

**CONTESTING MASCULINITY BETWEEN ROBIN HOOD AND AZEEM**

**AS SEEN IN ROBIN HOOD: PRINCE OF THIEVES (1991)**

**A GRADUATING PAPER**

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for Gaining Bachelor Degree

in English Department



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**2022**

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Saya menyatakan bahwa skripsi tersebut sudah dapat diajukan pada sidang Munaqasyah untuk memenuhi salah satu syarat memperoleh gelar Sarjana Sastra Inggris.

Atas perhatiannya, saya ucapkan terima kasih.

*Wassalamu'alaikum wr. wb.*

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# CONTESTING MASCULINITY BETWEEN ROBIN HOOD AND AZEEM AS SEEN IN ROBIN HOOD: PRINCE OF THIEVES (1991)

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## ABSTRACT

This research aims to find variations in masculinity between two characters, Robin Hood and Azeem, in the film *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991). The two characters have different perspectives on masculinity because Robin comes from a Western or European country while Azeem comes from the Middle East. The researcher analyzes this phenomenon using the theory of masculinity by Todd. W. Reeser. This theory focuses on variations in masculinity because Reeser does not only see a person's masculinity through physical or biological aspects, but also through other aspects. The researcher focuses on variations in masculinity in several intersections, including the intersection with culture or religion, the intersection with race, the intersection with psychology, and the intersection with socioeconomics. This research uses a qualitative descriptive method to collect the data. The conclusion obtained by researcher is that cultural differences can affect perspectives on masculinity.

**Keywords:** *masculinity variations, culture, Europe, Middle East*

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# CONTESTING MASCULINITY BETWEEN ROBIN HOOD AND AZEEM AS SEEN IN ROBIN HOOD: PRINCE OF THIEVES (1991)

Oleh: Erika Estinia Oktaviyani

## ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan variasi maskulinitas antara dua karakter, Robin Hood dan Azeem, yang terdapat dalam film *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991). Kedua karakter tersebut memiliki sudut pandang kemaskulinan yang berbeda dikarenakan Robin berasal dari negara Barat atau Eropa sedangkan Azeem berasal dari Timur Tengah. Peneliti menganalisis fenomena ini dengan menggunakan teori maskulinitas oleh Todd. W. Reeser. Teori ini berfokus pada variasi maskulinitas dikarenakan Reeser tidak hanya melihat kemaskulinan seseorang melalui aspek fisik atau pun secara biologis namun juga melalui aspek lain. Peneliti memfokuskan variasi maskulinitas tersebut dalam beberapa interseksi antara lain, interseksi dengan budaya atau agama, interseksi dengan ras, interseksi dengan psikologi, dan interseksi dengan sosioekonomi. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif untuk mengumpulkan data. Simpulan yang didapat oleh peneliti adalah perbedaan budaya dapat mempengaruhi perspektif tentang kemaskulinan.

**Kata kunci:** *variasi maskulinitas, budaya, Eropa, Timur Tengah*

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## MOTTO

“If you put your hope in something, you will be betrayed. Promises will be broken and anticipation will turn to disappointment. Because of it, I decided not to trust anyone anymore.”

— Mitsuru, *Darling in the Franxx* Ep. 11 00:42-01:02





## **DEDICATION**

This research is dedicated to;

My beloved parents

My lovely little brother

My great lecturers

My dearest advisor, Dr. Danial Hidayatullah, S.S., M.Hum.

My gorgeous friends

And the last is myself.



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*Assalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb.*

*Alhamdulillahirabbil'aalamiin.* All praise to Allah SWT, the Most Merciful, and His Messenger, Prophet Muhammad SAW, who have blessed and guided the researcher to finish this graduating paper entitled **Contesting Masculinity Between Robin Hood and Azeem as Seen in Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves.**

As the researcher, I would like to express my gratitude and show appreciation to the people that have helped and supported me to finish this research; those people are the following:

1. Dr. Muhammad Wildan, as the Dean of the Faculty of Adab and Cultural Sciences of UIN Sunan Kalijaga,
2. Mrs. Ulyati Retno Sari, M.Hum., as the Head of the English Department. Thank you for your advice and knowledge,
3. Dr. Danial Hidayatullah, SS., M.Hum., as my academic and research advisor. Thank you for patiently guiding me, giving me advice and corrections, and supporting me in finishing this paper,
4. All the great lecturers in English Department, Dr. Ubaidillah S.S., M.Hum., Ulyati Retno Sari, M.Hum., Dr. Witriani, S.S., M.Hum., Dr. Danial Hidayatullah, SS., M.Hum., Dr. Arif Budiman, S.S., M.A, Aninda Aji Siwi, S.Pd., M.Pd., Dwi Margo Yuwono, M.Hum., Febriyanti Dwiratna Lestari, SS., MA, Harsiwi Fajar Sari, SS., M.A, and the other lecturers. Thank you

for giving me knowledge and experiences in every class that I have been through.

5. My beloved parents, Sugiyanto and Paryani. Thank you for becoming the reason I live and can reach this point.
6. My lovely little brother, Muhammad Reza Assyarif. Thank you for giving me so much color in my life.
7. Mama Nana, the motivational person of my life. Thank you for your beautiful words that have made me realize I am doing great.
8. To all my reviewers, Urida Rahman Latif, Shifa Nur Rahmah, Ghulam Falah, Binti Khoiriyah, and Hifni Bahiroh Ruwaida. Thank you for all your advice and corrections to my graduating paper to be better.
9. All of my friends from *FGD*. Thank you for supporting me and becoming my friends since the beginning of my semester.
10. My gorgeous friend, Rosa Rahmawarti. Thank you for everything you have given to me. I appreciate your help. I am so lucky to have you by my side.
11. My lovely friend, Septiana. Thank you for being a supportive friend of mine. I will never forget your kindness.
12. My cheerful friend, Rihaadatul 'Aisyil Mubarokati. Thank you for your help and advice while I was confused about my graduating paper. I am so thankful for it.
13. To *TIMPRO*, Nadim, Fariz, Galang, Ambar, Tya, Melina, Ayis, Zula, and Caca. Thank you for sharing all the moments and happiness in my life.

14. All my friends in the English Department chapter 2017 that I cannot mention one by one. Thank you for being such great friends and sharing all the joy with me.

15. Last but not least, I want to be grateful for and proud of myself because I can do all the hard work through every second of my life. The last word for myself is thank you for being alive.

Lastly, the researcher realizes that the graduating paper is far from word perfect. Suggestions and corrections are welcomed to improve the research. The researcher hopes that this research will be helpful for all the readers.

Yogyakarta, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Erika', is placed over the watermark.

**Erika Estinia Oktaviani**  
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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Background of Study

In today's era, literature is a form of art that is in demand from the audience because it contains imaginative and artistic elements. According to Klerer, literature is the whole expression of emotions or written expression and has limitations in every literary document (2004: 1). Literature can be enjoyed by some various group and ages. There are some forms of literary work such as novels, short stories, lyrics, dramas, poetries, and many more. Then, film is one of the literary works. According to Hornby, film means a series of moving pictures recorded with the sound that tells a story and is shown at the cinema, where a film is displayed (2006: 950). There are two types of film, such as fictional film and non-fictional film.

A fictional film is a film that is limited to the author's imagination, and a non-fiction film is based on a true story. The making of a film cannot be separated from intrinsic and extrinsic elements. The intrinsic elements include theme, plot, character and characterization, setting, and moral value. Meanwhile, the extrinsic elements are a structure of literary works, which can be found outside the story, such as the author of circumstances, religion, and psychological state. Films are intended as a medium of entertainment and educational media which convey moral messages, and introduce art to the audience.

*Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991) is a literary work in the form of a fictional film that is adapted from the folklore of Great Britain in the middle age. It tells us about a protagonist character who is against an antagonist character. In the story, Robin Hood is a character who likes to steal from nobles who extort people's wealth with hefty taxes. The proceeds from the stolen money are distributed back to the people. Robin Hood is known as a hero to the villagers. This story has inspired many people, and some producers have tried to remake it through a film related to Robin Hood, one of which is a film called *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991). The storyline is almost identical to the original story, but some changes have been added to attract the audience's interest. *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991) adds a Muslim character named Azeem, who meets Robin in Jerusalem and becomes Robin's traveling companion. These two characters have different cultures because Robin comes from England. Meanwhile, Azeem comes from Al-Andalus (the Iberian Peninsula).

As the main character, Robin Hood has a big and muscular body which makes him look physically masculine. In *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991), he is also told as a noble man who participates in the Crusades. He even fights against the executioner, so he can be released from the prison in Jerusalem and meet Azeem. It shows the masculinity of a man who is strong and fearless.

Not only Robin, Azeem, as the supporting character, is also categorized as a masculine character, similar to Robin. He has muscular body. He is brave and strong.

He helps Robin fight the executioner even though he knows that Robin is a Briton. Azeem owes Robin a vow because Robin has saved his life.

The restriction on the perspective or point of view of masculinity in a man is usually hegemonic. Masculinity is usually seen from physical perspective of a man, such as, having big, strong, and muscular body. According to Gottzen, the structural components in social relations prove that men have influence and power based on the appearance of masculinity as mentioned earlier (2020: 378). This kind of masculinity can be seen in *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991), especially in Robin and Azeem. According to Connell, masculinity in a man is something to be proud of because male body is a natural bearer of masculinity, so the men tend to have high competitiveness, thirst for power, and strength (2005: 46). However, it is different from Reeser who said that masculinity cannot stand alone only from physical aspect. There are intersections that affect how masculinity is formed, such as with culture, race, psychology, and socioeconomic aspect.

The point of view of masculinity varies from country to country, and it depends on the cultures in that country. For example, England has a culture of socializing with other people by offering and drinking alcohol. This behavior coming from the culture makes men more masculine in England because alcohol can stimulate adrenaline and make the heart beats faster than usual. The alcohol makes men braver to do some activities, more confident about themselves, and become more relax. Meanwhile, in Muslim culture or Middle East where Azeem comes from, the people

are mostly religious. They believe that everything they do, their God (Allah) is always watching them. It is also written in the holy Qur'an that being drunk is forbidden. It can be concluded that Azeem is less masculine than Robin if we see this perspective from the culture in England.

The tension and conflict of masculinity between the two characters become a problem because Robin has European cultural values and Azeem has Middle Eastern cultural values, so it causes masculinity competition between the two cultures. In *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991), it shows that Azeem has a big and muscular body, but he is considered lousy by British people because he does not dare to get drunk. Likewise with Robin when he is in Jerusalem. For Middle Eastern people, honesty is a form of masculinity for a man. However, Robin's words to the executioner are still considered as a lie even though Robin tells the truth. It happens because Robin is a threat to Middle Eastern people and his people want to take the Holy Land, Jerusalem. This shows that masculinity is caused by various aspects that are hidden beyond the physical aspect of a man.

The researcher is interested in choosing this film and the two characters, Robin and Azeem, because of the masculinity contradiction between Robin who carries European cultural values and Azeem who carries Middle Eastern cultural values. Robin is treated differently when he is in Jerusalem as well as Azeem who is also treated differently when he is in England. This causes the perspective of masculinity to vary depending on the culture adopted in the country, so it is not only seen from one aspect. This

background makes the researcher want to examine further about the masculinity competition between the two characters in *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991), Robin and Azeem.

The researcher examines the object of *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991) using the masculinity theory by Todd W. Reeser and post-structuralism as interpretation tools to analyze the indirect meaning of a sign of gender studies, such as discourse, power, instability, and representation. There are many studies about masculinity comparison. The research on masculinity is mainly about comparing masculinity and femininity or masculinity in a woman's character. Different from previous research, this research focuses on masculinity that can be seen in Europe culture and the Middle East culture.

## 1.2 Research Questions

The researcher will analyses *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991) by the questions below. Here are the questions:

1. What are the masculinities portrayed in Robin Hood and Azeem's character in *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991)?
2. How are Robin and Azeem contested in *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991)?



### 1.3 Objective of Study

This study aims to point out the different kinds of masculinity between Robin Hood and Azeem through Europe and Middle East cultures. The researcher uses the theory of masculinity by Todd W. Reeser as a guide to solve the problem.

### 1.4 Significances of Study

This research explains how the masculinity of Robin and Azeem from two different cultures, Europe and the Middle East, affects the perspective on masculinity. The researcher hopes that this research might be helpful for all the readers, so they can better understand the variety of masculinity.

### 1.5 Literature Review

The researcher found some related data and tried to compare it with the research carried out. The data is collected from the thesis that the other researchers have done. The first data source is a journal entitled *Interseksi Maskulinitas dan Agama Dalam Cerpen Robohnya Surau Kami* Karya A. A. Navis (2017) by Danial Hidayatullah. This journal has a similar theory to Todd. W. Reeser that the researcher uses but has a different object. This journal operates a short story as the object. The result of this journal is to identify how gender and narrative text are correlated.

The second data is a thesis entitled *The Portrait of Masculinity in Roald Dahl's The BFG* (2013) by Hening Ciptaningrum. This thesis also has the same theory as what the researcher uses but has a different object. This thesis uses a novel as the

object. The result of this thesis is to show that masculinity is varied, changing, and relational. However, masculinity is mostly done by men and aimed at men.

The third data is a thesis from Aji Khoirudin Said entitled *Diana Crisis Masculinity in Wonder Woman Movie* (2019). This thesis has the same theory, but it uses different object. The result is that masculinity in Diana is unstable. Also, the phenomenon is that the female main character should be against stereotypes of women.

The last data is from Umi 'Afini with the title *Passing Down Masculinity from Father to Son as Depicted in Chef Movie* (2018). This thesis also has the same theory, but it uses different object. The result is that masculinity is not natural, but it is formed from the interaction with mature men and through pictures of masculinity that a boy watches.

The researcher wants to add more research using the theory of masculinity by Todd W. Reeser. The object of this research is a film and the research entitled *Masculinity Contesting between Robin Hood and Azeem as Seen in Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991). This research aims to discover the differences between Robin's and Azeem's masculinity that can be seen through their cultures. This research differs from all previous researches because it will explore the variety of masculinity through cultures from two countries, Europe and the Middle East, portrayed by Robin and Azeem.

## 1.6 Theoretical Approach

### 1.6.1 Masculinity Theory

There is a popular theory that was written by Todd. W. Reeser, in his book *Masculinities in Theory: An Introduction* (2009). Reeser said that the general characteristic contained in masculinity is a male body. Still, the spread and application of masculinity can be carried out by various groups, such as women, lesbians, and even gays (2009: 17). Masculinity cannot be defined. There are multiple ways to describe masculinity, focusing on discourse, ideology, and sign. It means that masculinity could be in any gender, and it is not only defined by the biological or male body. There are several uses of this theory, such as changing the perspective of most people who think that masculinity only can be seen as hegemonic, broadening the perspective of masculinity, and breaking the stereotype of masculinity.

Post-structuralism is a kind of approach that can provide a language in gender studies. This approach is essential in masculinity because it can find the indirect meaning behind a symbol or sign. There are four direct applications related to gender studies: discourse, power, instability, and representation. Discourse is a process of constructing masculinity that intersects with culture and creates indirect meaning. Power is one of the critical aspects of gender study because masculinity is seen chiefly through its power and hegemony. According to Reeser, power itself is a concept that equates institutional power and overrides male domination if the experience of hegemony is created (2008: 8). Instability is a relationship of hegemonic masculinity.

Still, there are gaps or cracks, and it causes men cannot show themselves as dominant figures. Representation is a process of masculinity contained in a culture that has constructive nature and can create implied meanings.

The concept of otherness is also included in post-structuralism because it is a concept where the dominating group has a different point of view from the dominant group. It creates inequalities, dissimilarities, contradictions, and disconnections in a dominating environment. Masculinity can be seen in various ways, such as through culture and not only about the male body and the power of domination that it has, but it can also be seen from other aspects also that construct masculinity. The intersection of masculinity in this movie is through race, culture or religion, psychology, and socioeconomic factors that Robin and Azeem represent as the characters that the researcher wants to analyze.

### **1.6.2 Film Theory**

The second theory that the researcher puts forward is film theory. This theory is used as a supporting theory and a guide to analyze the details of a film contained in *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991). The researcher uses film theory by Amy Villarejo in her book *Film Studies The Basic* (2007). As we know, the film is a medium to dispense the work of art of a picture form consisting of sound, movement, and most cultural practices. It also aims to realize the author's fantasy, to give a piece of information, and to entertain viewers. The author's ideas are poured into film and represent social life.

The film is a form of optical illusion captured using a camera and produces several images, movements, and sounds. The images are managed into a series of stories and interpret or represent meaning and symbol. The researcher uses the theatrical process of staging concept originating from France, often referred to as *mise-en-scene*. According to Villarejo, *mise-en-scene* is cinematographic aspects visually displayed in a film frame (2007:28). The purpose of *mise-en-scene* is to make the film feel more realistic. Not only *mise-en-scene*, another aspect that cannot be separated from the main feature of cinematic representation as stated by Sikov (2010:16), and it consists of:

- (1) *settings* are where the scene is played,
- (2) *properties* for supporting tools to build the character,
- (3) *lighting* shows the visual set and expression of the actors,
- (4) *costumes* are clothes to be worn by actors,
- (5) *actor* is the player on the stage,
- (6) *make-up* is to highlight the characteristics that the actors will present,
- (7) *figure behaviour* shows the facial expression and gestures of the actors.

Besides the main feature of cinematic representation, shots are also needed as the basic unit, and it builds a film. According to Villarejo (2007:38), several shots are often used in a film, including:

1. **Extreme Long Shot (ELS)** takes a vast panorama where humans can barely not be seen on a colossal scale,
2. **Long Shot (LS)** takes a human as an object, but the background still looks wider,
3. **Medium Long Shot (MLS)** takes a human in a picture but only shown from the knees up,
4. **Medium Shot (MS)** takes a picture of a human, and the camera moves slowly from the waist up,
5. **Medium Close-Up (MCU)** shows the human body from the chest up while the camera moves slightly closer,
6. **Close-Up (CU)** shows the whole face and emphasizes expressions,
7. **Extreme Close-Up (ECU)** shows some parts of looks, such as eyes or lips.

The angle of shots is also one of the basic units for making the film. Angle is the camera's point of view in taking pictures and places the camera at a certain height and viewpoint. Angle is divided into two parts, horizontally and vertically. Both are used to avoid unattractive images but at different angles, horizontally or vertically.

The researcher analyses the masculinity between two characters using both theories. The data evidence is used to explain and represent the analysis regarding the differences of masculinity portrayed by Robin and Azeem in *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991).



## **1.7 Method of Research**

### **1.7.1 Type of Research**

The researcher uses a qualitative descriptive method. According to Creswell, qualitative research is an approach to understanding the meaning of a social group or an individual. The analysis of the data obtained will be interpreted by the researcher (2012:32-33). In this analysis, the researcher states that she tries to discover the differences in masculinity between the two characters based on culture and religion, race, psychology, and socioeconomic in the object *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves*.

### **1.7.2 Data Collection Technique**

The researcher took the data by watching the film *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991), taking notes and choosing which part of the scene to analyze, making a sequence of analysis, examining the scenes and dialogues in the film using masculinity theory by Reeser, and the last one is drawing the conclusion of the research. The data sources are from the film *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991), books, journals, articles, and information that can be found on the internet to strengthen the researcher's arguments.

### **1.7.3 Data Analysis Technique**

The researcher takes data from a film titled *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991) and other sources such as articles, journals, books, etc. The researcher uses some steps to analyze the data. First, the researcher finds the data by marking some scene



and dialogue that shows masculinity by culture in the film *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991). Second, the researcher uses post-structuralism as a tool to analyze the masculinity theory by Todd. W. Reeser. Third, the researcher compares those two different characters and shows the variety of masculinity between Western and Middle Eastern based on the theory.

#### **1.7.4 Paper Organization**

This paper is divided into four chapters. The first chapter consists of an introduction with sub-chapters including the background of the study, research question, objectives of the study, the significance of the study, literature review, theoretical approach, and research method. The second chapter is intrinsic analysis. The third chapter is the content of the analysis, and the last is the conclusion of the research of this paper.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

#### 4.1. Conclusion

The researcher concludes that the masculinity described by Robin and Azeem can be seen from the analysis above. The researcher found differences in Western and Middle Eastern cultures that affect masculinity between Robin and Azeem. The research is examined using the theory of masculinity proposed by Todd. W. Reeser. The analysis above is not only seen from the physical and biological aspects, such as the theory of masculinity by R.W. Connell.

Robin and Azeem are the protagonists in *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991). Both figures have muscular, tall, and big bodies, so they are hegemonically categorized as masculine men. Reeser argued that the male biological body only measures a person's masculinity. However, their way of dealing with problems, how to take action and attitude, and even the emotions that they feel can also be identified as masculinity. Therefore, the masculinity of the two figures is also influenced by culture or religion, race, psychology, and socioeconomic aspects.

In culture or religion, Azeem's application is dominated by a more masculine man than Robin. Azeem gets more discrimination in England because he is a Muslim. However, Azeem responds and acts gracefully because he believes every problem must go through. He believes in Allah as his Lord and that all of the issues given to him are a test he should pass. In Qur'an, Surah Al-Insyira verse 5-6

also explains that Muslims who get trials from Allah SWT is given the ease in facing these trials. The race aspect can also be seen that Azeem dominates. He is currently in England, where most people are white, while Azeem has black skin. He is even said to be Robin's slave, but those words are ignored as long as they do not endanger his life. His actions in responding to the British who discriminate him make him more mature, patient, and he prefers to give in to an argument.

However, in the psychological aspect, Robin is more dominating than Azeem. It is because Robin is more expressive in showing his emotions. Robin always puts his feelings first in making decisions, such as when he helps Azeem, a Moorish, in the execution room. Robin also tells Azeem to return to his home when Robin returns to his homeland, England. Robin also dominates the socioeconomic aspect. Robin has power in his land because he is the son of one of the British nobles. He uses his influence to lead and protect his people from the atrocities of the Sheriff of Nottingham.

#### **4.2. Suggestion**

The researcher realizes that this research is still far from perfect. The researcher hopes that this research will have a positive impact on other researchers and readers. The readers are expected to be able to expand the discussion on the study of masculinity which is not only seen from the physical aspect of a man or his biological aspect. Masculinity that is only seen from one direction will have a negative impact and

stereotypes on men. Therefore, the researcher hopes that other researchers and readers will explore masculinity further by using another literary works



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