

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter serves as the study's introductory session. This chapter includes the background of the research, statements of the problem, research objective, research significance and previous studies.

1.1 Background of the Research

Film is the result of technological production with audio-visual power can convey information, public opinion, and values in society so that film becomes an attraction for society, especially young people. Film is more than just an imaginative and personal work; it is also a manifestation of the researcher's thoughts on the social changes that have occurred. In other words, a film has a history—the reason it was created. The background can be in the form of the researcher's personal experience or historical facts that also influence the conditions under which the work was created. Like drama, film also has intrinsic elements in the form of setting, plot, characterizations, and themes. According to Adi, one of the things that supports filmmaking is a film script. The film itself is a very complicated production because it involves a lot of other elements. The existence of film itself is welcomed by the community, because now film can become a way of life because the presence of film as a medium is so important for other lives (Adi, 2011).

Through film, the younger generation tries to convey their identity through their image of society. One image that reveals his identity is the style of his clothing. According to Nurudin, film is a mass medium that signifies a certain reality and view (Nurudin, 2007). As already mentioned, film, which is a form of mass media,

raises certain views held by the public, including the point of view of the fashion style shown in the film.

Fashion changes in different decades. The need for fashionable styles continues to increase with each generation. Because it is dynamic, the fashion style continues to grow so as to form its own scope, which is called the fashion industry. According to Bernard, "fashion" is a form or type of procedure or way of acting. The word fashion is related to the Latin word *factio*, which means to make. The word *factio* has been shortened to *faction* in modern English. "Factions" refer to conflicts between groups over rulers and those exercising power on behalf of different groups (Bernard, 2007).

Fashion through film, *The Wild One* is a 1953 noir-style crime film directed by László Benedek and produced by Stanley Kramer. This film is famous because there is the character Johnny Strabler as the main character, played by Marlon Brando, wearing a motorcycle suit complete with a leather jacket, captain's hat, and boots while riding a motorcycle, whose persona became a cultural icon in the 1950s. *The Wild One* is widely considered to be the first bad biker genre film, as well as the first to examine and introduce American motorcycle gang violence that year through the lens of biker fashion.

The story of *The Wild One* film represents the lives of young people who existed in the Baby Boomer era among motorcycle clubs and gangs in the late 1940s in the United States. The rise of these youth-member motorcycle clubs or gangs was attuned to feelings of disillusionment with American popular culture, whether due to the lack of a post-World War II economy or the marginalization imposed by the

general domestic shift toward homogeneity in the 1950s. Even so, these characters pay attention to appearance as a form of self-image, such as how they dressed while riding motorbikes in the past decade, so that it became an attraction for research on the culture of the Greasers' fashion style, which reflected how masculine they were, based on the film *The Wild One*.

When *The Wild One* was released in 1953, a subculture named Greasers emerged that year, which consisted of working-class and underclass teenagers and adults in the United States who were influenced by the film. When it first appeared in the 1950s, working-class fashion was synonymous with Greasers. Moore, in his book *Street Style in America: An Exploration* (2017), Moore explains that "greasers" are a subculture of working-class young people in the United States after World War II, most of whom are male, white, and have a high interest in culture. hot rods and motorcycles, and loves rock and roll music. Grease is also synonymous with hairstyles that use hair oil or jelly, and it is also synonymous with leather jackets or denim jackets and boots. The Greasers' overall combined appearance is synonymous with the aesthetics of 1950s motorcycle rider fashion (Moore, 2017). As quoted by Thronton, the first cinematic representation of the Greaser subculture was in the 1953 film *The Wild One* (Thronton, 1997). Greasers' membership are mostly male and usually filled with working-class white ethnicities with an interest in motorcycles. Some middle-class youth are also attracted to the subculture, so they join the Greasers subculture. Greasers themselves wore an outfit consisting of a leather jacket, boots, denim pants, and a plain shirt; the reference they got from *The Wild One* is that, until now, if people wanted to look like Greasers, they could wear Greasers' old clothes, which date back to the beginning of his appearance.

Entering the digital era has the characteristics of a society that exhibits a higher social class because there is a clear difference between lower class and upper class society: luxurious lifestyle, independence in acting, workaholic generation, showing masculinity for men, which goes hand in hand with People's lifestyles are changing as a result of advances in technology. Various masculinity values have emerged as a result of the evolution of masculinity values in each culture over time. Now that men are not only portrayed as physically manly but also portrayed as fashionable, paying attention to appearance and getting to know various body treatments, developments in the modern era have had a strong influence on the meaning of fashion for a person (Nugroho and Fauziyah, 2018).

This case occurs in Indonesian culture, where a man must have white skin, a muscular body, smoke, or dress according to his nature as a man. This is due to the persuasiveness of the film, where the actor or plot always shows men who are well-built, white-skinned, wear clothes according to their nature as men, and smoke as a sign of masculinity in men.

The researcher considers the case above as one of the phenomena in which films have an important role in influencing people. It is used to convey a certain message, and sometimes several symbols are used to support the delivery of that message to the people. Therefore, these messages and symbols need to be considered.

On the other hand, film is a commercial message and a semiotic way; it consists of meaning and signs. Films use signs consisting of symbols, verbal descriptions, and icons. Basically, the symbol consists of two kinds, namely verbal and nonverbal symbols.

The researcher uses *The Wild One* as the object of research. This is not a film that tells about the history of fashion, which is synonymous with masculinity. However, it is only a noir genre film that tells about the life of the Greasers motorcycle gang, but many signs or symbols of the concept of masculinity are influenced by the clothing styles worn by the film characters in *The Wild One*. The researcher views this film as an object of the concept of masculinity because the characters are Greasers. The Greasers subculture is a symbol of male masculinity, especially in terms of fashion. Films have a tendency to exploit physical appearance, particularly the Greaser members' dress style.

The Wild One was chosen by the researcher because of its theme about the lifestyle of young people, specifically Greasers, who entered the category of subcultures in the 1950s. Greasers are youth lifestyle depicted through a rebellious lifestyle followed by feelings of disillusionment with American popular culture, both due to the lack of a post-World War II economy and the marginalization imposed by the general domestic shift toward homogeneity in the 1950s. *The Wild One* is a film that tells the lives of the Greasers subculture in an instant, as well as the way to care about how they look to refer to masculinity for men.

There is a reading of signs through the meaning of fashion as a representation of the Greasers subculture that reflects masculinity in *The Wild One*, which will be studied with film studies and cultural studies from that is more focused on how are the costumes and fashion worn by the Greasers in relation to the characterization of the characters in *The Wild One* film and How does the film constructions the concept of masculinity.

Fashion has been actively present in every civilization, where the need for fashion continues to increase with every generation. Of course, fashion as a form of communication tool sends signals that can be interpreted based on societal experience and culture, including symbols of masculinity.

The researcher conducted a literature review to obtain references related to the study. These references come from scientific journals and theses that can contribute to this research, and this research has affinities, namely:

1. Dominikus Isak Petrus Bereks's academic Journal *Fashion Sebagai Komunikasi Sub Budaya Kajian Fenomenologis Terhadap Komunitas Street Punk Semarang*, Diponegoro State University, Semarang, 2014. This paper examines the identity of street punk groups in Semarang, which can be identified from the style of dress, environment, and lifestyle of the group to maintain their identity as a social unit. The common denominator of these studies is group identity, which is explained by their clothing styles. The difference in the research lies in the data sources and research methods, focusing on reading skills using Roland Barthes' theory.
2. The thesis of Dewi Anita Sari, *Representasi Remaja Putri Metropolitan Pada Iklan Fashion Di Majalah Gadis Edisi Agustus – September 2009*, published by Sebelas Maret University in Surakarta. This e-book examines the representation of metropolitan female youth symbols using Roland Barthes' semiotics method in print advertisements for fashion products in the August–September 2009 edition of *Gadis* magazine. clothes that represent something. Thus, this thesis is considered a review due to the similarities in the discussion regarding the signs represented by fashion.

However, the difference lies in research that deals with print advertising and uses Barthes' semiotic analysis. While this study focuses on the Greasers' fashion representing masculinity in *The Wild One* film using cultural studies analysis in film studies.

3. *Representasi Maskulinitas Dalam Iklan Televisi Pond's Men Lelaki Masa Kini (Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes Terhadap Representasi Maskulinitas)* by Friska Dewi Yuliyanti, Atwar Bajari, and Slamet Mulyana, Communication Management Study Program, Faculty of Communication Sciences, Padjadjaran University. This study aims to determine the meaning of denotation, connotation, and myth or ideology in the *POND'S Men* television advertisement, which represents masculinity in the *Lelaki Masa Kini* Edition. The method used in this research is semiotic analysis. The semiotic analysis used in this study is Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis. The difference in this study is in the object of research and the analytical approach.
4. *Representasi Maskulinitas dalam Film Disney Moana (Analisis Semiotika Charles Sanders Pierce)* by Ulin Sasmita published by Tadulako University in 2017. The results of this study provide an overview of the concept of masculinity or femininity as a concept of interchangeable gender declarations. This research uses the descriptive qualitative method, and the object of research is the Disney film *Moana*. This research is similar to Ulin Sasmita's research, which explores the concept of masculinity and uses descriptive qualitative research methods. However, the object of research

and analysis is different. In this research, Sasmita uses semiotic analysis by Charles Sanders Peirce.

5. *Representasi Maskulinitas Laki - Laki Infertil dalam Film Test Pack Karya Ninit Yunita* by Sylvia Aryani published by Airlangga University in 2014. This research examines the Film Test Pack in regards to how infertile male masculinity is represented. The object of this research is, of course, the film Test Pack, which is an adaptation of the novel by Ninit Yunita. By using a qualitative method, this study suggests several signs of masculinity and also signs that are interpreted in the film. The results of this study indicate that infertile men can still be described as masculine. This research has similarities with Sylvia Aryani's research, which examines the concept of masculinity. However, the object of the research and analysis used is different.
6. *Representasi Maskulinitas dalam Film Talak 3 (Studi Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes)* by Syulhajji published by Mulawarman University in 2017. This study focuses on the dimensions of masculinity: *no sissy stuff* (not feminine), *be a big wheel* (high influence), *be a sturdy oak* (strong), *give 'em hell* (brave), *new man as nurturer* (fatherly), *new man as narcissist* (narcissistic), macho male traits, violence, and *hooliganism* (terrible), as well as metrosexual men who uphold fashion. The research object is the film *Talak 3* by Hanung Bramantyo and Ismail Basbeth, with a qualitative interpretation research method in which the results of the research suggest that masculinity represented in the film *Talak 3* is divided into two things, namely, the assumption that real men have property, a wife, and a job.

Second, there is a new view of masculinity. This new view of masculinity is known to men with modern metropolitan and metrosexual lifestyles that lead to perfectionism. This research has similarities with Syulhajji's research, which examines the concept of masculinity as it relates to fashion. However, the object of the research and analysis used is different.

7. *Representasi Maskulinitas dalam Film Aquaman (Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes)* by Nurul Dewi Prabawaningrum published by Muhammadiyah Surakarta University in 2019. The research suggests signs of masculinity through the main character in the film Aquaman, namely Arthur Curry. The object of this research is the Aquaman film. The research method is a qualitative descriptive analysis, which shows that in the film Aquaman, Arthur Curry's character is identical with the seven concepts of masculinity. This research is the same as Nurul Dewi's research, which examines the concept of masculinity. The difference lies in the object and the research analysis.

1.2 Statements of the Problem

Fashion and costumes in film can certainly represent elements of masculinity. According to the study's background, the following are the problem statements for this research:

1. How are the costumes and fashion worn by the Greasers in relation to the characterization of the characters in *The Wild One* film?
2. How does *The Wild One* film constructions the concept of masculinity?

1.3 Research Objective

In connection with the formulation of the problem, this study has objectives to be achieved by the researcher, namely:

1. To describe the costumes and fashion worn by the Greasers in relation to the characterization of the characters in *The Wild One*.
2. To find out the concept of masculinity represented in *The Wild One*.

1.4 Research Significance

The importance of research is divided into two parts. both theoretically and practically. The following points must be understood in order to determine it clearly:

1. Theoretically

This research is expected to add to the reader's body of knowledge about library research, especially in film studies analysis. In addition, it can be used as material for further research to improve the ability to appreciate each literary work.

2. Practical

The results of this study can be beneficial to readers in appreciating a literary work as well as providing new experiences about various things around them and how to react to them, such as helping filmmakers develop meaning through textual techniques related to the concept of masculinity. So that an idea that will be constructed through film media can be understood by the audience through the clothing style of the main characters involved in the film being produced, Because the importance of this research is to know and analyze how the Greasers' culture was in reality at that time and when it was adapted into a film to depict reality. Of course, the greaser culture has entered Indonesia. Indonesia Greaser Party is the name of a music party event that was held in 2015 in major cities in Indonesia. The event presented various activities with the theme of subculture in the 1950s era. The event was attended by well-known bands such as Superman is Dead and Seringai.