

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. Theoretical Framework

This study is attempted to analyze the stardom of Shah Rukh Khan in India (specifically in Bollywood Industry) and in Indonesia (through *Bollywood* magazine). Therefore, these following theories are considered appropriate to help the writer to conduct the analysis in this study.

##### 2.1.1. Popular Culture

There are many different definitions about popular culture, but the definition which is more appropriate to this study is one of Storey's definitions. It relates to Gramsci's theory of hegemony. According to Storey (2001), there is a general outline of how cultural theorists have taken Gramsci political concept and used it to explain the nature and politics of popular culture. It sees popular culture as a site of struggle between the resistance of subordinate in society and the forces of in corporation operating in the interest of dominant groups in society.

In short, neo-Gramscian perspective tends to see it as terrain of ideological struggle between dominant and subordinate classes, dominant and subordinate culture. Hall (in Storey, 2001) also argues that popular culture is a contested side for political construction of 'the people' and their relation to 'the power bloc'. Cultural hegemony affects the culture as a series of discrete messages, signifying practices or discourse distributed by particular institution or Medias.

The complexity of those definitions about popular culture shows that it is not easy to state what exactly 'popular culture' is. Therefore, the study of popular culture should be carefully to acknowledge because the field of popular culture is very wide and it will carry into a specific theory.

### **2.1.2. Stardom**

A star is often defined as a film actor who becomes the object of public fascination. Richard Dyer in his book *Stars* (Feasey, 2004) examines the historical, ideological and aesthetic significance of film stars, and analyze performers from both within and beyond the cinema screen. He states that star image is created through a combination of filmic and extra-filmic texts. Star image is made out of media texts that can be grouped together as promotion, publicity, films and criticism and commentaries.

Furthermore, in *Heavenly Bodies*, Dyer (2004) also states that a star consists of anything that is 'publicly available' about performer (Feasey, 2004). He argues that a star image is not just made up from the films in which he or she appears, but rather, is made up by the promotion of those films and the star through pin-ups, public appearances, studio handouts and so on, as well as interviews, biographies and coverage in the process of the star's activity and 'private life'. It can also be said that stars combine a variety of representational strategies in order to produce 'charisma and 'image'.

The culture industries then use the star's charisma and image to stimulate consumptions towards their products. The industries will later shape audience's perceptions through these products (films, drama serials, or any other kinds of

media texts) so that the audience receives the construction of the star image which is put in the products.

The star image is then asserted through promotion, publicity, gimmicks, etc. These promotion, publicity, and gimmicks will support the previously produced 'charisma' and 'image', and so on. In short, star's image, industries, cultural products, and fans are interrelated and thus created a continuing cycle in order to support each other.

*Stardom* is much more than merely media representation (Beltran, 2002). It is a constantly changing process of production activity as part of media industries, media texts that make up star images and audience reaction. *Stardom* and celebrities create fans. The role of celebrities in the contemporary capitalist society has been the focus of many studies – how *stardom* and celebrity become hegemonic culture agent in order to reinforce *status quo* (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1997; Marcuse, 1964), how fans use celebrities to obtain pleasure in representation (Beaudrillard, 1983 in Darling-Wolf, 2004) and how fans serve to assert cultural narrative of stardom by consuming interrelated culture texts associated to the construction of celebrity status of a star (Marshall, 1997 in Darling-Wolf, 2004).

The discussion of *stardom* can not be fully separated from *fandom* because both of them are closely related to each other. Stars create fans and fans support stars. Stars will never exist without their fans and fans are meaningless without stars to be adored. Fans do activities around the stars and popular culture products surrounding the stars, whether it is seen as those who are oppressed in the domination of popular cultural industry, or as those who find pleasure in the

action of consuming the texts that asserts *stardom* of the stars and also *fandom* (Darling-Wolf 507).

### 2.1.3. Media

Print media – magazine, in specific – appears as a form of popular culture, this can give a profit to the producers. By this, the producers think that it can give the people what they want no matter whether it is real or fiction only. The subject of this print media is for the people who love reading at the first time when it is published. But later on, the people who do not love reading, will read it to find out the news about their idol or just to get some knowledge from it (Bignell 37).

There is a temptation among some social critics to see in all this popular literature, especially in its more advanced contemporary forms, some sort of plot by ‘the authorities’, a clever way of keeping the working-classes quietly doped (Storey 75). So, the producers begin to influence the reader especially the working-class people by introducing them with a glossier women magazines which capturing the working-class audience from the un-glossy magazine. Magazine itself goes through the process which its development really up to the readers request (Silverblatt 45).

Matthew Arnold noted that popular publications always have a good share of ‘generous instincts’ and in this reflect the character of their readers. But a closer examination shows that in moving towards the newer styles, these magazines are moving into a narrower world. The old-fashioned magazines sought the curious and the startling while in the newer style the emphasis is much more on the simply startling, in crime, in sexual matters, and in the supernatural.

The emphasis, then, is more on the startling than on the curious; or rather, the assumption behind this world are so narrowed that it seems as though only that which is startling will arouse curiosity.

Popular papers have always been under the stress of trying to be bright and interesting. But during the last half-century their world has become increasingly competitive.

## **2.2. Review of Related Studies**

The writer finds two studies which are considered closely related to her study. The first study is Fabienne Darling-Wolf's *Male Bonding and Female Pleasure: Refining Masculinity in Japanese Popular Cultural Texts* (2003), which discusses about the constructions of star image of one young male Japanese actor and singer Kimura Takuya. In conducting this study, the writer analyzed Kimura Takuya's appearances on three major Japanese media texts – television dramas, popular magazines, and musical appearances as a member of a group named SMAP (Sports and Music Assemble People).

The writer chose Kimura Takuya because he is one of the longest lasting and most popular male celebrities in Japan. His popularity is supported by his construction as the perfect female fantasy. His construction is derived from both his real personality and his appearances in different cultural texts. He is not only physically attractive, but he is also smart, witty, and sensitive individual. He is presented as a tough guy who also has his feminine side. Such representation is the image or construction that can make him loved by both male and female fans.

The second is a study of Meilani Handayani's *Audience Position and Stardom in "The Prince Who Turns into A Frog" (a study of popular culture)*, (2007), which also discussed about popular culture, specifically in the part of audience position and stardom based on the ideology of mass culture. She tries to examine the way the audience use to position themselves toward Taiwanese drama serial "The Prince Who Turns into A Frog", and how they consume the texts in order to assert the stardom of the actor.

She also analyzes the audience from the letters posted in an on-line discussion forum only without looking it through the media texts. It is interesting since the writer tries to relate the fans of Ming Dao himself as an actor and also a singer in Taiwan.

Both of the studies discuss about the star concept both by looking it through the media and audience position. Similar with the Darling-Wolf's study, the writer also analyzes the star through the media. But, the media which is used by the writer is only from magazine, while Darling-Wolf examines it through Kimura Takuya's or star's appearances on various Japanese media sites, not only from popular magazines but also from television dramas and concert videos.

One more thing which distinguished the writer's study from Darling-Wolf's study is since Darling-Wolf focuses on the alternative constructions of masculinity when these have entered the Japanese popular cultural scene. While the writer focuses her study on the entire star image, not only looking at him through his masculinity but also from his family, his movies, his attitude in front and behind the public, his awards and his other problems which is stated all in popular magazine. Similar with Meilani's study, the writer's study is also about

stardom but not looking at the serial or movies but only through popular magazines and without discusses about the audience position.