WOMEN EQUALITY AS SEEN IN A HORROR MOVIE: *SILENT HILL 1*

A GRADUATING PAPER

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the Bachelor Degree in English Literature

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

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WOMEN EQUALITY AS SEEN IN A HORROR MOVIE: *SILENT HILL 1*

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ABSTRACT

Film is a product of popular culture, so it becomes a part of human life. Therefore, analyzing movie that is part of a literary work is very interesting. The subject of this research is *Silent Hill*, a horror film series adapted from the video game. However, this research only takes the data from the first sequel of this movie, because the available data are appropriate with the objectives of this research. *Silent Hill 1* tells about a mother who struggles to find a solution in a mysterious town due to irregularities in her adopted daughter who often sleepwalks and calls Silent Hill town. The purpose of this research is to find out how women are depicted in the movie, and why they are shown as the dominant characters. This research uses an objective approach by applying liberal feminism theory, representation theory of Stuart Hall, and supported by film theory. Liberal feminism emphasis on individual autonomy and equality of opportunity. This research focuses on the concept of equality measured by Merle Thornton. While representation theory is used to help in interpreting the portrayal of woman characters that are portrayed dominantly. After analyzing all the data that have been found, beginning from the source of the conflict, the efforts, and the achievements of woman characters that become the focus of this research, they are Rose, Officer Cybil Bennett, and Christabella, the writer concludes that women in this horror movie are described as the figures that can be equal like men. While the portrayal of women as the dominant characters in this movie is an attempt to reverse the stereotypes about women who are weak by showing women with a positive impression and giving new meaning that women can be equal like men.

Keywords: *Silent Hill 1*, movie, equality, woman characters, the opportunity, dominant.

WOMEN EQUALITY AS SEEN IN A HORROR MOVIE: *SILENT HILL 1*

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ABSTRAK

Film merupakan produk budaya popular, sehingga menjadi bagian dari kehidupan manusia. Oleh karena itu, mengkaji film yang merupakan bagian dari karya sastra itu sangat menarik. Subjek penelitian ini adalah *Silent Hill*, yaitu serial film horror yang diadaptasi dari video game. Namun penelitian ini hanya mengambil data dari film tersebut yang bagian pertama, karena data-data yang tersedia sesuai dengan tujuan dari penelitian ini. *Silent Hill 1* menceritakan tentang seorang ibu yang berjuang untuk menemukan solusi di sebuah kota misterius karena terjadi kejanggalan pada anak adopsinya yaitu sering berjalan sendiri ketika tidur dan menyebut kota Silent Hill. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mencari tahu bagaimana perempuan digambar dalam sebuah film, dan mengapa perempuan itu digambarkan sebagai karakter yang dominan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan objektif dengan mengaplikasikan teori feminism yang focus pada liberal, teori representasi dari Stuart Hall, dan dibantu dengan teori film. Liberal feminism menekankan pada otonomi individu dan juga kesetaraan untuk mendapatkan kesempatan. Penelitian ini beracuan pada konsep *equality* yang dirumuskan oleh Merle Thornton. Sedangkan teori representasi digunakan untuk membantu menginterpretasikan penggambaran karakter perempuan yang digambarkan secara dominan. Setelah menganalisis semua data yang sudah ditemukan, mulai dari sumber permasalahan, usaha-usaha, dan pencapaian dari karakter-karakter perempuan yang menjadi fokus dalam penelitian ini, yaitu Rose, Officer Bennett, dan Christabella, penulis menyimpulkan bahwa perempuan dalam film horror tersebut digambarkan sebagai sosok yang mampu setara seperti laki-laki. Sedangkan penggambaran perempuan sebagai karakter yang dominan dalam film tersebut merupakan upaya untuk membalikkan *stereotype* tentang anggapan perempuan yang lemah dengan cara menunjukkan perempuan dengan kesan positifnya dan memberikan makna baru bahwa perempuan mampu seperti laki-laki.

Kata kunci: *Silent Hill 1*, film, kesetaraan, karakter perempuan, kesempatan, dominan.

MOTTO

Nothing to no purpose

Never do anything if your mother does not permit you!

Use your heart for thinking when your mind can not overcome it!

Life is too short to stand only, so keep running till you can fly.

DEDICATION

This Graduating Paper I dedicate to:

My strong mother

My beloved father and my cool brother

My big family

My great teachers and lectures

English Literature Department of UIN Sunan Kalijaga

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1.   Background of Study

Literature is human creativity. Therefore, it can be seen as the reflection of human life. People can learn about life with other point of views and many perspectives from literary works. Literary works can not only be presented by written form, but also by visual form. It can be seen by the emergence of movie. It includes into literary work as Turner said that film is seen to be analogous to literature (2003: 1-2). Here, the term "film" and "movie" is interchangeable (Villarejo, 2007: 9). Movie can present the works completely, because people can enjoy it by the audio-visual form at will and every time they want.

Today, movie becomes the part of people life in the world. There is the relation between movie and the trend within popular culture, and it is also used to be the documentary evidence of movement within social history (Turner, 2003: 152). Popular culture means a culture of mass-produced (Barker, 2011: 50). Since movie is mass produced, it becomes popular culture.

In the movie, the authors also can show their ideas as creative as they want, because movie can present the situation as if very natural. The movie's moving pictures and the sounds can help the viewers to understand the story well. All ideas are conveyed by utilizing the audio-visual systematically. On the other

hand, movie is not only taken as natural as the real world is, but also it can be added some graphic effects to make it more interesting, for instance, a horror movie.

According to Carrol, horror is a genre which represents an unnatural thing and there is a threatening monster character on it. However, the point of horror is to provoke outrage, fear, and disgust. It is very easy to stimulate the emotions and experiences of the viewers (as cited in Fahy, 2010: 14-15). In fact, horror movie is a narrative which is designed to evoke a profound fear, but it also can make an incredible fascination. Horror has essentially an aesthetic and moral value. Most critics assume that horror genre hides some meanings, such as psychological, sociological, and religious aspects (Mazur, 2011: 231-232).

Thus, the writer chooses one of horror movies, *Silent Hill* to be the subject of the analysis. *Silent Hill* is a horror movie written by Roger Avary and directed by Christophe Gans. This movie is an adaptation of survival horror video game *Silent Hill*, created by *Konami*. The movie has two sequels, *Silent Hill 1* and *Silent Hill 2 (Revelation)*. However, the writer focuses on the first sequel of this movie. It is proper to be analyzed based on the purpose of this analysis, because the main character of the second sequel is different, although the story is interconnected (http://www.sonypictures.com/movies/silenthill/site/html/prodnotes.html).

One of the important reasons why the writer chooses the first sequel of this movie to be analyzed is because woman characters that are shown in this movie are dominant in taking the roles of the social life. They show that they never want

to act like unpowered creation at all, and they show that they also have power to do something like men do.

Furthermore, every work has a particular purpose why it is produced. As Christophe Gans conveyed on his Personal Quotes, he views a horror movie as a different genre from the other works. He says, "It is important to consider that the horror movies should - like modern art - not have a too obvious meaning. When you watch them it is more important what you feel than what you understand … and today the horror genre is very feminine" (http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0304521/bio?ref_=nm_dyk_qt_sm).

From the quotation above, the writer of this research is motivated to discover the obvious meaning on the movie which is produced by Christophe Gans; in this case is a horror movie: *Silent Hill 1*. Moreover, he said that today the horror genre is very feminine. It is proper to be the object of the analysis based on the purpose of the writer of this research.

Moreover, the main character of this movie is a woman. She is Rose Da Silva, a mother who struggles to heal and save her adopted daughter, Sharon (nine years old), for getting her normal life again, because Sharon always sleepwalks and calls a town called *Silent Hill*. Meanwhile, the other woman characters that have the important roles are Officer Cybil Bennett as a policewoman and Christabella as the head of the cult. This paper is focused on woman characters which have the most important roles in the movie.

Smith says in "*The Image of Woman in Film*" that many movies generally show woman as confused person, or helpless and in danger, or passive, or as a purely sexual being (as cited in Thornham, 1999: 14-15). However, the woman characters in this movie imply that women have power enough to do something like men do. Moreover, the main character shows that woman is able to do something like men do; in this movie, it is shown by saving and curing her daughter.

Thus, the writer uses feminist theory to analyze how woman characters are depicted in this movie. Since there are many different thoughts of feminist theory, the writer decides to use liberal feminism as the proper thought to analyze the case, especially stressing on women equality. Moreover, this research also uses representation theory of Stuart Hall and film theory to support the analysis.

There is a concept of equality between women and men as Merle Thornton explained. The concept explains that the nature of women and men is equal. It is the fact that cannot be denied. Therefore, if women get equal opportunity in the same manner as men get, women are also able to do like men do. Thus, the result will also be equal. But, it must be noted that the term "equal" does not mean "same" (Hughes, 2002: 34-35).

The concept about equality is also seen in Islam perspective. Every person, man or woman has the same right. It can be based on God's saying in the holy Qur'an, Surah An-Nahl, verse 97:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَى وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهُ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً وَلَنَجْزِيَنَّهُمْ أَجْرَهُم بِأَحْسَنِ مَا كَانُواْ يَعْمَلُونَ.

Which means: whoever works righteousness – whether male or female – while he (or she) is a true believer (of Islamic Monotheism) verily, to him We will give a good life (in this world with respect, contentment and lawful provision), and we shall pay them certainly a reward in proportion to the best of what the used to do (i.e. Paradise in the Hereafter) (Alhilali and Khan, 1996: 537).

In addition, there is also the verse that explains about the equality among women and men. It can be seen in Surah Al'Imran, verse 195:

فَاسْتَجَابَ لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ أَنِّي لاَ أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عَامِلٍ مِّنكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَى بَعْضُكُم مِّن بَعْضٍ فَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُواْ وَأُخْرِجُواْ مِن دِيَارِهِمْ وَأُوذُواْ فِي سَبِيلِي وَقَاتَلُواْ وَقُتِلُواْ لأُكَفِّرَنَّ عَنْهُمْ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ وَلأُدْخِلَنَّهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِن تَحْتِهَا الأَنْهَارُ ثَوَابًا مِّن عِندِ اللّهِ وَاللّهُ عِندَهُ حُسْنُ الثَّوَابِ.

Which means: So, their Lord accepted of them (their supplication and answered them), "never will I allow to be lost the work of any of you, be he male or female. You are (members) one of another, so those who emigrated and were driven out from their homes, and suffered harm in My Cause, and who fought, and were killed (in My Cause), verily, I will expiate from them their evil deeds and admit them into Gardens under which rivers flow (in Paradise); a reward from Allah, and with Allah is the best of rewards (Alhilali and Khan, 1996: 157-158).

From the two verses above, they show that Allah treats women and men as the equal creature. He does not treat people based on the gender, but He gives the right to women and men equally. Hence, analyzing about woman characters in the movie is very important to understand the reflection of human being, especially

women life. Like the two verses conveyed above, they show that there must the equal right between women and men. Thus, the assumption about the weakness of women cannot be a reason for women to always give up in facing every difficult circumstance.

Moreover, today the perspective about woman equality is not right enough. Women try to insist their right about equality, while men suppose that it is too much. So, women and men must recheck again about their understanding about equality itself.

Finally, in this research, the writer analyzes the equality which is shown by woman characters in horror movie: *Silent Hill 1* and the reasons of woman characters which are shown as the dominant characters in the movie. The analysis aims to understand that women deserve to be equal to get the opportunity like men get. Women can overcome the problem that they face with no one can control or forbid them to do something that has been decided before they do it. They have power enough to against the oppression and escape from the difficult circumstance. Therefore, the writer hopefully can show it by this analysis.

1.2. Problem Statements

Based on the background of the study, the research of this paper aims to discover the answer of the problems as follows:

1. How women are depicted in *Silent Hill 1* movie?

2. Why women are shown as the dominant characters in *Silent Hill 1* movie?

1.3. Objectives of Study

After conducting the problem statements, the research of this paper aims to discover how women depicted in *Silent Hill 1* movie are, and why women shown as the dominant characters in *Silent Hill 1* movie are.

1.4. Significances of Study

The significance of this research is expected to be able to contribute the development of literary study both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research has used one of the literary criticisms. It is feminist literary criticism. It can be used to understand woman characters in the literary work deeper based on feminist literary criticism, especially in *Silent Hill 1* movie. So, this research can give some information about the depiction of women and the image of women as the dominant character as seen in the movie. This research also can give the understanding to the readers about moral value reflected in this movie.

Practically, this research is important for the readers or students to help in understanding more about feminist literary criticism, especially liberal feminist since this research applies liberal feminist theory. This research also can be used to be a reference for another researcher. Another significance of this research is to make people interested in learning and understanding about women equality. This research hopefully can be the inspiration for the readers to do another research about feminist thought.

1.5.   Prior Research

Related to this research, the writer did not find other researches about women equality as seen in *Silent Hill* movie. So, this research is the first in the literary research.

1.6.   Theoretical Approach

1.6.1. Feminist Theory

This research focuses on female character as the object of the analysis, so the proper theory is feminist theory. Feminist theory is a theory that talks about woman as human being that has human right as equal as the others (man). Jackson and Jackie says in their writing *Thinking for Ourselves: An Introduction to Feminist Theorising*, "feminist theory seeks to analyze the conditions which shape women's lives and to explore cultural understandings of what it means to be a woman (1998: 1).

> Feminism is centrally concerned with sex as an organizing principle of social life that is thoroughly saturated with power relations. Most feminists have argued that the subordination of women occurs across a whole range of social institutions and practices with a degree of regularity that makes it a structural phenomenon. This structural subordination of women has been described by feminists as patriarchy with its derivative meanings of the male-headed family, mastery and superiority (Barker, 2004: 68).

It concerns to argue that woman is not the incidental of life, such as mother, wife, sister, and daughter. As human being, woman and man have the equality for getting their right, but women suppose that they are only subordinated by men (ibid).

In literary work, the authors have a certain purpose why they produce their works. Similarly, feminist theory also has some aims. Madsen has explained that there are three main aims of feminist theory.

> Feminist literary theory had three main aims: to expose the workings ubiquitous patriarchal power structure; to promote the rediscovery of women's historical achievements (including literary history); and to establish a feminine perspective on critical, literary, political, scientific, philosophical (and other) theories of the cultural forces that shape our lives (2000: 14-15).

There are some kinds of feminist thoughts. They have the diversities of feminist thought such as liberal, radical, Marxist/socialist, psychoanalytic, care-focused, multicultural/global/colonial, eco-feminist, and postmodern/third wave. However, all thoughts explain women's oppression and they also propose the solution for it (Tong, 2009: 1).

Carter explains that feminist is divided into two stages; the first wave, and the second wave. The first wave is influenced by the social and economic reforms. There are many aspects endorsed by men, such as politic, social, and economic. It becomes the main factor for women to attempt developing a comprehensive account of the subordination of women and becoming the liberate women. Whereas the second wave is influenced by various liberalist movements and sexual different that is as the central concern (2006: 92-93). However, there is also third wave that is called postmodern feminism. It is different from first wave and

second wave, because it concerns to women question about their identities and what they want that has never been answered before (Tong, 2009: 9).

This research uses liberal feminism thought as the proper approach. It concerns to gender equality. Liberal feminism perceives that all human beings have a common nature. It emphasizes to the equality of opportunity between woman and man. All people (women or men) deserve an equal chance (Madsen, 2000: 35).

As the focus of liberal feminism, equality has a measurement. It is measured by Thornton as the following concept (as cited in Hughes, 2002: 35):

Women and men have equal natures → **Axiom**
So if women are given equal treatment with men → **Programme**
The outcome will be equal performance → **Goal**

However, the term "equality" cannot represent that woman is same like man. They have the nature of themselves. As Thornton (1986) notes that there are three elements to this standard argument for sex equality, these are:

1. Women's nature;
2. The social treatment of women; and
3. Women's performance.

Related to the three elements above, the concept of equality can be said that axiom is the nature of women. Then, programme means women treatment. While goal is the result that can be gained by women. Therefore, each of these issues should be considered in terms of the concept of equality itself (Hughes, 2002: 36).

Madsen mentions in her book *"Feminist Theory and Literary Practice"* about the Declaration of Sentiment that is drafted by Elizabeth Cady Stanton that also contains about equality. It says "we hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal … " (2000: 6).

1.6.2. Representation Theory

Since this analysis is focused on the image construction of woman characters in the movie, the theory about representation is proper to be used to support this analysis. Hall has explained, "Representation is the production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds through language, discourse, and image". Everything that is produced is constructed to transmit the meaning. However, the meaning involves many things that have interrelationship. Thus, when visual signs and images carry meaning, they have to be interpreted to get the meaning (Hall, 1997: 17-19).

There are three approaches of representation theory that have been explained by Hall; they are reflective or mimetic approach, intentional approach, and constructionist approach. Reflective approach is the approach that is used to reflect the true meaning that exists in the real world. It is like a mirror that can reflect everything/everyone in front of it like the original one. Intentional approach is the approach which words mean what the author intends them to mean. Constructionist approach is the approach that is used to represent individual concept (1997: 24-25).

The researcher chooses constructionist approach as the proper approach to analyze this movie, especially to answer the second problem statement of this

research. It is aimed to get the meaning of woman characters that are shown as the dominant character, because the appearance of them of course stands for, symbolizes, or represents a concept and a function of occupying them to be the dominant characters.

1.6.3. Film Theory

The data source of this research is movie, so film theory is needed to be used to analyze it. Film theory also can support feminist theory. Andrew said "Film theory, in short, a verbal representation of the film complex" (Andrew, 1984: 4). Film is a communication form that utilizes the technology as the representation of the text. On the other words, film attempts to translate stories into moving images (Abrams, 2001: 75). Film means conveying a verbal form becomes an image construction that tells a narrative as a natural event.

The image of woman in film has been discussed for many years ago. Feminism combined with film theory emerges in the early 1970s. However, the most influential in this combination is psychoanalysis and Marxism. This case is based on the point of view and the assumption that among women and men are not equal (Rushton and Garry, 2010: 70).

1.7. Method of Research

1.7.1. Type of Research

In this research, the writer uses qualitative method. Strauss and Juliet in their book entitled "*Basic of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*" said that qualitative method is a method of research that produces by findings something and it is not arrived at by statistical

procedures or other means of quantification (Strauss and Juliet, 1998: 10-11). The purpose of this method is to understand a phenomenon (Zhacharias, 2012: 10).

Strauss and Juliet have mentioned that there are three major components of qualitative research:

> First, there are the data, which can come from various sources such as interviews, observations, documents, records, and films. Second, there are the procedures that researchers can use to interpret and organize the data. These usually consist of conceptualizing and reducing data, elaborating categories in terms of their properties and dimensions, and relating through a series of prepositional statements. Third, there are parts of the analytic process (Strauss and Juliet, 1998: 11-12).

However, in this research, the writer does not do the interview, but only collecting data based on the textual of the movie.

1.7.2. Data Sources

In this research, the writer takes the data from a horror movie: *Silent Hill 1*. The writer also uses the other supporting data to complete the data that is analyzed. So, the writer of this research uses the script of the movie as the main data. While the supporting data is some reviews and also the critical works related with the movie.

1.7.3. Data Collection Technique

The researcher collects the data by using library research technique. First, the researcher considers the serial horror movie *Silent Hill 1* as the kind of literary work and considers the proper case to be analyzed based on the theory that is

used. Second, the researcher understands this movie deeply about the intrinsic elements of the movie.

Then, the researcher selects and classifies the data which relate to the problem statements. The researcher also collects the data that support this research, such as the film theory, and also the other data. After collecting the supporting data, the researcher analyzes the data based on the theory that is used in this research.

1.7.4. Data Analysis Technique

The researcher uses objective approach to analyze the data. It is based on the factual data in *Silent Hill 1* movie. First, the writer presents the data which are categorized on the proper data in this research including the events, objects, happenings, and the actions of the characters. For the example, the event when Rose Da Silva decides to bring Sharon to Silent Hill Town, but Christopher forbids her. However, she remains to continue her action. Then, the writer analyzes them based on the theories which are used, they are feminist, representation, and film theory. The writer does not only analyze the main character in the movie but also analyzing the other characters to support the data. Last, the writer concludes all of the analysis to answer the problem statements.

1.8. Paper Organization

This paper is divided into four chapters. The first chapter describes the general information of the research including the background of study, problem statements, objectives of study, significances of study, prior research, theoretical approach, method of research, and paper organization. The second chapter

consists of the intrinsic elements of the movie: *Silent Hill 1*. The next chapter is the analysis that contains the data analysis. The last one is the conclusion of the research.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

4.1. Conclusion

The aims of this research are to discover how women depicted in *Silent Hill 1* movie are, and why women shown as the dominant characters in *Silent Hill 1* movie are. In the movie *"Silent Hill 1"*, the image of woman characters indicates the implicit meaning by showing them in the different positions and situations. The portrayal of women in this movie can be identified that they can do everything like men do. By identifying the source of conflict, comparing woman and man in each action, and also analyzing the image of women that is shown in the movie, there are two things that can be discovered by analyzing this movie.

First, woman characters in this movie show that they should be given the equality of opportunity to do something that they think it is the best decision. This movie also shows the form of women actions to be equal like men. It can be proven by the existence of woman as the decision maker, woman who can compete with man, and woman who can against man's power.

Woman as the decision maker is shown by Rose who remains to bring her daughter to Silent Hill Town, although her husband does not permit her. Moreover, woman can compete with man is shown by Rose and Christopher in which they have the different thoughts and they do everything that they think it is

the best way. In addition, woman can against man's power is shown by Rose who remains to continue her decision, although her husband tries to stop her by using his power in economic sphere.

Second, woman characters in this movie are shown as the central and dominant in the story. The reason is aimed to emphasize that women can be equal like men by constructing woman characters to reverse the stereotypes about women, show the positive image, and give new meaning about women. It can be proven by the existence of women in occupying men's position. They are Christabella who is shown as the head of the curl and also Cybil Bennett who is shown as the officer.

By showing the character of Rose in this movie, the image of woman is shown as an active person. Moreover, Rose also shows that woman can be a heroine. It can be seen in her achievements in this movie. In the realm of household, she shows her success to cure and save her daughter. While in the realm of politic, she shows her success to reveal the injustice in Silent Hill Town. And in the realm of philosophy, she can pass all oppressions that she faces.

It can be concluded that *Silent Hill 1* movie includes into feminist movie. Woman characters in *Silent Hill 1* movie are shown dominantly to be the focus of the story. They are also shown by the different way to give the new positive meaning of women as equal as men. They can be equal like men if they want to struggle.

4.2.   Suggestion

At last, the writer has the suggestion to be considered by the next researchers. The equality between women and men can be seen in Islamic perspective. For the example, Allah has stated about it in the holy Qur'an, Surah An-Nahl, verse 97. It can be seen when women and men do the righteousness, Allah will give a good life and a reward based on the righteousness that has been done by them. It is not based on gender. Indeed, it shows that Allah gives the right to women and men equally, and He also treats them equally.

Thus, the case like this is not only shown in Surah An-Nahl, verse 97, but there is also in the other verses of the holy Qur'an. The next researcher can do the research like the writer has done, but by another verse to be the source of the Islamic perspective.

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