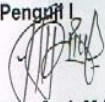
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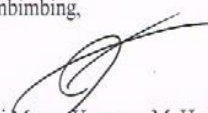
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THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMAN EQUALITY AS SEEN IN *ELYSIUM* MOVIE

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ABSTRACT

Elysium movie by Neil Blomkamp is an action movie. This movie conveys the social issues such as race, ethnicity, social class, politics and gender. Related to gender issue, this movie represents a woman character named Delacourt who regulates in the government as a secretary of defense along with her status as wife and mother. It encourages the researcher to discuss the issue of woman equality. Thus, the objective of research is to know the portraits of woman equality undertaken by Delacourt. In conducting the research, the researcher elaborates liberal feminist theory and film theory. This research is categorized as qualitative research. The method of analysis data is objective-descriptive approach. The result of the discussion shows that the equality undertaken by Delacourt in *Elysium* movie tends to be equal but different. It is because beside she is able to be potential as men in the social, economic and political roles; she also still regards her nature as a woman. Furthermore, the woman equality as portrayed in Delacourt character is still influenced by a power. Its power comes from her middle-high social strata of society. Thus, liberal feminist thought is relative – it tends to the one who has power and high rated social status in society.

Key word: Elysium, Gender, Liberal Feminist, Woman Equality,

THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMAN EQUALITY AS SEEN IN *ELYSIUM* MOVIE

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ABSTRAK

Elysium, sebuah film yang disutradarai oleh Neil Blomkamp merupakan film yang bergenre *action*. Film tersebut mengangkat beberapa tema sosial yang diantaranya adalah ras, etnisitas, kelas sosial, politik, dan gender. Berkaitan dengan isu gender, film tersebut menggambarkan seorang perempuan bernama Delacourt yang berkecimpung di dalam pemerintahan dan menduduki posisi sebagai sekretaris pertahanan negara disamping statusnya sebagai istri dan ibu. Hal tersebut mendorong peneliti untuk membahas tentang isu kesetaraan perempuan. Sehingga tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui bagaimana kesetaraan perempuan di gambarkan melalui karakter Delacourt. Peneliti menggabungkan teori liberal feminis dan teori film. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif. Metode analisis data yang di gunakan adalah pendekatan objektif-deskriptif. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa kesetaraan wanita yang digambarkan pada karakter Delacourt cenderung kearah setara tapi berbeda. Hal tersebut disebabkan karena disamping dia mampu sepotensial laki-laki akan tetapi dia juga masih mempertahankan identitas keperempuanannya. Selain itu, kesetaraan perempuan yang tergambarkan dalam karakter Delacourt masih dipengaruhi oleh adanya unsur kekuasaan. Kekuasaan tersebut bersumber dari status sosialnya dalam masyarakat yang tergolong sebagai menengah keatas. Oleh karena itu, teori liberal feminist tersebut relatif untuk diterapkan – lebih mengarah pada mereka yang memiliki kekuatan yang dipengaruhi oleh status sosial yang tinggi di masyarakat.

Kata kunci: *Elysium, Gender, Liberal Feminis, Kesetaraan Perempuan,*

Motto

To educate a man; to educate a man
To educate a woman; to educate generations

Indeed, every hardship comes ease
(ash- Sharh)

Get the achievements with *Akhlakul Karimah*



DEDICATION

This graduating paper I dedicate to:

My lovable parents

Ibu Thaifah and Bapak Kuswoyo

My current time and future time

My crying time, trying time, and praying time

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Yogyakarta, March 22, 2016

Ayu Karomah

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Film or movie is categorized as a medium of literature and culture. Film and literature are in correlation each other; each capable of encompassing part of other. In addition, Midega says that literature shares with film the capability of employing the structure of narrative. Its structures of narrative are intrinsic elements – action from the characters, plot, setting, and dialogue. Film serves those narrative structures by the sequence of moving picture in the screen (<http://blog.jaluo.com/?p=11700>).

Film amalgamates the cinematographic aspect and literature aspect i.e. narrative structures. It represents the real imagination into the screen; it allows mind to see the project in brain screen of object and events (Midega, 2010: in <http://blog.jaluo.com/?p=11700>). Thus, the audiences of film are able to know what the real objects and events from a story by seeing the moving picture in a film. It makes film becomes a branch of literature that most popularly consumed. In other words, it is most known as popular culture.

As the integration between literature and culture, film engages with human daily life where it is able to depict the issues conducted in the reality. Film is a media representation of the culture. Villarejo states that film reveals the dimension of “social, historical, industrial, technological, philosophical, political,

aesthetic, psychological, personal, and so forth” (2007: 9). Based on the ability of film to bridge the literature and culture, it leads the researcher to choose film as the material object of this research.

Film has many genres – action, adventurer, comedy, drama, musical film, horror, biography, science-fiction, and so forth. A film can collaborate more than one genre. Here, the researcher chooses a film with the action genre. Action genre formulates the concept right and wrong, bad guy or good guy, physical action, or heroes that overcome the obstacle. Thus, it produces the “cathartic feeling stimulation and reward thorough action and effect, and inspiration through the hero characters (Dyer, Tasker, and Troy in Burns, 2009: 5).

Beyond of that, action movie conveys the complex issues as the theme of the story. Tasker states “...the broadly ideological questions of meaning and identity that dominated writing on action movie during the early 1990s and which continues to produce fascinating work on areas including stardom, gender, class, race and ethnicity” (2004: 1). Thus, action movie represents the social issues that mainly become the broad attention of cultural studies.

The main issue that the researcher puts interesting is about the gender issue in action movie. Gender is better understood as the social construction of social belief in viewing the relationship between men and women which produce the certain identity among them (Lorber, 1997: 8). The gender issue is interesting to be discussed because it has the correlation in encompassing the identity of being men and women. Ryle also says “it is important to be able to understand gender in

this way because it helps explain the powerfully strong belief most people in society have in notion of sex as something objectively real” (2015: 42).

Action movie becomes a medium of representation of gender issue. Whether it creates the stereotypes or wipes the stereotypes of gender norms. The ideology of patriarchy uses action movie as the media to create the stereotypes that men are superior while women are inferior. In contrast, the feminists intend to wipe the stereotypes of being women who are inferior by placing them in the equal position with men or beyond – they tend to construct the iconic strong women by having the masculine qualities among their femininity. For instance, the *Charlie’s Angel* movie (2002) represents women to be strong, attractive, and intellectual.

Here, the researcher takes an action movie containing the gender issue. It is entitled *Elysium*. This movie is directed by Neil Blomkamp under the production of Media Right Capital and Tri Star Pictures. It was released on August 9, 2013 and became the box office movie which had gross total worldwide of \$286, 007, 248 (<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1535108/>). Substantively, *Elysium* movie conveys not only the gender issue, but it also conveys the political, race, and social class issue.

Elysium movie tells about the condition in the year 2154 where the earth is over polluted causing the fatal diseases. There is a separation between two social classes of people – wealthy society and poor society. The wealthy society lives on pristine man-made station out of the earth named Elysium to preserve their way of life. Meanwhile, the poor society lives in ruined earth. It becomes the source of

conflict within the movie. Many of earth inhabitants try to enter Elysium illegally mainly to get the health facilities that are not conducted in the earth. On the other side, the wealthy society forces to protect the viability of Elysium from the illegals. The duty to protect the Elysium is in defense department.

Defense department functions to assure the secureness of Elysium and provides the military forces. The highest functionary in defense department is secretary of defense. Its position holds the control, direction, and authority. The one who positions the defense secretary is a woman named Delacourt. She takes important roles in regulating the welfare of Elysian and becomes the determiner of market toward the factory that serves the security equipment of Elysium.

From Delacourt action within the movie, it depicts that Delacourt is a woman who can do like men do. She has significant roles even in the public and politics area which are traditionally believed as the area of men. In spite of her regulation in the Elysium government, she also holds the status of being a wife and mother. Thus, it encourages the researcher to convey the concept of woman equality.

In relation with gender issue, the concept of woman equality is important to be analyzed. It links with the creating the new assumption and social view about women. It emerges the assumption that women also deserve to hold a power and contribution in public life. The equality cannot be ignored and it happens inevitably. Seen from Islamic perspective, the equality between men and women had been mentioned in a hadits

الناس سواية سنان المشط (رواه احمد و ابو الزبير)

“Human being (men and women) are like the teeth of comb, standing tall side by side in equality (narrated from Ahmad and Abu Zubair)” (PSW UIN Sunan Kalijaga in Ja’far, 2015: 22).

From hadits above, it can be known that Islam positions men and women in some degree – both have their own characteristics and responsibilities. Men are not always better than women and per se. Thus this research intends to give the representation or portraits of woman equality in *Elysium* movie.

1.2 Research Questions

Regarding with the background above, the researcher aims to answer the following questions.

1. How is woman equality portrayed through Delacourt character in the *Elysium* movie?
2. How can those portraits of woman equality be explained?

1.3 Objectives of Study

In line with the questions above, this research aims to find out how woman equality is portrayed through Delacourt character in *Elysium* movie.

1.4 Significances of Study

This research is significant for the development of literature, social sciences, and cultural study either theoretically or practically. Theoretically, this research gives the contribution to the literature field in English Department.

Primarily, it gives the explanation of how to apply feminist theory and film theory.

Practically, this research can help the academic readers in understanding the equality of woman in literary works. Furthermore, it can stimulate them to conduct the research based on feminist-perspective and also becomes a reference in conducting the further research. Besides, for the common people, through this research, perhaps they understand that women and men are equal; there is no significant differentiation between men and women. Then, it is able to construct the assumption of them that women have significant role in regulating the civilization.

1.5 Literature Review

In reviewing the prior researches, the researcher uses the researches which have the same object and same theory. The first research is entitled “The Struggle of Max to Reach Equality for Low Class People in *Elysium* movie” which is written by Erandhi Hutomo Saputra in 2014. Saputra’s research aimed to dig out the struggle of proletarian that represented by Max da Costa in the *Elysium* movie. He used the qualitative design. For the theory, he employed the Marxist theory accompanied by theory of resistance and rebellion, theory of equality, and theory of film. As the result, there found many inequalities of life got by low class people. Max, as a proletarian, took an action of struggle through resistance and rebellion by uniting and constituting a group with other proletarians. Finally, he got the equality dreamed by proletarians and lessened the social gap although he sacrificed his life (Saputra, 2014: iv)

The second is the research that was conducted by Ahmad Faqikhudin, a student from State Islamic University Sunan Klaijaga Yogyakarta, in 2015. It was entitled “The Struggle of Lower Class against the Government as Seen in *Elysium* Movie.” Faqikhudin aimed to find out how the upper class oppresses the lower class and how the lower class struggles to achieve the justice and equality against the upper class. He used qualitative research. For the theory, he applied Marxist class struggle theory and representation theory. As the outcomes of the research, there found that the struggles of lower class in the movie were the way of lower class to get their justice. While the portrayal of lower class in this movie was an attempt of reverse the representation of government through a negative meaning and giving a new meaning that people in government is not always the good ones (Faqihuddin, 2015: vi).

The third is the research which has similar theory with this research. It was entitled “Woman Equality as seen in *Silent Hill 1* movie” by Irwan Zaeni. The aims of the research are to find out how women are depicted in *Silent Hill 1* movie and why they are depicted dominant. The research used objective approach by applying liberal feminism theory, representation theory, and film theory. The results of the research are that women in *Silent Hill 1* movie were described as the figures that could be equal as men. Then, the portrayal of women as the dominant character in the movie was an attempt to reverse the stereotypes about women who were weak by showing a positive impression and giving the new meaning that women could be equal like men (Zaeni, 2014: v).

By examining those researches above, there are no researches which discuss the depiction of woman equality in *Elysium* movie. Even Saputra and Faqikhudin discuss the *Elysium* movie as material object, but the differentiation between their researches and this research lies on the applying theory. Mainly, they apply Marxist theory whereas this research applies liberal feminist theory in showing the achievement of equality by a woman. Then, though Zaeni who also discussed the woman equality, it is still different from this research in ways of choosing the indicators of equality and of course in choosing different material object of research. Thus, this research aims at describing the portraits of woman equality through Delacourt as woman character in *Elysium* movie.

1.6 Theoretical Approach

1.6.1 Liberal Feminist Theory

Since this research engages with the female character, that is Delacourt in *Elysium* movie, as the object of the analysis, the writer considers that feminist theory is the proper theory to be applied. Feminist theory aims at seeking the equal treatment between men and women especially in the public realm. There are some kinds of feminist thought – liberal, radical, Marxist, psychoanalytic, existentialist and postmodernism, women in color feminism, and eco-feminism (Tong, 2009: 1).

In this research, the writer concerns with liberal feminism theory. Liberal feminism theory is the approach focused in achieving the equality of opportunity between women and men. The equal opportunity allows women to have the opportunity as men have. Tong says that women need place to shed their

public personae and be their selves (2009: 12). It means that if men have close relation to public sphere, women demand to have their public sphere also.

Liberal feminist thought seeks to enable women to have equal right in higher education, political and social view, and the determination in market (Tong, 2009: 12). Moreover, it also demands about the liberty in fulfilling the women's pleasure. Thus, it will give women the choice – just being housewifery and mothering, work out side home, or keep both in one hand (Tong, 2009: 17).

To determine the equality itself, there is a measurement of equality proposed by Thornton. Thornton elaborates three element of the standard argument of equality – women's nature, the social treatment of women, and women's performance. Women's nature means the equality represents that women have their own nature. Thus, to gain the equality women still have their own identity as women. Here the identity is either biological characteristic or psychological characteristics as women. The second is about women's social treatment means women are given equal opportunity with men in the public sphere—it is enabling women to access the same life chance as men. The last is the women's performance – the outcome that shows women are equal as men (Hughes, 2002: 35-37).

1.6.2 Film Theory

Film theory is considered as the supporting theory. Film theory is important in this research because the pictures that are taken help the writer in finding data. Film theory composes the basic analysis of the film by echoing *mise-en-scène* – the theatrical process of staging. There are six components of *mise-en-*

scène – setting, lighting, costume and hair, make-up, figure behavior, and cinematography (Villarejo, 2007: 28-36).

The first composition is setting. Setting is important to be considered in making a film. Just like the narrative structure, the setting in a film takes an important role in which it helps to amplify and live the situation of the story within the movie. By presenting the setting whether setting of place or setting of time, the audience of film can easily understand the story. In addition, a movie maker conveys the setting of the film by constructing it either realistically based on the place where the story happened or just modifying the studio.

The second is lighting. Lighting is able to establish the mood and directs attention to detail. There are three point of lighting – key light, fill light, and backlight. Key light tends to illuminate the subject strongly and cast the strongest shadow; it is the primary source of light. Then, fill light softens the shadow of the illumination upon the subject. Meanwhile, backlight comes to separate subject and background by counterbalancing the brightness of key light (Villarejo, 2007: 32-33).

The other compositions are costume, hair, and make up. Those are able to creating and modifying the imaginative dimension of the film. then, figure behavior is also categorized as the composition of film. It means to describe the expression, action, or movement from the characters. The last composition is cinematography; there are seven cinematography aspects that are used in framing the pictures in a film. First is the extreme long shot in which one can barely distinguish the human figure. Second is the long shot, the humans are able to

distinguish but they dwarf by background. Third is the medium long shot in which the human is framed from knees up. Fourth is medium shot portrayed the human from waist up. Fifth is medium close up in which it gives the depiction of human from their chest up. Sixth is the close up that isolates a portion of a human. The last is extreme close up where portrays the mere portion of object (Villarejo, 2007:35-37).

1.7 Methods of Research

1.7.1 Types of Research

In conducting the research, the researcher uses the qualitative research design. According to Creswell, qualitative research is a method used to explore and understand the human or social cases whether individual or groups, then making interpretation of them (2009:1). Therefore, the researcher intends to explore woman issue that is woman equality in the *Elysium* movie and tries to interpret it by using theory of feminism and representation theory.

For the strategy of inquiry, it is a case study. As Stake states, a case study gives the detail description of setting or individuals (as cited in Creswell, 2009:184). Thus, in this research, there are detail descriptions about the issue of woman equality as seen in the movie. Furthermore, the library research is also used in conducting the research.

1.7.2 Data Sources

In this research, there are main data and supporting data. The main data in this research is the *Elysium* movie and the object of the research is the indicators that reflect woman equality in Delacourt character. The forms of data in

this research are practice and image Delacourt as woman character. for practice, there includes dialogue and performances; while for image, it comes from Delacourt's appearance. For the supporting data, the researcher takes some references such as books, journal articles, and websites that support the main data. Both main data and supporting data are primary data because the researcher gets those data directly.

1.7.3 Data Collection Technique

The audio visual and the close reading method are used as the technique in collecting the data in this research. Hence, some steps are done by the researcher for gathering the data. First, the researcher watches the *Elysium* movie intensively in order to comprehend its intrinsic elements. Second, the researcher determines the data based on Delacourt's appearance and performance that represent the equality. Third are gathering the dialogues and pictures which relate to the representation of equality done by Delacourt. For supporting, there are also dialogues and pictures from other characters that indicate the act of achieving the equality done by Delacourt.

1.7.4 Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis technique of this research uses objective-descriptive approach in which the data are factually taken from the movie and analyzed descriptively by applying liberal feminist theory and film theory. There are some steps that the researcher does in conducting this research.

First, the researcher watches the movie intensively in order to analyze the intrinsic elements of *Elysium* movie. Second, the researcher interprets the

classified data based on liberal feminist theory and film theory. Then, the researcher measures those act of equality based on Thornton's aspects of equality measurement. The aspects of measurement are the woman's nature, woman's treatment and women's performance.

After that, the portraits of woman equality in Delacourt character are defined. In addition, the researcher also applies film theory to emphasize the explanation of pictures of Delacourt's appearance and performance. From the analysis, the researcher draws conclusion.

1.8 Paper Organization

This research is presented in four chapters. The first chapter is introduction which contains the background of study, research questions, objectives of study, significances of study, literature review, theoretical approach, method of research, and paper organization. The second chapter is about the intrinsic elements of the *Elysium* movie including theme, character and characterization, setting, and plot. The third chapter is the analysis of the data using liberal feminism theory, representation theory and film theory. The last chapter is the conclusion of the analysis

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In this chapter, the researcher shows the result of the discussion in the previous chapter and the suggestion for the further researcher related to the *Elysium* movie.

4.1 Conclusion

The aims of the research are to describe the representation or portrait of woman equality through Delacourt character. To define the equality, the researcher applies liberal feminist theory. After analyzing the data, the researcher finds some indicators that reflect the equality in Delacourt character.

Those indicators are 1) enjoying education, 2) prioritizing the career, he 3) positioning in men's position, 4) having feminine traits (tenderness and nurturance, tend to adorn and beautify) and masculine traits (assertiveness, leader, decision maker, dominance, aggressiveness, and short haired), and 5) determining the market. Then, Delacourt's attainment in equality is categorized as "equal but different" in which she minimizes her woman nature and prioritizes her role in public life.

In conclusion, from the results of discussion, the base that makes Delacourt gain the equality is in accordance to the power of her social status. She is categorized as middle-high class woman; it helps her to gain the equality easier. Thus, liberal feminist thought is relative – it tends to the one who has power and high rated social status in society.

4.2 Suggestion

Elysium movie engages with the complexity of social issue theme such as gender, ethnicity, and social race. Here, the researcher has analyzed the issue of gender by using liberal feminist theory, representation theory and film theory. In the previous, there are two researchers that had conducted the research related to social class issue based on Marxism perspective. After knowing the whole story of *Elysium* movie, the researcher thinks that it will be proper probably to use postcolonial theory. It is because in the movie there are some ethnics – western, Indian, and Asian. Thus, it can discuss how the treatments of western to the third world are.

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