

**AN ANALYSIS OF HEGEMONIC MASCULINITIES IN RAMESES AND
MOSES AS SEEN IN *THE TEN COMMANDMENTS* (1956)**

A GRADUATING PAPER

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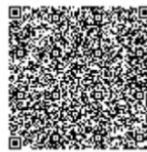
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MOTTO

“A NEGATIVE MIND WILL NEVER GIVE YOU A POSITIVE LIFE”

“IF PEOPLE ARE DOUBTING HOW FAR YOU CAN GO, GO SO FAR THAT
YOU CAN'T HEAR THEM ANYMORE”

-Michele Ruiz-

DEDICATION

This graduating paper is dedicated to myself and my dearest parents.

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In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful.

First and foremost, praises and thanks to the God, the Almighty, for His showers of blessings throughout my research work to complete my graduating paper “An Analysis of Ramses’ Hegemonic Masculinity As Seen In *The Ten Commandments (1956)*” successfully. Then, may peace and salutations be sent to our Prophet Muhammad; peace be upon him, who has guided us out of the darkness.

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An Analysis of Ramses' Hegemonic Masculinity as Seen in *The Ten*

Commandments (1956)

By: Nazila Chiladati Rohmaniyati

ABSTRACT

The Ten Commandments (1956) tells a story about the life of the Egyptian kingdom led by Pharaoh as the king of Egypt. In this film, the story is told about the Egyptian kingdom, starting from the leadership of Pharaoh Sethi to the change of leadership by Rameses. This research focuses on Rameses' and Moses' characters to find out their hegemonic masculinity. The royal order that are still applied in this film give rise to the existence of social class in men. This different social class leads to the concept of hegemonic masculinity. However, this does not mean that lower-class men are always subordinated to middle-class men. In some other cases, the condition can occur in reverse. From the attitude of Rameses and Moses, the question arises whether Rameses' dominant attitude is classified as hegemonic masculinity or whether Moses who is hegemonic. This research will be focused on analyzing Rameses' and Moses' character, and using masculinity theory by R.W. Connell as the main theory of analysis. This research aims to find out what can Rameses' masculinity be classified as the hegemonic masculinity and to find out the cause of the hegemonic masculinity construction more embedded in Rameses' antagonist characterization than in Moses' protagonist characterization. As a result of the research, the hegemonic masculinity of Rameses can be classified as hegemonic masculinity. Most of Rameses' hegemonic characters lead to the negative things. Meanwhile, Moses' hegemonic characters are shown to obtain the positive things.

Keywords: Masculinities, Hegemonic Masculinity, Rameses, Moses

An Analysis of Ramses' Hegemonic Masculinity as Seen in *The Ten Commandments* (1956)

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ABSTRAK

The Ten Commandments (1956) bercerita tentang kehidupan kerajaan Mesir yang dipimpin oleh Firaun sebagai raja Mesir. Dalam film ini diceritakan tentang kerajaan Mesir, mulai dari kepemimpinan Firaun Sethi hingga pergantian kepemimpinan oleh Rameses. Penelitian ini berfokus pada karakter Rameses dan Musa untuk mengetahui hegemoni maskulinitas keduanya. Tatanan kerajaan yang masih diterapkan dalam film ini memunculkan adanya kelas sosial pada laki-laki. Kelas sosial yang berbeda pada laki-laki ini mengarah pada konsep maskulinitas hegemonik. Namun, bukan berarti laki-laki kelas bawah selalu ter subordinasi oleh laki-laki kelas menengah. Dalam beberapa kasus lain, kondisi tersebut dapat terjadi secara terbalik. Dari sikap Rameses dan Musa, muncul pertanyaan apakah sikap dominan Rameses tergolong maskulinitas hegemonik atau justru Musa yang hegemonik. Penelitian ini akan difokuskan pada analisis karakter Rameses dan Musa, serta menggunakan teori maskulinitas R.W. Connell sebagai teori utama analisis. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah maskulinitas Rameses dapat diklasifikasikan sebagai maskulinitas hegemonik dan untuk mengetahui penyebab konstruksi maskulinitas hegemonik lebih melekat pada karakterisasi antagonis Rameses daripada karakterisasi protagonis Musa. Sebagai hasil penelitian, maskulinitas hegemonik Rameses dapat diklasifikasikan sebagai maskulinitas hegemonik. Sebagian besar karakter hegemonik Ramses mengarah pada hal-hal negatif. Sementara itu, karakter hegemonik Musa ditunjukkan untuk tujuan memperoleh hal-hal positif.

Kata kunci: **Maskulinitas, Maskulinitas Hegemonik, Rameses, Moses**

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

The Ten Commandments (1956) tells a story about the life of the Egyptian kingdom led by Pharaoh as the king of Egypt. In this film, the story is told about the Egyptian kingdom, starting from the leadership of Pharaoh Sethi to the change of leadership by Rameses. Besides these 2 characters, Moses' character is also highlighted in this film. At the beginning of the story, Moses is told as Rameses' cousin until it is finally proven that Moses actually has a different race and ended up being the leader of his people, the Hebrew, against Rameses.

This research focuses on Rameses' and Moses' characters to find out their hegemonic masculinity. As Connell states, hegemonic masculinity is involving a certain form of masculinity in unequal relation to emphasized femininity and non-hegemonic masculinities (Connell, 2005). In a sense, to know the hegemonic side of one's masculinity, another character's side of masculinity is needed. As already explained above, since this research involves 2 characters in the analysis, the researcher chooses *The Ten Commandments (1956)* from the many versions of other films with the same story as the object of the research because in *The Ten Commandments (1956)*, the characters Rameses and Moses are both equally highlighted.

Rameses is portrayed in the movie as a cruel king. The cruelty of

Rameses as a leader makes the enslaved people suffer. For many years Rameses had enslaved the Hebrews, and for many years the enslaved people had to work day and night without rest, building the statues and the glories, and the cities. The enslaved people worked day by day without getting paid. They are forced to keep working and doing their duties without receiving their rights. For several years they are getting suffered under Rameses' leadership.

A few years later, Moses comes as a deliverer to the Hebrews, leading them to fight against Rameses. Moses asks Rameses to liberate the enslaved and threatens him with the power of God. However, with the sense of power Rameses has, he rules Moses out. Thus, some plague comes into Egypt and messes up Egypt. Rameses gets mad and instructs the soldiers to kill all the firstborn Hebrews, which is started from the firstborn child of Moses. The fog filled Egypt and killed every Egyptian's firstborn child, including Rameses' son. Because of it, Rameses liberated the Hebrews and told them to go far away from Egypt. Unfortunately, his revenge on Rameses is burning again. Rameses sends thousands of soldiers to pursue the Hebrews and destroy them. Thus, from the story above, it can be seen that Rameses cannot easily be resisted. There is a lot of battle happen among Ramses and Moses during the movie.

The royal order that are still applied in this film give rise to the existence of social class in men. Rameses and Moses are both portrayed as a leader. However, in this movie, their masculinities are depicted differently.

It can be seen from the leadership style of Rameses as a pharaoh who dominates the class of society below him. It is because he feels that he is in the top rank of society for being the ruler of Egypt. The examples of domination by Rameses are the inability of people under Rameses to control themselves and even just getting their rights. In this film, Rameses' domination is not only among men but also among women. It can be seen from the scene of Nefretiri, who loves Moses but does not have the right to marry the person she loves and is forced to marry Rameses.

This is different from Moses' leadership style as the leader of the Hebrews, who does not have the right to do much because he is in the bottom of the social class. The masculinity of Moses at first is depicted as a lack of confidence. He has no audacity to fight against Rameses. It happens because he feels that Rameses has more power than him. When he is finally fighting against Rameses, instead of using his power, he uses the power of God to intimidate Rameses. His masculinity towards women is also depicted differently from Rameses' masculinity. Moses respects women and doesn't dominate them. It can be proven when he meets shepherded women in Midian who are drawing water and are chased away by a group of shepherd men. When Moses sees that, he helps the women and tells them to go back to draw the water first.

This different social class in men leads to the concept of hegemonic masculinity. However, this does not mean that lower-class men are always subordinated to middle-class men. In some other cases, the condition can

occur in reverse. (Hidayatullah, 2017, p.5). Connell states that hegemony is related to the gender relations, as domination and subordination not only over women but also among men (Connell, 2005, p.67). In Gramsci's social theory, hegemony is defined as cultural leadership run by the authoritative social class (Ritzer and Douglas, 2012, p.300). In fact, there is a dominated male class and a subordinated male class (Budyati, 2016, p.68).

Hegemonic masculinity is the dominant masculinity in hierarchical order of hegemonic masculinity, subordinating other masculinities with a combination of force and consent. When force has to be deployed, the majority of members of the gender regime consent. People who embody subordinate masculinities are aware of their subordination, but they may still consent for the concessions they receive (Connell, 2005, p.80). In addition to different classes of male, hegemonic masculinity is related to more complex things, such as sexuality, race, etc. which cannot be simplified into clear boundaries categories (Hidayatullah, 2017, p.5). Connell explores how societies are constructed to replicate social inequalities among different genders and within genders (Connell, 2005, p.46).

Not simply in real life, masculinity is also shown through literary works like a movie. Literary work is often developed from a process of reality. According to Wellek and Warren (1977, p.94), the literature contains things about life, for the most part, and representation of real society. Thus, the process of masculine construction is represented through

the characters of the movie.

Based on the previous explanation, the dominant attitude of Rameses is more shown than Moses'. The forms of domination are like using his power to control, making people obey his orders, and physically attacking people in the social class under him. Instead of being dominant, Moses is shown to be more powerless. From the attitude of Rameses and Moses, the question arises whether Rameses' dominant attitude is classified as hegemonic masculinity or whether it is Moses who is hegemonic. In this research, the researcher uses a masculinity theory developed by R.W Connell to observe the masculinity side of Rameses and Moses to find out which masculinity among them is hegemonic.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background of the problem should be formulated with the research questions:

1. What can Rameses' masculinity be classified as the hegemonic masculinity?
2. How can the construction of hegemonic masculinity be embedded in Rameses' antagonist characterization while the non-hegemonic masculinity in Moses?

1.3 Objective of Study

1. To find out what is Rameses' masculinity can be classified as the

hegemonic masculinity.

2. To find out the cause of the hegemonic masculinity can be embedded in Rameses' antagonist characterization.

1.4 Significance of Study

Practically, this research is generally directed to the English Literature student and the reader. For the English Literature student, this research can be used to comprehensive study of Masculinity especially hegemonic masculinity. Thus, it can enrich the knowledge about literary work. For the reader, perhaps this research can attract their interest to study more about hegemonic masculinity.

Theoretically, this research is a kind of literary research, mainly as a reference to discussing about representation of hegemonic masculinity in the movie. This research can be used as a reference in further research, particularly with the similar topic and theory.

1.5 Literature Review

There are several previous types of research related to the research which was done. The first research is "*Moses and Pharaoh Story's plot comparison between the film The Ten Commandments and The Interpretation of the Holy Quran by Yusuf Ali*" thesis by Waskita Umaran. This research uses the same movie as the object, *The Ten Commandments* (1956). The research aims to investigate Moses and Pharaoh's plot in the

film *The Ten Commandments* and the Interpretation of the Holy Qur'an by Yusuf Ali. The research focuses on Moses and Pharaoh Story's plot, whereas this research focuses more on the masculinity of Pharaoh.

The second research is "*The Portrayal of Modern Masculinity in Pirates of The Caribbean 1: The Curse of The Black Pearl*" thesis by Muhammad Abdul Muhyi. The research uses the masculinity theory by R.W. Connell to analyze the main character, Jack Sparrow. The analysis aims to find out the category of Jack's masculinity. The research results show that Jack Sparrow's character is categorized as modern masculinity based on hegemonic masculinity. Jack Sparrow's masculinity is represented through the domination over women. Although using the same theory, the object and objective of the research are different.

The third research is "*The Portrayal of Letty's Masculinity in Fast and Furious 6 Movie*" thesis by Jazilatus Silfiyah. The research uses the same theory, the masculinity theory, by R.W. Connell. The research is to find the hegemonic masculinity of Letty through her domination, power, and competitiveness, but the difference is that the dominant character analyzed is female, while in this research is the male character. The result of the research concludes that Letty's character in the movie is a portrayal of female masculinity.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

1.6.1 Masculinity theory

Based on the objectives of study, the researcher uses the masculinity theory by R.W. Connell as the main theory of analysis. R.W. Connell defines masculinity as a problem of the position of men in society. The rationale is that she believes that women's defiance of the patriarchal system should cause transformations in men's lives (Connell). Then, in the end, Connell is known as the concept of "hegemonic masculinity" as the most popular and influential concept of masculinity theory. Hegemonic masculinity is a specific form of masculinity in historical and societal settings that dominates unequal gender relations between men and women, masculinity and femininity, and among masculinities (Connell).

The word hegemony refers to hegemony, where domination occurs not through coercion but from cultural and social constructions. Connell calls this a patriarchal dividend that could gain honor, prestige, and decision-making authority. Race, sexuality, ethnicity, class, and status play an important role in determining who gets more dividends, and any non-elite male is generally as disadvantaged as any female (Connell, 2005, p.76).

Connell mentions four types of masculinity, which can be described more as positions about one another than as personality types:

1. Hegemony: The political or cultural dominance of one state or social group over others.
2. Subordination: The actions or state of subordinating or of being subordinated. This placement is in a lower class or position.
3. Complicit: The state or group taking advantage of the hegemonic masculinity without being a part of them.
4. Marginalization: Placing someone or something in a position of lesser importance, influence, or powerlessness. They do not let to be able to do things or make decisions.

1.6.2 Movie theory

Since this research object is a movie, film theory is necessary to analyze this research. The theory in this research is a film theory by Amy Villarejo. It starts with *mise-en-scène*, from the French that has a meaning the theatrical process of staging (Villarejo, 2007, p.28). Amy Villarejo also stated in her book that there are six components of *mise-en-scène* – setting, lighting, costume, and hair, make-up, figure behavior, and the last one is the cinematography (2007, p.28-36).

However, in this research, the researcher will only use the last component of the theory, cinematography. Cinematography will be focused on anal from its framing and the camera angles. Frame depends on the

choice of cinematography. Each camera placement can be analyzed in terms of the distance between the camera and the object (Villarejo, 2007, p.38).

There are seven framing techniques mentioned by Villarejo (2007, p.38).

1. The extreme long shot (ELS), in which one can barely distinguish the human figure;
2. The long shot (LS), in which humans are distinguishable but remain dwarfed by the background;
3. The medium long shot (MLS), or plan American, in which the human is framed from the knees up;
4. The medium shot (MS), in which we move in slightly to frame the human from the waist up;
5. The medium close-up (MCU), in which we are slightly closer and see the human from the chest up;
6. The close-up (CU), which isolates a portion of a human (the face, most prominently);
7. And the extreme close-up (ECU), in which we see a mere portion of the face (an eye, the lips).

1.7 Research Method

1.7.1 Type of research

The method used in this research is a descriptive qualitative method since the data are descriptively analyzed. The descriptive qualitative

approach is a procedure used to describe data in the form of written or spoken words of people or actors that can be observed in the novel or movie. (Glass & Hopkins, 1984, p.160).

1.7.2 Data sources

The Ten Commandments (1956) are the primary data sources used in this research. It is an American film released on October 5, 1956, directed by Cecil B. DeMille. The data units used in this research are practices and discourses. The data will be collected from the dialogue and the movie scene.

1.7.3 Data collection technique

In collecting the data, the researcher applied several procedures as follows:

1. Reading the movie, *The Ten Commandments* (1956) repeatedly until the researcher understands the content of the movie,
2. Understanding the intrinsic elements of the film, such as theme, setting, plot, character, and characterization.
3. Breaking the film into scenes and discourses, they are coded.S

1.7.4 Data analysis technique

The researcher uses some steps in the research process, including planning, collecting data, and analyzing. For doing an analysis, the researcher uses some steps as follows:

1. Sorting the data collected that is related to the topic of this research,
2. Classifying the data based on variables of the theory related to the problem statement. The theoretical variables found are domination, power, and competitiveness,
3. Analyzing some parts of the movie using R.W Connell's masculinity theory,
4. Concluding, the researcher makes a conclusion from the result of the research that has been done.

1.8 Paper Organization

This research will contain four chapters. The first chapter is the introduction. It consists of the background of the study, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, the literature review, the theoretical framework, the research methodology, and the paper's organization. The second is the intrinsic elements of the movie. The third is the data findings and data analysis. And the last chapter is the conclusion of the film.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

From what has been analyzed in the previous chapter and based on the problem of this research paper, Rameses masculinity can be classified as hegemonic masculinity. In almost the entire story of *The Ten Commandments (1956)*, Rameses shows his hegemonic character, such as dominance, power, and competitiveness. But at the movie's end, Moses gradually begins to show his hegemonic attitude. It was caused after Moses was chosen to be God's messenger and was sent back to Egypt to free the Israelites. Moses leads his power from God to threaten Rameses to release Israel and bring them out of Egypt. Since Moses shows his hegemonic masculinity, it does not frighten Rameses and make him bow to Moses. It is because Rameses still think that he is more powerful than Moses. However, Moses is getting more assertive and decisive in showing his power until it fears Rameses and eventually makes him bow to Moses.

From the analysis of the two characters above, the results of this research indicate that Rameses is hegemonic whereas Moses is non-hegemonic. However, Moses masculinity can become hegemonic when the character of Rameses is removed. From the research that has been analyzed, the formulation of the problem has also been answered. Most of the hegemonic characteristics of masculinity shown by Rameses in *The Ten Commandments (1956)* are forms of masculinity that tend to lead to negative

things. Meanwhile, Moses' hegemonic characters are shown to obtain positive things, such as strike the mobs of men who are looking down on women and threaten Rameses to free the slaves. Those examples of positive thing contrast the hegemonic masculinity of Rameses. Therefore, it causes the construction of hegemonic masculinity more embedded in Rameses' antagonist characterization than in Moses' protagonist characterization.

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