

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Football as the most popular sport in the world, had been played by most people in the world for years. Talk about football, it is not a matter of players only, but other aspects that involved in it. One of those aspects is the supporters, or the football fans. 'A fan is a person who has an intense interest in certain team, celebrity, show, band or similar' (Crawford 2004, 19). In this case, football fans are people who support certain football team. As people who support their favorite team, certainly they have great fanaticism and loyalty. Fanatic supporters always follow wherever their favorite team will go, give a great support for the team, and they always ready to keep their beloved team's pride, and this is supported by the research done by Sir Norman Chester Centre for Football Research from the University of Leicester in 2004, that about 50% of supporters became supporters because their pride towards the club they support. This shows that the relation between a football club and its fans are very close. According to Hansen and Gauthier in Neale and Funk (2005) it is very important for a football club to understand the behavior and motivation of their supporters or fans to increase the number of supporters coming to the stadium, give support for the team, and also it is a key to success for a football club. However, they sometimes misused the fanaticism with fighting with fans from other clubs or teams. They have no hesitation to use weapons, guns, and knives to fight with others. Kamlesh wrote about the psychology of competition : 'a competition is an open-conflict or

rivalry between two sides, and how their efforts to beat the others' (255). From this phenomenon of football supporters, the term "hooligans" then appears.

Talk about football hooliganism, it can be said that it has attracted so much attention in recent years, and become a problem that many people are concerned about. Thus, probably more suggestions have been made concerning about what to do about football hooliganism than any other contemporary issue, with the possible exception of the economy (Ingham 1978, 129). The term "hooligans" itself is basically a label covering a wide variety of heterogeneous offenses and other forms of misbehavior (Trivizas 1980, 276). In other words, football hooliganism can also be defined as people who were dealt with the police for offenses occurring in connection with attendances at football games (SC/SSRC 1978, 1). Common forms of misbehavior that football hooligans commonly do are, physical friction with opposite fans, pitch invasions, throwing missiles, verbal abuse, drunkenness, vandalism, theft and possession of an offensive weapon (Melnick 1986, 2). These forms of misbehavior can be considered as a main reason towards chaos, or vandalism in a football match, that leads into football supporter's death in the match. There were found so many football fans killed in the last previous years, and it was believed that it was caused by the hooligans. Due to their brutality, the loss of lives occurred in football often addressed to them. "...it is worth nothing that significant numbers of football supporters have died at football matches throughout the world since at least the beginning of the twentieth century."(Darby 2005, 2) However, today hooligans can not move as

freely as they were. Due to their brutality that seems to be threatening societies, the preventing actions must be made, and that was successfully applied in Europe.

Indonesia is one of countries considered having fanatic football supporters in the world, even football supporters in Indonesia is the third biggest football supporters in the world below Argentina and England (*"10 Suporter Sepakbola Terfanatik di Dunia"*). It can be seen through the excitement of football supporters in Indonesia while they are watching football matches in stadium which the average number of supporters is 96% of the stadium capacity (*"10 Suporter Sepakbola Terfanatik di Dunia"*). There are so many football supporters in Indonesia, they belong to clubs participating in the Indonesian football league. One of them is the supporter of Persebaya Surabaya / known as "Bonekmania".

The existence of Bonek has been recognized since some years ago. One of the most famous stories about Bonek happened in 1990s. At that time, thousands of Bonek went to Jakarta by bus which was organized by Dahlan Iskan, the CEO of *Jawa Pos*, and it was recognized as the first and biggest trip done by football supporters until today (*"The Forgotten Spirit of Bonek"*). However, it seems that the image of Bonek has become more negative today. For example, as reported in *Tempo.co* in 24th January 2010, when Bonek threw stones from inside the train, and hurt train driver and television journalist (*"Di Yogyakarta, Bonek Melukai Masinis dan Jurnalis Televisi"*). This case shows how the image of Bonek today tends to be more negative, and this is why there are so many publicity about the negative side did by Bonek today. Another case related to Bonek is reported by

radarbanten.com in 5th September 2006, there were four cars burnt, and some other vehicles were broken as the result of Bonek's anger after *Persebaya* did not manage to go to the next round of *Coppa Dji Sam Soe* (“*Amuk Bonek, 4 Mobil Dibakar*”).

Due to some negative news related to Bonek, it will create an obstacle or challenge for females who want to be the fans of *Persebaya*. However, it does not seem as a real obstacle, as there are more female are found watching a football match in the stadium, and declared themselves as supporters or fans as it's done by those who became the fans of *Persebaya* who commonly known as *BONITA* (Bonek Wanita). Actually there is no clear source about how this term was firstly created, but it is obvious that this term of *BONITA* is the same with how female football fans of other football clubs in Indonesia call themselves with the word related to female at the end of the name of male fans community's name. For example, fans of *Arema* are known as *Aremania*, then we simply call the female fans of *Arema* as *Aremanita*, and people call female fans of *Persebaya* as *BONITA*, as it derived from the words *Bonek Wanita*. As football fans, it is obvious that *BONITA* also have similar behaviors with the male *Bonek*. There is no specific difference between male and female football fans. Such behaviors as joining a tour, getting involved in organizing, singing in the stadium, playing the drums, and even sleep in a station while having a tour to other cities are considered as behaviors that can be done by female football fans (Istianto 2005, 55). They do not shame to show their fanaticism as the male supporters did, even to do this they have to act like male supporters, and it is very interesting to see

women involved in football in which is being dominated by men, and football is considered as a sport for men.



Figure I.1 (female football fans standing on a fence)



Figure I.2 (Some female fans of *Persebaya*).



Figure I.3 (Two *BONITA* inside the stadium).

The idea of football as a sport for men, cannot be separated from the origin of football itself. The Male Public School was the place where the rules of football were created in there, and even developed organization and competition of football (Giulianotti 1999, 155). However, the change has made. In England, the number of female football fans rose in every year. According to FA Premier

League National Fan Survey done by John Williams from Sir Norman Chester Centre for Football Research shows that in 1997 about 12% of FA Premier League fans are female, and this figure rose to 15% in 2001. It is supported by the club's policies on improving facilities for family, and the decreasing number of hooliganism and football violence in England (Williams 2002). It is quite different with the condition in Indonesia, where there is no special stand as family areas in England football stadiums where female football fans usually watch the match with their kids. Also, the number of football violence in Indonesia is still high, but it does not seem to reduce the increasing number of female football fans to come and watch the match, and some of them also behave like male football fans do.

From this act, it seems that some female football fans are against the idea of the traditional gender roles, but they can also be seen as affirming this concept, "...they cast women as emotional (irrational), weak, nurturing, and submissive." (Tyson 2006, 85). They are against the point of weak, nurturing, and submissive. Football fans must not be weak, since there will always be a possibility of an accident that will need the strength of fans. For example, in ticketing and entering a queue where there are so many people who want to be the first to get the ticket or enter the stadium. If the fans are not strong physically, it will be dangerous for them, because they may collapse in the queue, and the worst is when they collapse, they could be hit by the others. However, female fans also can be seen as affirming the traditional gender roles point of emotional, and it is commonly known that most football fans are emotional whether male or female. Another statement said by Gunter in Gauntlett's book that, "Overall, men were more likely to be assertive

(or aggressive), whilst women were more likely to be passive. Men were much more likely to be adventurous, active and victorious, whereas women were more frequently shown as weak, ineffectual, victimised, supportive, laughable, or 'merely token females'(43). This statement implies that women will always be victimised and laughed by men, and they will always be on the weaker side than men. Talk about gender, then it will raise the binary opposition which says that the gender has to be the same as the sex. To be a man is to be not-woman and vice versa (Beasley 2005,12). From this statement it may be said that human beings are divided into two, man and woman, or male and female. Once a person was born as a man, so it is demanded that he must act like men, and in vice versa, once a person was born as woman, she must act as like women as well. However, in this case when women football supporters act like men, then it could show that there is a possibility of gender shifting from femininity into masculinity happened in women football supporters.

The interesting side in doing this research is that the number of female football supporters seems to increased rapidly. Even if football is often to end up with chaos, and even the loss of lives. Thus, the emergence and the increasing number of *Bonita* would make people ask their reason why they follow behaviors and things that is considered not suitable for female. "...gender is culturally constructed : hence, gender is neither the casual result of sex nor as seemingly fixed as sex." (Butler 1999, 10). The statement by Butler shows that gender is constructed culturally, it means that the society we belong influences the gender identity we should perform. Gender identity itself is one's innermost concept of

self as male or female or both or neither, and it can be the same or different with the sex given at birth (“*Understanding Gender*”). The gender identity is strongly influenced by the society through what people have done.

1.2. **Statement of the Problem**

According to the background above, the problem that will be discussed in this research is to find:

1. What is the gender identity performed by *BONITA*?

1.3. **Objectives of the Study**

This research is designed to figure out the following purpose :

1. To find out the gender identity appeared to the members of *BONITA*?

1.4. **Significance of the Study**

The significance of this research is to add a research knowledge in Airlangga University specifically for the English Department in the Faculty of Humanities. In particular, this work will be a useful instrument to develop the advancement of the cultural studies subject in a field football fans culture, especially women football fans. This research can also be used to analyse the

gender identity shown by female football fans, in this case is *BONITA* through the way they behave, and giving perspective about the phenomenon of female football fans in Indonesia, specifically *BONITA* as female football fans of *Persebaya*.

1.5. Definition of Key Terms

1. *BONITA*, the term given for female football fans of *Persebaya Surabaya*.
2. *FEMININE*, qualities and things relate to or are considered typical of women, in contrast to men.
3. *GENDER*, grouping of nouns and pronouns into masculine, feminine, and neuter.
4. *IDENTITY*, who or what somebody / something is. The characteristics they have that distinguish them from the others.
5. *MASCULINE*, qualities and things relate to or are considered typical of men, in contrast to women.