

RADICAL FEMINISM OF NATALIE ARTEMIS CHARACTER IN *MONSTER HUNTER* FILM

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ABSTRACT

Feminism issues are often radically depicted in literary works, especially in a film today. Filmmakers emphasize these issues to raise women's awareness about the oppression that might happen to them. This radical movement happens because they try to create an idealistic society for women. From this premise, radical feminism was born because the previous movement could not undo the women's oppression as time goes throughout the decades. Adjusting to the patriarchal system, women are often portrayed as unique and unusual to be treated as equal to men. This study aims to analyze the radical feminism of Natalie Artemis' character in *Monster Hunter* film using Tong's radical feminism and Petrie and Boggs' characterization theories. This research used Uwe's qualitative descriptive method and Mikos' film analysis theory. The researcher confirms that Natalie Artemis' character is portrayed as a radical feminist through radical libertarians and radical cultural feminists' ideas in the *Monster Hunter* film. These ideas are portrayed through Natalie Artemis' androgynous appearance and gender portrayal.

Key Words: radical feminism, radical libertarian feminism, radical cultural feminism, gender portrayal.

ABSTRAK

*Isu-isu feminisme sering digambarkan secara radikal dalam karya sastra, khususnya film saat ini. Pembuat film menekankan isu-isu ini untuk meningkatkan kesadaran perempuan tentang penindasan yang mungkin terjadi terhadap mereka. Gerakan radikal ini terjadi karena mereka berusaha menciptakan masyarakat idealis bagi perempuan. Dari premis ini, lahirlah feminisme radikal karena gerakan sebelumnya tidak mampu menghapus penindasan terhadap perempuan seiring berjalannya waktu selama berpuluh-puluh tahun. Menyesuaikan diri dengan sistem patriarki, perempuan seringkali digambarkan unik dan tidak biasa untuk diperlakukan sama dengan laki-laki. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis feminisme radikal karakter Natalie Artemis dalam film *Monster Hunter* dengan menggunakan teori feminisme radikal Tong, dan teori karakterisasi Petrie dan Boggs. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif Uwe dan teori analisis film Mikos. Peneliti menegaskan bahwa karakter Natalie Artemis digambarkan sebagai feminis radikal melalui ide-ide libertarian radikal dan feminis budaya radikal dalam film *Monster Hunter*. Ide-ide tersebut tergambar melalui penampilan androgini dan penggambaran gender Natalie Artemis.*

Kata Kunci: feminisme radikal, feminisme libertarian radikal, feminisme budaya radikal, penggambaran gender.

A. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, feminist issues are always found in our society. Society often controls how women should behave. Feminism issues seem like an endless discussion among people. Therefore, feminist criticism was born to examine the way literature stigmatizes women's position in economic, political, social, and psychological. It simply teaches us the way literature represents women's oppression which is reflected according to our society. The patriarchal system makes women's chances in politics, economic, social, education, or anything seem difficult.

These issues happen in our daily life and are often brought up by authors in their works such as films. A film can be identified as part of entertainment, it still reflects how society behaves especially towards women. These problems reflect in the *Monster Hunter* film, directed by Paul W.S. Anderson and released in 2020. The film is an adaptation based on a video game with the same title.

Monster Hunter film describes how American soldiers led by Natalie Artemis look for one of the missing teams that leads them to a monster world. This film focuses on Natalie Artemis as the captain that tries to escape and return to her world. As the captain of her fellow soldiers, Natalie Artemis is forced to be stronger physically and mentally than any other of her comrades. Moreover, she is the last of her group that survives the monster's attack. Then, she finds and works together with a native man called 'the hunter.' Moreover, she is stronger than 'the hunter' who has more experience than her in the monster world. Natalie Artemis' appearance in a soldier uniform, and then she wears metal armor with dual blades emphasize that she embraced her masculine and feminine sides. The film reflects how Natalie Artemis fights against gender representation in our society. Afterward, the researcher wants to analyze Natalie Artemis' radical feminism as reflected in the *Monster Hunter* film.

The researcher focused on analyzing the radical feminism of Natalie Artemis' character through her appearance, speech, action, and some characters that responsibly emphasize feminism issues in the film by using Petrie and Boggs' characterization theory and Rosemarie Putnam Tong's feminism theory. Women's oppression is caused by patriarchal norms, assumptions, and institutions in society and the only way possible to get equality is to radically eliminate male supremacy. Therefore, radical feminism was born to undo the women's oppression that had happened for decades.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Literature and Film

According to Klarer, the literature includes every written expression, whilst several written documents might not (1). It simply means literature is a medium of creative expression used by its authors.

Similarly, a film can tell stories and is considered a medium as well. Therefore, film and literature help their audience to deliver stories. Klarer considered film as a mode of literary presentation such as camera angle, editing, montage, and slow and fast motion, and can be explained using a textual structure (54). It is a mode of literary presentation that used moving visuals, and editing techniques to fulfill its ideas. It brings the literary text to a life full of expression, and emotion, and is still considered literature.

2. Character

According to Abrams, characters are the people that represent the conflicts of the literary work and have moral, intellectual thinking, and emotional traits, whether delivered by another character or through their dialogues and actions (42). Characters are the persons that have moral values, idealism, and emotional, and facial expression in the narrative work. Griffith mentioned that there are two kinds of character, which are static (flat), and dynamic (round) characters (61). Flat characters remain the same throughout the story. Their actions do not contribute much to their lives. However, dynamic characters grow alongside the story (Petrie & Boggs 59).

3. Direct and Indirect Characterization

According to Kenan direct characterization can be recognized through explicitly naming the character's trait using adjectives, nouns, and part of speech (61). Besides, characterization can be built indirectly by several things as well such as using speech, external appearance, and action.

Petrie and Boggs mentioned there are several characterizations in film (51). First, characterization through appearance can trigger an assumption about the characters based on their facial features, clothes, physical, manner, and the way they move. In this case, characterization can be seen the minute they appear on the screen. Similarly, a dialogue can emphasize their thoughts, attitudes, and emotion as well. In addition, the character can deliver those dialogues through stress, pitch, pause, sentence structure, vocabulary, and dialects to emphasize its characterization as well (51). Last, action can responsibly emphasize the characterization in the film as well. However, Petrie and Boggs separated characterization through action into external and internal action. External action can determine characterization because it reflects the quality of the character's personality. Therefore, external action might demonstrate the integrity of a character (52). On the contrary, internal action plays in the character's mind and emotions. This action might emphasize secret, unspoken thoughts, daydreams, aspirations, memories, fears, and fantasies (53). Internal action can be shown through the character's mind so the audience can understand the character's imagination. In addition, internal action is usually shown as flashbacks in a film.

4. Feminist Criticism

A literary criticism of male domination towards women's writing and female character portrayed in literary work (Drabble 355).

According to Dobbie, feminist criticism focuses on the unequal power of patriarchal Western culture which limits women and their productivity (102). This was led by the western culture's assumption that women were inferior creatures.

3. Radical Feminism

Radical feminism is stronger than the previous movement. It believes women are superior creatures to men. Tong stated that radical feminist believes women's oppression is caused by patriarchal norms, assumptions, and institutions in society and the only way possible to get equality is to radically eliminate male supremacy (37). It simply indicates radical feminism uses the 'hard way' to achieve its goal. Tong added, that radical feminism claimed women's sexual and reproductive lives are the most important human issues and are responsibly determined by patriarchal society (49).

a. Radical Libertarian Feminism

This feminist insists that women should be able to 'adapt' to a patriarchal society. Furthermore, they claimed women's oppression is caused by the exclusivity of the feminine gender, where women only reflect feminine traits. Therefore, this feminist stated women

should become androgynous, and embody feminine and masculine sides as well. Thus, women can develop entirely like human beings (50). It indicates that women should embrace their masculine and feminine sides at the same time, and call themselves androgynous to get equal recognition from society.

Moreover, radical libertarians believe that the existence of a patriarchal society because men have the power to control the public and private worlds, and to get rid of this power the society must eliminate any terms of gender stigma (Tong 51-52). They claimed the only way to put an end to this assumption is for both men and women should recognize the fact that women are no less active than men.

b. Radical Cultural Feminism

On the contrary, radical cultural feminism claimed women should not be androgynous to achieve equality, instead, women should emphasize feminine traits to achieve the recognition they deserve (Tong & Botts 37-41). They insist strictly feminine women can achieve equality as well. This feminism forces the patriarchal society to be a matriarchal society to gain equal treatment. Women should appreciate their advantages, instead of associating their characteristics with men to gain the same rights in society.

This feminism also sees gender portrayal as extremely important in society. Patriarchal society needs to reconsider its masculine values in terms of feminine values can proceed. However, they claimed the perfect society is an androgynous society where they see women's values of love, compassion, and sharing as important as men's values of control, structure, possessiveness, and status (Tong 57-58).

C. RESEARCH METHOD

This research used descriptive qualitative research. Flick stated that qualitative research is a type of research that aims to examine the values of social products such as issues, events, or practices by analyzing texts and images through the researcher's interpretation rather than numbers and statistics through respondents (472). Whilst feminist criticism is considered to analyze issues and events in literature through interpretation, therefore the researcher chose to use descriptive qualitative research to examine the social products which are feminism issues in literature. Besides, the researchers used Rosemarie Putnam Tong's radical feminism theory in *Feminist Thought (A More Comprehensive Introduction)* book to analyze the radical feminism of Natalie Artemis' character, whilst the *Monster Hunter* film is the object of this research.

The researchers used the *Monster Hunter* film as the source data. *Monster Hunter* film was directed by Paul W.S. Anderson and available on the Hulu streaming service. Whilst the researcher is considered to be the research instrument. Moreover, the data of this research would be actions, dialogues, and events presented through scenes reflecting radical feminism throughout the film. These data will be obtained through the following steps: first, the researcher watched *Monster Hunter* film. Second, the researcher raises the questions that might need to be resolved. Third, the researcher collected the data from the film. Then, the researcher interpreted the societal context of the data.

Furthermore, the researchers wanted to analyze the feminist values of Natalie Artemis' character, therefore the researcher examined the balance or imbalance of power depicted in the film. Afterward, the researchers found the connection between the theory in chapter two with the data analysis. The researcher used Rosemarie Putnam Tong's feminism theory to analyze the radical feminism of Natalie Artemis' character through double standards of

reproduction, biological, and sexual orientation that only advantage men whilst women are harmed in the film. Finally, the researcher verified the data and conclude the analysis.

D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Radical Libertarian of Natalie Artemis' Character

a. Androgynous

The first radical feminism of Natalie Artemis' character that is found is androgynous. In this case, radical libertarian feminists claimed androgynous means embracing both masculine and feminine sides at the same time.

Data 1 (Min 00:05:35)

Marshall : **Ma'am!**

Artemis : (Turns around) Marshall.

Natalie Artemis' first appearance from behind could confuse the audience about whether Artemis is a male or female because of her masculine and feminine traits. She wears a soldier's uniform. Besides, she has tied-long hair that creates confusion for the audience whereas she has a masculine body. However, the researcher is convinced she is a female when another character, Marshall, calls her "Ma'am" in the next scene.

Next, data 2 (min 00:56:24) shows that Artemis appearance illustrates her preparation to fight Diablos. It is depicted through the dual blades behind her back and the metallic armor worn by her. Similarly, to the previous data, this scene emphasizes her radical libertarian feminist trait. As the radical libertarian feminists' explanation, even though women are biological females, they are allowed to show other traits such as masculine traits.

Then, data 3 (min 00:06:28) shows that Artemis matches her masculine and feminine identities with a tattoo on her forearm to create an androgynous look. This also emphasizes her radical feminist movement to gain recognition and to be treated as equal to men. In the view of the radical libertarian, women can choose their gender identities and roles, mixing and matching them freely to support the idea to be androgyny, therefore this idea is supported through Artemis' androgynous appearance.

b. Gender

The second radical feminism of Natalie Artemis' character is gender portrayal. As the radical libertarian feminists' explanation, there is no connection between sex and gender because that assumption was created to make women less active than men.

Data 4 (Min 00:05:48)

Artemis : All right, **ladies**. Saddle up.

Axe : (smiles) **She's a woman, but she still manages to make that sound like an insult.**

Steeler : (chuckles) **Get used to it.**

After continuously hearing the alert from the Bravo team over a radio, Artemis gets information from Marshall that they found the last location of the Bravo team before they went missing. As a captain, Artemis orders her men to prepare the expedition to the location. At that point, she sarcastically makes fun of her men and describes them as the opposite of their gender. Two of her men, Axe and Steeler find that quite funny and insulting at the same time.

Data 5 (Min 00:21:36)

Dash : What does it matter? Do you see that thing?

Artemis : **It matters because we're soldiers. And this is what we do. We fight. Am I right?**

Artemis' dialog "**we're soldiers**" emphasizes that she has eliminated the assumption of gender created by the patriarchal system. As previously described, the existence of a patriarchal system is responsible for creating the gender assumption that women are less active than men. In this case, Artemis acknowledges that women and men are equally active as she describes through her dialog. Artemis has eliminated the gender assumption and sees herself and her soldiers are equally strong.

Next, in data 6 (min 01:32:39), Artemis stands side by side with other survivors to fight Rathalos emphasizing there are no biological differences between men and women. As described by radical libertarians, gender portrayal in the patriarchal system is exaggerated, making the biological differences of men seem dominant and masculine, whereas women are subordinate and feminine. This portrayal confirms that Artemis, the Admiral, and the Hunter have eliminated the assumption of gender portrayal created by the patriarchal system. Artemis has eliminated the feminine and subordinate assumption created by patriarchal society about women through her action.

2. Radical Cultural of Natalie Artemis' Character

a. Gender

Natalie Artemis depicts gender portrayal through radical cultural feminists' perspectives. It is portrayed in a scene when Artemis tries to help one of her soldiers, Link.

In data 7 (Min 00:28:22), it is shown that Artemis' emphasizes the feminine traits through her action. Given the radical cultural' explanation, the perfect society is an androgynous society where they see women's values of love, compassion, and sharing as important as men's values of control, structure, possessiveness, and status. This idea is depicted through Natalie Artemis' compassion towards Link. Although Artemis is portrayed with a masculine appearance, she depicts the feminine traits through her action values of love and compassion towards her soldiers. Artemis' action toward Link also emphasizes the idealistic society that is described by radical cultural feminists.

Last, in data 8 (min 01:04:08), even though they tried to kill one another, Artemis is still showing compassion and her values of love toward his new partner, the Hunter. Instead of focusing only on masculine' values, radical cultural feminists insisted that feminine values be re-established in a patriarchal society. This is depicted through Artemis' behavior towards the Hunter, she takes care of the unconscious Hunter to establish the feminine values in the masculine society. Contrarily to her masculine appearance, her compassion and values of love towards others show Artemis' radical cultural perspective on gender portrayal.

E. CONCLUSION

After analyzing how radical feminism is represented by Natalie Artemis' character in the *Monster Hunter* film, the researcher confirmed that Natalie Artemis depicts radical feminism including both radical libertarian and radical cultural feminism. The researcher concludes that Natalie Artemis' character emphasizes the androgynous appearance and gender portrayal of radical libertarians, and the gender portrayal of radical cultural feminists. In this case, radical libertarians are represented through Natalie Artemis' androgynous appearance that consists of her tied-long hair, soldier's uniform, flat chested, forearm tattoo, metallic armor, and dual blades. The second radical libertarian of Natalie Artemis' character is represented through the gender portrayal. This type of radical feminism is represented

through Natalie Artemis' speeches and actions. Moreover, radical cultural feminism is also represented through Natalie Artemis' actions in gender portrayal. Besides, the researcher concluded that Natalie Artemis' character represents radical libertarian and radical cultural feminism based on Petrie and Boggs's characterization. The characterization theory includes appearance, speech, and actions. As for the appearance, the researcher found the androgynous look in Natalie Artemis' character. For the speech, the researcher confirmed that through radical libertarian in androgynous look and gender portrayal of Natalie Artemis' character. Also, radical cultural feminism is confirmed through Natalie Artemis' gender portrayal.

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