

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

*Lusi Lindri* is an Indonesian historical novel written by Y.B. Mangunwijaya. Lusi Lindri was a girl who lived during the reign of Susuhunan Amangkurat I of Mataram in the seventeenth century (Mangunwijaya, 2019). The novel is written mainly in Indonesian mixed with some Javanese language, the traditional language in Central Java, Indonesia. This is the last novel in the *Trilogy of Rara Mendut* by YB Mangunwijaya. The story presents a heroine, Lusi Lindri, who is represented as a girl who is specially selected by the Queen Mother to become a member of Susuhunan Mangkurat I's bodyguard. Her life in the Palace allows her to witness the political conspiracy that occurred at that time. Her disapproval of the way the royal family unjustly treated the commoners turns her to rebel against Amangkurat.

The character of Lusi Lindri is portrayed as a heroine who displays a unique character compared to other female characters in the novel. Judging from the seventeenth-century settings, the Mataram kingdom positioned women in marginal and subordinate positions. Therefore, the character of Lusi Lindri, who the Queen Mother chose as an elite personal bodyguard, showed her status as a special woman. That is to say, it displays an act of trespassing on the border of gender domains. The fact that the Queen Mother specially selected her as a member

of Amangkurat I's bodyguard proves that Lusi Lindri is considered to be a capable and talented woman in martial arts. In the novel, Lusi is characterized as someone with a mix of masculinity and femininity.

The object of this study is the female hero character, Lusi Lindri. Lusi Lindri is depicted as a female warrior who is a brave and free-spirited woman, even though there was no feminist movement at that time (the era of Majapahit Kingdom; the novel's setting). The character of Lusi Lindri shows female masculinity. Barber (1998) as cited in Goodwill's journal (2019), explained that traditionally, masculinity has meant "of or characteristic of men (p. 7)" and, when applied to a woman, "having qualities considered appropriate to a man (p. 8)". Thus, this study aims to analyze the female masculinity of the female hero, Lusi Lindri.

Female masculinity was studied by Goodwill (2019) in her thesis titled *The Action Hero Revisioned: An Analysis of Female "Masculinity" in The New Female Hero in Recent Filmic Texts*. Goodwill's thesis generally explains female masculinity that embraces both "masculinity" and "femininity" in the female hero characters in filmic text. The thesis examines the developments in gender theory, proposes a behavior-based definition of masculinity. Moreover, the thesis argues that the new female action hero proves that "masculinity" can be authentically performed by female-bodied persons.

This study is different from the previous study in some terms. If the previous study, *The Action Hero Revisioned: An Analysis of Female "Masculinity"*

in *The New Female Hero in Recent Filmic Texts* by Goodwill, talks about female masculinity in the new female hero in recent filmic texts, this paper talks about female masculinity in a novel that is set in seventeenth-century Java. Another difference is that the previous study focuses on the new female hero with western cultural background, while this paper is talking about the female hero in the context of an Indonesian, especially Javanese, background. This thesis argues that the female-bodied Lusi Lindri has more masculine traits than feminine traits, representing her as female masculinity.

### **1.2 Field of the Study**

The field of the study is literature focusing on gender studies.

### **1.3 Scope of the Study**

The study focuses on the representation of female masculinity in Lusi Lindri's character in Mangunwijaya's novel, *Lusi Lindri*.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

This study tries to answer the question, "How is Lusi Lindri's female masculinity represented in the novel?"

### **1.5 Objectives of the Study**

The objective of the study is to find out the representation of Lusi Lindri's female masculinity.

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The writer expects the readers to understand better what female masculinity is as a theory. It is expected that the result of the study can be used as a reference in the Gender Studies class. In addition, this thesis is a discourse to understand that “masculinity” can be authentically performed by female-bodied persons. The writer also hopes that the study gives an example of how female masculinity can be found and is represented in Indonesian novels.

## **1.7 Definition of Term**

### **1 Female**

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) (2014), Female is a sex category, and the aspects of sex will not differ significantly between human societies. Some sex characteristics include a.) Females (women) menstruate, whereas males (men) do not; b.) Females (women) have developed breasts capable of pregnancy and breastfeeding, whereas males (men) do not.

### **2 Femininity**

In ‘common-sense’ sociology-speak, femininity or femininities are seen as ways of ‘doing girl or woman’ and can thus be discovered empirically in any social group. Rahbari & Mahmudabadi (2017, p. 1) stated that general understandings of femininity have formed around biological roles such as giving birth and breastfeeding consecrated by a halo of cultural norms.

### 3 Masculinity

Masculinity has been regarded as a sign, a reward, and an instrument of men's power (Gardiner, 2002), and as central to the maintenance of patriarchy and women's subordination (Nguyen, 2008, p. 668). The term "masculinity" is derived from a set of behaviors, norms, and customs expected of men (Leitao, 2018, pp. 11–12).

### 4 Female masculinity.

Both masculine and feminine characteristics are present in female masculinity. Judith Halberstam used the phrase to describe "women who perceive themselves to be more masculine than feminine" in modern history and culture (Halberstam, 1998, p. xi).