

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Ingoing the 21th century, amount of movies are provided in the cinema or theatre, especially in Indonesia. Watching movies becomes the favorite thing to do for Indonesian people since movies become the reflection of reality that gives some meanings and the viewers could absolutely criticize it (Manurung, 2011). People would spend their spare times by going to the cinema or even at home to watch movies. From 84 movies produced in 2011, there were around 14million people watched movies in theatres (filmindonesia.or.id). Since the first made, Indonesian movies, had always reflected Indonesian people and culture at particular time, for instance, *LOETOENG KASAROENG* (1926), the first Indonesian movie, which produced by Dutch people told about folklore of West Java.

As time goes by, there are many genres offered by producers to the viewers, such as drama, action, comedy, and horror. The last genre becomes the most favorite among Indonesian people. Based on filmindonesia.or.id, there were 24 horror movies produced in 2011, and two of them became the box office in Indonesia 2011. The audiences of Indonesian horror movies are mostly around 1millions people, compared to Indonesian drama movies that only got 500.000 audiences (Haryadi 2008, p.93).

Horror movies mostly contain pessimism, melodrama, tragedy, worldliness, and even terror (Carroll 1990, p.15). Horror movies mostly show the ghost that has

close relationship with the audiences. Noel Carroll, in his book entitled *The Philosophy of Horror*, explained that horror genre is mostly talks about monsters. Humans views monsters they meet as abnormal and also disturbances of natural order. *Frankenstein* story which written by Mary Shelley in 1818 and then filmed in 1931 is the appropriate example of monster character in horror movies. Monsters in horror movies are mostly featured as extraordinary character in humans' ordinary world (Carroll 1990, p.16).

In Indonesia, most of the movies show *Pocong* and *Kuntilanak* as the ghosts in the scene. Puguh Budi Susetiyo explained that *Pocong* and *Kuntilanak* are mostly appear in ndonesia folklore stories and movies. *Pocong* is influenced by how people are buried when they die in Moslem tradition. While *Kuntilanak* is a pregnant woman who suicides and can't deliver her baby while she is alive (Susetiyo 2012, p.14) . Those two ghosts are considered as the most scary ghosts for Indonesian people (Rusdiarti, p.10).

Indonesian cultural commentators have tried to explain the horror genre's popularity by stating that it is closely related to Indonesian peoples and eastern culture, which is perceived to be synonymous with mystics and supernatural matters. Every region and ethnic group in Indonesia, according to these explanations, has its own superstitious beliefs and mystery tales about supernatural occurrences. All kinds of shamanism, superstition, mystical objects, ghosts and an endless number of supernatural beings are rendered as

an undeniable part of the beliefs and culture of Indonesian peoples (Van Heeren and Bernad Harps, 2006).

In 1990s, Indonesian movies fell from the trend, but it has become popular again since 2001 because of *Jelangkung* movie. This is because after the reformation era, there were many producers started to be brave to produce movies. The fall of New Order started the freedom of expression, a massive willing to seek the truth, and the real democracy (Arps and Van Heeren 2006; Aartsen 2011, p.3). This also happened in production of movie. After *Jelangkung* movie showed in cinema, there were many horror movies produced.

Posters become the important advertisement to promote the movies in order to get many viewers. According to Marcel Danesi, there are three categories of advertisement: (1) advertisement for consumers, purposed to promote the products or service, (2) advertisement for trade, purposed to sell the products to market and dealer in professional segment, and (3) advertisement for social-politic, purposed to promote someone's idea or campaign (Danesi 2004, p. 257). In this case, movie poster is the first type. It means that from posters, which usually shown in theatres or even in streets, the producers of the movies try to send message about the movie so that the viewers would possibly know how the genre, the casts, and the brief outline story of the movie are.

Indonesian horror movies posters have particular design for these ten years. As times go by, there are many development in design not only from color or words,

but also from the pictures. The producers of horror movies show women characters more in 2009 above than in the beginning of 2000. From the observation, 100 of 120 movies posters produced in 2001-2011 showing woman characters. As explanation above, there should be meanings of showing woman in the posters.

The image of women in media is actually complex (Byerly&Ross 2006, p.37). It is assumed that there are still many misrepresentation and critics of women's existence in media. It is criticized that woman also become the object of fantasy, not the subject (Byerly&Ros 2006s, p.20; Howson 2005, p.79), and the image does not reflect the appropriate women's role in reality (Barker 2000, p.248). From this poster, the image of women through their bodies is socially constructed, also clothes and accessories are also needed to support the idea of the image of woman (Pilcher & Welehan 2004, p.6-9). It's also described in *Miss Representation* documentary movie, explaining that women in media are represented through their bodies, not their brains (2011). Through the media, the image of women is constructed with stereotypes. The representation of woman's body is given by people who have power, and it is subjective (Holiday and John Hassard 2001, p.3; Howson 2005, p.74-76).

The representation of women for being object of sexual also happens in Indonesia. Sunarto, in *Televisi, Kekerasan dan Perempuan*, stated that

Woman in media is represented in particular way; can not decide important thing wisely, always looks at herself, always be the object of sexual (pornographizing; exploitation), always be the object of fetish, the victim of

patriarchal practice, the object of harassment and violence, and also always be blamed, even act as the consumers of goods and services produced to persuade (2009 p.4).

Similarly, in the Indonesian horror movies, from this explanation, it is assumed that women always become subjects that appropriate to blame and always do something bad. The representation of women in Indonesia is similar to representation of women around the world in particular way. There are many producers using women as the tools of promotion that becomes the important factor in the posters. In the beginning of 2000, there were a lot of movie posters that show women, and the most was about 2009. From the 24 movies posters, there were 20 movies posters showing the women's bodies. Those are "*Air Terjun Pengantin*", "*Anak Setan*", "*Darah Janda Kolong Wewe*", "*Darah Perawan Bulan Madu*", "*Hantu Biang Kerok*", "*Hantu Jamu Gendong*", etc. Nevertheless, women are usually represented in particular way.

Thus, representation itself does not only reproduce what it represents, but also contributes some ideas to construction of reality (Chandler 2002, p.70). As quoted in the research entitled *Politik Tubuh dan Sensualitas Perempuan: Diskursus Media terhadap Fenomena Goyang Penyanyi Dangdut Perempuan*, Surya and Rachmah Ida also said that the existence of women in the country is never been well-claimed. It means that women are always be second subject and the media is controlled by

patriarchal tradition and masculinity (2003, p.3). As consequence, women are usually represented as how men look at the women.



Figure I.1, I.2, I.3, I.4 & I.5

As the advertisement, therefore, posters contain ideology behind their signs. Through the verbal and even non-verbal technique, the producer maximizes the message to persuade people, in this case, to watch the movie. Thus, the representation of women in the movie posters can be considered to be socially built by the producers through the eyes, hands, face expression, posture, and other gestures. In culture, body even can become non-verbal sign containing more than a physically matter (Danesi 2004, p. 64).

In this study, the writer does not analyze all the advertisements made by the producers to promote their movies, but only the posters of the movies. Specifically, the writer only analyzed three box office movies: *Jelangkung* (2001), *Kuntilanak* (2006), and *Terowongan Casablanca* (2007). To analyze those three posters, the writer applies semiotic analysis developed by Roland Barthes. It is considered as the most appropriate theory to analyze sign in advertisement. It is also used to elaborate

the message in the posters, especially about the representation of women in the posters. As quoted in *Feminist Theory and Cultural Studies*, Barthes develops semiotic to analyze every sign and representation through the language, code and other daily behaviors (Thornman 2000, p.211). The posters are analyzed by using three kinds of message in semiotics, namely linguistic message, non-coded iconic message, and coded-iconic message, in order to determine myth of women representation derived from those three posters.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

How is the representation of women in Indonesian contemporary horror movie poster?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Based on the statement of the problem, this study is aimed to describe the representation of women in the posters of Indonesian contemporary horror movies.

1.4 Significance of the Study

By analyzing the posters, the writer hopes the research could be countable to those who study semiotics. It is because this study wants to tell the readers that every sign in daily-life, especially poster, brings many messages. People may enjoy the Indonesian horror movie poster, but the writer hopes after reading this study, the reader would be more aware to message contained in the Indonesian horror movies and even other signs in everyday life.

This study, furthermore, is proposed to the readers to know about the representation of women in Indonesian horror movie posters considered ideological. This study also expected to make the readers know more about how the women are positioned in the visual advertisement, such as poster, especially the messages behind it. The last advantages of this study is giving more understanding to the readers, especially students of English Department of Airlangga University who take Cultural Studies as their concentration, in the case culture and media studies, and who use semiotics as the key of their analysis. It is finally hoped that this study can provide the deep understanding on how symbols in the posters could bring certain messages.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms

1. Representation : something which stands for something else (Chandler 2002, p.60). The meanings are embedded in sounds, images, books, and any particular materiality. The meanings are also constructed, performed, built, and understood in particular social contexts (Barker 2000, p.8).
2. Ideology : terms of ideas, meanings, and practices of social, economic, or even politic which pushed to be universal truth and maintained by powerful social groups (Barker 2000, p.66; Storey 2008 p.2).
3. Horror movies : movies which contain the fear, mystic, blood, monster, and other unusual character (Carroll 1990, p.16).
4. Poster : a medium that contains text and graphic to advertise or publicize something.

5. Semiotic : a study to elaborate how meanings contained in text through signs and codes (Barker 2000, p.35)