

**Female Sexploitation in Indonesian Horror Films:
*Sundel Bolong (A Perforated Prostitute Ghost, 1981),
Gairah Malam III (Night Passion III, 1996), and
Air Terjun Pengantin (Lost Paradise – Playmates in Hell, 2009)***

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Abstract

This research explores the portrayal of female sexual exploitation (sexploitation) and representation in three Indonesian horror films: *Sundel Bolong* (*A Perforated Prostitute Ghost*, 1981), *Gairah Malam III* (*Night Passion III*, 1996), and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (*Lost Paradise – Playmates in Hell*, 2009). These films coincide with three significant political periods in Indonesia, namely: the New Order period; the Transition period; and the post-New Order period that shaped and reflects the present Indonesian society. The New Order was known as authoritarian and repressive with prevalent censorship; the Transition period was marked by unstable political and economic conditions; and Post-New Order has seen a shift toward democracy with more freedom of speech. This research utilises a qualitative research methodology with thematic and textual analysis. Drawing on Mulvey's (1975) *visual pleasure* concept, the research shows that women are clearly represented as sexual objects to be savoured by heterosexual male viewers. In addition, this research uses Creed's (1993) concept of the *monstrous feminine* to analyse female character representation in the three selected films, in their respective political and economic contexts, to compare a 'good' woman and a 'bad' woman according to Indonesian patriarchal society. The research finds that female characters are depicted as dependent, passive and helpless, which is associated with Indonesian ideals of womanhood during the New-Order and Transition periods. However, during the Post-New Order period, female representation has changed. The female character is depicted as a survivor who does not need a man's support and protection. She is more independent, active and fierce; yet, she still cannot escape fully from society's expectation for her to follow the patriarchal rule.

Keywords: Sexploitation; Indonesian horror film; *Sundel Bolong*; *Gairah Malam III*; *Air Terjun Pengantin*; *visual pleasure*; *monstrous feminine*.

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this thesis submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anggit Pangastuti', written in a cursive style.

Anggit Pangastuti

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Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter explores the concept of female sexual exploitation (sexploitation) and representation through the lens of the feminist concepts *visual pleasure* (Mulvey, 1975) and the *monstrous feminine* (Creed, 1993). In this thesis, female sexploitation in Indonesian horror films refers to the portrayal of female characters as seductive and as sex symbols; their bodies are exploited to sell the films for easy profit (Imanjaya, 2010). It should be noted, however, that female sexploitation in the three Indonesian horror films selected for study have less nudity compared to Western horror films, which present gratuitous nudity or constitute softcore pornography (Schaefer, 2007). *Visual pleasure* is a concept used to explain a pleasure in looking at females as sexual objects on screens, whose bodies are products and fragmented by close-ups in a voyeuristic manner for male fantasy; females are the passive images and males are the bearer of the look (Mulvey, 1975). The concept of the *monstrous feminine* refers to a female monster who is horrifying because of her sexuality and embodies this concept in many forms such as the *vagina dentata*, *witch* and *femme castratrice*, which I will discuss in chapter 2 (Creed, 1993). Female sexploitation pertains to the three main female characters, Alisa, Darmi, and Tiara found, respectively, in the Indonesian horror films called *Sundel Bolong (A Perforated Prostitute Ghost, 1981)*, *Gairah Malam III (Night Passion III, 1996)*, and *Air Terjun Pengantin (Lost Paradise – Playmates in Hell, 2009)*. These films were specifically selected for study as each was made during a distinct political period in Indonesia: *Sundel Bolong* (1981) during the New Order (late 1960s to mid 1990s); *Gairah Malam III* (1996) during the Transition (1994 to 1998); and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) during the Post-New Order period (1998 to present). The three women, one from each of the three films were selected in order to observe a changing trend of female sexploitation and representation over a period of time in Indonesian horror films. The focus of this thesis is to examine the female sexploitation and representation in these films as a means of emphasizing how female characters are depicted in denigrating ways and as sex objects, and how this is shaped by the wider socio-political and economic context.

In order to assess these films, textual analysis is employed. Textual analysis is committed to engaging with the politics of representation, in this case through the various ways in which specific meanings around gender are constructed (McKee, 2003). By using textual analysis and the feminist concepts of *visual pleasure* (Mulvey, 1975) and the *monstrous feminine* (Creed, 1993), I explore the main female character in terms of their representation within each of the three films, which were made during periods of radical political change in Indonesia.

The terms 'female sexploitation' and 'female representation' will be discussed both generally and within the Indonesian context. This chapter's first section 1.1 provides the background for the research topic by focusing on sexploitation within Western horror films, and mapping the similarities and differences found to those of Indonesian horror films. In addition, female character representation in Indonesian horror films will be discussed. Section 1.2 overviews the key Indonesian political periods studied. The next section 1.3 details the two research questions: "How is female sexploitation portrayed in Indonesian horror films?" and "How are female characters in Indonesian horror films represented over the New Order, the Transition and the Post-New Order time frame?". This is followed by a presentation of the rationale for this thesis. Finally, section 1.4 outlines the structure for the thesis, explaining how the analysis and discussion of the films will be tied to the key themes.

1.1 Background

Indonesian horror films have been depicting women in a sexualised and exploitative manner for decades (Imanjaya, 2010). This treatment of women has positioned them as commodities since the 1970s (Imanjaya, 2009). Such a positioning means that women are not viewed as human beings or people with "potentials for expansion of their subjectivities and the possibilities for creating more humane communities" (Hartsock, 2004, p. 16). Like other commodities, women have exchange and use values, such as for being sex objects (Hartsock, 2004). Women are presented as sex objects to be bought and sold in popular Indonesian horror films (Imanjaya, 2010).

“Sex in media is not limited to explicit portrayals of intercourse or nudity, but rather may include any representation that portrays or implies sexual behaviour, interest, or motivation” (Harris as cited in Bryant & Miron, 2006, p. 438). In Indonesia, as part of Eastern culture, sexual portrayals on Indonesia’s screen is “not because of what it shows or contains per se in terms of sex and naked bodies, but rather as documents of sexual activity that provoke debate and discussion” (Barker, 2015, p. 254). Indonesian horror films do not have explicit portrayals of sexual intercourse or full nudity, but often only imply sexual activities that emphasise a female’s sexual motivation, interest or behaviour in a way that exploits female’s sexualised bodies (Imanjaya, 2010). This phenomenon of female sexploitation in Indonesian horror films was occasionally labelled in the local media as the problem of pornographic film, though it should be made clear at this point that female sexploitation has a particularly local meaning, one which can be puzzling to those unfamiliar with Indonesian culture and filmic output (Herawati, 2011). Thus, while bedroom scenes are often suggestive, and female characters’ costumes are revealing ‘too much’ skin for Indonesian viewers’ standard, there is certainly no gratuitous nudity.

The sexploitation of women in media supports the view of female objectification to help sell products or services and is seen in all forms of media from film and television to advertising on various mediums (Gunter, 2001). “Sexploitation refers to the commercial exploitation of sex, sexual attractiveness, or sexually explicit material ... and is a blend of sex and exploitation” (*Oxford Dictionary*, 2006). Sexploitation in Western film, however, is evident in independently produced, low budget films, and features gratuitous nudity and non-explicit sex situations, also known as softcore pornography (Schaefer, 1999). The term ‘sexploitation’ in relation to film was first used in 1924 (Merriam Webster Dictionary, 2019). ‘Sexploitation’ as a term in Indonesia was first used in 1978 by Rosihan Anwar, a well-known Indonesian journalist, to discuss the level of exploitation within Indonesian films that involved displaying women as sexual objects as a means to attract viewers (Imanjaya as cited in Jenkins, 2019). Female sexploitation in Indonesian horror films in this thesis, then, refers to the portrayal of female characters as seductive and as sex symbols; their bodies are exploited to sell the films for easy profit (Imanjaya, 2010). These same women are

commonly portrayed as being mistreated in a degrading manner while the audience is positioned to view their situation from a dominant heterosexual male point of view.

1.1.1 Female sexploitation in Western horror films and Indonesian horror films

Female sexploitation in films is a common practice in many countries around the world (Aripurnami, 2000; Hunt, 2013; Koven, 2004; Gorfinkel, 2017; Steinwender & Zahlten, 2012). Scholars from Western countries who have examined female sexploitation in films are: Hunt (2013) explored the phenomenon of sexploitation in United Kingdom (UK); Koven (2004) examined female sexploitation in Italy; Gorfinkel (2017) investigated female sexploitation in the United States of America (USA); and Steinwender and Zahlten (2012) studied female sexploitation in Germany. One scholar who examined women in Indonesian films, Aripurnami (2000), found that they are portrayed as bitchy and revealing their skin, which is a form of female sexploitation. Sexploitation films in Western countries developed during the 1960s and initially screened in grindhouse theatres in the USA (Schaefer, 2007). A grindhouse is an American term for theaters that primarily were associated with sexual deviance, violence, and cheapness of sexploitation films (Church, 2011). The theatre type was named after the “grind policy, which refers to the screening of films continuously throughout the day and evening for cut-rate admission prices” (Church, 2011, p.3). Indonesia soon started to follow this trend of female sexploitation occurring in Western countries. Female sexual exploitation in Indonesia has been used as a formula in making sexploitation films to lure viewers since the late 1970s (Imanjaya, 2009). In many Western horror films, such as in *Psycho* (1960), *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984) and *Jennifer’s Body* (2009), women are presented as totally naked or half-naked; women are often more sexualised than their male counterparts (Ward, 2016). This speaks to what Laura Mulvey (1975) defines as ‘male *visual pleasure*’ in that this manner of filming is about a pleasure in looking at females as sexual objects; their bodies are products and fragmented by close-ups in a voyeuristic manner for male fantasy; females are passive images and males are the bearer of the look (Mulvey, 1975). Another author who discusses *visual pleasure* is Gaylyn Studlar (1985); she referred to the “spectatorial pleasure that has also been linked to the representation of the female as a masochistic object for the male’s scopophilia/voyeurism” (p. 5). Examples in Western film which show the woman as naked can be seen in Marion’s

shower scene in *Psycho* (1960), Nancy's bathing scene in *A Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984) and Jennifer's swimming scene in *Jennifer's Body* (2009). Their naked bodies can be understood as reflecting the *visual pleasure* as conceptualised by Mulvey (1975).

Women are presented in horror films to provide *visual pleasure* in terms of the *male gaze* (Mulvey, 1975). The *male gaze* is the act of seeing females from a masculine heterosexual point of view, whereby females are represented as sexual objects and viewers are positioned to assume that 'masculine' orientation (Mulvey, 1975). Scenes that include showering in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) and the beach in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) are commonplace in Indonesian horror films, and here they show women as sex objects by accentuating females' sexualised bodies (Aripurnami, 2000). For example, Alisa in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) is depicted as a prostitute ghost. She lures her male victims to have sexual intercourse. Darmi in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) is depicted as a promiscuous witch who bewitches her male victims to engage in her sex rituals. Tiara in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) is depicted as a sexy woman who uses of her sexual attractiveness to get her boyfriend's attention and to distract a psychopathic *dukun* (shaman). There is a dearth of research on female sexploitation, considering the level and extent of female sexploitation that occurs in Indonesian horror films. Siddique (2002) and Wilger (2016) studied *Sundel Bolong* (1981) for its representation of feminism. Karnanta (2015) and Sutandio (2015) investigated *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) for female stereotypes and visual representations of gender. However, research into *Gairah Malam III* (1996) has not been conducted. Moreover, Siddique (2002), Wilger (2016), Karnanta (2015) and Sutandio (2015) did not analyse the female sexploitation and representation in the three films specifically using Mulvey's *visual pleasure* concept (1975) and Creed's *monstrous feminine* (1993). Thus, this thesis fills an important gap in the literature by seeking wider knowledge around gender issues in Indonesian horror films through female sexploitation and representation.

Female sexual objectification is "sexual representation that examines how woman function as a sign for patriarchy as its other, its spectacle and its subordinate thing" (Attwood, 2004, p. 7). In horror films with strong female characters like Ripley in *Alien* (1979) and Tiara in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009), the female characters are often objectified. For example, though

Ripley in *Alien* (1979) is one of the toughest female characters in film, she is still seen to undress, one article of clothing at a time, until she wears only white underwear that almost falls to reveal her buttocks and a white transparent t-shirt that shows her breasts. Tiara in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) is seen with her two-piece lingerie item accentuating her breasts, torso and hips. In both cases, the cameras linger and sexually objectify the women's bodies in a sexualised manner. Scholars such as Cowan and O'Brien (1990), Freeland (2000), Welsh (2010) and Iftene (2016) have discussed how women are portrayed as sex objects in Western horror films. Similarly, women are still portrayed as sexual objects in Indonesian horror films (Aripurnami, 2000; Octavita & Zaimar, 2018; Imanjaya; 2018).

Unlike Western horror films, Indonesian horror films contain female sexploitation which presents a partially naked female's body and less explicit sex scenes (Imanjaya, 2010; Barker, 2015). Western horror films, such as *Wrong Turn* (2003), *Antichrist* (2009) and *Piranha* (2010), have full female nudity and explicit sex scenes. Indonesian culture dictates that full nudity is not an accepted norm in Indonesia and, as such, it has a high rating for censorship (Sen, 1996). While the three films of the thesis archive only have partial nudity and less explicit sex scenes than Western productions, I argue these films are nevertheless still presenting women as sexually exploited, objectified and commodified. This is evident in the films' shots emphasising women's cleavages, nipples, bare hips, shoulders, arms, midriffs, sensual lips and body curves. My analysis will also show that the reason for this female sexual objectification, commodification and reinforcement of moral message is largely due to the Indonesian patriarchal culture "embodied in every aspect of life and is typically socialized through religious teachings" (Murtiningsih & Advenita, 2017, p. 143). The moral message from Indonesian horror films is promiscuous women will face negative consequences, which is part of sexual politics in Indonesia. Sexual politics in the form of control or domination of men over women were shaped by the New Order patriarchal ideology (Suryakusuma, 2004). There is, however, noticeable change in the representation of female characters through various periods in history, especially during the Post-New Order period (Sutandio, 2015). Female characters are still sexually objectified in film (Karnanta, 2015), but they are shown to be more independent and no longer mere victims, as is the case in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009). Women continue to be sexually objectified so

that they are able to attract viewers' attention, because the viewers are the buyers (Kuhn, 2013). Based on Sen's (1995) observation, where women dominate the screen, often they are "presented to be seen so that the film is seen (sold)" (p. 134). Murtagh (2011) concurred with this, adding that the "over-lengthy gaze on their bodies serves not only to sell the film, but does so in such a way as to ensure maximum profit while keeping production costs to a minimum" (p. 126). Consequently, due to the exploitative nature of the representations of women and the low production costs, Indonesian horror films have been considered as the least 'respectable' of Indonesian film genres (Barker, 2011).

Indonesian film production companies made profit by lowering production costs by using formulaic scripts, especially during the Transition period from 1994 to 1998 when the economy in Indonesia was unstable (Barker, 2015; Matondang, 2010). Film producers argued that sex and nudity in their films were *bumbu* (spice) to attract viewers in the face of declining moviegoers' numbers (Pudyastuti, Muryadi & Indrawan, 1994). The pressure to increase profit margins resulted in many Indonesian film directors making use of popular Indonesian themes in their films, such as those of the supernatural, mysticism, and sex (Herawati, 2011). Supernatural and mystical themes are interwoven through the films because much of Indonesian society still believes in mysticism and supernatural beings, and these themes (Herawati, 2011) lend themselves well to believable rituals which incorporate sexual activities. Thus, this research into the portrayal of female sexploitation in Indonesian horror films, through the three chosen productions, is informed by the way in which film producers attempt to maximise profit by inserting sexual activities based on the existing tropes of mysticism and supernatural elements.

1.1.2 Female character representation in Indonesian horror films

The female character representations in the three Indonesian horror films - *Sundel Bolong* (1981), *Gairah Malam III* (1996) and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) - will be analysed using Barbara Creed's (1993) *monstrous feminine* and its many forms such as *vagina dentata*, *witch* and *femme castratrice* (see chapter 2). This key concept is used in this research in relation to the notion of *ibuism*, which encompasses being a good wife and mother in Indonesian patriarchal culture (Suryakusuma, 2011). The depiction of female characters in

the three films reveals different takes on both *ibuism* and monstrous characters. Alisa in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) represents a good wife after her marriage to a man; however, she is transformed into a monstrous female ghost (*vagina dentata* and *femme castratrice*) after her death as a result of a gang rape and subsequent pregnancy. Darmi in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) represents a monstrous woman (a witch), who is promiscuous and revengeful. Darmi's characteristics are against the notion of *ibuism*. Tiara in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) represents a monstrous woman (a *femme castratrice*) revenging the death of her boyfriend. Tiara's characteristics of being independent, active and resourceful in order to take her revenge are far away from the passivity and dependence encapsulate in the notion of *ibuism* (Suryakusuma, 2011). To make sense of the Indonesian political context in which Indonesian films have been produced and how that has shaped the representation of female characters, it is necessary to understand the Indonesian political periodisation.

1.2 Indonesia: Political periodisation

The relevant Indonesian political period that is explored in this thesis is divided into three time periods, namely: the New Order; the Transition; and the Post-New Order.



Figure 1. Indonesia's political period timeline

The New Order period started in 1967 and ended in 1998. The Transition period was the in between period, which took place from 1994 to 1998 before the Post-New Order period. Lastly, the Post-New Order period began in 1998 to present day.

1.2.1 New Order period

The New Order (*Order Baru*) is a term that was coined by Suharto (also written as Soeharto based on Dutch orthography), the second president of Indonesia who ruled from 1967 until 1998 (Eklof, 2004). He used the term to distinguish it from the Old Order (*Order Lama*) which was named by Sukarno (also spelled Soekarno), the first president of Indonesia who governed for 22 years from 1945-1967 (Hellman, 2003). The Old Order government was anti-Western, and tended to favour communist ideology (Mortimer, 2006). Sukarno cut off all economic connections with the Western countries and, as a result, Indonesia experienced a catastrophic economic situation (Pauker, 1967). “Direct action against him [Sukarno] was initiated by the students only in January 1966, when the cost of living price index (1957-100) jumped from 36,347 (in December 1965) to 56,020, following an inept currency reform. Years of financial and economic mismanagement had brought about hyperinflation ... skyrocketing prices” (Pauker, 1967, p. 505). Suharto used a military coup to take power from Sukarno and eradicated suspected communist leaders on 30 September 1965 (Roosa, 2006). This marked the commencement of the New Order period, which placed Indonesia under Suharto’s dictatorship regime (Pauker, 1967; Dowling & Yap, 2008). He was infamous for controlling state enterprises (Berger, 2008) and censoring the media (Hill, 2006). Suharto’s repressive government was backed up by the military to control the country and to make use of the media for his political goals (Imanjaya, 2009). People would be silenced and ‘disappeared’ if they were against the government policies and, as a result, the people’s ‘consensus’ was based on terror and fear (Imanjaya, 2009). For this reason, Indonesian economic policies underwent a radical change, with Suharto focusing on attracting investors from Western countries (Berger, 1997; Legge, 1968). One of Suharto’s policies was to lift the ban on Western (imported) movies implemented during the Old Order (Sen, 1995). The Indonesian Censorship Board during the New Order period did keep out “the political and sexual ‘excesses’ of Hollywood cinema” (Sen & Hill, 2000, p. 138); however, “new layers of pre-censorship were added in the first decade of the New Order, which resulted in locally produced films being even more stringently censored than imported ones” (Sen & Hill, 2000, p. 140). Thus, the Indonesian film market during this period was flooded by Hollywood and other imported films. Even though Suharto opened

up economic relations with Western countries, Indonesia also applied *Pancasila* democracy to filter issues that were deemed a threat to the New Order regime.

Pancasila is an Indonesian theory of democracy which is based on five principles (*panca* means five and *sila* means principle) (Prawiranegara, 1984). This meant that the Indonesian film industries had to adhere to the state ideology of five principles (Sen & Hill, 2000). *Pancasila* are stated in Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian language), but are rather ambiguous and less suggestive when translated into English; the five principles are (Morfit, 1981, p. 840):

- 1) *Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa* (Belief in the one and only God)
- 2) *Kemanusiaan yang adil dan beradab* (A just and civilized humanity)
- 3) *Persatuan Indonesia* (The unity of Indonesia)
- 4) *Kerakyatan yang dipimpin oleh hikmat kebijaksanaan, dalam permusyawaratan perwakilan* (Democracy guided by the inner wisdom of representatives of the people)
- 5) *Keadilan sosial bagi seluruh rakyat Indonesia* (Social justice for all Indonesian people)

If both the imported and Indonesian films did not adhere to the *Pancasila*, which was part of the New Order's pervasive censorship, the films would not be screened; however, local films were more strictly censored than international films (Sen & Hill, 2000). The media were heavily censored and used for Suharto's political agenda: "all left-wing [communist] elements were excised from cinema (and from the rest of Indonesian cultural life). Prominent leftist film-makers were jailed or, at the very least, they were excluded from all media – leftist cultural organisations were destroyed, their films and ideologies banned" (Sen & Hill, 2000, p. 139). His political agenda was to maintain political stability by spreading his key ideological mission of anti-Communism and "the anti-politics ethos" through media (Sen & Hill, 2000, p. 138), especially by inserting political subliminal messages in Indonesian horror films through the Indonesian Ethical Code for Film Production created in 1981 (van

Heeren, 2007). Examples here included a male figure winning at the finale of the film (van Heeren, 2007) and a woman character (ghost or witch) being punished (Sen, 1995). The New Order stability was kept for almost 30 years; however, it could not continue because Suharto was getting older and losing support from the military and political establishment (Huxley, 2013). Thus, Indonesia entered into a new period, the Transition, which brought the economy into an unstable condition, leading to almost stagnant growth (Sen, 1995). Indonesian film industry was eventually affected by the economic crisis (Imanjaya, 2010); for instance, production went from 33 films in 1994 to just four films in 1998 (Film Indonesia 1994; 1998).

1.2.2 Transition period

The Transition period marked the unravelling of Suharto's regime and, eventually, leading to the third Indonesian president. It is the period when Suharto's power started to decline in 1994, and he finally stepped down as president in 1998. In 1994, Suharto declared he would retire in 1998 and this led to a politically and economically unstable environment (ABC, 1994). This manifested in several political riots; for example, in July 1996, there was an attack by government forces on the Indonesian Democratic Party head office, which was occupied by Megawati Sukarnoputri, the daughter of the first president of Indonesia (Hill & Sen, 2005). In addition, the Indonesian economy was the hardest hit in 1997 during the Asian financial crisis (Tambunan, 2010). One of the reasons that affected the economic crisis was illegitimate money flows due to the corruption of Suharto and his cronies' (Sharma, 2002). Suharto and his own family had derailed the Indonesian economy and prevented it from functioning properly (Hill, 2016). The ensuing high rates of unemployment and rising food prices led to widespread unrest (Britton, 2018). This collapse in the economy directly affected the Indonesian films industry (Imanjaya, 2010).

During the Transition period, the film industry was in a state of inertia and did not produce many films. Many films that were in the process of creation were left uncompleted or were produced at a far lower standard than permitted. Filmmakers began to exploit sex for their low-budget films and cheap publications (Barker, 2015), such as *Misteri Kebun Tebu* (*Sugar Cane Plantation Mystery*, 1997) and *Misteri Banyuwangi* (*Banyuwangi Mystery*, 1998).

Meanwhile, the film industries were also competing with rapidly increasing television consumption; televisions were by that stage present in many Indonesian households (Barker, 2011). The competition caused by the prevalence of television as a primary source of entertainment contributed to the decline of film production. From 1991 to 1996, many theatres went bankrupt and a total of 1248 theatres in Jakarta had been forced to shut down (Herawati, 2011). They were switched to fit a new function or were sold due to the economic crisis (Herawati, 2011). In addition, Indonesian cinema was further threatened by a cousin of Suharto called Sudwikatmono, who had founded the leading cinema chain in Indonesia (Sen & Hill, 2000; Vickers, 2013). This chain monopolised the market and favoured the screenings of Hollywood films over national films, which in turn contributed to the decline in Indonesian film production in the early 1990s (Sen & Hill, 2000). Consequently, the Indonesian films that were still being screened in cinemas at that time were mostly dominated by those films which contained sex and female sexploitation (Barker, 2015; Imanjaya, 2010).

Indonesian filmmakers promoted female sexploitation in adult-themed content which showed more female skin in low budget films as a way to increase profit margins (Imanjaya, 2010). From 1990 until 1998, the content of many Indonesian films could be deduced from the titles, for example, *Misteri di Malam Pengantin* (*Mystery of the Wedding Night*, 1993), *Bergairah di Puncak* (*Desire at Puncak*, 1996), *Bisikan Nafsu* (*Lust Whisper*, 1996) and *Mistik Erotik* (*Erotic Mystics*, 1996). The drive for economic success resulted in a focus on sexual themes in horror genres as they brought profit to the film producers (Barker, 2015; Imanjaya, 2009). For instance, *Sundel Bolong* (1981) is considered successful because it was able to continue the story with a sequel, *Telaga Angker* (*Haunted Lake*, 1984); *Gairah Malam III* (1996) is also regarded as successful because it was produced after the success of *Gairah Malam I* (*Night Passion I*, 1993) and *Gairah Malam II* (*Night Passion II*, 1995); and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) has its sequel which is *Air Terjun Pengantin Phuket* (*Phuket Bride's Waterfall*, 2013). The combination of sex and horror was a formula for film production companies to survive the Indonesian economic crisis simply by exposing more 'skin' of Indonesian females (Pudyastuti, Muryadi & Indrawan, 1994; Matondang, 2010) and, further, by promoting them as seductive women and sex symbols (Imanjaya, 2010). Malfin

Shayna, who starred in *Gairah Malam III* (1996), and Suzanna van Osch, who starred in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), were two Indonesian sex symbols in the 1980s and 1990s (Imanjaya, 2010). In 1970, van Osch debuted her adult career with *Bernapas dalam Lumpur* (*Breathing in the Mud*, 1970), the first Indonesian film to accentuate the depiction of sexuality through rape, sex and 'dirty' dialogue (Imanjaya, 2010; Kristanto & Ardan, 2007). Therefore, Indonesian horror films are often labelled as sexual exploitation films.

1.2.3 Post-New Order period

The Post-New Order period started in May 1998 after the resignation of Suharto (Eklof, 2004). He was forced to step down from power because of the widespread May 1998 demonstrations and riots, just two months after getting himself re-elected for a seventh term of presidency (Berger, 2008; Said, 1998). Suharto was brought down from power by the student demonstrations that challenged the nation's cohesiveness (Mydans, 1998).

The Post-New Order was a major reformation for Indonesia with calls from demonstrators for change to a more democratic country. Indonesian filmmakers started to practise freedom of speech and expression (Barker, 2015). The shift from authoritarian control over the media to a period of liberalisation was celebrated, as it allowed the previously repressed voices to be heard (Barker, 2015). A range of new publications appeared such as a "'fragrant literature' (*sastra wangi*) or Indonesian-style chick lit ... [about] youth culture and its open stance towards ideas on sexuality" (Barendregt, 2006, p. 6) and film narrative that, for example, included sexual intercourse between two cousins, as seen in *3 Hari untuk Selamanya* (*Three Days to Forever*, 2007). Many people used the opportunity to publish content that both challenged and criticised state institutions and pushed the boundaries of acceptability. *Arisan!* (*The Gathering*, 2003), for example, was the first Indonesian film to have a homosexual theme (Oetomo as cited in Chinadaily, 2004) while *Berbagi Suami* (*Love for Share*, 2006) was about polygamy. Both films were directed by the same female director, Nia Dinata. Since the fall of the New Order period, there has been a significant growth in female participation behind the camera in the Indonesian film industry; this has resulted in more nuanced and varied representations of men and women and relationships (Hughes-Freeland, 2011). Dominant norms around sexuality were changing, and diverse voices and

interests were becoming more visible (Barker, 2015). Novel ideas were introduced into Indonesian horror films during this time period and thus reflected the change in Indonesia's politics. One of the new types of representation that was permitted with the emerging freedoms was that of more agency being granted to women. For example, in Indonesian horror films there was the previously unfamiliar presentation of the independent female character who could protect herself without the help of a man. This appeared in films such as *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) and *Rumah Dara (Macabre)*, (2009).

Over time, the Post-New Order period brought greater freedom and liberal attitudes to Indonesia. The political reformation gave room for filmmakers to express themselves (Barker, 2015) as there was no longer a need for self-censorship. As a result, there were more films produced which portrayed SARA, which stands for *Suku* (ethnic), *Agama* (religious), *Ras* (racial) and *Antargolongan* (group/class) (Sen & Hill, 2000). The latest film that portrayed SARA is *Lima (Five)*, (2018), which represents Indonesian diversity. Film content that was previously forbidden during the New Order regime surfaced in the Post-New Order. In a reverse of fortune from previous time periods of excessive constraints, the Indonesian film industries thrived once more, and even managed to attract moviegoers to visit more local films than the international films. By 2009, it was found that Indonesian audiences favoured their local films over international films (Kurniasari, 2009), which meant that Indonesian movies dominated the cinemas again. More local films - drama, comedy and horror genres - have screened in Indonesian local cinemas and succeeded in attracting more viewers since 2007. The local films have offered more in terms of reflecting real lives and interesting cultural shifts than was the case during the New Order and the Transition period (Paramaditha, 2014).

According to Film Indonesia's official website (Film Indonesia, 2007; 2008; 2009), horror films that reached the top ten most watched in 2007, 2008, and 2009 can be seen in Table 1:

Film Title	Year	Viewers
<i>Terowongan Casablanca (Casablanca Tunnel)</i>	2007	1,200,000
<i>Suster Ngesot (Crawling Nurse)</i>	2007	800,000
<i>Pulau Hantu (Ghost Island)</i>	2007	650,000
<i>Pocong III (Shrouded III)</i>	2007	600,000
<i>Lantai 13 (13th Floor)</i>	2007	550,000
<i>Kuntilanak II (The Chanting II)</i>	2007	550,000
<i>Tali Pocong Perawan (The Rope of a Virgin Shrouded Ghost)</i>	2008	1,082,081
<i>Hantu Ambulans (Ambulance Ghost)</i>	2008	862,913
<i>Air Terjun Pengantin (Lost Paradise – Playmates in Hell)</i>	2009	1,060,058
<i>Suster Keramas (Evil Nurse)</i>	2009	840,880
<i>Setan Budeg (Deaf Satan)</i>	2009	871,062

Table 1. Indonesian horror films top ten most watched in 2007, 2008, and 2009

Some New Order ideologies had been deeply rooted in Suharto’s regime, were still having an effect on Indonesian people. Indonesia’s obsession with “women’s sexuality has been treated as matters for everyone’s concern, with repercussions for the future of the entire society” (Brenner, 1999, p. 33). This meant that a woman’s private preferences in regard to matters, such as dress code and sexual behaviour, were part of national governance matters (Brenner, 1999), resulting in many Indonesian people placing sexual behaviour and clothing under a prescribed set of rules instead of personal choice or preference (Davies, 2018; Neff,

2011; Platt, Davies & Bennett, 2018). Indonesia's Criminal Code Bill criminalises several aspects related to sexuality that are regarded as violating decency, such as cohabitation (Widayati, 2018). Activities that violated moral codes (*melanggar tata susila*) or were deemed to be immoral (*dianggap cabul*) were brought under Indonesian law because they are contrary to the religious and cultural norms of many Indonesians (Barker, 2015; Widayati, 2018). An example that illustrated this point occurred in 2010, when a well-known Indonesian celebrity was sued under the anti-pornography law of 2008 for his role in the production and distribution of two sex-tape videos, which appeared on the internet (Vaswani, 2010). The two videos showed a pop singer, Nazril 'Ariel' Irham, partaking in sexual activity with his Indonesian superstar girlfriend, Luna Maya. In another video, Ariel was having sexual intercourse with a married popular Indonesian Television presenter called Cut Tari. Ariel was found guilty and his charge carried a sentence of a maximum prison term of twelve years and a fine of US\$600,000. As it turned out, he ended up serving three and a half years and was fined US\$17,500 (Kamil, 2011). After Ariel was released from prison, his popularity began to rise, yet his girlfriend Luna Maya's reputation drop, and her career declined (Omar, 2018). Cut Tari's career was also diminished in the Indonesian entertainment industry, with her being rarely seen on television after the scandal. In addition, the two women are still left as suspects for their involvement in the two sex-tape videos (Vaaju, 2018), and even now are still blamed and isolated by Muslim society, which has resulted in the further decline of their careers.

During this same period, radical conservative Muslim groups, such as the Islamic Defenders Front (*Front Pembela Islam*, hereafter FPI), began pushing against the new-found freedom in the country. A rise in conservative Muslim beliefs appeared as part of the democratisation process after the New Order regime collapsed. FPI, which was founded immediately after the New Order regime ended, had been conducting its own form of censorship in Indonesia under the guise of morality, aimed at anything which it deemed as sexually deviant (Kassam, 2017). Attention was also placed on the entertainment industry, where censoring of film and television ensued, and the FPI demanded the termination of controversial films, such as *Selimut berdarah* (*Blooded Bedsheet*, 2010) and *Pocong Mandi Goyang Pinggul* (*Shrouded Corpse Bathing and Shaking Hips*, 2011). In another incident, a national television

station in Jakarta was subjected to an FPI protest for airing a telenovela that was deemed to have disgraced Islam (Tempo, 2012). In addition, a sold-out concert tour by entertainer Lady Gaga was threatened by the FPI group (Robinson, 2014). The FPI bought 150 tickets in order to get inside the concert arena to cause a riot (DetikNews, 2012). The FPI argued that Lady Gaga's "sexy clothes and provocative movements" would corrupt Indonesian youth (BBC, 2012). That "the FPI protests were a show of "political muscle" rather than genuine moral concern seemed evidenced by the fact that they made no attempt to stop the widespread circulation of Lady Gaga video clips on Indonesian television screens all across the country" (Robinson, 2014, p. 62). For the Islamists, their protests are political tools for consolidating power and incorporating Islam in their new vision of nationhood (Paramaditha, 2014). Although films had been passed by the Censorship Board, the FPI still could protest and threaten to destroy the cinemas if such films were not taken down. Thus, filmmakers were more aware and careful when creating and promoting films, to ensure that they did not include sexually provocative content (Paramaditha, 2014).

The FPI were inconsistent in terms of the types of sexualised video content of which it attempted to stop the distribution (Robinson, 2014). Similarly, the Indonesian Censorship Board was inconsistent in the types of Indonesian films it chose to censor (Hapsari, 2017). There were still many films where female sexploitation in Indonesian horror films was a central draw card for audiences, such as *Hantu Jamu Gendong (Herbal Seller Ghost, 2009)* (Octavita & Zaimar, 2018), *Pacar Hantu Perawan (Virgin Ghost Girlfriend, 2011)* and *Perawan Seberang (A Virgin from Seberang, 2013)*. They were still screened, promoted and circulated publicly during the Post-New Order period. In these examples, it is clear that the majority of female characters are sexually objectified and sexploited in a degrading manner. Their bodies are exploited to attract viewers, thus sell the films (Imanjaya, 2010). Film producers have utilised adult porn stars to market their films, including Rin Sakuragi in *Suster Keramas (Evil Nurse, 2009)*, Tera Patrick in *Rintihan Kuntilanak Perawan, (The Moaning Virgin Ghost, 2010)* and Maria Ozawa in *Hantu Tanah Kusir (Carriage Ghost, 2010)* (Matondang, 2010; Lodish, 2011; Mubarak, 2016). The three Indonesian horror films that are analysed in this thesis also contain the sexual objectification and sexploitation of women through sexual assaults suffered by the female characters. In *Sundel Bolong (1981)*,

Alisa is gang raped; and in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) Tiara is forced to have sexual intercourse with a sadomasochistic *dukun* (shaman). In addition, these films contain promiscuous female characters: in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), Alisa as a Sundel Bolong ghost lures her male victims with her seductive body before she revenges her death; and in *Gairah Malam III* (1996), Darmi performs sexual rituals before she sucks the soul from the men. In summary, the female sexploitation and representation in the three films selected for this study cannot be disconnected from the political ideology that simultaneously shaped Indonesia as a nation and the representation of Indonesian women. Female sexploitation in Indonesian cinematic texts present women as seductive and as sex symbols, their bodies are exploited for commercial purposes (Imanjaya, 2010).

1.3 Research questions and rationale

1.3.1 Research questions

This thesis explores the political and economic drivers, across the three selected historical periods, of female sexploitation apparent in Indonesian horror films. The issue revolves around the extent to which such representations of women are due to the promotion of the ideology of *ibuisism* or the commercial logic of luring viewers for maximum profit.

Having considered the political contexts within which Indonesian films have been made, I use two primary research questions to guide this study:

1. How is female sexploitation portrayed in Indonesian horror films?
2. How are female characters in Indonesian horror films represented over the New Order, the Transition and the Post-New Order time frame?

The two questions function as guidelines in exploring the research topic, which is complemented with a review of the relevant literature to supplement the critical analysis of female sexploitation and representation and discussion how issues around sexualities (prostitution, sexual violence and abortion) are presented in the thesis' chosen films.

1.3.2 Rationale

A core issue of this thesis is about the female body which remains the focus of feminist discussion of film because its representation in three Indonesian horror films is perceived as degrading to women. This is of specific interest in terms of the cultural context of the thesis given that the female body is often the territory in which Indonesian morality is discussed (Suryakusuma, 2004). Female bodies are portrayed as sexual objects in many Indonesian horror films, which is a matter of concern from feminist perspectives. Arising from that concern, the aim of this thesis is to shed light on female sexploitation and representation through analysing the female lead characters in the selected films: Alisa in *Sundel Bolong* (1981); Darmi in *Gairah Malam III* (1996); and Tiara in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009). The analysis is contextualised by considering Indonesia's political and economic context during the New Order, the Transition, and the Post-New Order period. Culturally, the Indonesian horror genre was chosen for this thesis because this genre is popular among Indonesian viewers who still believe in supernatural phenomena (van Heeren, 2012).

Preliminary research showed that Indonesian horror films received some academic attention pertaining to the Islamic religion (van Heeren, 2007; 2012) and to historical trauma from the past (Barker, 2013; Sutandio, 2014), while female sexploitation in Indonesian horror films had not been researched in great depth. However, Sophie Siddique's *Haunting visions of the Sundel Bolong* (2002) addresses the notion of *ibuism*, as does the subsequent work of Julia Suryakusuma (2011). Both authors provide material which can contribute to answering the second research question about female character representations in *Sundel Bolong* (1981). Adding to Siddique's (2002) findings are more recent studies. Maren Wilger's (2016) '*Sundel Bolong*' as a mode of femininity: Analysis of popular ghost movies in Indonesia discussed the socio-religious aspects of the *Sundel Bolong* (2002) femininity, which embodies different forms of femininity. She explained it is a "model that does not allow a freely acting woman and wants to tame her in accordance with the New Order; a model of femininity that gives space for the possibility of a transgressive female potential; and finally, femininity according to pious Muslim notions" (Wilger, 2016, p. 188). In addition, Anton Sutandio's (2015) analysis of *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) employed Judith's Butler's gender performativity theory to address representations

of sexuality. Kuku Karnanta (2015) used A.J. Greimas' narrative structure to identify the stereotyping of women in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009). While these studies offer insights into Indonesian horror films, especially into *Sundel Bolong* (1981) and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009), there remains a lack of attention paid to *Gairah Malam III* (1996) and female sexploitation. Female sexploitation, in the three Indonesian horror films chosen for this thesis, refers to the portrayal of female characters as seductive and as sex symbols for commercial and for political ideology purposes, which ignited my interest in filling the gap with a further study on Indonesian horror films.

This research therefore focuses on the connection between the three Indonesian horror films - *Sundel Bolong* (1981), *Gairah Malam III* (1996) and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) - and how they both reflect and shape Indonesian political ideology. Indonesian society adheres to a patriarchal culture that cannot be separated from the Islamic religious teachings that seek to establish the difference between the significance, position and role of women and men, both in the public and private spheres (Murtiningsih & Advenita, 2017). The Islamic influence on Indonesian patriarchal culture is significant because Islam believes in men's leadership over and above women; a man directs and makes every decision in the family (Salim, Nurdin, Sekarnigrum & Prengki, 2017). Many Indonesian Muslims only value women based on their function as a good wife and mother (Arimbi, 2009; Suryakusuma, 2011). Thus, the Indonesian horror films have a significant impact on shaping Indonesian society and the way people perceive 'good' and 'bad' women. Films are produced as entertainment for all social classes, and they permeate sociocultural lives because films are "one of the most influential forces of our lives" (Corrigan & White, 2009, p. 9). Indonesian horror films are an important means of entertainment and gender representation that are accessible for many Indonesians (Hobart, 2006). They are used to shape the society's perception of the ideal womanhood. Understanding the three Indonesian horror films - *Sundel Bolong* (1981), *Gairah Malam III* (1996) and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) - through the representation of the main female characters helps to develop a profound understanding of the Indonesian situation around a major issue for women, which is that of female sexploitation.

Because this study proposes a link between films and their wider context, each political time period is matched with a key film:

- The New Order period – *Sundel Bolong* (1981)
- The Transition period – *Gairah Malam III* (1996)
- The Post-New Order period – *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009)

It is proposed that each of the films represents its matched political period, making each politically significant in influencing and being influenced by the ideological messages of the time. The main female character in each of the three films is explored to underline the female exploitation and representation that has evolved over time. Together, these characters provide an interesting and varied demonstration of the Indonesian notion of *ibuism* (Suryakusuma, 2011). For instance, in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) and *Gairah Malam III* (1996), the notion of *ibuism* is enforced to the extent that the female lead characters who do not adhere to it are severely punished through death. However, in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009), the notion of *ibuism* only appears as a shadow, which the female protagonist, Tiara, does not follow yet she is not punished and is allowed to live. The notion of *ibuism* (Suryakusuma, 2011) is juxtaposed with *monstrous feminine* (Creed, 1993) in such a way as to lead the analysis to a more in-depth exploration of the female exploitation and representation in Indonesian horror films.

The first case study to be explored is Alisa in *Sundel Bolong* (1981). She is a female ghost character, who, after being attacked and killed, takes revenge on her attackers by seducing her victims before killing them. Her course of revenge is later stopped by the intervention of a male religious leader. The second case study is Darmi, the main antagonist character in *Gairah Malam III* (1996), who is presented as a sexually insatiable witch. She sacrifices males' souls in order to keep her everlasting beauty, and she is finally destroyed by the main male protagonist. The third case study is Tiara, the main female character, in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009), who sexualises her body in order to take revenge on the psychotic and sadomasochistic *dukun* (shaman) who killed her boyfriend.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is divided into six chapters, the first of which herein functioned as an introduction, discussing the context of Indonesian horror film production. Chapter 2 reviews existing academic material relating to this study, while chapter 3 formulates the research methodologies used within this study. Chapter 4 presents the analysis of the three Indonesian horror films and chapter 5 then discusses the relation of the three films regarding prostitution, abortion and sexual violence with the 'real' life in Indonesian society. Finally, chapter 6 delivers a conclusion to this study and offers suggestions for future research. There is an appendix defining specific terminology used in this thesis.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

This chapter examines previous studies that are relevant to an exploration of female sexploitation and representation in the selected Indonesian horror films: *Sundel Bolong* (*A Perforated Prostitute Ghost*, 1981); *Gairah Malam III* (*Night Passion III*, 1996); and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (*Lost Paradise – Playmates in Hell*, 2009). Then, an evaluation is made of the following feminist theories: Simone de Beauvoir's woman as *other* (1953); Laura Mulvey's *visual pleasure* (1975); Julia Kristeva's notion of *abjection* (1982); Carol Clover's *final girl* (2015); Virginia Allen's *femme fatale* (1983); and Barbara Creed's *monstrous feminine* (1993). Together, these help to answer the two research questions: "How female sexploitation is portrayed in Indonesian horror films?" and "How are female characters in Indonesian horror films represented over the New Order, the Transition, and the Post-New Order time frame?" In this chapter, section 2.1 explores Western horror films and Indonesian horror films, while section 2.2 explores the area of sexual politics in Indonesia in relation to sexuality and censorship and the notion of *ibuism* from Suryakusuma (2011) in Indonesian horror films. Section 2.3 introduces six feminist theories: two main theories - Mulvey's *visual pleasure* (1975) and Creed's *monstrous feminine* (1993); and four secondary theories - de Beauvoir's woman as *other* (1953), Kristeva's *abjection* (1982), Clover's *final girl* (2015) and Allen's *femme fatale* (1983). Together, these connect directly with, and are used to analyse female sexploitation and female representation in the three Indonesian horror films, *Sundel Bolong* (1981), *Gairah Malam III* (1996), and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009). Finally, section 2.4 provides an assessment of the literature used to support this thesis' analysis.

2.1 Western horror films and Indonesian horror films

The Western horror genre started with the early cinema period between 1890 and 1910 (Abel, 2004; Hansen, 1993; Nour, 2018), beginning with the first Western horror film *le Manoir du diable* (*The House of the Devil*, 1896) directed by Georges Méliès from France. This was followed by *Nosferatu* (1922) directed by F. W. Murnau from Germany. *Nosferatu* was the first film to contain the vampire figure in the horror genre (Silver & Ursini, 1997). Then other immortal figures followed such as vampires, mummies, Dracula and

werewolves, which have since adorned the horror genre throughout the ages. The horror genre is wide-ranging, covering many sub-genres such as psychological horror, slasher horror and supernatural horror. This genre has developed over time to display many different types of monsters. In this thesis, *Sundel Bolong* (1981) and *Gairah Malam III* (1996) are supernatural horror and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) is slasher horror.

In contrast to the history of the Western horror films, the first Indonesian horror film titled *Tengkorak Hidoep* (*The Living Skull*, 1941), which is a horror of the demonic type (a sub-genre discussed in section 2.2.1.2). In Indonesian horror films, the monsters are categorised under the headings of ghosts (*hantu*) or spirits (*arwah*), and these are based on Indonesian traditional beliefs. Supernatural beings and myths are taken seriously in Indonesian society because ghosts and supernatural experiences are considered part of everyday life (Allerton, 2009). According to van Heeren (2007), “Indonesian cultural commentators have tried to explain the appeal of horror films by stating that the genre is closely related to Indonesian society and Eastern culture, which, they suppose, is synonymous with mystics and supernatural things” (pp. 212-213). Thus, the Indonesian horror stories form a specific Indonesian cultural asset (van Heeren, 2012). Indonesian culture cannot be separated from its mystical and supernatural beings (Van der Kroef, 1965) and prefers demonic horror. The three films analysed in this thesis, *Sundel Bolong* (1981), *Gairah Malam III* (1996) and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) contain mystical and supernatural elements.

More than half of Indonesian Muslim society still believe in supernatural beings (Pew Research Center, 2012). For that reason, many Indonesian horror films insert supernatural elements; in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), Sundel Bolong can appear before any humans, especially before her rapists because she wants to revenge her death. The film indicates Sundel Bolong can be turned back into a human being when a nail is thrust into her head. Wilger (2016, p. 101) adds:

cerita hantu [Indonesian ghost stories] contain the idea that those beings can be tamed and transformed back into a living and human form again. Indeed, *hantu* Sundelbolong can be transformed back into a human when a knife is driven through her neck. It seems like *hantu* have greater physical potency and [a]ffect the living more than Western spirits, the undead or vampires do.

Hantu can, for example, steal infants, be created of by *ilmu hitam* (black magic) and may be living as normal humans by day and appear as *hantu* by night.

This ability to transform from a supernatural being back to a human is a unique feature of the Indonesian ghost when contrasted with the presentation of Western ghosts in cinema.

There is a very strong connection between the cinematic ghosts in Indonesian horror and cultural references. For example, Indonesian ghost characters are influenced by their direct connection with traditional and local beliefs, which in turn are influenced by animistic, Hindu-Buddhist and Islamic beliefs (Hanan, 2017). For instance, in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), the female ghost also appears as a shrouded ghost, which indicates she is a Muslim ghost. A shroud is a prescribed length of white cloth used in Muslim burials to wrap a dead body; it is tied under the feet, around the neck and over the head (Bane, 2016). This portrayal of Indonesian ghosts wearing white clothes corresponds with the Indonesian viewers' well-established imagination of such ghosts.

As the growth of Western horror films increased from the early cinema in 1890 to the present day (Abel, 2004; Hansen, 1993; Nour, 2018), so did academic interest in the subject matter; there are many scholars, such as Andrew Tudor (1997), Charles Derry (2009) and Steve Jones (2018), who have studied Western horror films over a substantial period of time. They have discussed the many and far-ranging areas of the horror genre. Academics discuss many areas in horror such as the type of horror films (Derry, 2009) and the appeal of horror films (Tudor, 1997; Jones, 2018). In addition, Western horror films suggest something about gender; two major areas of concern are gender representation in slasher horror films (Clover 2015; Trencansky, 2001; Weaver III, 1991; Welsh, 2010) and female monstrosity in horror films (Berenstein, 1990; Briefel, 2005; Creed, 1993; 2002; Harrington, 2017; Iftene, 2016; Tharp, 1991; Tortolani, 2015). There are very interesting things happening with gender in horror, not least in terms of women being allowed to have more agency than they would normally have, often wielding power or surviving against the odds (Clover, 2015). By contrast, this area of film studies has been under-researched in Indonesia. In contrast to Western academic concerns, Indonesian horror films have generally been

under-represented and under-theorised in academic scholarship so there is a large academic gap in relation to gender representation in Indonesian horror films.

This dearth of scholarship on the Indonesian horror film this thesis aims to redress. Of the Indonesian horror areas that are covered, these are about: the Indonesian horror genre in general (van Heeren, 2007; Barker, 2013; Panuju, 2019); the Indonesia slasher horror genre, in particular *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) (Karnanta 2015; Sutandio 2015); and a female ghost, Sundel Bolong, in the Indonesian horror genre (Siddique, 2002; Wilger, 2016; Zulhamsyah & Degaf, 2017). The research on the Sundel Bolong ghost in relation to this thesis has been discussed by Siddique (2002) and Wilger (2016). Siddique (2002) argues:

Sundel Bolong ... negotiates between order and disorder and, as a fantasy of the feminine, offers the possibility of destabilising the essentialist construction of women by New Order gender and state ideologies that structure them primarily as wives and mothers (p. 24).

This thesis further discusses the state ideology of *ibuism*. *Ibuism* is a concept to describe being a good wife and mother (Suryakusuma, 2011), through the presentation of the Sundel Bolong ghost character as well. In addition, Wilger (2016) explores the feminine presentation of Sundel Bolong in Indonesian films from the New Order, Reformation era and Modern period. She argues that:

Each depiction of Sundel Bolong has a common core, but embodies different models of femininity: a model that does not allow a freely acting woman and wants to tame her in accordance with the New Order; a model of femininity that gives space for the possibility of a transgressive female potential; and finally, femininity according to pious Muslim notions (p. 118).

The same film *Sundel Bolong* (1981) is used in this thesis to examine female sexploitation and female character representation during the New Order period in relation to the state ideology of *ibuism* (Suryakusuma, 2011) and *monstrous feminine* (Creed, 1993) (see section 2.3.6).

In addition, there are several important studies on *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) conducted by Karnanta (2015) and Sutandio (2015). Karnanta (2015) utilised A. J. Greimas' narrative structure to analyse female and male characters' linguistic style in relation to patriarchal

ideology in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009). Karnanta (2015) argued the film continues to present female stereotyping and vocalise patriarchal ideology. The female characters in the film are designed in such a way as to invite death but are still sexy enough to be enjoyed by male viewers (Karnanta, 2015). Sutandio (2015) studied gender performativity in relation to body images and sexuality in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009). He adopted Judith Butler's (2009) theory of gender performativity to analyse the representation of sexuality. Sutandio argued the film challenges the 'fixed' New Order gender discourse and negotiates its way "against any notion of essential forms of dominant gender discourse" (Sutandio, 2015, p. 8). The same film *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) is used in this thesis to examine female exploitation and female character representations during the Post-New Order period, but through different theoretical concepts. Barbara Creed's (1993) *femme castratrice* and Laura Mulvey's (1975) *visual pleasure* are employed to analyse *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) in identifying the nature of female exploitation and female character representation. This research attempts to fill the gap that currently exists regarding female exploitation and representation in Indonesian horror films. Research drawing upon feminist theories will be discussed in section 2.3 of this chapter.

Horror stories in general aim to create tension in the form of fear and terror. Monstrous human characters, disasters and monsters or demons are often involved to create the horror (Briefel, 2005; Odell & LeBlanc, 2010). As a result, the horror genre includes a number of sub-genres or types that keep being repeated, such as horror of personality, horror of Armageddon and horror of the demonic (Derry, 2009).

2.2.1 The horror film types

Charles Derry (2009), in his book entitled *Dark dreams: A psychological history of the modern horror film*, divides horror films into three categories, namely: the horror of personality, horror of Armageddon, and horror of the demonic. However, only two types of horror that fit with Indonesian horror films are analysed in this thesis: the horror of personality and the horror of the demonic. I will explore these categories in the proceeding paragraphs.

2.2.1.1 Horror of personality in Western and Indonesian horror films

The horror of personality is a type of a horror film which does not draw upon mystical characters, such as the vampire, monster or demon, as a source of horror (Derry, 2009). This type of horror presents a human character which seems normal at the outset, but at the end he/she reveals his/her monstrous character (Derry, 2009). An example of this type of character is the Norman Bates character in *Psycho* (1960). This film presented a psychopathic character which was later modelled in other horror films. According to Derry (2009), the murder scene, which is full of blood splashes, later became an inspiration for the type of slasher horror film that exploits explicit violence scenes using sharp weapons such as knives, ice breakers, axes, chainsaws and harpoons. The development of this type of horror in Western countries can be seen in the films *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974) and *Halloween* (1978). Additionally, the Western trend of the horror of personality was followed by Indonesia in an early horror film entitled *Lisa* (1971). This type of horror was not as popular as the horror of the demonic in Indonesia during the 1980s and 1990s because there was no horror of personality type produced in Indonesia during this later period (Film Indonesia, 1980; 1990). In the late 2000s, the number of horror of personality type in Indonesia started to increase, for example: *Kala (Dead Time)*, (2007); *Rumah Dara (Macabre)*, (2009); and *Pintu Terlarang (The Forbidden Door)*, (2009). However, *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009), which is analysed in this thesis, is a hybrid of horror of personality and horror of the demonic. This hybridity indicates Indonesian viewers still prefer to see supernatural elements that are closely connected with their culture (Heider, 1991), and, at the same time, that Indonesian horror films, nevertheless, follow the trend of the Western horror of personality type because feminism is growing during the Post-New Order period.

2.2.1.2 Horror of the demonic in Western and Indonesian horror films

The horror of the demonic is a type of horror film which contains themes about demonic power such as the supernatural or evil spirits that dominate and threaten human life for revenge (Derry, 2009). Western examples include: *Don't Look Now* (1973), *Friday the 13th* (1980) and *Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984). The evil spirit can only be destroyed by a

spiritual or religious leader's appearance. Indonesian culture, in contrast to Western perspectives, adheres to the concept that ghosts and supernatural experiences are part of everyday life. People in Indonesia have a strong belief in ghosts and supernatural experiences (van Heeren, 2007). It is not surprising the Indonesian film industry adopts these local beliefs and brings everyday horror stories to Indonesian cinemas. The three horror films analysed in this thesis fit the criteria of the horror of the demonic. This type has become the most successful horror genre in Indonesia, based on viewer numbers indicating significant appeal. For instance, *Sundel Bolong* (1981) gained 301,280 viewers and was the third most watched film in Jakarta (Ardan, 1992; Film Indonesia, 1981); and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) gained 1,060,058 viewers (Film Indonesia, 2009).

2.2.2 The appeal of horror films

Horror appeals to viewers because it satisfies certain human desires. These desires include sexual excitement and sexual pleasure gained from watching horror films (Tudor, 1997). Sex and horror intertwine in the horror genre in a complex way. Jones (2018) stated sex and horror are composed in a way that distorts the boundaries between disgust and desire. Horror films can cause disgust for the horrific portrayal of a murder, and the desire for the sexualised images of female objectification. Jones (2018) further explained the combination of sex-horror in the film is perfect as a source of pleasure, entertainment and fascination (Jones, 2018). Horror films can give *visual pleasure* from the sex scenes and/or the portrayal of sexualised females' bodies. Horror films can entertain viewers in a way that they feel they are experiencing something they would not otherwise experience in real life. At the same time, horror films fascinate viewers from their almost limitless themes that can be covered by the horror narrative because unimaginable things can happen in horror films. Jones' (2018) statement that horror distorts the line between disgust and desire is supported fully by the three Indonesian horror films chosen. In all the three films, there is desire evident during the sex scenes and, almost simultaneously, these scenes are combined with those of murder. This juxtaposition of desire followed by murder prompts disgust.

Furthermore, Jones (2008) argued horror scares, but sex arouses. In Indonesian horror films, scenes of men's castration and murder are depicted as sensual and erotic moments,

and female characters are more sexualised than male characters. This mix simultaneously scares and arouses viewers. In the films of the thesis' archive, heterosexual male viewers get voyeuristic sexual pleasure (Mulvey, 1975) from watching the monstrous woman luring and offering sexual satisfaction to their male victims. The monstrous woman "arouses fear of castration and death while simultaneously playing on a masochistic desire for death, [sexual] pleasure, and oblivion" (Creed, 1993, p. 130). In all three films, the main female characters get sexual satisfaction from killing their victims, actions that link closely to Creed's idea of the *monstrous feminine* (1993).

Sex and horror intersect with each other because they induce some of the same extraordinary emotions and experiences (Jones, 2018), and when combined make for a heady mix for the audience. Sex-horror films negotiate the complex relation of pain and pleasure, which are generated from the fear of death facing the unknown (Jones, 2018). In the three Indonesian horror films, the sex scenes are seen just before the victims are suddenly killed. The moral message from these films is that promiscuous women will face negative consequences, including their demise, which is part of sexual politics in Indonesia.

2.2 Sexual politics

In order to examine the context of Indonesian horror films, it is useful to compare the term 'sexual politics' in Western countries and in Indonesia. *Sexual politics* by Kate Millet (1970) is regarded as a pivotal text for 1970s second-wave feminism. Millet (1970) initiated her analysis by arguing the sexualisation of power is the basis of oppression so the relationship between men and women is political and defined by the domination of men over women. She wrote "unless we eliminate the most pernicious of our systems of oppression, unless we go to the very centre of the sexual politic[s] and its sick delirium of power and violence, all our efforts at liberation will only land us again in the same primordial stews" (p. 22). The term 'sexual politics' in the study of Indonesian politics was first explored by Saskia Wieringa (2002) in her book, *Sexual Politics in Indonesia*. She argued sexual politics is a concept that links sexuality to power-structured relationships and, as such, involves control techniques that are designed to maintain power. One of the control techniques includes limitations on female's political sphere participation by domesticating Indonesian women. Sexual politics

can be seen clearly in two of the chosen Indonesian horror films: the lead female character in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) and in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) are banished by patriarchal figures.

Wieringa (2002) argued during the New Order period, patriarchal society confined women to the domestic spheres and discouraged them from participating in politics. Patriarchal society limited women to the domestic spheres by promoting *ibuism* (Suryakusuma, 2011), the concept of a woman being a good wife and mother for her family (Suryakusuma, 2011). Thus, women's political power was taken away by Indonesian patriarchal society through the domestication of women. In addition, the New Order regime discouraged women from participating in political organisations by spreading propaganda. The latter was about Indonesian Women's Movement political party members (*Gerakan Wanita Indonesia*, hereafter *Gerwani*), who were said to support the Indonesian Communist Party (*Partai Komunis Indonesia*, hereafter *PKI*), perform erotic dances and to have copulated with seven Indonesian military generals before murdering them (Anderson, 1987; Wieringa, 2002; Campbell, 2007). The rumour was circulated in the media and was intended to satisfy the conscience of many a conservative Javanese and Islamic male (Sen, 2006). The news had a huge impact because many Indonesian Muslims condemn free sexuality because it goes against Islamic teaching.

Furthermore, the so-called 'murder' of 'seven Indonesian military generals' led to the 1965-1966 massacres that killed 500,000 suspected communists (Anderson, 2001; Cribb, 2001; Henschke, 2017; Robinson, 2018). Afraid of being accused of supporting the *PKI* and becoming a target to be killed, many women withdrew from the political group, *Gerwani* (Locher-Scholten, 2000). The success of the slander campaign against *Gerwani* lay in the careful manipulation of the shared religious and cultural principles of Indonesians upon which Suharto made his way to the presidency (Wieringa, 2003). The New Order regime legitimised its power using sexual politics in the form of spreading despicable rumours of *Gerwani* members' sexual promiscuousness (Wieringa, 2002). It was Suharto's propaganda to defame the women's political party and communism by publishing false stories of women's promiscuity. Therefore, Suharto's power was established upon violence and upon sexual metaphors linking women's political activities with sexual pervasion and moral

depravity (Wieringa, 2002). Sexuality during the New Order period was seen as a threat because it was deemed as central to Communist ideology, which needed to be periodically targeted and brought under control (Lesmana, 1995).

During the New Order regime, the government controlled cultural expression, such as films, through surveillance and censorship in order to build a cohesive and stable nation. These types of control, involving the restriction of media freedom were backed by the Indonesian military in anticipation of another internal Communist threat, which might resurface again after the 1965 massacre (Hill, 2006). Government restrictions on media were put in place through censorship, and this took the form of inserting *ibuism* into cultural products. In other words, *ibuism* was promoted and enforced in Indonesian films, and thus functioned as an interventionary sexual politics to confine women (Suryakusuma, 2011).

2.2.1 Sexuality and censorship in Indonesian cinema

Krisna Sen (1995), in her book *Indonesian cinema: framing the New Order*, pointed out the censorship guideline states that films that emphasise sex and violence and/or associate with colonialism, imperialism, fascism, socialism and communism are all subjected to being censored or banned (Sen, 1995). Suharto made use of the media and censorship to implement his New Order ideology in the narration of the films. Thus, the majority of people were more likely to share the same values and beliefs, which was the means by which to achieve the goal of Suharto's New Order - maintaining national stability. The controlled state of New Order Indonesia is a good illustration of Benedict Anderson's concept of a socially constructed imagined community that is homogeneous and limited to maintain the national unity; here, the media plays a key role (Anderson, 1983). In this regard, Indonesian cinema had to go through three phases of censorship during the New Order Period: pre-production; post-production; and a tentative censorship.

The first phase of censorship was during the pre-production stage. It took the form of self-censorship by a film maker before the shooting took place. Indonesian films should not contain the four forbidden subjects of SARA (*Suku, Agama, Ras, and Antargolongan* - ethnic group, religion, race, and interclass relations) (Sen & Hill, 2000). Following self-censorship, the filmmakers had an obligation to send their scripts to the Indonesian Censorship Board

before they could start shooting (Sen & Hill, 2000). The second phase of censorship was of the regular kind that was carried out by the Indonesian Film Censorship Board after film production; that is, films are classified for adults (*Dewasa*) or teenagers (*Remaja*), and re-cut before being passed (Sen & Hill, 2000). 'Tentative censorship', the third phase meant that, even though a film had passed the Censorship Board, it could be pulled from distribution, and cancelled from being shown in theatres (Sen & Hill, 2000). For example, *Langitku Rumahku* (*My Sky My Home*, 1990) was controversial for depicting the rich and the poor, symbolising Suharto's family and Indonesian commoners. Suharto's cousin, Sudwikatmono, who owned the major films distribution chain in Indonesia, had the film withdrawn from the screens (Vickers, 2013).

Another extension of the level of censorship in Indonesia was with the application of a Code of Ethics. If filmmakers did not follow the Code of Ethics, it could result in the prevention of a film being released. A film had to be formulated in a certain way that, whatever the narrative paths may have been, the film ending had to be happy or positive to compensate for the pain and suffering endured (van Heeren, 2012). Further, the portrayal of ideal womanhood had to conform to *ibuism* (Suryakusuma, 2011). Subsequently, during the Post-New Order period, the Code of Ethics was abolished.

The censorship criteria for Indonesian film is based on the Indonesian government regulation number 7 year 1994 regarding the Film Censorship Board article 19 verse 3 (*Peraturan Pemerintah nomor 7 tahun 1994 tentang Lembaga Sensor Film pasal 19 ayat 3*).

This is set out as follows:

- a) The scene of a man or a woman in a state of naked impression, whether seen from the front, side or from behind; *adegan seorang pria atau wanita dalam keadaan atau mengesankan telanjang bulat, baik dilihat dari depan, samping, atau dari belakang*
- b) This includes close-ups of genitals, thighs, breasts or buttocks, both with [transparent] covers and without covers; *close up alat vital, paha, buah dada, atau pantat, baik dengan penutup maupun tanpa penutup*

c) A stimulating kissing scene, both by couples with opposite sex and same-sex full of lust; *adegan ciuman yang merangsang, baik oleh pasangan yang berlainan jenis maupun sesama jenis yang dilakukan dengan penuh birahi;*

d) Scenes, movements or sounds of intercourse that give the impression of being engaged, both by humans and by animals, in any manner, openly or covertly; *adegan, gerakan atau suara persenggamaan atau yang memberikan kesan persenggamaan, baik oleh manusia maupun oleh hewan, dalam sikap bagaimanapun, secara terang-terangan atau terselubung;*

e) Movement or act of masturbation, lesbian, gay or oral sex; *gerakan atau perbuatan onani, lesbian, homo atau oral sex.* (Peraturan Pemerintah tentang Lembaga Sensor Film, 1994, p. 9).

These criteria are inconsistently implemented in Indonesian horror films because Indonesia has experienced fluctuations in the number of local film productions, and this was of concern to government (Imanjaya, 2010). For instance, when there were not many films produced in the 1990s, some films had escaped censorship even though they contained the scenes that are forbidden by Indonesia's Censorship Board. This was the case for *Gairah Malam (Night Passion III, 1996)*, one of the three films analysed in this thesis.

2.2.1 State *ibuism* in Indonesia

State *ibuism* was supported during the New Order period to domesticate Indonesian women. Julia Suryakusuma (2011), in her book *State ibuism: The social construction of womanhood in New Order Indonesia*, explained *ibuism* is a social construction of Indonesian womanhood rooted in various pre-colonial, mainly Javanese aristocratic norms, which were modified to maintain patriarchal power. Women have *kodrat*, or divinely allocated roles to perform in a domestic area. A mother or *ibu* is regarded as the keeper of harmony. *Ibuism* refers to the ideological role of women, in which a woman's position is determined by the husband's position (Suryakusuma, 2011). Women are allowed to pursue their careers as long as this harmonises with fulfilment of their domestic duties as wives and mothers. Djajadiningrat-Nieuwenhuis (1992) defined *ibuism* as an ideology in which a mother looks after her family without demanding power and prestige in return. Indonesian women must behave according to their *kodrat*, with the socially attributed obligations such as *macak (make up)*, *masak (cook)* and *manak (to reproduce)* (Arimbi, 2010). Hence, *ibuism* views

bapak (fathers) and/or *suami* (husbands) as the main elements of society, while *ibu* (mothers) and/or *istri* (wives) act as minor elements who assist men by taking care of families. The biological and social attributes of women are used as justification for the gender politics that supports patriarchal power (Suryakusuma, 2004). Therefore, during the New Order, Indonesian women were required to be subordinate and supportive of men in building Indonesian national identity (Campbell, 2007).

Ibuism was used to shape a homogenised national identity of Indonesian women by domesticating them. Ideal womanhood based on *ibuism* focused on being a good wife and mother to take care of and serve her family (Suryakusuma, 2011). It was during the New Order period that state *ibuism* was strongly promoted through film. As evidenced by the portrayal of female characters, *Ibuism* was inserted in the horror films selected for this thesis. Ideal womanhood is characterised by submissiveness, passiveness and dependency in a domestic role only. *Ibuism* can be seen clearly in *Sundel Bolong* (1991) and *Gairah Malam III* (1996). Female characters who do not reflect *ibuism* are eliminated by the patriarchal society in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) and *Gairah Malam III* (1996). However, the trend changed during the Post-New Order period from a portrayal of more active and independent woman who can survive without a man's help, as demonstrated in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009). The female character no longer embodies the New Order ideal *ibuism* identity because Indonesian society during the Post-New Order period has become more democratic (Robinson, 2006) and feminism has started to grow (Derry, 2009). In this respect, it is important to study the role of Indonesian women using feminist theories to increase understanding of how women are portrayed in Indonesian horror films.

2.3 An introduction to feminist theories

Feminist film theories emerged and developed as reactions to the ways women were positioned within patriarchal society (Clover, 2015; Creed, 1993; de Beauvoir, 1953; Kristeva, 1982; Mulvey, 1975). Consequently, feminist film practices were part of a wider movement that looked at many aspects of life for women, including equal rights. Those feminists who highlighted the marginalised women in Western horror film practices were part of the overall trend within second-wave feminist theory that began in the USA in the

1960s. The second-wave feminists aimed to increase gender equality, equal rights and opportunities for women (Kuhn, 1994; McCabe, McCabe & Murray, 2004). Some of the feminist theorists and their key concepts referred to in this thesis are: Simone de Beauvoir's (1953) idea of woman as *other*; Laura Mulvey's (1975) *visual pleasure*; Julia Kristeva's (1982) *abjection*; Carol Clover's (2015) *final girl*; and Barbara Creed's (1993) *monstrous feminine*. These theories are useful to use with an examination of Indonesian horror film because much Indonesian horror contains women experiencing rape and attack and the films contain images of degradation.

2.3.1 Simone de Beauvoir (1953) – Woman as *other*

Simone de Beauvoir (1953), in her book *The second sex*, writes about how female is defined in relation to male. This was a seminal theory and is still pertinent for evaluating female (mis)representation in cinema and society. De Beauvoir (1953) argued that women take the position of passive *other* in society, in response to the masculine active power, because the patriarchal society constructs gender and binds women into positions of subordination and passivity. However, this began to change when the Western slasher horror films started to depict female heroes (see section 2.3.4 for a discussion of Clover's [1993] key text on the changing role of women in horror films).

In Indonesia, the depiction of women as *other* was a key trope presented in Indonesian movies, especially during the New Order Transition periods. However, the trend slowed during the Post-New Order period. In Indonesian horror films during the first two political periods, masculinity in cinema was depicted through rationality and superiority; for instance, they were portrayed as law enforcers (policemen, detectives), religious leaders or as good fathers. On the other hand, femininity was projected as his *other*, woman as irrational, inferior, monstrous and promiscuous. For example, both *Sundel Bolong* (1981) and *Gairah Malam III* (1996) depict a mad or monstrous woman and an obedient or submissive wife. During the New Order and Transition periods, the women in the films are defined in relation to men, based on the notion of *ibuism* (for being a good wife and mother) (Suryakusuma, 2011). However, this trend started to change during the Post-New Order

period; female characters began to be depicted as more independent and able to survive without a man's help.

2.3.2 Laura Mulvey (1975) – *Visual pleasure*

Some of the processes seen in Indonesian horror films explain the dynamics of the female role in the films explored in this thesis. Laura Mulvey (1975) in her essay, *Visual pleasure and narrative cinema*, introduced the concept that cinema positions the male viewers as agents of the look - the *male gaze* - and the females on the screen as the objects of the look through the process of fetishism and voyeurism. The *male gaze* concept informs the act of portraying females from a heterosexual masculine point of view that presents women as sex or fetish objects for male viewers (Mulvey, 1975). This not only empowers men but also objectifies women. Mulvey (1975) explained the *male gaze* is linked to the 'cinematic apparatus', which represents the power and pleasure that inevitably puts the female figures on display as the object of desire and puts the viewer in a masculine subject position. Woman as a whole (feelings, thoughts and characters) is not important other than her being objectified and framed by male desire, which is known as scopophilia, a pleasure involved in gazing sexually (Mulvey, 1975). Many popular Western films are shot for a male audience or point of view, but the entire audience is positioned in this way, such as in *Marnie* (1964), *Vertigo* (1958) and *Rear Window* (1954) (Mulvey, 1975). Similarly, in all three Indonesian horror films analysed in this thesis, the female characters are sexualised and presented as sexual objects. Male dominance over female sexuality is asserted in the cases of Alisa in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), Darmi in *Gairah Malam III* (1996), and Tiara in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009).

As Mulvey proposed, narrative cinema enforces the masculine gaze and men as the active gazer on all of the cinema viewers. "Traditionally, the woman displayed has functioned on two levels: as erotic object for the characters within the screen story, and as erotic object for the spectator within the auditorium, with a shifting tension between the looks on either side of the screen" (Mulvey, 2009, p. 20). She further argued the *male gaze* generates a power imbalance, which reinforces the patriarchal status quo of continuing women's objectification and validating the way the patriarchal culture has designed the film form. It

is uncommon to see Indonesian men sexualised in the same way as Indonesian women; during female sexploitation scenes in Indonesian horror films, the women are portrayed as promiscuous, seductive and more sexualised than the men, who often are almost out of the camera shot. It is the women who are acted upon, only to return after their deaths to achieve some kind of revenge. In other words, the “man controls the film fantasy and also emerges as the representative of power in a further sense: as the bearer of the look of the spectator, transferring it behind the screen to neutralise the extra diegetic tendencies represented by woman as spectacle” (Mulvey, 2009, p. 20). Mulvey’s critique of the way in which females have been portrayed in patriarchal Hollywood cinema is useful in explaining Indonesian patriarchal structures and the standard horror film form.

2.3.3 Julia Kristeva (1982) – *Abjection*

Julia Kristeva (1982), in *Powers of horror: An essay on abjection*, explored the notion of the *abject*, which is a concept that explores the concept of corporeal reality, that is, the breakdown in the difference between what is *other* and what is *self*; the *abject* does not recognise rules, positions and borders. According to Kristeva (1982), the *abject* is also a human reaction of horror because of the disruption in meaning. For instance

food loathing is perhaps the most elementary and most archaic form of abjection ... experience a gagging sensation and, still farther down, spasms in stomach, the belly; and all the organs shrivel up the body, provoke tears and bile, increase heartbeat, cause forehead and hands to perspire (Kristeva, 1982, p. 2).

She further argued the *abject* causes the distinctive loss between *self* and *other* or between subject and object. The *abject* includes physical waste such as urine, blood, pus and cadavers, which can disturb the symbolic order (Kristeva, 1982; Creed, 1993). The symbolic order was introduced by Jacques Lacan and refers to a universal structure that encompasses human existence, shapes human identities and involves ideologies (Evans, 2006; Grosz, 2002). In the context of this study, the symbolic order is the Indonesian patriarchal structure such as laws and patriarchal society’s social norms.

Many Indonesian horror films involve the *abject*, which can cause both disgust and fascination. For instance, ghosts, corpses and blood, as part of *abject*, can cause viewers to

feel disgusted. On the other hand, there is a fascination with human bodies in the three selected horror films. Human bodies are the source of bodily fluids that can be disgusting (*abject*) and, since sex that fascinates commonly entails the exchange of bodily fluids, it can incite fears about interpersonal contamination and pathogenic pollution (Jones, 2018). Therefore, the theory of the *abject*, as explored by feminist theorists such as Kristeva (1982) and Creed (1993), is applicable to this study's film analysis. *Abjection* in Indonesian horror films can also be seen in female characters who transgress the boundaries, threatening the patriarchal symbolic order. For instance, in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) and *Gairah Malam III* (1996), the female characters are a ghost and a witch, who are thus *abject* women.

2.3.4 Carol J. Clover (2015) – *Final girl*

Carol J. Clover (2015) defined the *final girl* as a trope in a slasher horror subgenre; it refers to the last female survivor who finally slays the killer and remains alive to tell the story. Based on her observation, slasher horror films generally have a psychopathic killer or a monster in a dreadful place, where the prey is isolated, and the *final girl* defeats the monster at the end. Clover invented the term *final girl* in her book *Men, women, and chainsaws: Gender in the modern horror film*, which was first published in 1992. Clover (2015) suggested that the *final girl* is phallicised by using sharp phallic objects and by having masculine characteristics as she actively looks for the psychopathic killer in order to combat him. She is depicted as a powerful character who can survive by her ability to adapt and negotiate change (Clover, 2015). Clover's ideas suggest a unique position of women in horror, insofar as women have come to occupy a far more centralized position than most Hollywood films had previously permitted. Prior to the 1980s and 1990s, slasher films positioned women as submissive and not particularly active. Even if the *final girl* kills the monster or attacker, she is saved at the last minute by someone else, such as a male police officer (Clover, 2015). Furthermore, that the *final girl* survived was presented as owing to her moral superiority. She is the character in the horror film which is upright in some way, refusing sex or drugs or other bad behaviour exhibited by her friends. Clover's (2015) theory also offered a unique view of the audience. She suggested the audience identification with the lead female character is fluid and unstable across gender lines in the slasher film. The placement of the female in this role means the female experiences *abject* terror along with

the audiences. Some critics have suggested, however, the *final girl* is not so progressive because they tend not to survive in sequels and/or are frequently hospitalised in the sequel (Williams, 1996). The *final girl* shares masculine traits due to being given a boyish name, which suggests that they are not feminine figures (Clover, 2015), as in the following example films: Laurie Strode from *Halloween* (1978); Vanita “Stretch” Brock from *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre II* (1986); and Marti Gaines from *Hell Night* (1981). Clover (2015) explained that the *final girl* is a figurative male:

Abject terror may still be gendered feminine, but the willingness of one ... to represent the hero as an anatomical female ... suggest that at least one of the traditional marks of heroism, triumphant self-rescue, is no longer strictly gendered masculine (p. 60).

Clover (2015) pinpointed how both femininity and masculinity are sutured together in a character that is physically female. Her study was influenced by second-wave feminism, which emphasised equality and an androgynous worldview that woman and man are equal in terms of their ability to reason, pursue goals and prosper both at home and at work (Thornham, 2004). Clover’s term the *final girl* is used in this thesis to describe the female heroine in the Indonesian slasher horror film, *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) because she defeats a monster and survives at the finale of the film. However, Clover’s theory of the *final girl* being phallicised is criticised by Creed’s (1993) theory of *monstrous feminine*. Creed (1993) argued the *final girl* is not phallicised, but is actively threatening as she seeks out the male killer ready to castrate him as a *femme castratrice* (the latter terms is discussed in section 2.3.6).

2.3.5 Virginia Allen (1983) – *Femme fatale*

Virginia Allen’s *The femme fatale: Erotic icon* (1983) describes the *femme fatale* as “a woman who lures men into danger, destruction, even death by means of her overwhelming seductive charms” (Allen, 1983, p. 7). The *femme fatale* is a combination of sensuality and aggressiveness in a woman, whose characteristics are embodied in a sexy body, luscious lips and clothing that often reveals her legs, shoulders and cleavage (Mercure, 2010). Her outward appearance can attract and infatuate men, which usually leads to their own destruction; the ability to hypnotise her victims gives her power over men. Hence, based on

the works of Allen (1983) and Mercure (2010), the *femme fatale* is a mysterious beautiful woman who seduces and ensnares a man. She uses her quality of beauty, sexual allure and charm to drive men crazy. In Western horror films, famous examples of the lethal and tempting woman can be found in *Basic Instinct* (1992), *Jennifer's Body* (2009) and *All the Boys Love Mandy Lane* (2013). The *femme fatale* character is also present in Indonesian horror films and shares similarities with her counterpart in Western films. *Sundel Bolong* (1981) in particular, has a female character who is very seductive, at the same time as being highly dangerous.

2.3.6 Barbara Creed (1993) – *Monstrous feminine*

Barbara Creed (1993), in her book *The monstrous feminine*, examined horror film using feminist and psychoanalytic approaches. For the feminist approach, Creed (1993) drew upon Kristeva's (1982) notion of *abjection* to inform her study of the many forms of the *monstrous feminine*. Creed (1993) noted that, historically, purifying the *abject* was executed through religious rituals. The idea of the religious ritual is to confront the *abject* in order to banish it, at which point the system and order will finally be re-established. This use of religious rituals occurs in one of this study's selected films, *Sundel Bolong* (1981). The *abject* monster is banished through Islamic religious rituals by citing Koranic prayers led by a male Muslim leader, to safeguard the border between human and non-human (Creed, 1993). This suggests that if women deviate from the patriarchal constructed values, they will be eliminated by a patriarchal figure.

Creed (1993) pointed out that women are connected to the *monstrous* through the releasing of blood during menstruation and the process of giving birth. Here, she was highlighting how the *monstrous feminine* in Western horror films is mostly characterised in correlation to women's reproductive and mothering roles; similar to the ways in which patriarchal society constructs women's role and position (Creed, 1993). However, the *monstrous feminine* tries to break through the boundary, which positions women as threats to the patriarchal system order (Creed, 1993). In the same vein, many of the ghosts in Indonesian mythology, and they are associated with giving birth; one of them is the Sundel Bolong ghost. The film, *Sundel Bolong* (1981), fits Creed's description of the connection

made between female monstrosity and women giving birth; the Sundel Bolong ghost gives birth grotesquely through her back inside a grave. In addition, the antagonist female character in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) has her family happiness taken away when her son becomes mentally ill and because of her maternal nature, she takes her revenge. She is monstrous in proportion and relation to her mothering role.

Using the psychoanalytic approach, Creed (1993) drew upon Freud's (1955) theory of castration anxiety to argue that women are the castrators. Creed's (1993) focal point is the horror film's figuration of women is as the *monstrous feminine*. Creed explained why she uses the term *monstrous feminine* instead of female monster:

The reasons why the *monstrous feminine* horrifies her audience are quite different from the reasons why the male monster horrifies his audience. A new term is needed to specify these differences. As with all other stereotypes of the feminine, from virgin to whore, she is defined in terms of her sexuality. The phrase *monstrous feminine* emphasizes the importance of gender in the construction of her monstrosity (Creed, 1993, p. 3)

Creed (1993) argued that the *monstrous feminine* terrifies viewers because she possesses the threat to castrate men. Moreover, woman as castrator can take many forms. The three forms that are identified in the films for analysis in this thesis are: a *vagina dentata*; a *femme castratrice*; and a witch (Creed, 1993). More specifically, there is a *vagina dentata* and *femme castratrice* in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), a witch and *femme castratrice* appear in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) and a *femme castratrice* can be identified in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009). Each main female character in the three Indonesian horror films fits with Creed's (1993) *monstrous feminine* concept perfectly for each has the power to eliminate and castrate men.

Vagina Dentata

As mentioned in the previous section, Creed's (1993) *monstrous feminine* is also shaped by Freud's castration anxiety and the idea of the *vagina dentata*. The idea of male castration anxiety originated from Freud's conceptualisation of sexual difference on the basis that men's and women's genitalia are different. He argued women want the respect and power men have, which is referred to as 'penis-envy' (Freud, 1953; 2014). Freud related this to his

conceptualisation of women's vagina as Medusa, which is viewed as a horrid adaptation of *vagina dentata* (Creed, 1993). Medusa has snakes on her head with huge mouths and sharp teeth. According to legend, men who look upon the Medusa's head are immediately turned stiff or became stones, and this calls up women's sexual power over men (Creed, 1993). Freud deduced "the 'turning to stone' as a metaphor for having an erection" (Creed, 1993, p. 111). Thereafter, "it offers consolation to the spectator; he is still in the possession of a penis, and the stiffening reassures him of the fact" (Freud as cited in Creed, 1993, p. 111). Freud (1955) emphasised that although Medusa is disheartening and daunting, she serves as a reassurance that the male is in possession of his penis. Creed (1993) argued Freud's theory was created under patriarchal ideology, assuming femininity ought to be the opposite - lacking aggressiveness and monstrous behaviour.

At the same time, Creed (1993) challenged Freud's idea that a man is afraid of a woman because she is castrated, suggesting instead a man fears a woman because he might be castrated by her. She argued Medusa petrifies not because she mirrors the castrated females passively, but because she actively threatens to castrate men. The castration can be symbolic, such as the loss of mother's breasts which is experienced by both male and female children, or it can be applied to body dismemberment and/or genital castration (Creed, 1993). *Vagina dentata*, then, is "a trap, a black hole which threatens to swallow them [men's genitals] up and cut them to pieces" (Creed, 1993, p. 106).

The *vagina dentata* myth is found in many cultures across time and place (Gulzow & Mitchell, 1980; Otero, 1996). It can be traced back to a Greek mythological figure, a Scylla, who is a beautiful and appealing woman in her upper body, but her lower body is ringed with six snapping hellhounds (Hopman, 2013). In Aotearoa-New Zealand, the goddess of what she is called death in Māori mythology has sharp teeth of greenstone and obsidian in her vagina (Alpers, 1964; Higgins, 2011). In Western society, *vagina dentata* is represented, for example, in the fairy tale of *Sleeping Beauty*, with her impassable wall of deadly and dangerous thorns (Lederer, 1970). Another fairy tale, *Little Red Riding Hood*, also symbolises "*vagina dentata* with its reference to the red riding hood/clitoris and its emphasis on the devouring jaws of the wolf/grandmother" (Creed, 1993, p. 108). Lastly, Rawson (1977), in

his book *Erotic Art of the East*, discussed *vagina dentata* in relation to the belief that Chinese women's genitals "apart from offering pleasure, were also executioners of men" (p. 260).

The vagina dentata is portrayed in the Hollywood film, *Teeth* (2007), where a female highschool student literally has teeth inside her vagina. She leaves a trail of bloodied, penis-less men behind her following their awful attempts to have sex with her. *Teeth* (2007) depicts a woman who is monstrous - she literally castrates men. In terms of Indonesian horror films, *vagina dentata* is presents in *Sundel Bolong* (1981); Sundel Bolong represents the *vagina dentata* with the bloody hole in her back adorned with her ribs and maggots. She is aggressive and ready to castrate her male victims after luring them with a promise of sexual bliss. It is the mystical "*vagina dentata* which threatens to devour, to castrate via incorporation" (Creed, 1993, p. 57).

Femme Castratrice

In addition, Creed's (1993) theory of the castrating woman or *femme castratrice* indicates that females are strong enough to arouse fear amongst males. The depiction of *femme castratrice* is generally practiced in slasher horror films (Creed, 1993). Creed (1993) criticised Clover's (2015) *final girl* trope, through which the latter illustrated the *final girl's* castrating aspect in terms of phallicization. Creed (1993) argued a revenging female protagonist in a slasher horror film is not a phallic woman who is phallicised by wielding a phallic-like weapon, but the lethal *femme castratrice*, a powerful figure who incites fear of castration and death. Therefore, the male body carries the anxiety of castration, not the female body. The *femme castratrice* controls and manages her revenging gaze, and makes the male victim her prey; thus, the heroines in slasher horror films belong to this category (Creed, 1993). This can be seen in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009): the female main character is a lethal *femme castratrice* with a vengeful gaze, who makes a psychopathic and sadomasochistic *dukun* (shaman) her prey. Even though *femme castratrice* presents in each of the three Indonesian horror films, the threatening *femme castratrice* in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) constructs a more empowering image of a modern Indonesian woman who endures until the finale of the film. In contrast, the two main female characters in

Sundel Bolong (1981) and *Gairah Malam III* (1996), while also possessing features of the *femme castratrice*, meet their demise at the end of the films.

The notion of the castrating woman, *femme castratrice*, is sometimes muddled with the notion of the phallic woman in films. According to Laplanche and Pontalis (as cited in Creed, 1993), a phallic woman image has two forms: “the woman either has a phallus or phallic attribute or she has retained the male’s phallus inside herself” (p. 156). In *femme fatale* characterisation in Western film noir, for instance, the woman who possesses a pistol is considered to be a phallic woman by film theorists. Creed (1993) argued *femme fatale* is another representation of women’s sexuality in relation to a phallus, a phallicization or a Freudian phallic woman. She added the archetypes of castrating woman and phallic woman (*final girl* and *femme fatale*) are different. However, this thesis uses both *femme fatale* and *femme castratrice* for *Sundel Bolong* (1981) because the lead female character lures her victims at night, in a mysterious way via incorporation, and castrates her victims without a phallic-like weapon, which can be referred as *femme fatale-castratrice*

Witch

The portrayal of witches has a long history and is common in both Western and Indonesian horror films. Historically, women were associated with magical powers before men (wizards or male witches) because women have the mysterious ability to produce a new life (Campbell, 1968). Creed (1993) explained a woman’s curse, especially a mother’s curse, is considered more powerful than a man’s curse, because it can mean certain death. This is due to the association of women’s blood with supernatural (Creed, 1993). A curse of a woman who practices witchcraft is even more powerful than a regular woman. Thus, witches are feared because they possess terrifying magical powers that can castrate males.

Creed (1993) highlighted how there were many witches’ ‘crimes’ that were proposed as being of a carnal or sexual nature: causing the disappearance of a man’s penis or stealing a man’s penis. In short, witches’ ‘crimes’ were those that threatened males with castration. Furthermore, witches’ ‘confessions’ to irrational crimes, such as having sex with the devil and causing men’s penises to disappear, have supplemented the common myth about the monstrosity of female sexual desire (Creed, 1993). In 20th century Western horror films,

the representation of witches continued to highlight woman's sexual nature (Creed, 1993). Likewise, in Indonesian horror films, witchcraft that involves sexual intercourse both with the devil and with a human is common in the narratives. This is particularly so in *Gairah Malam III* (1996), wherein the female antagonist is portrayed as a witch who practices black magic to pursue her youthfulness. She is depicted as a sexually insatiable woman who always has sex with men before killing them in order to keep her magical power.

2.4 Conclusion

Female portrayals in popular media such as Indonesian horror films are still problematic given the fact Indonesian horror films present female exploitation and representation as shaped by patriarchal society in Indonesia. After reviewing the relevant academic literature related to this research topic, from horror film types and the appeal of horror, to sexual politics in Indonesia and feminists theories, an analysis of the thesis' selected films can be conducted. The analysis will explore women's portrayal in these films in relation to female exploitation and representation. It will do so in consideration of the broader context in which the films were made, noting changes in women's portrayal over time. Before moving on to the film analysis, it is necessary to outline the methods used in this thesis to generate the analysis.

Chapter 3 Methodology

This chapter details the research procedures used in this thesis to analyse *Sundel Bolong* (A Perforated Prostitute Ghost, 1981), *Gairah Malam III* (Night Passion III, 1996) and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (Lost Paradise – Playmates in Hell, 2009). Two research questions direct this thesis: “How is female sexploitation portrayed in Indonesian horror films?” and “How are female characters in Indonesian horror films represented over the New Order, the Transition and the Post-New Order time frame?” Answering these questions involves analysing female sexploitation and female representation in the three films using Mulvey’s (1975) *visual pleasure*, Creed’s (1993) *monstrous feminine* and other feminist theories. This thesis is underpinned by qualitative research methodology because the research is descriptive; that is, it seeks to answer questions which can help to describe the phenomena of female sexploitation and representation in Indonesian horror films. Furthermore, this research uses qualitative research methods, those tools which help generate a rich analysis of the three films.

This chapter is divided into six sections. Section 3.1 discusses the qualitative research methodology used in this thesis and justifies why it has been selected. Section 3.2 establishes the research method approaches: the case study and textual analysis. Section 3.3 delivers the feminist theoretical framework, which includes Mulvey’s (1975) male *visual pleasure* and Creed’s (1993) *monstrous feminine*. Section 3.4 describes the research design: the sample and the data collection method. Section 3.5 addresses the research limitations. Finally, section 3.6 summarises the research methodology used in this thesis.

3.1 Qualitative research methodology

The use of qualitative research as a form of methodology has become a key feature of the social sciences. It is a strategy, a plan of an action or research techniques recognised by social researchers that enable the analysis of the data (Bellamy, 2011; Cresswell & Poth, 2017). Qualitative methodology proposes that reality is subjective and constructed (Sarantakos, 2012) because people cannot know what is universally true or false, good or bad, right or wrong; people only know stories about truth, falsity, good, bad, right or wrong

(Galbin, 2014). When people interact in a social system over time, they create mental representations of each individual's actions, and meaning is embedded during the process; thus, reality is socially constructed (Andrews, 2012). Qualitative research uses inductive logic so the researcher can explore meanings and insights in a given situation (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Inductive logic begins with specific observations of 'the texts', in this case the three Indonesian horror filmic texts, to recognise the patterns of female sexploitation and representation to be analysed and to make conclusions (Thomas, 2006). Even though the inductive logic is not as robust as other analytical strategies, it can offer a simple and straightforward approach to derive the findings (Thomas, 2006). Consequently, an inductive approach is used in this thesis to examine how female sexploitation is depicted in Indonesian horror films, and how the female characters in Indonesian horror films are represented during the New Order, the Transition and the Post-New Order political periods.

Qualitative research focuses on words rather than numbers to interpret situations in order to make sense, and understand meanings of a social phenomenon (Ritchie, 2003). In comparison to quantitative methodology, qualitative methodology is considered more effective when investigating sociocultural phenomena such as gender roles (Ritchie, 2003; Punch, 2013). On the other hand, quantitative methodology is used to investigate phenomena through statistical techniques, which is not suitable for the nature of this thesis. Qualitative methodology is considered appropriate to investigate social phenomena such as female sexploitation and representation in the selected films: *Sundel Bolong* (1981), *Gairah Malam III* (1996) and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009). Qualitative methodology allows the researcher to unpack the social construction of gender (Marshall & Rossman, 2014) because it is specifically used to obtain culturally specific information, such as female sexploitation and representation in film (Ritchie, 2003). The women in the three Indonesian horror films are represented as sexploited, submissive subjects. In this sense, they reproduce the gender roles which are regulated by religion and sociocultural norms in Indonesia.

There are five main approaches within the umbrella of qualitative research methods, namely: case study, phenomenology, ethnography, narrative and grounded theory (Creswell & Poth, 2017).

3.2 Research methods

Research methods are the processes, techniques or tools that a researcher uses in a study (Weerakkody, 2008). “Methods refer to the various data collection and analysis techniques, practices and procedures used in research”; the methods are chosen based on what the study proposes to explore (Weerakkody, 2008, p. 9). As there are three Indonesian horror films to be examined, the technique utilised in this qualitative research is a case study approach.

3.2.1 Case study

A case study approach is widely used in social sciences research, such as in psychology and sociology, to build knowledge about social, political and cultural phenomena (Simons, 2009; Yin, 2017). The case study involves an in-depth and detailed examination of topics (Zainal, 2007); in this thesis, female sexploitation and representation of the three female lead characters in the selected films: Alisa in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), Darmi in *Gairah Malam III* (1996), and Tiara in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009). The objective here is to investigate the changing trend of female sexploitation and representation over three political periods, the New Order, the Transition and the Post-New Order periods.

A case study approach has many advantages. It can help to answer this study’s two research questions - “How is female sexploitation portrayed in Indonesian horror films?” and “How are female characters in Indonesian horror films represented over the New Order, the Transition and the Post-New Order time frame?” - by categorising information, and by identifying patterns and structuring data in a subsequent arrangement (Yin, 2017). The approach also can be advantageous in interpreting female sexploitation and representation in the three selected Indonesian horror films because it enables a deep and detailed analysis of filmic phenomena (Yin, 2017). A case study can offer solid understanding based on a detailed description of phenomena and the real-life context within which they occur (Yin, 2003; 2017). And this is precisely the aim of this thesis - to describe in detail how female

sexploitation and representation appear in the three Indonesian horror cinematic texts situated within their real-life Indonesian social context. Yin (2017) highlighted that a case study is suitable when the phenomena under research are not perceivable from the context or when the meanings are not explicitly stated. In terms of the three films selected, the female character representations are shaped by the Indonesia political ideology of *ibuisism*, which demands women remain in the domestic sphere to be a good wife and mother (Suryakusuma, 2011). Therefore, a case study is suitable for this thesis because the three Indonesian horror films to varying degrees insert the socio-cultural notion of *ibuisism* as part of Indonesia's sexual politics throughout the New Order, the Transition, and Post-New Order time frame.

A case study is categorised into three approaches: intrinsic, instrumental and collective (Simons, 2009). This thesis uses the instrumental and collective approaches. The instrumental case study is a study of a case - in this research, a female character representation in a filmic text - to support greater understanding of a specific issue and generate generalisations (Simons, 2009). It facilitates understanding of a film; in this study, it can provide insights into female sexploitation and representation in the selected Indonesian horror films. The collective case study enables research into multiple case studies (Yin, 2003). It is suitable for this thesis as there is more than one case (three Indonesian horror films). This approach relies on observing and analysing each case separately. In this study, each film is studied individually to uncover the visual components that align with feminist theories, such as the *monstrous feminine* theory as illustrated by Barbara Creed (1993) and *visual pleasure* by Laura Mulvey (1975). In this way, my analysis is able to compare the 'bad' and monstrous women in each film, who are usually associated as being hypersexual and promiscuous, to 'normal' women who are shaped in Indonesian society through the notion of *ibuisism* which confines women to their domestic roles (Suryakusuma, 2011).

3.2.2 Textual analysis

Textual analysis is committed to engaging with the politics of representation, that is the various ways in which specific meanings around gender, class and religion are constructed

(McKee, 2003). Textual analysis focuses on implicit cultural and ideological messages of the text, and examines the meanings, omissions and patterns in the text to develop a broader understanding of specific sociocultural, and political issues (Fairclough, 2003). Textual analysis is frequently used in film studies as a “*toolkit for examining the media*” (Bainbridge, 2011, p. 224). Textual analysis is suitable for analysing the three Indonesian horror films because, according to Bainbridge (2011), textual analysis is utilised to decode popular culture products through interpreting the ‘signs’ within the filmic text to understand how meanings are shaped by them. Furthermore, when conducting textual analysis, the researcher tries to “make an educated guess at some of the most likely interpretations that might be made of that text” (McKee, 2001, p. 140). It is utilised to “obtain a sense of the ways in which, in particular cultures at particular times, people make sense of the world around them” (McKee, 2003, p. 1).

Textual analysis in this thesis tries to unveil the implicit cultural meaning of the filmic texts that connect with the politics of representation in which specific meanings around gender are constructed in Indonesian horror films. Therefore, textual analysis enables an examination of female sexploitation and representation of three female lead characters in three Indonesian horror films - Alisa in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), Darmi in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) and Tiara in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) - over three significant political periods: the New Order, the Transition, and the Post-New Order periods to reveal how gender power imbalance is constructed. Textual analysis enables in-depth analysis of specific meanings around female sexploitation and representation in the selected films to expose the implicit cultural or ideological messages in terms of the notion of *ibuism* (Suryakusuma, 2011), inserted in the films to confine women in a domestic sphere. Thus, textual analysis can underline the changing trend of female sexploitation and representation in Indonesian horror films in relation to the political changes in Indonesia that structure viewers’ subjective social construction of gender roles, to see how gender power imbalance in Indonesian horror films reflect the reality of Indonesian society.

3.3 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework is a 'blueprint' or a guide for research (Grant & Osanloo, 2014), which is based on theories that reflect or relate to the study (Adom, Hussein & Agyem, 2018). A theoretical framework of feminist scholarship is devised, drawing mainly on Mulvey's (1975) *visual pleasure* and Creed's (1993) *monstrous feminine*, to analyse *Sundel Bolong* (1981), *Gairah Malam III* (1996), and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009). For instance, *visual pleasure* of the *male gaze* posits women as the objects of the look while the men are the bearer of the look (Mulvey, 1975). Mulvey's concept provides a theoretical heuristic to understand how the framing of female sexploitation functions in showing the gender power imbalance in the three Indonesian horror films. In addition, Creed's (1993) notion of the *monstrous feminine* is utilised to analyse the films' female character representations, which juxtapose a monstrous or 'bad' woman with an ideal womanhood based on the notion of *ibuisism*. The feminist theories and associated literature provide a foundation for the textual analysis, and are synthesised to enable the researcher to describe how female sexploitation and representation are portrayed and presented in the three Indonesian horror films.

3.4 Research Design

This section outlines how the research is conducted to examine the three Indonesian horror films selected for this thesis. The topics of interest for this thesis are female sexploitation and representation in Indonesian horror films. Gender roles are chosen in Indonesian horror films as the topic because gender power imbalance is depicted in many Indonesian horror films, and exemplified in the three films chosen for analysis over the New Order, the Transition and the Post-New Order political periods.

3.4.1 Sample

The three Indonesian horror films were chosen as sample based on its success in attracting viewers. They can be seen in Table 2 below:

Film	Indonesian Political Period	Year	Viewers
<i>Sundel Bolong</i>	New Order	1981	301,280
<i>Gairah Malam III</i>	Transition	1996	269,804
<i>Air Terjun Pengantin</i>	Post New Order	2009	1,060,058

Table 2. Data sample

Sundel Bolong (1981) was the third most watched film during 1981 (Ardan, 1992; Film Indonesia, 1981). As the title suggests, *Gairah Malam III* (1996) was the third in a successful trilogy. Its predecessors were *Gairah Malam I* (Night Passion I, 1993), which was the second most watched film in Jakarta, Indonesia with 269,804 viewers (Film Indonesia, 1993), and *Gairah Malam II* (Night Passion II, 1995) achieved similarly high viewer numbers. *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) was the sixth most watched film in 2009, but the first most watched for the Indonesian horror genre with 1,060,058 viewers (Film Indonesia, 2009). Therefore, the three films chosen met the first criterion of successfully attracting Indonesian viewers.

The challenge in discovering suitable samples is to obtain an adequate sample size while not being so large as to hinder the focus of the in-depth analyses (Ruane, 2015). The three films were chosen because they met the second criterion; each film represents one of the three significant political periods in Indonesia. *Sundel Bolong* (1981) was produced during the New Order period, *Gairah Malam III* (1996) was created during the Transition period, and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) was made during the Post-New Order period.

3.4.2 Data collection method

A qualitative research method with a descriptive research design is best suited to making sense of, and interpreting complex phenomena, such as the social construction of gender roles that is central to this. Since the two research questions for this thesis are concerned with female sexploitation and representation in three Indonesian horror films, this thesis relies on close observation of each of the films to gather data which can help uncover the visual components that present that female sexploitation and representation. The films were examined until the researcher became familiar with the content of the films to the extent that a comprehensive understanding of each film was gained. The scenes that contain female sexploitation which objectifies women for their sexual attractiveness (including but not limited to a sex scene) were selected from the beginning, the middle and the end of each film with a focus on the female lead characters - Alisa in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), Darmi in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) and Tiara in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009). The selected scenes exemplify female sexploitation and representation in Indonesia horror genre. The data from each of the three films were organised for the analysis and interpretation so as to describe how female sexploitation and representation are portrayed and represented.

3.5 Limitations

This thesis is limited to three specific Indonesian horror films: *Sundel Bolong* (1981), *Gairah Malam III* (1996) and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009). Consequently, the results of the research analysis cannot be generalised across other Indonesian film genres; they can only be generalised for the Indonesian horror film genre. The scope of the topic involved a focus on identifying female exploitation and representation with regard to three female lead characters: Alisa in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), Darmi in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) and Tiara in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009). This means the study is limited to: a) these three female characters; and b) one issue – that of gender - in Indonesia over three political periods (the New Order, the Transition and the Post-New Order). These research boundaries were due to the limited time and funding available to researcher. Some researchers might consider a sample size of three Indonesian horror films is not enough to provide accurate female sexploitation and representation data. Small sample size must be considered when

generalising the results (Ruane, 2015). However, this limitation does enable the researcher to delve deeper into the specifics of both the characters and the films, and within their broader social context of the three political periods, thus providing the kind of rich data for analysis that can contribute to this research field.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the qualitative research methodology used to analyse the three Indonesian horror films. The qualitative research methodologies that are employed in this thesis are a case study and textual analysis. The case study involves an in-depth and detailed examination of female sexploitation and representation of the three female lead characters in the three selected films. The case study is suitable for this thesis because it offers solid understanding based on a detailed description of how female sexploitation and representation appear in the three Indonesian horror cinematic texts situated within their real-life Indonesian social context over the New Order, the Transition, and the Post-New Order periods. The textual analysis focuses on implicit cultural and ideological messages of the three filmic texts, and examines the meanings, omissions and patterns in the texts to develop a broader understanding of specific sociocultural, and political issues in Indonesia. Textual analysis is suitable for analysing the three Indonesian horror films because it is utilised to decode the three films through interpreting the 'signs' within the filmic texts to understand how meanings are shaped by them. The theoretical framework of feminist theories, primarily Mulvey's (1975) *visual pleasure* and Creed's (1993) *monstrous feminine*, help to navigate this research into female sexploitation and female character representations from feminist perspectives.

Chapter 4 Analysis

This chapter provides an analysis of female sexploitation and representation of the three main female characters in three Indonesian horror films, *Sundel Bolong* (*A Perforated Prostitute Ghost*, 1981), *Gairah Malam III* (*Night Passion III*, 1996), and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (*Lost Paradise – Playmates in Hell*, 2009). Each was produced during one of the named three significant political periods in Indonesia. This chapter sets out to answer the two research questions: “How is female sexploitation portrayed in Indonesian horror films?” and “How are female characters in Indonesian horror films represented over the New Order, the Transition, and the Post-New Order time frame?” Female sexploitation in the thesis’ chosen films refers to the representation of female characters as seductive and as sex symbols, their bodies are exploited for the purpose of selling films. The films chosen for analysis in this study were made for commercial purposes for easy profit. Female sexploitation is mainly analysed by utilising Mulvey’s (1975) *visual pleasure* concept, which is the pleasure of looking at females as sexual objects on screen - their bodies are products and are fragmented by close-ups in a voyeuristic manner; females are the passive images and males are the bearer of the look (Mulvey, 1975). The female character representations are mainly analysed by using Creed’s (1993) theory of the *monstrous feminine* and Suryakusuma’s (2011) notion of *ibuism* so as to compare and contrast three monstrous women with the ideals of Indonesian womanhood, defined as being good wives and mothers. Other feminist theories will be used in conjunction with the main theories to reinforce the analysis. These are: how women are positioned as the *other* (de Beauvoir, 1953); *abjection* (Kristeva, 1982); *final girl* (Clover, 2015); and *femme fatale* (Allen, 1983). Women in the films are represented as *other*, valued less because their identities do not fit within ‘normal’ Indonesian society; for instance, Alisa as a prostitute in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) and Darmi as a single mother in *Gairah Malam III* (1996). Women are depicted in terms of *abjection*. For example, Alisa appears as a Sundel Bolong ghost with a grotesque hole in her back in *Sundel Bolong* (1981); Darmi is presented as a witch who does not age because she consumes men’s souls in *Gairah Malam* (*Night Passion III*, 1996); Tiara is depicted as a *final girl* in *Air Terjun*

Pengantin (2009) who survives and defeats a psychopathic *dukun* (shaman); and Alisa in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) is also portrayed as a *femme fatale* who appears mysteriously at night luring her former rapists into her charms before revenging her death.

Alisa in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) is depicted as a prostitute ghost who seduces and lures her male victims to have sexual intercourse. Alisa is associated with both *ibuism* and a monstrous character. She represents a good wife after her marriage to a man; however, she is transformed into a monstrous female ghost (*vagina dentata* and *femme castratrice*) after her death as a result of her gang rape and forced pregnancy. Darmi in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) is depicted as a promiscuous witch who bewitches her male victims for her sex rituals. She represents a monstrous woman (a witch), who is not only promiscuous but also revengeful. Darmi's characteristics stand in stark contrast to the notion of *ibuism*. Tiara in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) is portrayed as a sexy woman who is sexually objectified, but she makes use of her sexual attractiveness to get her boyfriend's attention and to distract a psychopathic *dukun* (shaman). She represents a monstrous woman (a *femme castratrice*) revenging the death of the boyfriend who was going to marry her. Tiara's characteristics of being independent, active and resourceful in order to get revenge are far away from the notion of *ibuism*.

Sundel Bolong (1981), the first of the three films, was produced during the New Order period, and has a central character who represents both two seemingly different aspects of Indonesian women: the notion of ideal Indonesian womanhood; and the *monstrous feminine*. *Gairah Malam III* (1996), the second film, was produced during the Transition period and has a female antagonist who is power-hungry, sexually insatiable, and a revengeful mother. These three aspects put her into the category of the *monstrous feminine* in the form of a witch. *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009), the third film, was created during the Post-New Order period. The film contains a heroic female character who overcomes her past trauma to take revenge on the psychotic and sadomasochistic shaman who killed her boyfriend. This is a portrayal of a woman that embodies the ideas of the *femme castratrice*, and *monstrous feminine*. These films of the thesis' archive highlight how female characters are exploited and represented as *monstrous* women in each film's diegesis, and who

adhere to a patriarchal culture that cannot be separated from Islamic religious teachings which support the difference between women's and men's roles, both in public and private spheres (Murtiningsih & Advenita, 2017).

4.1 *Sundel Bolong* (1981)

The Indonesian horror genre during the New Order period is famous for portraying supernatural beings and local beliefs (see Kristanto & Ardan, 2007). *Sundel Bolong* is based on traditional Indonesian beliefs, which are influenced by their direct connection with traditional and local beliefs, which, in turn, are influenced by Islamic beliefs (Hanan, 2017). "Hantu Sundelbolong can be transformed back into a human when a knife is driven through her neck", and can be living as a human and also appears as *hantu* (Wilger, 2016, p. 101). Sundel Bolong ghost in the film can shapeshift into a human form, usually a beautiful woman to lure her victims, and transform back into a ghost to kill them. Many Indonesian horror films portray urban legends and myths and *Sundel Bolong* (1981) is an Indonesian film that exemplifies this.

4.1.1 *Sundel Bolong* (1981) in context

Sundel Bolong (1981) is a rape-revenge horror film, which can be categorised as a horror of the demonic type because the film contains themes about demonic power - Sundel Bolong ghost threatens human life for revenge (Derry, 2009). The film was directed by Sisworo G. Putra, who was a well-known Indonesian horror film director during the 1980s (Sutandio, 2019). *Sundel Bolong* starred Suzanna van Osch, who also appeared in some other popular horror films, such as *Bangunnya Nyi Roro Kidul (The Awakening of Queen of the Southern Sea, 1985)* and *Ratu Buaya Putih (The White Crocodile Queen, 1988)*. She was internationally famous and known as the Indonesian cinema horror queen (Wilger, 2016). This actress started the trend of female sexploitation in Indonesian horror film in 1970 with *Bernapas dalam Lumpur (Breathing in the Mud, 1970)*, the first Indonesian film to accentuate depictions of sexuality such as rape, sex and dirty dialogues (Imanjaya, 2010; Kristanto & Ardan, 2007). Portrayals of female sexploitation in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) and the lingering gaze on female bodies serve not only to market the film, but also to gain profit while keeping the production costs low (Murtagh, 2011). Women in Indonesian horror films are expected

to be very erotic so that they are able to attract viewers, who are, after all, the buyers (Kuhn, 2013). Female sexploitation depiction is degrading the female characters by portraying women as sexual objects.

Sundel Bolong is a female ghost which originated from the Javanese oral tradition that is also well-known across Indonesia (Siddique, 2002). In the Javanese language, “*Sundel*” means a prostitute, and “*Bolong*” means a hole. According to Wilger (2016, p103-4), “Sundel Bolong is always female; has long black hair; a grotesque hole through her upper body; had an ‘improper life’, was raped, and became pregnant; and is driven by vengeance to kill the men who abused her”. Sundel Bolong’s characterisation is problematic; she is an ex-prostitute but this does not mean that she deserves to be gang raped. Siddique (2002) explained how a woman is transformed into a Sundel Bolong when she commits suicide brought on by her shame at being raped. Therefore, Sundel Bolong is dangerous, especially for men who cannot control their sex-drive and for her former rapists who assaulted her (Wikanjati, 2010). Sundel Bolong’s narrative becomes problematic because her killings of her male victims do not promote the justice she seeks. Violence against violence makes her indifferent to the men who gang raped her, in which the circle of violence continues.

The Sundel Bolong ghost is a popular theme in Indonesian horror films; for example, it appears in: *Legenda Sundel Bolong (The Legend of Sundel Bolong, 2007)*; *Urban Legend Sundel Bolong (Sundel Bolong Urban Legend, 2009)*; *Kafan Sundel Bolong (Sundel Bolong’s Shroud, 2012)*; and *Suzzana: Bernapas dalam Kubur (Suzzana: Buried Alive, 2018)*. The recurring theme of the Sundel Bolong narrative represents the popularity of the Sundel Bolong myth among Indonesian society, that represents real issues about the place of women in society in general and how women suffer and experience constricting moral values in Indonesia society. One of the issues that is generated from the interaction between the representations of women on screen is sexual objectification. In this film, Sundel Bolong is treated purely as a sexual object for men’s sexual satisfaction. The male director during the New Order films presented women “to be seen and so that the film is seen (sold)” (Sen, 1995, p. 134). Thus, the next subtopic discusses female sexploitation in this film. It should be clear that female sexploitation has a particularly local meaning that

can be perplexing to those unaccustomed to Indonesian culture and filmic output. Thus, while female sexploitation is presented through characters' revealing and sexy costumes, and bedroom scenes are often sexualised and suggestive, there is no gratuitous nudity on display.

4.1.2 *Sundel Bolong* (1981) Narrative

Alisa, who is an ex-prostitute, marries Hendarto, a ship captain, who was one of her clients when she was a prostitute. The marriage elevates her status to a more respectable woman. When Hendarto has to leave for nine months on a ship, Alisa is confronted by her former pimp. The pimp tries to convince her to return to her former profession as a prostitute while her husband is away. When Alisa refuses, her former pimp commands her workers to teach her a 'lesson'. She is kidnapped and gang raped. Alisa reports the rape incident, and the case is taken to court. However, the court finds the pimp and her helpers are not guilty after Alisa's credibility is questioned for being an ex-prostitute.

After finding out that she is pregnant resulting from the rape, Alisa asks a doctor to abort her baby, but is refused and told she is a cruel mother for wanting to abort an innocent baby. The doctor lectures Alisa about the duties of a good mother. He judges Alisa's gang rape and her desire to abort the unborn child as major sins. Alisa feels unable to be an ideal wife for Hendarto and commits suicide. The night after her funeral, she rises from the grave as a Sundel Bolong ghost, with a grotesque and bloody hole in her back. Her death is the beginning of her revenge.

4.1.3 Female sexploitation in *Sundel Bolong* (1981)

Female sexploitation is evident in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), which can be seen from Alisa's portrayal as a seductive sex symbol, her body is exploited to sell the film for commercial purposes for easy profit (Imanjaya, 2010). For the depiction of gratuitous nudity, female sexploitation in Indonesia is quite different from Western female sexploitation. Sexploitation in Western films is characterised by a low budget film, independently produced, features gratuitous nudity and non-explicit sex situations, also known as soft core pornography (Schaefer, 1999). On the other hand, Indonesian culture is mainly influenced by Islamic teaching with its Muslim majority population, which in turn also affects

Indonesian politics regarding film censorship. Thus, female sexploitation in Indonesia is less explicit compared to Western films. The sexploitation of female characters in this film is seen with the focus of the camera's attention on women's hips, buttocks, breasts and sensualised lips. The camera lingers on the woman's body parts to satisfy males' scopophilia, a pleasure to look at the sexualised images of women (Mulvey, 1975). In other words, women serve as the main erotic object in the film (Hollows, 2000). Women's bodies are objectified, and represented as the product of men's projections of male scopophilia. In contrast, the bodies of male characters are not sexualised in the same way as those of the female characters. In this film, women are sexploited and seen as commodities through their portrayal as prostitutes. Female sexploitation can be seen throughout the film scenes focusing on Alisa as the main female character.

The first example of female sexploitation is a gang rape scene, which emphasises the Indonesian patriarchal power over a woman. This scene is exploitative toward the female character because the camera focuses more on Alisa's objectified and sexualised body during the rape than on the five men who gang rape her. The female main protagonist, Alisa, is presented as penetrable, vulnerable and hopeless during the rape scene. Four men carry her and put her on a table in an old barn. Alisa's pained expression is depicted in a manner that sexualises her vulnerability. Her hair is messy, and both her hands and feet are tied to a table. Alisa's legs are forced open. A diegetic sound of Alisa's ripped cloth implies that she is stripped by one of the rapists. A wide angle shot focuses on Alisa's bare legs, which makes her dehumanised and objectified. In this regard, Dworkin and MacKinnon (1988) have described how "women are presented dehumanized as sexual objects, things or commodities; women's body parts are exhibited such that women are reduced to those parts" (p. 36). A sound of a zipper being opened stresses that the rapist confidently commits the sexual assault to dominate Alisa's body. The montage shows her bare legs are under the first man's legs whose pants are still intact. While Alisa is seen vulnerable and almost naked, the male rapist is clothed and not vulnerable; he is shown as being in control while she is violated. Indonesian patriarchal society successfully induces its power by projecting woman as a sex object, and reducing a woman to body parts in this film. This film exhibits sexualised female flesh for audience excitement (Sen, 1995). This was a time when female characters

were dominating the screen, they were presented in such a way as to lure viewers (Sen, 1995). Thus, the filmmaker uses sexual imagery for the delight of the audience for commercial purposes.

At the same time, Alisa's forced sexual intercourse is witnessed and enjoyed by the voyeuristic gazes of four men (see Figure 2). These men watching the forced sexual assault are enjoying it, and are operating in a sense like the audience who are being invited to enjoy the scene.



Figure 2. Men's voyeuristic gaze in Sundel Bolong (1981).

In the scene, the men eagerly peak from behind a half-open door, while drooling and looking at the rape. The other four men later take turns committing the gang rape. The audience is positioned to enjoy this brutal act in the same way as the men. Alisa's screams emphasise the terrible forced sexual penetration that she experiences. The men dominate Alisa's body, and justify their actions that Alisa deserves the rape because she was a prostitute who disobeys her pimp's order. Alisa's body is sexualised and objectified, while

the men's bodies are sexualised, too, but in a different way - male sexuality is about power and domination. This rape scene symbolises how a woman's body deserves to be violated because she refuses to follow the patriarchal order. Alisa is dragged, tied and taught a 'lesson' by her rapists. The rape is depicted by showing Alisa's close-up face, which reveals her pained, startled and shocked emotions. The censorship during the New Order period restricted the portrayal of sexual intercourse and nudity in this film. This scene demonstrates the levels of female exploitation and objectification in the film based on the Indonesian context, which is less subtle than female exploitation in Western horror films, which include gratuitous nudity.

Another example of female exploitation can be seen in the portrayal of a prostitute. Sundel Bolong is depicted as a prostitute as well, when she transforms into a human form to revenge her first rapist. In the scene, a man kisses a prostitute's bare chest. The camera shot lingers on her chest and focuses on the woman's sexualised facial expression receiving pleasures from a faceless man, who only is shot from the back of the head so viewers cannot see his face. Even though they exchange sexual pleasures, the female character is more sexualised and portrayed as a male's satisfier. In addition, the diegetic sound of a woman moaning also emphasises female exploitation. Based on this scene, only the woman is sexualised, while the man is almost removed from the camera frame. This scene is problematic because they are exchanging pleasures, but the woman is more exploited in a sexualised manner than the man. Female exploitation in this film is constructed by a male director and is troublesome because male characters who have sexual desire can act, while female characters are acted upon. Sen (1995) argued the prostitution narrative presented the filmmaker with many opportunities to capture a female's flesh on camera. Sen (1995) also observed using female bodies and prostitution in the films during the New Order period was to sell the film. For this purpose, cameras linger and consume female bodies in the over-lengthy *male gaze* (Mulvey, 1975), to keep the production costs low in order to gain more profit (Murtagh, 2011).

Furthermore, the film contains a scene that presents sexual intercourse between Alisa and her husband in his dream, and shows he is on top of Alisa. Alisa looks rather shy in this scene, which depicts Alisa as a passive and submissive woman in relation to her husband.

In this scene, she is portrayed as a 'good' wife for Hendarto, one who obeys her husband. Alisa's role in this scene correlates closely to woman's place in *kasur* (bed), to satisfy her husband's sexual needs. Her role and place indeed correspond with the *ibuism* notion, which Suryakusuma (2011) argued so strongly reinforces a woman's place in the domestic sphere. In the scene, wife and husband both kiss each other's lips. A close-up shot shows Alisa's facial expression savouring the kiss, while Hendarto's facial expression is not shown much. A medium shot of Hendarto's hand squeezing Alisa's hand indicates that they make love as a married couple. The montage shows Alisa's face affirming the sexual satisfaction that she receives from her husband. A high angle shot, when the camera looks down on Alisa from her husband's perspective, represents Alisa's weakness and vulnerability in relation to her husband. These characteristics are shown several times by accentuating her jawline, her neck and her open lips. The representation of a consensual sex act is problematic in this scene because Hendarto is positioned as an active pleasure giver, while Alisa is acted upon. Alisa's sexualised facial expression receiving sexual pleasure is dominant in the camera shots. On the other hand, Hendarto's sexuality is about his power of self-composure. He is shown more composed and not in the camera as much as Alisa's sexualised face. A low angle shot, when the camera looks up at Hendarto, indicates his power and authority. Drawing on Mulvey (1975), it can be said he is a bearer of the look, gazing at Alisa's facial expression receiving sexual pleasure. Finally, the scene is intercut when Hendarto wakes up from his dream. The sex scene in Hendarto's dream shows Alisa is sexualised and objectified more than Hendarto even though the sex is consensual (they exchange pleasures). Alisa's passive and submissive characteristics are the ideal characters for a 'good' Indonesian wife, which adhere to Wieringa's (1992) description of an Indonesian ideal wife as loyal and obedient. A wife who never protests and submits herself to her husband. Indonesian patriarchy's main objective is to create a certain power relationship over women that positions men higher than women in both private and public matters to continue the imbalanced power relationship (Wieringa, 2002). In this film, Hendarto assigns Alisa the housekeeping roles, which isolates her in a domestic role as a wife, to keep her out of power (Suryakusuma, 2011). Indonesian patriarchy's goal is to maintain males' superiority over females (Suryakusuma, 2011).

Women only have values when they can be used as commodities, for instance as a prostitute in *Sundel Bolong* (1981). Unequal gender power distribution between men and women in Indonesian society, maintained by Islamic religious teachings that cannot be separated from Indonesian patriarchal culture, is influenced strongly also by the 'normalisation' of a woman's portrayal as a sex object in media (Murtiningsih & Advenita, 2017). Furthermore, the notion of *ibuism* is also neatly inserted into the film to depict and shape Indonesian ideal womanhood (Suryakusuma, 2011). In order for the film to pass the Indonesian censorship board, the filmmaker had to follow the New Order censorship rules, and when a film drifted away from this practice, the Indonesian film censorship board would intervene to resolve the situation (Sen, 1994). In other words, the filmmaker had to go along with the New Order ethical codes for filming production.

4.1.4 Female character representation in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) during the New Order period

There is a juxtaposition of the ideal of Indonesian womanhood (*ibuism*) and the concept of the monstrous woman seen in the representation of the main female protagonist in *Sundel Bolong* (1981). The notion of *ibuism* states that women have *kodrat* or divinely allocated roles to perform in the domestic area; it is a social construction of Indonesian womanhood to maintain patriarchal power (Suryakusuma, 2004; 2011). The political ideology of *ibuism* is inserted implicitly in this film to shape Indonesian women through the representation of the main female protagonist character. Alisa has a dynamic character and undergoes several important transformations. When Alisa is alive, she undergoes a change of status from a prostitute to become a 'good' wife. Then, after her death, she transforms into a monstrous female ghost, a Sundel Bolong. Her transformation means that she transgresses the patriarchal symbolic order in order to revenge her unjust death. Otherwise, she could not do anything when she is still alive because, as Hendarto's wife, she must obey the patriarchal order. She transforms into a disgusting female ghost with a bloody hole in her back to kill her rapists.

Importantly, *Sundel Bolong* (1981) makes a clear distinction between a monstrous woman and the 'good' female qualities of *ibuism* which are posited within Indonesia patriarchal society. Alisa gets married to one of her clients, and for a while she is seen as a 'good'

woman because having a husband can elevate her status to that of a respectable woman. During a wedding scene at the beginning of the film, Alisa represents the normative ideal for the appearance of a 'good' Indonesian woman. Her hair is combed into a hair bun. She wears a *kebaya*, a national costume of Indonesia, which is a traditional blouse-dress combination that originated from Java. Her clothes are clean and modest, with long sleeves and a long tight skirt. Her clothing represents female subordination that restricts her from moving freely. In the montage, she falls down during the wedding procession when walking in the long tight skirt. A high angle camera position indicates Alisa's helplessness. Then, Hendarto smiles at her and helps to carry her. In this scene, Alisa is portrayed as the ideal image of Indonesian womanhood - *istri* (wife), dependent and helpless.

Furthermore, Alisa's helplessness can be seen when she is sexually assaulted by a group of men because this time her husband is not around to help her. She cannot defend herself against five men who gang rape her. In contrast, in another scene where Alisa's husband fights a group of men, he can defend himself, a contrast that demonstrates how vulnerable women are to sexual attack. Consequently, Alisa gets pregnant after her gang rape. She decides to abort her forced pregnancy, which symbolically disrupts her New Order defined roles as a good wife and mother of *ibuism* (Siddique, 2002). She fails her dictated New Order identity to be a good mother, one who must look after her family.

After Alisa's death, she becomes a Sundel Bolong ghost, a look and position that are the farthest away from the Indonesian image of an ideal *ibu*. She no longer follows the notion of *ibuism*, of being a 'good' woman (Suryakusuma, 2011) who is submissive and obedient; instead, she becomes a vengeful ghost. In the film, her ghost form with a bloody gaping hole in her back is a stark contrast to her white robe. She only presents her beautiful and clean appearance in a human form, showing her submissiveness before ensnaring her victims. Then, she shows the bloody hole in her back when she is ready to castrate her victims. Sundel Bolong transgresses from the *ibuism* notion of a 'good' Indonesian woman to become a filthy monstrous female ghost, who is immoral due to her 'free sexuality', disobedience and being unforgiving. She now has the agency and power to take revenge on her rapists and her former pimp. She is now active and no longer a character who is acted

upon. Sundel Bolong, however, continues to be presented as immoral for her 'free sexuality'. Many scenes depict her promiscuity, as in when she lures her victims with the promise of sexual bliss. In one of her revenge scenes, she transforms into a beautiful widow (*janda kembang*) wearing a sexy cloth, exhibiting half of her breasts to be looked at and touched by her lusty male victim. Just as her victim gets excited to undress her, before she kills him, Sundel Bolong reveals her true image as a ghost.

Sundel Bolong, then, is depicted as a promiscuous female ghost. Her free sexuality goes against the notion of *ibuism* (Suryakusuma, 2011). Consequently, Sundel Bolong is punished for her promiscuity. The rape of Alisa, prior to her ghost form, can be seen as a punishment for disobeying patriarchal society. She refuses to go back to her previous job as a prostitute. She already crossed the line the point of no return once she became a prostitute. Her marriage still cannot erase the fact that she is an ex-prostitute, which is seen as a social *other* by many Indonesian Muslims. Thus, her (past) free sexuality still needs to be eradicated, which aligns with Sen's (1995) argument "that a sexually threatening woman character in New Order needs to be punished" (p. 9). She is punished by banishment to the afterlife, which is seen as her second death. The banishment of Sundel Bolong indicates that she is not a 'good' Indonesian woman. Even worse, she is a female ghost so does not fit in the human realm anymore.

Sundel Bolong does not follow the notion of *ibuism*, which requires her role to be submissive and forgiving. It can be seen from her disobedience during a revenge scene of her last rapist in front of her husband, *Kyai*, and a group of men. Her husband begs her to stop torturing this rapist several times, but Sundel Bolong ignores her husband's pleas and continues to torture her rapist and make him confess in front of people. The rapist confesses by telling the truth and begs for her forgiveness to spare his life; however, Sundel Bolong continues to strangle him even tighter with two metal poles until he dies. Sundel Bolong disrupts the patriarchal order with her supernatural power by killing a number of men violently. She has the potential to destabilise the promoted gender ideologies of *ibuism* (Siddique, 2002). From this scene, Sundel Bolong is portrayed as an unforgiving woman, against the notion of *ibuism* (Suryakusuma, 2011). On the other hand, the rapist is depicted

as a gentleman by admitting his mistake in front of many people. This scene represents how patriarchal society privileges masculinity. Sundel Bolong is positioned even lower than her former rapist for not forgiving him and not sparing his life. In addition, she disrespects her husband; consequently, her disobedience cannot be tolerated anymore. Her failure to follow her husband's orders legitimises her subsequent banishment. Once Alisa's last rapist has confessed and has been killed by her, she has no more reasons to seek revenge. She stops and asks for forgiveness from her husband in order for them to live together again.

Sundel Bolong (1981) dramatises a battle between a father and a mother; between *Kyai* (teacher of Islam, or a Muslim male leader), who represents the patriarchal society, and Sundel Bolong, who represents a mother. Sundel Bolong is banished by *Kyai* after she kills her last rapist near her graveyard. The presence of a male religious leader or *Kyai* who has the power to banish Sundel Bolong echoes Indonesian patriarchal culture. A *Kyai* figure is believed to be far from any sin. So, he is the only character who can banish Sundel Bolong. Alisa's husband, policemen and other male commoners participate in banishing Alisa's spirit to send her away to the afterlife realm. In the scene, Sundel Bolong does not do anything when a group of men led by *Kyai* chant Koranic verses toward her. During the citing of the Koranic verses, Sundel Bolong turns back into Alisa's spirit, and becomes passive again. This scene indicates her revenge is done, and she has to be submissive and obedient to patriarchal power. After her last killing, she asks for forgiveness from her husband. However, her husband tells her to leave the human world. The diegesis sound in the film emphasises Alisa's spirit cries after hearing her husband does not want her in the human world. Even though she has finished her revenge and has killed all her rapists, she still cannot win, for her husband rejects her in the human world. Her cries indicate she still lost against the patriarchal order. The implausible 'happy ending' carries reassurance about the maintenance of social and natural justice even when institutions have failed. Alisa's tormentors received their punishment from Sundel Bolong. The pack-rape, however, went unpunished; Alisa's life was trampled by injustice. How a story ends was very important in the making of Indonesian horror films at this time because censorship codes and practices insisted on a certain kind of closure to ensure a morally correct, politically convenient interpretation (Sen & Hill, 2000, p. 152).

Male figures, such as *Kyai*, a policeman and a husband, are presented as the guardians of symbolic order. They focus on eliminating the disorder and chaos to reach the stability of the normative order. Many of the films produced during the New Order period followed the same formula that revolved around the symbolic order. Heider (1991) claimed the basic conflict of life in Indonesian culture revolves around order versus disorder. The wellbeing of the group is more important and outweighs the wellbeing of the individual. It is an obvious sign of New Order Indonesia. "Films made between the mid-1970s and the mid-1980s followed a narrative structure from order, through disorder to restoration of order" (Sen & Hill, 2000, p. 146). At the final moment, the order is restored. Indonesian men as protectors and authorities are positioned higher than Indonesian women. Sundel Bolong changes back to Alisa's spirit, and seems to accept her fate before leaving the human world. In the following sections, *Sundel Bolong* is analysed in more depth by drawing upon feminist theories.

Woman as other

Alisa is positioned as *other* in Indonesian patriarchal society, which constructs and positions her based on patriarchal rules. This film is a tool for a patriarchal discourse in 'othering' woman's image. In the film, Alisa is a prostitute, who signifies 'otherness' because prostitution is condemned by many Muslims in Indonesian society (Jones, Sulistyarningsih & Hull, 1995). After Alisa's death, she turns into a horrific *other* as a Sundel Bolong ghost, who is depicted as promiscuous when she lures her rapists. Sundel Bolong ghost can transform and shapeshift to become various sexy women who are sexually threatening. In line with Creed (1993), it can be proposed that she is a threat because she lures her male victims before ensnaring them. She disturbs the normative order and does not respect the dictated patriarchal laws and the social norms. The way the male film director made this film represents his view of female characters. He uses prostitute characters and uses their bodies to market the film, and, in the process, condemns the female body (Sen, 1995). The image of Alisa both as a prostitute and as a ghost in the film adheres to de Beauvoir's (1953) conception of *other* in Indonesian patriarchal society. She is considered as a threat to that society. Indeed, her promiscuity crimes are punished by a patriarchal figure because "censorship regulations and processes were designed primarily to shape the narrative of

Indonesian films – to produce film texts that would show a [patriarchal] state in control” (Sen & Hill, 2000, p. 140). Alisa is put under control by marrying a man, and again when she turns into a ghost; she is put under control again by her banishment to the afterlife by a patriarchal figure.

The portrayal of woman as sexually threatening does not happen in Indonesia alone. Creed’s (1993) *monstrous feminine* clearly pinpointed that film narratives and mythology globally contain many depictions of sexually threatening women. Creed (1993) saw the transgression of symbolic order as a central element of sexually threatening woman or *monstrous feminine*. The monstrous feminine crosses the border between human and nonhuman, natural and supernatural, in which position the *monstrous feminine* functions as an *abject* (Creed, 1993; Kristeva, 1982).

Abjection

In the film, Alisa commits suicide; blood flows from her hand and splatters all over the bathroom. Alisa’s blood signifies shame and humiliation. She commits suicide because she is ashamed to meet her husband. She blames herself because of her ill-fated condition, and could not prevent the rape from happening. She feels humiliated because she is pregnant with someone else’s baby, a result of the gang rape; she cannot save her family’s face. She fails to be an ideal wife for her husband and fails to be a good mother for her unborn baby. Alisa’s self-blame for the sexual violence against her is wrong from a feminist perspective. The gang rape is not her fault, a view strongly held by second-wave feminism’s anti-rape movement. The movement sought to change society’s attitude of victim-blaming and self-blame for sexual violence against women (Matthews, 1994). The suicide scene also represents Alisa’s shift from innocent victim to *abject* monster. Her innocence is symbolised by the white gown that she wears. Now, it is tainted with red blood that symbolises abjection. The image of Alisa’s bloody suicide adheres to Creed’s (1993) and Kristeva’s (1982) concept of *abjection*; blood gushes out from her body transgressing her skin (border) that separates the inside and outside of the human body.

In addition, by the time Alisa transforms into a ghost, she has transgressed the human world. She crosses the border between human and non-human. She becomes an *abject*

when she becomes a ghost, which is the ultimate form of *abjection* because ghost “signifies one of the most basic forms of pollution”, a spirit without a body (Creed, 1993, p. 10). She is an *abject* monster by terrorising her victims with a disgusting display of her rotten bloody back. She has to go through a disgusting transformation in order to revenge her unjust treatment after her death by disturbing Indonesian patriarchal society’s harmony. Her *abject* bodily horror terrifies whoever sees her back hole because it is a disgusting bloody hole filled with living maggots. The image of Sundel Bolong ghost with a bloodied hole in her back adheres to the concept of *abjection* (Creed, 1993; Kristeva, 1982).

It is historically a “function of religion to purify the *abject* ... to redraw the boundaries between the human and non-human” (Creed, 1993, p. 14). Similarly in this film, the *abject* is purified and banished by a Muslim patriarchal religious leader, *Kyai*. *Kyai* is a guardian of a spiritual world, protecting Muslims from supernatural evil beings (Izharuddin, 2017). *Kyai* with other male characters banish Sundel Bolong by citing Koranic verses together. *Kyai*’s role is like the role of a priest in Hollywood horror of demonic to restore the order, such as the priests in *The Exorcist* (1973). Sundel Bolong’s banishment by a Muslim religious figure also aligns with Creed’s (1993) argument that an *abject* monster needed to be purified by a religious figure. The inclusion of *Kyai* in this film is to ensure the glorification and devoutness of the One and only God, which is the first principle in *Pancasila* (foundational philosophical theory of Indonesia), where the good will always win over evil. In this case, the patriarchal figure wins and a female character loses. While it is the male characters that cause all the dangers, the solution provided by this film is for the female character to change her ‘bad’ behaviour. During the New Order period, filmmakers knew that “any crime that was central to a film’s narrative had to be resolved and its agents [usually women] had to be punished” (Sen, 2011, p. 209). This film upheld Indonesia’s Code of Ethics to follow certain themes and plots during the New Order, such as family values and a restoration of the patriarchal order at the finale of the film (see van Heeren, 2012). After the New Order and Transition periods, values were re-imagined during the Post-New Order period.

Vagina dentata

Sundel Bolong also represents a *vagina dentata*, illustrated by Sundel Bolong's back (see Figure 3).



Figure 3. Sundel Bolong's back – a big hole filled with living maggots in *Sundel Bolong* (1981)

According to the myth, the hole in Sundel Bolong's back is caused when she gives birth through her back, instead of through her vagina, while in a grave. Therefore, the hole represents the *vagina dentata* or the toothed vagina (Creed, 1993). In the film, it is shown with a wide angle shot such that her back bones can be seen as the teeth and the big gaping hole is the opening of her vagina where her baby gets out. The metaphor of her vagina is connected to her past as a prostitute. The nasty hole at her back signifies her genitalia that have been contaminated by a great deal of sexual intercourse with men. The maggots that live in the hole represent an illness or a sexually transmitted disease (STD) that might be carried by a prostitute. In addition, she has long black hair that hangs down raggedly concealing her hole, because her prostitute profession needed to be concealed from the common public. She conceals her past in order to manipulate her rapists by taking the form of a beautiful woman. Thus, Sundel Bolong's back hole, which is a symbol of *vagina dentata*, the threatening feature of a female genitals, adheres to Creed's (1993) interpretation that: "*vagina dentata* is the mouth of hell – a terrifying symbol of woman as the 'devil's gateway'"

(p.106). Sundel Bolong is a devil who ensnares her victims after offering pleasures or 'paradise'. In this film, there is a juxtaposition of female power and powerlessness. Female power in terms of utilising sexuality in order to get men to agree with her because pleasure and power are sometimes by-products of Alisa's position as a prostitute (Beazley, 2015). Furthermore, Sundel Bolong ghost has autonomy, and it is her decision to seduce and to kill her rapists. She is in a position of authority and power over her rapists for having them confess but still killing them at the end. On the other hand, Alisa's powerlessness contributed to her rape and suicide, she failed her husband's expectation of her to be his ideal wife.

The symbolic *vagina dentata* in Sundel Bolong's back causes fear and disgust for viewers, but at the same time Sundel Bolong looks beautiful from the front. Women have been portrayed as alluring yet dangerous like the classic *femme fatale* (Allen, 1983), which is discussed in the next section. Female genitalia are a source of pleasure and attraction in the sense of sexual pleasure, but also a source of danger in the way they can carry STDs. Female genitals are enticingly alluring and at the same time pose a threat (Tan, 2010). Creed (1993) argued that: "*Vagina dentata* also points to the duplicitous nature of a woman, who promises paradise in order to ensnare her victims" (Creed, 1993, p. 106). In one of Sundel Bolong revenge scenes, Sundel Bolong only shows her back once; her male victim savours her front body attractiveness as a sexy woman. At first she always makes her victim unaware of the danger that awaits him. Once the victim is totally defenceless, Sundel Bolong shows her back to her victim to unleash a terror before she kills. The *vagina dentata* concept in Creed's (1993) *monstrous feminine* is relevant to this film; this female character is a deadly castrator, the terrifying *vagina dentata*.

Sundel Bolong actively looks for her rapists and kills them one by one. She manages to kill five men who gang raped her and her former pimp who commanded the rape. Each of her rapists meets Sundel Bolong in a scene where the *mise-en-scene* represents the threat of a *vagina dentata* (see Creed, 1993). For instance, the rapists are killed in a bathtub, in an old barn and in a garage, which can symbolise inside a woman's vagina or a womb where a room symbolises the inside of a vagina (see Freud on castration anxiety, 1953). Moreover,

she also 'rapes' back by strangling her victims with bent phallic-like objects. Bent poles represent Sundel Bolong's elimination of patriarchal power. She does not need a phallic (straight and erect) object in order to have power over a man.

Femme castratrice

Sundel Bolong acts as a *femme castratrice* whose aim is to seduce and castrate her male victims. One of her supernatural powers is to shapeshift to take the appearance of various sexy women to lure her male victims. Once her rapist agrees to spend the night together, she takes revenge by killing him. Sundel Bolong is an elicitation of a hostile female sexuality, which is the power to get her revenge. Creed (1993) emphasised female power relates to her sexuality, like being a pure virgin or a whore. Similarly, in this film, the name *Sundel* means a whore, and Sundel Bolong utilises her free sexuality to seduce her male victims in order to kill them at the end. In Creed's (1993) words, she is a "deadly *femme castratrice*" (p. 1) because she actively threatens her rapists.

Sundel Bolong castrates her rapists symbolically by taking their lives. Her first rapist is killed drowning in a bathtub. Her second rapist is killed in a car crash; before his demise, Sundel Bolong told him that it is his turn to be raped. The third rapist is killed in a graveyard; Alisa's tombstone pierces his heart. The penetration provides a sexual meaning that Sundel Bolong symbolically rapes him to end his life. The fourth rapist is killed in his garage; he is strangled to death by Sundel Bolong. Lastly, Sundel Bolong kills the gang rape leader perpetrator by strangling him with metal poles.

Femme fatale

Sundel Bolong is a *femme fatale* because of her charming and mysterious characteristic, seductive but secretive. She only appears at night in a beautiful body and dresses in a provocative way, alluring her victims to copulate with her. Sundel Bolong's depiction in the film adheres to the ideal of the *femme fatale*, "a woman who lures man into danger, destruction, even death by means of her overwhelming seductive charms" (Allen, 1983, p. 7). Sundel Bolong takes advantages of her sexy body and beautiful appearance to seduce men, luring them to their deaths. Her sexiness allows her to take advantage of a male's imagination and fantasy that helps her to conduct her revenge.

4.1.5 *Sundel Bolong* (1981) Conclusion

It can be concluded that Sundel Bolong's character in the film operates within a pattern of culture that negotiates between order and disorder. The film offers the possibility of destabilising the construction of women by the New Order *Ibuism* that dictated women primarily as good wives and mothers (Suryakusuma, 2011). However, the banishment of Sundel Bolong by a patriarchal figure to restore the systemic order implies that women during the New Order period had to follow patriarchal rules and laws. In the finale of the film, Indonesia's patriarchal ideology reinforces the male dominance in Indonesia's patriarchal society. Indonesian women are only acceptable in society if they follow the patriarchal rules, but even if they do, they still appear to become victims. Women are welcomed and accepted in the patriarchal society when they are under control and under the protection of their husbands. If their husbands are away, the women seem to disrupt the order very easily; the status of the women then becomes insecure.

The portrayals of females' sexualized bodies within the film narrative highlight the gender power imbalance in Indonesia during the New Order period. Female sexploitation within the film shows women are merely sex objects and commodities for men to consume. Female sexploitation disparages women to the point that they are positioned as inferior to men. The gang rape in the film reflects Indonesian society's acceptance of gender-based sexual violence at that time, thus perpetuating that acceptance. This film can be interpreted as the female gender responding in a particular way to male sexual violence and power because, after her death, Alisa seeks revenge in the form of a ghost killing her rapists. In doing so, the film creates a narrative that is not complimentary to the representation of Indonesian society. Further, Indonesian law is meant to protect a rape victim, but the law blames Alisa's past as a prostitute. Alisa faces injustice as a gang rape victim, because her alleged sexual harassers do not face legal repercussions. After Alisa takes revenge for her unjust death by killing all her rapists. She cannot escape patriarchal discrimination. Hence, she is rejected by her husband and banished to the after-life.

4.2 *Gairah Malam III* (1996)

The Indonesian horror genre is famous for portraying mysticism and supernatural phenomena (van Heeren, 2007). Even though 88 percent of the Indonesian population are Muslims (Mujani & Liddle, 2009), mysticism such as black magic (*guna-guna*) is still believed and practiced in Indonesian society by many (Mulder, 2005). The use of black magic in Indonesian Muslim society in order to gain power or official positions is also common (Wessing, 1996; 2008). Many of those who believe in mystics, conduct rituals in sacred places for personal gain, such as becoming more beautiful and/or powerful (Al Jazeera English, 2010). According to the Pew Research Center report (2012), almost 70 percent of Indonesian Muslims believe in witchcraft, which is the highest proportion amongst other Southeast Asian countries. Furthermore, 88 percent of Indonesian Muslims display Quranic verses in their home to prevent evils (Pew Research Center, 2012). Unlike horror films from Western countries, black magic often forms a major part of the plot in Indonesian horror films (Bräunlein & Lauser, 2016). One Indonesian film that portrays mysticism in the form of black magic is *Gairah Malam III* (1996), which falls under horror of a demonic type because it involves an evil spirit that resides in a witch's body (Derry, 2009). *Gairah Malam III* (1996), the second analysed in this thesis, is the subject of this section.

Gairah Malam III (1996) provides examples of female sexploitation and representation that are related to the female antagonist character, Darmi. She is sexploited to gain viewers' attention in order for the film to be sold because, ultimately, viewers are consumers (Sen, 1995; Kuhn, 2013). Her body is exploited when the camera lingers and sexualises her body curves from a heterosexual masculine point of view – the *male gaze* (Mulvey, 1975) - in order to gain maximum profit with minimum production cost (Murtagh, 2011). Darmi is also represented as a social *other* (de Beauvoir, 1953), an *abject* being (Kristeva, 1982) and a monstrous witch, who is at the same time a *femme castratrice* (Creed, 1993). She is represented as a promiscuous woman, one who does not follow the notion of *ibuism*, which entails being a good wife and mother (Suryakusuma, 2011). Her promiscuousness leads to her punishment by a male figure in order to maintain the patriarchal order promoted during the New Order and the Transition periods under Suharto's regime (Sen, 1995). Before

moving to the analysis of this film, it is necessary to understand the film context and narrative.

4.2.1 *Gairah Malam III* (1996) in context

Gairah Malam III (1996) was directed by Prawoto Rahardjo. This film was produced during the Transition period from 1994 to 1998, when Indonesian political conditions were unstable due to Suharto ageing, losing his political hold and having engaged in the corruption and cronyism that had damaged Indonesia's economy (Berger, 1997; Mydans, 1998; Said, 1998). The international "marketplace had ravaged the rupiah, plunging Indonesia into its worst economic crisis ... The rupiah lost 75% of its value, prices spiralled, and ¾ of the companies listed on the local stock exchange were technically bankrupt. The sector was in tatters, and unemployment was expected to triple" (Suryakusuma, 2004, p. 4). Indonesia's economic instability during the Transition period also influenced the Indonesian film industry (Imanjaya, 2010). The industry plummeted to become nearly stagnant, from producing 33 films in 1994, 34 films in 1996 to only four films in 1998 (Film Indonesia, 1994; 1996; 1998). *Gairah Malam III's* (1996) film production was also affected by the unstable economy; it fell below a quality standard to be called 'Indonesian film' (*film Indonesia*), one that requires the promotion of Indonesian culture with educational purposes (*film kultural edukatif*) (Imanjaya as cited in Jenkins, 2019).

During the Transition period, many Indonesian film production companies determined the elements that made films successful and produced other films based on previous success formulas, such as sex and the use of a sex symbol. Katinka van Heeren stated: "Sex emerged in 1970s' horror films and was used to spice up a movie. But by the 1980s and 1990s, the use of erotic elements to the level of smut and kitsch had become the main ingredient of such films" (van Heeren, 2007, p. 213). Driven by a 'cheaper' cost of filming production, the films that were created mostly related to mysticism, involving sex scenes and ignoring the quality of the film (Imanjaya 2010; Barker, 2015). The slump in Indonesian film production in the 1990s meant sexploitation films mushroomed rapidly (Imanjaya, 2010). Film producers argued nudity and sex in their films were *bumbu* (spice) to attract audiences (Pudyastuti, Muryadi & Indrawan, 1994). "Sex was used not only in horror films but was

part of a wider trend of Indonesian films from the 1970s that capitalized on its selling point. However, it was only in horror films that sex was rendered fairly explicit” (van Heeren, 2007, p. 213). The main themes of Indonesian ‘horror-sex’ movies during this period were rape and promiscuity (van Heeren, 2007). Similarly, *Gairah Malam III*’s (1996) theme is sex. The film starred Malvin Shayna, who was considered a sex symbol in Indonesia in the 1990s by Indonesian viewers because she also starred in other films that emphasised sex, such as *Misteri Wanita Berdarah Dingin (The Mystery of the Cold-Blooded Woman, 1992)*, *Gairah Malam I (Night Passion I, 1993)*, *Gairah Malam II (Night Passion II, 1995)* and *Misteri Cinta (Love Mystery, 1999)*. *Gairah Malam III* (1996) was chosen for this thesis because it critically engages with female sexploitation. *Gairah Malam III* (1996) contains sex and has a sex symbol for its success formula, following *Gairah Malam II (Night Passion II, 1995)* and *Gairah Malam I (Night Passion I, 1993)*; the latter was the third most-watched Indonesian film in Jakarta (Film Indonesia, 1993).

4.2.2 *Gairah Malam III* (1996) narrative

Gairah Malam III’s (1996) narrative will be explored to provide important understanding about female sexploitation and representation. Sarah (Malvin Shayna), the female protagonist, is depicted as a sexy and beautiful woman. However, almost throughout the entire film she is under the influence of Darmi’s (Diaz Astuti) black magic to seduce Jody (Eddy Chaniago). Darmi, the antagonist character, practises black magic to stay young and beautiful by consuming men’s souls after sex rituals. One of her goals is to exact revenge on Jody’s family, who she blames for causing her son to be mentally ill. On the other hand, Jody’s father, who is also Darmi’s brother, practises white magic to protect his family from Darmi’s wrong-doings. Many of the fights between Darmi and Jody’s father are in spirit realms. Later on, Darmi is defeated and destroyed by Jody.

4.2.3 Female sexploitation in *Gairah Malam III* (1996)

The use of female sexploitation dominates the narrative of *Gairah Malam III* (1996) and is portrayed in relation to Darmi, the female lead character, when she uses black magic and conducts sexual rituals. The black magic in this film is employed mainly for bewitching or

influencing people to act against their own will through committing sexual acts. The sex rituals and female sexploitation provide central motifs for this film; that is, as marketing strategies for a cheap publication to lure viewers (Imanjaya, 2010; Barker, 2015; Sen, 1995). The female body is exploited insofar as it is presented to be looked at as a sexual object through a process called the *male gaze*. Here, viewers are positioned in such a way as to assume a heterosexual masculine perspective (Mulvey, 1975). The female sexploitation is presented through a lingering gaze on a female's sexualised body. This can be seen as a strategy to sell the film and to gain maximum profit while keeping the production costs to a minimum (Murtagh, 2011).

There are many examples of female sexploitation at the beginning, in the middle and at the finale of the film in relation to Darmi. In the opening scene, female sexploitation can be seen during a rape scene. Four women are trapped inside a warehouse and are being pursued by a group of men, who are under Darmi's spell. The women are rendered unconscious before the rape. They are slapped on the face and even bound, actions which show that sexual violence has become a normal aspect of the Indonesian horror film. The rape results in the death of one of the four women, which shows females are depicted as sex objects and victims. The rape scene in this film breaks Indonesia's censorship rule Article 19, verse 3, year 1994 for showing close-up nudity – in this case a woman's breasts (Peraturan Pemerintah tentang Lembaga Sensor Film, 1994). However, this film was passed by the Indonesian Censorship Board because, during the Transition period, the Indonesian economy was in a crisis condition; thus, the government utilised an audience-quantitative policy that prioritized the quantity of Indonesian films over and above the quality (Kristanto, 2004). Ignoring the quality, this film uses the elements of sex and violence (Said, 1991). Female sexploitation in this rape scene occurs by objectifying a woman; she becomes a sex object, which is demonstrated in Figure 4. In addition, the camera emphasises the woman's breasts instead of her whole being. Thus, she is more of an object than a human being (Attwood, 2004). On the other hand, the rapist is less sexualised compared to the woman during the rape scene. The latter accentuates and lingers on the female's sexualised body parts, such as nipples, shoulder and neck, in a degrading manner, while the man is depicted as powerful and tough. This scene also supports Mulvey's (1975) notion of the *male gaze*,

whereby viewers are situated in a 'masculine' position to observe the woman being raped. The female sexploitation presented in this scene is a strategy to gain viewers' attention for easy profit (Imanjaya, 2010).



Figure 4. A woman's body on display during a rape scene in Gairah Malam III (1996)

In the middle of the film, female sexploitation is seen during Jody and Sarah's sex scene under Darmi's black magic influence. The sex scene displays Sarah and Jody's half-naked bodies intertwined and caressing each other while they are making out. Sarah is compelled to seduce and have sexual intercourse with the male protagonist, Jody. Once the sexual intercourse takes place, he can be harmed easily because he is less alert and most vulnerable. During that time, his soul can be easily taken away from his body by sucking it through his mouth. Indonesian horror films put sexual agency onto women by highlighting their roles as male seducers (Suryakusuma, 2004), which fits with Sarah's portrayal as a female seductress in the film. She is portrayed as aggressively sexual under Darmi's black magic influence. At first, Jody tries to avoid her, but Darmi casts a black magic spell against him to make him compliant. At the same time, Darmi, who controls them from afar, also enjoys the sexual pleasure as if she receives it from Jody directly through Sarah. However, Darmi and Sarah's sexualised bodies are more dominant in the film than Jody's, which is

portrayed differently. For instance, Darmi and Sarah's faces are sexualised, and their bodies are sexually objectified, whereas Jody is shown to be rather emotionless. The viewers perceive the representation of Sarah and Darmi receiving and giving sexual pleasure through Jody's point of view, which is the *male gaze* (Mulvey, 1975). In this scene, women are exploited in a way that can attract viewers' attention because the viewers are buyers and the women are sexual objects to be sold (Kuhn, 2013).

At the finale of the film, the female sexploitation scene is portrayed in a spirit realm during Darmi's sex ritual that involves death and sexual pleasure. To differentiate the spirit realm with the real world, the film director uses red lights for the spirit world. The colour red in this film is associated with power, lust and desire (Bellantoni, 2012), which symbolise Darmi's hunger for power and her insatiable sexual desire. Darmi wears a red top with red lipstick, which makes her more sexualised and more seductive, as the colour red, according to Bellantoni (2012), represents sexiness and seductiveness. Her desire to stay young and beautiful requires her to sacrifice males' souls (*tumbal nyawa*) during sex rituals. In the scene, the sex ritual and murder are presented as erotic and sensual moments. For instance, the sex ritual involves a red bed and human blood, which draw a strong connection between sexual pleasure and death; "woman, pleasure and death are intimately related" (Creed, 1993, p. 129). In the scene, Darmi is engaged in a sex ritual with a man. A close-up shot is used to show Darmi's sexualised facial expression and her sexualised body movement. She kisses the man full of lust, which shows, in accordance with Creed's (1993) understanding, that her "sexual pleasure is also bound up with excitation of the mouth and lips ... It is the connection between orality and sexuality" (p. 113). Suddenly, Darmi bites and sucks the man's tongue out from his mouth, which represents the oral sex and sadism that kills him. Creed (1993) can be quoted in this regard to this film: the "visual association between biting and bloodied lips, sexual intercourse and death provides a central motif" (p. 107). She sucks the male's tongue to get his soul out from his mouth, in Creed's (1993) words, "as if she were sucking the semen from his penis" (pp. 69-70). She is a monstrous woman, following Creed's (1993) notion "because she castrates, or kills, the male during coition" (p. 129). By sucking out his tongue, Darmi is also sucking his soul and reaches her sexual climax. She is filled with a sexual energy and is ready to engage in another sex ritual. The sudden death of

a man while savouring the sexual encounter with Darmi makes this horror film appealing (Jones, 2018). She attains her orgasm once she kills him, which shows that Darmi's sexual pleasure and power go hand in hand (see Valverde on the topic of sex, pleasure and power, 1985). At the same time, female sexploitation through Darmi's sexualised body is utilised to sell the film easier (Imanjaya, 2010).

A further example of female sexploitation can be seen when Darmi engages in another sexual encounter with her female disciple, which can cause a controversy in Indonesian society. Two women caressing and almost kissing each other pushes the boundaries of an Indonesia censorship rule that disallows "a stimulating kissing scene, both by couples with opposite sex and same-sex with full of lust" (Peraturan Pemerintah tentang Lembaga Sensor Film, 1994, p. 9). In addition, Indonesian Muslim society condemns same-sex relationships because it is a great sin in Islam (Nurish, 2010). This scene is used as a strategy for the film marketing because both female sexploitation and controversy can sell the film (Matondang, 2010). This time, the female sexploitation is seen from Jody's voyeuristic gaze, which is a pleasure in looking sexually (based on Mulvey, 1975). Further, Jody's voyeuristic gaze indicates female sexploitation in the film is made for male' consumption. Male gaze posits as the bearer of the look and the female characters are the objects of the look. Jody is sent to a spirit realm using white magic by his father in order to stop Darmi's wrong doing. Once he is in a spirit realm, no one recognises him, and no one breathes, except Jody. Through a window, Jody actively gazes at and observes Darmi as she caresses her female disciple. Jody's active gaze changes and he becomes an active participant by joining the sexual encounter with Darmi. He is going to make use of her weakness of being sexually insatiable. Female sexploitation can be seen again when Darmi and Jody are depicted engaging in foreplay. Darmi wears a black bra that partially covers her breasts. The camera frames her in a close-up shot to accentuate her cleavage and sexualise her body movement. Darmi kisses Jody's body full of lust and seductively. Just before she is ready to have sexual intercourse and reaches her climax by sucking his soul, the scene is intercut with the sudden arrival of two uninvited guests who interrupt her sex ritual. Darmi strangles the two uninvited guests furiously for the interruption. Her eyebrows grow longer and become unruly and disordered, which can be interpreted as a sign of chaos, free sexuality and

madness (Heider, 1991). Darmi's free sexuality is exploited; her breasts, cleavage, neck line and jaw line are accentuated in ways that degrade her as merely a sex object for males' voyeuristic gaze so as to attract viewers (Imanjaya, 2010; see also Mulvey, 1975). All in all, female sexploitation is presented in the film by exploiting sexualised bodies of women helps to minimise the production cost and at the same time to lure viewers. The female sexploitation and the same sex relationship can cause controversy because they push the boundaries of the Indonesian Censorship Board, which also can give the film more publicity because controversy can sell the film more easily; controversy makes Indonesian viewers become more curious (Matondang, 2010).

4.2.4 Female character representation in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) during the Transition period

Female representation in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) focuses on the female antagonist character, Darmi. She is depicted as a promiscuous and monstrous woman, whose characteristics go against the notion of *ibuism* that positions woman as a good mother and a good wife (Suryakusuma, 2011). She pursues the magical power of an everlasting beauty so that her body remains youthful and flawless. Darmi's everlasting beauty and youthfulness are attained from sucking men's souls during sex rituals, in which she is depicted as *other* (de Beauvoir, 1953), an *object* being (Kristeva, 1982), a witch and, at the same time, a *femme castratrice* (Creed, 1993). In this way, Darmi represents all that runs counter to the Indonesian patriarchal order.

Women as other

The main female antagonist, Darmi, is depicted as '*other*' for several reasons. Firstly, she does not have a husband. The Indonesian woman is defined through her relationships to her husband (Wieringa, 2003), and "woman's value is always measured from her familial identity" (Arimbi, 2010, p. 121). Darmi is *other* because she is not valued without a husband in Indonesian patriarchal culture. As a single mother, she is depicted as a neglectful mother who seems unable or unwilling to care for her mentally ill son. In the film, her son tries to get her approval and attention, but his actions seem to annoy Darmi. She gets angry easily, which can be seen at the beginning of the film when she slaps her son because he cannot carry out an easy task, which causes her first attempt of revenge to fail. Darmi's

transgression of being a neglectful and short-tempered mother represents her monstrosity, which is called *monstrous feminine* (Creed, 1993). She does not follow the dictated norm of *ibuism* or Indonesian womanhood, which is set by the patriarchal society (Suryakusuma, 2011), and requires that women take care of the family in the home and be men's 'helpers' (Arimbi, 2010). Darmi does not behave according to her *kodrat*, an "unalterable nature one is born with", or destiny (Arimbi, 2010, p. 57), "which requires women, especially mothers, to be submissive and sacrifice for the good of all family members" (Arimbi, 2010, p. 121). "The *kodrat* of Indonesian women prescribed that they should be meek, passive, and obedient to the male members of the family" (Wieringa, 2003, p. 75), but Darmi neither follows her *kodrat* nor the dictated patriarchal rules.

Secondly, Darmi is a promiscuous woman who is depicted with a different man every time she performs her sex rituals. In other words, a woman who has many sex partners is equated with a prostitute, which posits her as *other* (de Beauvoir, 1953). "Man defines woman as "other" and attempts to exclude her from the symbolic order of law" (Creed, 2005, p. 16). She is constructed as *other* by Indonesian patriarchal society because she does not follow the set laws of Indonesian Muslim society. Islam perceives sex outside a marriage as a *zina* (an illicit form of sex), and it is forbidden and sinful (Bennett, 2007). Her free sexuality is considered as a threat to patriarchal society "because she promises paradise, in order to ensnare her victims" (Creed, 1993, p 106). Moreover, she kills men, and so is an even greater threat to patriarchal society. Later on, Darmi gets punished for her sexual promiscuity, which supports Sen's (1995) argument that promiscuous woman in Indonesian films during Suharto's regime will be punished. Her 'otherness' is eradicated by a patriarchal figure to safeguard the patriarchal order.

Witch

Darmi is represented as a seductive witch which confirms castration anxieties (the latter psychoanalytic idea was discussed by Creed, 1993). A "witch is essentially a male creation, a product of male fears" (Russell, 2004, p. 71). Darmi bewitches other people for her personal gain. In Creed's (1993) words, she is "capable of drawing on her evil powers to wreak destruction on the community" (p. 76). Creed also suggested that the "central reason

for the persecution of witches was morbid interest in the witch as 'other' and a fear of the witch/woman as an agent of castration" (p. 74). For instance, Darmi casts spells to cause disorder when mass rape happens at the beginning of the film. She also casts a black magic spell on Sarah in order to attain Jody's soul to exact her revenge, and at the same time to keep the supernatural power which she needs to sustain her continuously through a sex ritual. Thus, the sex ritual "continues to foreground her essentially sexual nature ... as a monstrous figure [a witch] with supernatural powers" (p. 76). This suggests Darmi is situated outside the patriarchal ideology of passive female and active male, and against the patriarchal order put in place by Indonesian patriarchal society. Her sex rituals outside of marriage "signifies a crisis in the symbolic world" (Sen, 1995, p. 144) and to deal with this problem she needs to be eliminated by a patriarchal figure.

Abjection

Darmi is represented as an *abject* being who deals in *abject* things such as using black magic to harm other people. She is an *abject* because she does not recognise rules, positions and borders (Kristeva, 1982). She goes against her fate as a normal human being because she chooses to stay young forever. She crosses the boundary of being a normal human being due to sucking men's souls. She also transgresses Indonesian Muslim society's rules for being sexually immoral and insatiable. In accordance with Creed (1993), it can be proposed that Darmi's "abjection is constructed as a rebellion of filthy, lustful, carnal, female flesh" (p. 38). She does not follow the patriarchal rules because she refuses to be domesticated in a monogamous relationship (Marching, 2004); rather, she chooses to have many sexual partners for her sex rituals. She disturbs the patriarchal order by being sexually free, killing men and ignoring her mentally incapable son. She goes against the notion of *ibuism* (Suryakusuma, 2011) for not being a nurturing mother. Her son and the men represent patriarchal symbols who Darmi fails to serve. She is a threat for Indonesian patriarchal society; thus, she needs to be eliminated. During Suharto's New Order and Transition periods, it was common to see sexually threatening women punished (Sen, 1995) because the state relied on the patriarchal ideology to control women and the family to maintain its power (Brenner, 1999). The state "specifically aimed at women who had breached the *kodrat wanita* (women's moral code), an ideology that suggested women should be meek,

submissive, and politically passive” (Wieringa, 2003, p. 70). Darmi’s character exists in resistance to the patriarchal society and the state order. Therefore, she is punished and destroyed by a patriarchal figure.

Femme Castratrice

Darmi is depicted as Creed’s (1993) *femme castratrice* or castrating woman. A *femme castratrice* “assumes two forms: the castrating female psychotic ... and the woman who seeks revenge on men who have raped or abused her” (p. 123). Darmi is the castrating female psychotic. Even though she seeks revenge for her son consistent with her mothering role, Darmi’s revenge is for her own personal gain as sucking a man’s soul will contribute to her everlasting beauty. She kills men during sex rituals in a red room. This room symbolises the inside of a vagina (see Freud on castration anxiety, 1953). She entices her male victim into her trap. Once he is experiencing sexual pleasure, he is killed instantly. His soul is sucked out through his mouth by Darmi. A tongue has been identified as a phallic symbol because its long shape is penis-like, and a removal of a tongue becomes a symbolic representation of castration (see Flugel, 1925). Thus, Darmi is a *femme castratrice*. She castrates her male victims; she kills them in order to keep her everlasting youth. Darmi is a dangerous threat for men because, drawing on Creed (1993), she attacks the “patriarchal society’s weaknesses and plays on its vulnerabilities” (p. 41). She is an ultimate *femme castratrice* because she kills her sex partner during coition. Therefore, Creed’s (1993) theory on *femme castratrice* fits perfectly with the antagonist female character in this film.

It is the moral message of this film that a promiscuous and monstrous woman will be the cause of her own demise because she does not fit the socially constructed woman’s role as defined by Indonesian patriarchal culture (Suryakusuma, 2012). Darmi’s negative image can be perceived “as a social construct developed in order to safeguard phallic power ... and eliminate the potential threat” (Tortolani, 2015, p. 100). Darmi is a threat to the patriarchal order because she has a supernatural power: “women as monster threatens the male symbolic order of law” (Creed, 2005, p. 16). Her supernatural power, however, has a “weakness (*pantangan*: literally taboo), a prohibited action or certain spell by which the powers can be undone” (van Heeren, 2007, p. 213). Darmi’s weakness is her navel, which is

the erotic and sacred spot in her body. In this film, the navel is depicted as the place where a life can end. She can be eradicated when her navel is blown by a man. At the finale of the film, Jody simply blows on her navel and successfully destroys her, which indicates man is superior and far more powerful than woman.

4.2.5 *Gairah Malam III* (1996) Conclusion

Female sexploitation in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) is apparent through the sexualised and degrading depiction of the female characters, in order to lure viewers. Their breasts and other sexualised body parts are accentuated. They are reduced to sexual objects in order to maximise the film's profit. In other words, women are depicted as less than men. Female character representation in this film shows that Darmi, who is depicted as *other* (de Beauvoir, 1953), an *abject* being (Kristeva, 1982), a witch and at the same time a *femme castratrice* (Creed, 1993), deserves to be punished by a patriarchal figure. She is punished because she does not follow the patriarchal set of rules and does not adhere to the notion of *ibuism* (Suryakusuma, 2011). Being a good wife and mother are the characteristics of an ideal woman that are advantageous for Indonesian patriarchal society seeking to maintain control of women. Thus, Darmi is eradicated to safeguard the patriarchal order.

4.3 *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009)

Monstrous women such as a ghost and a witch are central motifs in Indonesian horror films made during the New Order and Transition periods. They are commonly depicted as hypersexual and disobedient; they challenge male power and so are punished by a male figure (Sen, 1994). On the other hand, in the Post-New Order period, women are depicted in a different way. The two previous horror films examined represent women characters as *abject* beings, a ghost in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) and a witch in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) and also put the two films in the horror of demonic category (Derry, 2009). In addition, it was a standard formula for Indonesian horror film narratives during the New Order and Transition periods to have the monstrous women killed by a patriarchal figure such as *kyai* (teacher of Islam, or a Muslim male leader) in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), and a male figure in *Gairah Malam III* (1996). However, *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) challenges the formula and changes the representation of women in Indonesian horror film during the Post-New Order period.

In 2009, due to the growth of feminism during the Post-New Order period, Indonesian culture and society also changed (Hatley, 1999). Independent Indonesian cinema emerged as it did not have to follow the New Order restrictions. Many Indonesians were enthusiastic to witness and appreciate the creativity and innovation of a new generation of Indonesian filmmakers in a less state-controlled environment (Kurniasari, 2009). Urban legend narratives such as *Sundel Bolong*, which were adapted in many horror films during the New Order and Transition periods, started to change. During the Post-New Order period, ghost characters from Indonesian urban legends and myths no longer appeared (Paramaditha, 2014; van Heeren, 2012). The Post-New Order period witnessed the emergence of slasher horror films that involve a female character who overpowers a psychopathic male killer, an example of which is *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009), which seems a direct response to the feminist movement. Slasher horror is a subgenre of a horror film that features a violent psychopathic monster or a killer murdering a group of people using a sharp weapon in an isolated place, and a *final girl* defeats the monster at the end (Clover, 2015). Unlike slasher horror films from Western countries, Indonesian slasher horror films still portray Indonesia culture through the use of black magic. Black magic is still practiced by *dukun* (shaman), especially on the island of Java (Schlehe, 2014; Mulder, 2005). It is not a surprise, then, that

the Indonesian horror genre still features black magic and mixes it with the psychopathic killer trend in Western cinema. The rise of feminism in Indonesia has also influenced Indonesian horror film narratives; a female character wins at the finale of the film by defeating the psychopathic killer.

4.3.1 *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) in context

Air Terjun Pengantin (2009) was influenced by Western slasher horror films such as the *Scream* film series (1996; 1997; 2000; 2011). In 1996, the *Scream* slasher series transitioned from being part of low culture to being a component of high culture; the series had box office success and gained press attention (Trencansky, 2001). *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009), which is directed by Rizal Mantovani, attempted to duplicate the feel and the look of Western slasher horror films in relation to its female survivor. However, *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) is localised by the insertion of black magic practised by a psychopathic and sadomasochistic character called *dukun* (shaman). The combination of a black magic user and psychopathic character make this film a hybrid of demonic and personality horror (Derry, 2009).

The success of *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) with its female survivor narrative gained 1,060,058 viewers (Film Indonesia, 2009). It is followed by other slasher horror films adopting a similar narrative such as *Pengantin Pantai Biru* (Blue Beach Bride, 2010), *Pengantin Topeng* (Bridal Mask, 2010), and *Air Terjun Pengantin Phuket* (Phuket Bride's Waterfall, 2013). By having a strong and independent female character who becomes a female survivor rather than a victim, *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) is more empowering compared to the two horror films that have been analysed in this thesis. However, women are still sexually exploited and objectified by the patriarchal society.

4.3.2 *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) narrative

The film's narrative provides important understanding and context which will be explored here. The film begins with a flashback that portrays a forest near a village where many people chase a male *dukun*. He has abducted a woman and forced her to become his bride. Ultimately, the *dukun* is surrounded by villagers at the edge of a waterfall. The woman tries to escape from him but she falls from the top of the waterfall. Thus, the waterfall is named

Air Terjun Pengantin (The Bride's waterfall). Finding out that his future bride already died, he begins to take revenge on the villagers. He somehow manages to kill all of the villagers, but a male villager is able to scorch his face. He puts a mask on to conceal the burnt mark, and becomes the only person living on the island.

In the present day, a group of three men and five women from the modern city of Jakarta choose to have a holiday on an isolated island called Pulau Pengantin (Bride's Island) on the North of Jakarta's coast. However, their holiday becomes a killing disaster when a masked psychopathic and sadomasochistic *dukun* kills them one by one. He consumes human blood to be powerful and invincible. However, the female protagonist, Tiara, manages to survive, seeks revenge and kills him.

4.3.3 Female sexploitation in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009)

Female sexploitation in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) still dominates the visuals of the film narrative. Female sexploitation refers to the portrayal of a female character as seductive and a sex symbol; their bodies are exploited to sell the films for easy profit (Imanjaya, 2010). The main female character is objectified and sexualised in this film, even though she is able to defeat the psychopathic and sadomasochistic *dukun*. As Mulvey (1975) emphasised, the female character is still there to be looked at for male voyeuristic visual pleasure. There are examples of female sexploitation that occur throughout this film.

In the beginning of the film, there is a bedroom scene depicting the main female protagonist fast asleep (see Figure 5). Female sexploitation starts when the camera lingers on her tall and scantily clad body - she is wearing a two-piece pink lingerie and is depicted as a good-looking and sexy woman. The viewers are introduced to the female lead character from her beautiful and sexy appearance first, before learning her name. Her body is presented as pleasurable, alluring and beautiful to look at. The camera 'consumes' her body, gazes on her body's curves through a process called the *male gaze*. The *male gaze* is an act of portraying females from a masculine heterosexual male point of view that represents females as sexual objects and the viewer is positioned to take on that point of view (Mulvey, 1975). The lengthy gaze on Tiara's body "serves not only to sell the film, but does so in such

a way as to ensure maximum profit while keeping production costs to a minimum” (Murtagh, 2011, p. 126).



Figure 5. The female protagonist, Tiara, is asleep in Air Terjun Pengantin (2009)



Figure 6. Tiara wakes up in Air Terjun Pengantin (2009)

Figures 5 and 6 offer good examples of female sexploitation and objectification. The camera shot navigates the viewers to stare at Tiara's body sexually from a film's perspective. She is depicted as a seductive figure. Viewers are 'forced' to look at Tiara's body as a sexual object to be desired. Not long after Tiara wakes up, Lillo hugs her from behind and kisses her softly. In the bedroom scene, it is implied that they engage in sexual relations. Lillo, who is fully clothed, is on top of Tiara who lies on the bed, and he kisses her lips passionately. Then the camera moves to a photo frame next to the bed, which indicates the two are having sexual intercourse. This scene portrays Tiara as more sexualised than her boyfriend. She is still in her two-piece lingerie item which appears sexual, while Lillo is fully clothed. In this scene, the camera also focuses on her face receiving kisses from Lillo, while Lillo is shot only from behind and over his shoulder. The camera lingers longer on Tiara's body than Lillo's, signifying a male dominance over a female sexuality (see Flax, 1987). Lillo's facial expression is less frequently depicted from the camera point of view. This scene emphasises Tiara's sexploitation, and she is depicted as a seductress.

Secondly, female sexploitation occurs on a boat in a scene wherein the characters are on a trip to Bride's Island. Tiara lies sunbathing on a boat (see Figure 7). The shot is taken with an aerial camera, a full shot and from a high angle. The shot makes Tiara look small, indicating her vulnerability. She lies there as a passive image and her image is safe to be savoured through the voyeuristic gaze; viewers are active gazers and have power over Tiara's body (see Mulvey, 1975). The camera looks down on Tiara showing her full sexualised body. In the boat scene, Tiara is portrayed in a sexualised manner by accentuating her long legs, hips, long hair, midriff, cleavage, shoulders, neck line, jaw line and sensuous lips. Her black bikini stresses her fair skin colour too. Tiara's body is consumed and exploited in a way that announces it is there to be looked at (see Mulvey, 1975). This scene alone adheres to the idea of female sexploitation, putting a woman as a sexual object in a film to make an easy profit (Imanjaya, 2010).



Figure 7. Tiara sunbaths on a boat in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009)

Thirdly, female sexploitation is presented when the group reach Bride's Island. They go to the beach first before heading to the Bride's waterfall. Five female characters change into bikinis, and the camera only lingers on the female bodies' curves. They play a "traditional exhibitionistic role", their bodies are portrayed as passive erotic object[s] for the *male gaze*, so heterosexual male viewers "can project their fantasies" on to them (Chaudhuri, 2006, p. 35). There are numerous close-up shots of cleavages, buttocks, backs, midriffs and hips. Moreover, Tiara is depicted in a more sexualised manner than the other women as she tries to get Lillo's attention. She attempts to make Lillo jealous and succeeds. She conveys her message to Lillo implicitly that she is wanted and desired by other males. However, this scene highlights that she cannot escape the male voyeuristic gaze. The montages in Figure 8 illustrate the male characters embodying the *male gaze*, with Tiara as the sexual object and the males as the agent of the look (see Mulvey, 1975). She is there to be looked at, and the montages show that she is more sexualised than the men who gaze at her. The men are fully clothed, while Tiara is in her bikini. Female sexploitation presents the five female characters, particularly Tiara, as sexual objects to be savoured by the male characters in the film, and viewers are situated in the 'masculine' position to gaze at the females' sexualised bodies.



Figure 8. Montages illustrating Tiara's sexualisation in Air Terjun Pengantin (2009)

Fourthly, in the middle of the film, female sexualisation is presented when, after playing on the beach, three female characters decide to have showers in an old factory building. The females' naked bodies are alluded to from a heterosexual masculine's point of view. A reverse shot shows us that Icing, one of the males in the group, is watching the women shower through a peep hole (see Figure 9). He is an "active gazer" who gazes at the females sexualised bodies (Sutandio, 2015, p. 82), which supports Mulvey's (1975) concept of the *male gaze* that presents women as sexual objects. Icing is an agent of the look and the females are the objects of the look through the process called voyeurism (Mulvey, 1975). This scene indicates patriarchal society has a power over the females' bodies through the male as the active gazer and bearer of the look.



Figure 9. Icing peeps at women taking shower Air Terjun Pengantin (2009)

Furthermore, female exploitation presents during a scene when a male and a female character kiss each other full of lust and almost engage in sexual activity. In this scene, the female is the main focus of the camera, and the man is shot from the back. They do not realise that a psychopathic and sadomasochistic *dukun* is preying on them. When they are undressing, the psychopathic and sadomasochistic *dukun* suddenly slays the woman's throat and stabs the man's head with a harpoon. This scene is an example of the appeal of the sex-horror film, the sex scene arouses viewers, who are positioned in a masculine gaze and the killing scene scares viewers. The sudden attack during the foreplay indicates this film simultaneously provides sexual desire and titillating death (see Jones on sex and horror, 2018). In this film, the female character experiences a slower death compared to the male character. Her death is slow, detailed and close-up (see Figure 10), while the male character's death is quick. In the scene, her death is sexualised in the manner of sadomasochism. She is turned into a sadomasochistic sexual object through her gory mutilation. This scene indicates when a woman is targeted for violence, the violence is sexualised. On the other hand, when a man is the target of violence, the violence generally

is not sexualised. Thus, the female exploitation appears in sexualising the female character in a sadomasochistic manner and treating her as a sex object.



Figure 10. Stacy is dying slowly and choking her own blood in Air Terjun Pengantin (2009)

As can be seen in Figure 10, female exploitation is depicted in a degrading manner. Here, Stacy is dying slowly and that process is portrayed in a sexually objectified manner. On the other hand, the psychopathic *dukun* gains his sexual pleasure through the punishment, control and domination that makes him a sadomasochistic man. He “achieve[s] sexual gratification from killing”, and the viewers “vicariously attain voyeuristic sexual pleasure from watching horror” (Jones, 2018, p. 3). He torments his victim by mutilating and ingesting her blood. Stacy experiences an agonising messy death. Dworkin and MacKinnon (1988) noted “women are presented in scenarios of degradation, injury, torture, shown as filthy or inferior, bleeding, bruised, or hurt in a context that makes these conditions sexual” (p. 36). The depiction of a sexualised, tortured woman in the film shows pain and pleasure go hand in hand (see Valverde on the topic of sex, pleasure and power, 1985). The close-up shot of *dukun*’s bloodied lips sipping the woman’s blood, while the woman is in agony, depicts his sadomasochistic sexual pleasure (see Kernberg on sadomasochism and sexual excitement, 1991). His sadomasochism implies patriarchal society has more power over women’s bodies, and women are merely just sex objects.

In the final scene set against a backdrop of the Bride's waterfall, female sexploitation is depicted when *dukun* tells Tiara to consummate their supposed 'marriage'. He is portrayed with an obsessive desire for Tiara because he keeps hearing voices within his mind that Tiara is his bride. He reveals his true face in front of Tiara; he lets his guard down by showing his burnt face to Tiara. This scene symbolises that *dukun* is getting ready to have sexual intercourse with Tiara, by taking off his mask. By seeing *dukun's* true face, Tiara has an advantage. She lets the *dukun* grab her waist from behind, while taking her time to prepare her next move. He hugs her tightly and keeps telling her to mate with him. However, Tiara tries to break free. The scene shows that the sadomasochistic *dukun* is aroused by Tiara's strong and rebellious manner. Tiara realises that fact so she makes him distracted by conversing with him. She lets him boast about his supernatural power of being invincible. She is sexploited in a sadomasochistic manner as she resists and struggles to get away from *dukun's* forced embrace.

The female sexploitation occurs during *dukun's* sexual sadomasochistic assault on Tiara. However, Tiara uses her sexploited body to her advantage. When Tiara sees an opportunity, Tiara pierces *dukun's* eye with a pair of scissors that were thrust into *dukun's* shoulder ferociously. She also stabs his heart with a harpoon that she manages to seize from him. Her attack has a sexual connotation. *Dukun* screams when the pair of scissors pierces his eye as if he receives the ultimate sexual pleasure in a sadomasochistic manner. The pierced eye also symbolises a *male gaze* punishment, because *dukun* gazed and preyed upon the other female characters before he killed them. He receives "pain for maximum pleasure"; his sexual pleasure escalates to a point where he is most excited by experiencing pain and pleasure to the maximum before he dies (see Blum on psychomasochism and psychoanalysis, 1991, p. 434). Tiara arouses "fear of castration and death while simultaneously playing on a masochistic desire for death, [sexual] pleasure, and oblivion" (Creed, 1993, p. 130). Not long after that, Tiara also echos an orgasmic moan as if she reaches her orgasm after killing him. She proves that his invulnerability and his black magic are nonsensical.

This film continues presenting the idea that women are to be enjoyed in a voyeuristic manner by means of the over-lengthy and lingering gaze on females' bodies that serves "not only to sell the film, but does so in such a way as to ensure maximum profit while keeping production costs to a minimum" (Murtagh, 2011, p. 126). The final scene of Tiara and *dukun* fighting shows that a woman is still sexualised, yet, at the same time, Tiara is able to punish a man who misuses his gaze. She symbolically punishes him for his power abuse. She represents a woman who has a power over her body and refuses to be a passive sexual object. She is as strong as a man - she can kill to survive the psychopathic and sadomasochistic *dukun's* terror.

4.3.4 Female characters representation in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) during the Post-New Order period

In *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009), the female characters refuse to follow the notion of *ibuism* (Suryakusuma, 2011). Due to a change in Indonesian culture and society after the New Order period, the impact of a growth in feminism can be seen in this film. The female characters do not adhere to the New Order's patriarchal ideology that define an ideal womanhood for being dependent, submissive, passive, and modest (Suryakusuma, 2011). The ideal woman during the New Order wore long skirts and long sleeve blouses (Arimbi, 2010). On the other hand, in this film that is created during the Post-New Order period, they wear miniskirts and tank tops. The female characters no longer embody the New Order ideal *ibuism* identity (Suryakusuma, 2011). None of the female characters are good mothers or good wives and, regarding their state of relationship, it is safe to assume that they are no longer virgins (Sutandio, 2015). The bedroom scene in the beginning of the film is not related to a married woman in the domestic sphere. It only appears briefly to emphasise that Tiara lives together with her boyfriend and has sexual relations with him, acts which can be criminalised because they are against Indonesian law (shaped by the large Muslim population) (Blackwood, 2007). Living together before marriage is not acceptable in Indonesian Muslim society (Bedner & van Huis, 2010) because a non-marital relationship is forbidden by the Islamic law on the basis that it is considered as *zina* (an illicit sex) (Halstead, 1997). In addition, Tiara's attitudes are in contrast with the New Order ideology of ideal

womanhood. Tiara is presented as independent, strong-willed, active and a survivor. However, she still cannot get away from the patriarchal society expectation for her to get married and make a family.

Tiara is represented as an independent woman. In the film, she can take care of herself and keep her niece safe from a psychopathic and sadomasochistic *dukun*. She also manages to defeat him, which indicates she is an independent character. She outsmarts and overpowers him. Being able to defeat a male figure represents her as breaking free from the patriarchal power that restrain women from moving progressively to be equal with men. Tiara's victory over *dukun* represents a victory over patriarchal power structures.

Femme Castratrice

Tiara is depicted being a strong-willed and active. After her boyfriend is killed by *dukun*, she screams out loud for that loss, which indicates her change of character from being passive to become active. She is determined to revenge her boyfriend's death. She collects necessary items from the boat such as a rope, a pair of scissors, a spear gun and a flare gun to defeat *dukun*. From the moment she picks up her weapons, she hunts down *dukun* in order to kill him. Tiara becomes a deadly *femme castratrice*, a figure who, in Creed's (1993) words "arouses fear of castration and death while simultaneously playing on a masochistic desire for death" (p. 130). Tiara's strong will results in her ability to overcome her fear of darkness and also helps her to defeat *dukun*. She is not afraid to actively look for her prey in the dark forest and fights him in her own way by being a resourceful character. She is transformed from a friendly and pleasant woman into a powerful and deadly killer. In the final scene, she is portrayed standing up on top of *dukun*'s dead body holding his harpoon, which indirectly marks Pulau Pengantin as "her territory" (Sutandio, 2015, p. 3). The camera shot is a low angle. It looks up at Tiara's whole body, which indicates that Tiara has more power than the male *dukun* who is dead. For the first time, almost at the end of the film, Tiara is portrayed from a low angle, which symbolises, albeit for a brief moment, woman starting to overpower man.

Final Girl

Tiara can be seen, additionally, as a female survivor or a *final girl* because she defeats the psychopathic and sadomasochistic *dukun*. Clover (2015) argued that the *final girl* is usually masculinised in order to survive and has a tomboyish name. However, in this film, Tiara is still a feminine figure. Tiara's name refers to the ornamental hairband jewellery worn on top of woman's head, a diadem, which symbolises her femininity and a symbol of power and prestige (see Harris, 2018). Her name is not a boyish name, a point made by Clover (2015) in relation to *final girl* trope. Creed (1993) also criticises this trope. Clover (2015) illustrated the *final girl's* castrating aspect in terms of phallicization. However, Tiara in this film is not a phallic woman who is phallicised by having phallic-like weapon, but she is a lethal *femme castratrice*, who incites fears of castration and death (see Creed, 1993). Tiara controls and manages her revenging gaze, and makes the psychopathic and sadomasochistic *dukun* her prey. She manages to take away *dukun's* harpoon and kills him with his own weapon; thus, on Creed's (1993) terms, she is a *femme castratrice*. Tiara survives the horrific killing spree through to the end of the film when she manages to defeat *dukun*. She saves herself and her cousin to live to tell the horrifying story until the next sequel of *Air Terjun Pengantin Phuket* (Phuket Bride's Waterfall, 2013).

On the other hand, despite all the strong characteristics that the main female character demonstrates at the end of the film, Tiara's future of a married life is still unknown. She still cannot escape from the patriarchal society's expectation for her to get married, because "marriage is a familial, social, and state expectation" (Martin-Anatias, 2018, p. 9). Tiara is expected to get married by her family before she gets older and becomes a leftover woman (Fincher, 2013). This is depicted in the film, when Tiara asks her boyfriend when they will get married because she is tired of being asked by her family and her peers. Tiara transforms into an active and revengeful character after finding out that her boyfriend was going to propose her, but he died at *dukun's* hand before he had the chance to propose. Her new active role represents a woman who breaks free from the New Order patriarchal power. However, the New Order ideology which has been rooted for more than three decades in Indonesia (since 1967) did not simply disappear after the New Order period ended in 1998 (Eklof, 2004). Tiara's boyfriend is killed and her fate in terms of future marriage remains

unknown. "As her male lover dies, it is she who is left alone. Her future remains unresolved, but it seems that the idealised marriage and family for which she yearns is an impossibility" (Murtagh, 2011, p. 111). The New Order patriarchal ideology still lingers during the Post-New Order period in the form of family, society and state expectations for women to settle down in the domestic sphere. However, the female representation in this film no longer totally vocalises Indonesian patriarchal ideology. In this respect, Sutandio (2015) argued such films challenge "the 'fixed' New Order gender discourse and negotiate their way against any notion of essential forms of dominant gender discourse" (p. 8).

4.3.5 *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) Conclusion

In summary, the female sexploitation in this film is used to lure viewers and to minimize the cost of production by deploying the over-lengthy *male gaze* on the females' sexualised bodies. Female bodies are still objectified and degraded in ways that are misogynistic and sadomasochistic. This film also depicts the ultimate clash between the reality of female autonomy and male desire, by portraying the main female character as rebelling against the antagonistic patriarchal character. She is no longer a passive sexual object; instead, she defeats the patriarchal figure, punishing him for abusing his patriarchal power. However, Tiara still cannot get away from the shadow of the New Order patriarchal ideology that demands her to get married and make a family.

Chapter 5 Discussion

In this chapter, I set out to explore how issues around sexualities such as prostitution, sexual violence and abortion are presented in relation with female exploitation and representation in the thesis' chosen films. In Indonesia, talking about sexuality cannot be separated from sociocultural issues and religion because they are intertwined in view of the many Muslims in Indonesian society. Issues around sexualities are shaped by Islamic norms that are defined by the Koran (Davies, 2010). In the three films analysed in this thesis - *Sundel Bolong (A Perforated Prostitute Ghost, 1981)*, *Gairah Malam III (Night Passion III, 1996)*, and *Air Terjun Pengantin (Lost Paradise – Playmates in Hell, 2009)* - sexuality issues are also influenced by Indonesian sociocultural factors, which are interconnected with Islamic teachings.

Dialmy (2010) proposed “sexual standards in Islam are paradoxical: on the one hand, the exercise of sexuality is allowed and even encouraged but, on the other hand, discrimination is enforced between male and female sexuality, between marital and non-marital sexuality” (p. 161). Indonesian Muslim women are prohibited from having non-marital sex because it is deemed as *haram* (forbidden) by Indonesian Muslim society (Bennett, 2007). From the Islamic point of view, “only the whore loses her virginity before marriage” (Dialmy, 2010, p. 164). Those who are found to be engaging in non-marital sex will be considered outcasts (Collins & Bahar, 2000). Indonesian Muslim society attempts to regulate people’s sexual expression through shame and fear (Bennett, 2005). They foster the awareness that women who engage in non-marital sex will be humiliated by society and considered to be ‘damaged’, while men who have non-marital sex are regarded as powerful and manly (Davies, 2010; Puspabening, 2016). Indonesian Muslims have set the foundations in society for what is valued, what is shunned, what is viewed as ‘right or good’ and what is perceived as ‘wrong or bad’ (Martin-Anatias, 2018). A couple who are caught in sexual activity outside of marriage will receive social punishment; they will be paraded naked or semi-naked by villagers around the neighbourhood (Global Finance Market Review Press Release, 2017). Indonesian Muslim society considers sex outside marriage as unholy and something to avoid (Bennett, 2007). Moreover, Indonesian patriarchal culture discourages sex outside marriage

by reinforcing the dangers of sex - such as an unexpected pregnancy, social punishment, abortion and death - through Indonesian media, one of which is the Indonesian horror film. *Sundel Bolong* (1981), *Gairah Malam III* (1996) and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) show each of the female lead characters having non-marital sex for sexual pleasure, which goes against Islamic teaching because the main purpose of sexual intercourse in Islam is for procreation (Bouhdiba, 2013). Thus, the three films also show the discrimination against female sexuality; the 'bad' promiscuous women such as Alisa in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) and Darmi in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) are punished by patriarchal Muslim figures.

Each of the female lead characters, Alisa in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), Darmi in *Gairah Malam III* (1996), and Tiara in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) engage in non-marital sex. Alisa in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) is a prostitute who sells sex to survive financially, and uses sex to revenge her rapists. She meets her demise twice, first when she commits suicide as a result of her depression, brought about by her exclusion from the mainstream community following her gang rape and forced pregnancy. Alisa meets her second demise when she is banished as a ghost, after seeking revenge on her rapists, by *Kyai* (a male Islamic leader). Darmi in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) is a promiscuous single mother who always has a different sex partner for her sex rituals. She sacrifices men's souls during sex rituals in order to maintain her magical power that is believed to enhance her beauty, strength and youth. She is destroyed by a patriarchal figure at the finale of the film. Tiara in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) is an unmarried woman who lives with her boyfriend outside of marriage, and her future for a married life is unknown because her boyfriend died just before proposing to her. Given that the errant lead female characters die in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), produced during the New Order, and in *Gairah Malam* (1996), created during the Transition period, the message is that women who disobey Indonesia cultural norms will receive a severe punishment. However, during the Post-New Order period, a female lead character in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) who has premarital sex not only survives death attempts, but also manages to defeat a male antagonist character. This shift shows that Indonesian society's sociocultural norms have changed from the New Order period to the Post-New Order period, and are reflected in the characterisation of the films' lead female figures. The New Order and Transition periods were characterised by patriarchal and Islamic beliefs and the associated notion of

ibuism that positions women in domestic spheres in the shadow of their husbands (Suryakusuma, 2011). Islamic teachings that support men's superiority over women have been utilised to embed patriarchal ideology in Indonesia with its Muslim majority population (Wieringa, 2006). Furthermore, during the Post-New Order period, Islam and patriarchal culture in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) appear as shadows "which seems a direct response to the feminist movement" (Derry, 2009, p. 113). The cultural norm that 'dictates' a woman should marry and make a family is still present in the film. Tiara's family demands that she get married soon to her boyfriend. As a dutiful daughter she tries to fulfil her parents demand, and asks her boyfriend when they will get married. The stigma of failing to "enter into a heterosexual marriage is seen as a failure of self and citizenship" (Boellstorff, 2005, p. 107), but now Tiara is alone and a future of a married life is still unknown after her boyfriend is killed by a psychopathic *dukun* (shaman). The two females who engage in non-marital sex, Alisa in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) and Darmi in *Gairah Malam III* (1996), are punished by death during the New Order and Transition periods. However, Tiara in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009), who commits to non-marital sex and violates the dominant discourse by challenging gender stereotypes, goes unpunished and remains alive in this film made during the Post-New Order period, due to the rise of feminism (Derry, 2009).

The next sections discuss these issues around sexuality that are shaped by the Indonesian sociocultural norms. The latter are also influenced by Islamic teachings that affect sexual practices, such as prostitution, sexual violence and abortion, issues which are presented in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), *Gairah Malam III* (1996), and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009).

5.1 Prostitution

Of the three films studies, prostitution is only depicted in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) and this mirrors the sociocultural situation in Indonesia. This film is a reflection of Indonesian society because the story itself comes from Indonesian society, not just as it is now, but also where it has been; in other words, the film is "a legitimate metaphor for society" (see Ahmed, 1992, p. 289). Prostitution in Indonesia is regulated 'loosely' because it is not precisely addressed in Indonesian law (Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights & Labor, 2008). The

Indonesian government interprets any crimes against decency or morality in general as applicable to prostitution; the latter is not specifically mentioned in the Criminal Code (Refworld, 2003). The sexual violence experienced by Alisa in the film is framed as inevitable or as something to be expected due to her previous line of work as a prostitute. It is often suggested that prostitutes are at greater risk of sexual assault because of the sexual nature of their work and the social and physical power imbalance in favour of men (Jeffreys, 2008). There are disturbing reports from prostitutes who experience abuse and violence from male clients and mainstream society (UNICEF, 2004). In *Sundel Bolong* (1981), prostitution is illustrated many times through scenes of a pimp running the prostitution business by providing 'services' to satisfy male customers. These workers are considered as lesser than other humans and, therefore, are treated as sexual objects and commodities to be bought and sold (Dworkin, 2000). Having to be a prostitute or a man's 'lust satisfier' shows how low the Indonesian woman is compared to the man (Horton, 2005).

Many Indonesian women become prostitutes because of their economic struggles and lack of life choices (Beazley, 2015). In *Sundel Bolong* (1981), Alisa does not have any family who support her financially. Thus, lacking of economic power, she uses sex to gain financial resources (see Jeffreys on the global sex trade, 2008). Given Alisa's background, she has little choice but to be a prostitute because it is her only means of survival. Once she becomes a prostitute, there is no way for her to go back. She becomes an 'other' (see de Beauvoir, 1953), and a 'lesser' human being in Indonesian patriarchal society. In addition, prostitution generally involves economic and physical pressures during recruitment and in daily practice to prevent women from leaving a brothel (Horton, 2005). In *Sundel Bolong*, it is hard for Alisa to get out of prostitution and find other ways to make money. One of the ways to stop being a prostitute is to get married. Alisa marries one of her clients to uplift her status to a more respectable one because a woman without a husband is seen as incomplete in Indonesian culture (Wolffers, Triyoga, Basuki, Yudhi, Devillé & Hargono, 1999; Martin-Anatias, 2018). In a *Sundel Bolong* (1981) scene, the pimp is shown to want Alisa back into the prostitution business again, but she refuses the offer. Unsatisfied with Alisa's response, the pimp sends five men to teach Alisa a 'lesson' through a gang rape. She suffers under physical pressures to prevent her from leaving the prostitution world.

The Indonesian government has failed in providing jobs for women who do not have financial support to access a better education (Al Jazeera English, 2010). In 2016, the percentage of Indonesians over 25 years old who have attained a bachelor's degree was under nine percent, which was the lowest among Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (Dilas, Mackie, Huang & Trines, 2019). Lack of education leads to unemployment and diminished life choices, which also causes women to become part of a marginalised community in Indonesia suffering under poor socioeconomic conditions. Prostitution has become an only option to survive for women who lack financial support.

5.2 Abortion

Abortion is only depicted in one of the three films analysed, *Sundel Bolong* (1981) as opposed to *Gairah Malam III* (1996) and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009). Accessing a legal abortion is difficult in Indonesia, often because of the religious stigma that surrounds it (Sedgh & Ball, 2008). Even professional doctors in Indonesia often discourage women and girls from terminating their pregnancies because they see abortion as a great sin (Llewellyn, 2018). Similarly, in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), during a doctor's visit scene, Alisa attempts to abort her forced pregnancy, but she is 'lectured' by a male doctor about her sinful wish to abort her innocent baby. Alisa is judged for committing a great sin and labelled as a cruel mother by a professional doctor. Alisa reaches out for help from a doctor to abort her unwanted baby, but only gets rejection and horrible accusations from him. Therefore, Alisa is a victim of poor access to healthcare; she is, in fact, refused access to healthcare.

Although knowing abortion is sinful and illegal, many Indonesian women choose to abort their unintentional pregnancies (Sedgh & Ball, 2008). The estimated number of abortions in Indonesia is about two million per year, and 300,000 Indonesian women pass away because of unsafe abortion yearly (Sedgh & Ball, 2008). The World Health Organization (WHO) target is to decrease the worldwide maternal mortality proportion to less than 70/100,000 births by 2030 (World Health Organization, 2018). Indonesia's maternal mortality rate in 2015 reached 126/100,000 live births. Meanwhile, the average maternal mortality proportion in developed countries reached 12/100,000 live births (World Health Organization, 2018). As shown on the maternal death rate, healthcare for women in Indonesia remains bleak.

In *Sundel Bolong* (1981), it is clearly depicted how hopeless Alisa's future is with her forced pregnancy. She is afraid that her husband will be disappointed, and afraid that the baby will look abnormal because she resents it, and she does not take care of herself and her unborn baby. A woman who has been raped mostly is overwhelmed with feelings of shame, guilt, sadness and anxiety and has low self-esteem (Resick & Schnicke, 1993). In a scene after she visited a doctor, Alisa is at home and having delusions about deformed babies. She cannot cope with her reality and cannot endure the rape consequences by herself, which later leads to her suicide.

Almost four decades have passed since this 1981 film, stories of rape, abortion and suicide, like those told in the film, are common in Indonesia and thus still a concerning problem. In 2018, it was reported that a 16-year-old girl committing suicide in West Java after being gang raped by eight men. This highlights the fact that a rape victim must endure the rape consequences alone. In addition, a girl was jailed for terminating her pregnancy after the six-week limit of the Indonesian Abortion Law that applies to rape (France-Press, 2018; Llewellyn, 2018). The law puts Indonesian women in a disadvantageous position because many women will not find out that they are pregnant until around 10 to 12 weeks (Llewellyn, 2018). In the film, Alisa is also in a disadvantageous position. She finds out about her unwanted pregnancy after her court trial, which in a real situation can take months to process. This indicates that Alisa only knows she is pregnant three months after the rape; she is refused an abortion by a professional doctor because the baby is formed. The abortion law position on pregnancy resulting from rape is still homework to be done by Indonesian government, and in a way that does not put the rape victim in a more disadvantageous position. "The ambiguous legal status of abortion and the fact that most abortions do not meet the narrow legal requirements of current legislation make it very difficult to monitor the safety of abortion" (Hidayana & Tenni, 2015, p. 92). In *Sundel Bolong* (1981), Alisa's death after being refused professional legal treatment for her unwanted pregnancy reflects the reality that safe abortion is not an option. Alisa also tries to have an illegal traditional abortion, such as having a massage by a traditional birth attendant or taking certain herbal medicines, but, due to the stigma surrounding abortion for being

haram (forbidden) and sinful, her decision is not supported by others and she is refused again. These refusals lead her to commit suicide.

5.3 Sexual Violence

Sexual violence occurs in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), *Gairah Malam III* (1996) and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009). In *Sundel Bolong*, Alisa is taught a 'lesson' because she refused to be a prostitute again. The five men rape Alisa and justify their action based on the claim she deserves it. This scene is an example of the normalisation of sexual violence in Indonesian horror films, and as a form of female sexploitation. The normalisation of sexual violence against women is a dangerous effect of how media present how women are treated. In addition, sex in Indonesian media is portrayed as a moral threat leading to promiscuity, cohabitation, rape, pregnancy, abortion and prostitution (Zae, 2002). Many rapes committed in Indonesia might occur because of the normalisation of rape scenes in Indonesian horror films. The normalisation of sexual violence in popular media reinforces sexual and cultural attitudes that lead to rape and sexual harassment in real life (Coy, Wakeling & Garner, 2011). This is evident from many rapes that are committed in Indonesia on a frequent basis (Yi, 2016). For instance, the data on sexual violence in Indonesia, of the kind experienced by Alisa and as portrayed in *Sundel Bolong* are also disturbing. In 2015, there were more than 1,700 reported rape cases in Indonesia (Damayana, 2017). In 2016, the Central Statistics Bureau (*Badan Pusat Statistik*, BPS) stated that one in three Indonesian females aged 15 to 64 experienced sexual violence (Damayana, 2017). In 2017, the Women's National Commission (*Komisi Nasional Perempuan*) documented an escalation in gender-based violence, with more than 348,400 reported cases in Indonesia (Fierdha & Vasandani, 2018). Meanwhile, in the first three months of 2017, 26 gang rapes were reported in Indonesia, and three of the victims died (Asian Correspondent, 2017; Sufa, 2018). Similarly, in *Sundel Bolong*, Alisa's death from suicide occurred because she was afraid and too ashamed to face her husband for having someone else's baby. She thinks that she is no longer an ideal wife for her husband.

When a rape is committed, many people in Indonesian society blame the victim. Victim blaming not only happened during the New Order period, but also continues to the present day (Wahyuni & Mariani, 2018). A recent survey found more than 90 percent of rape victims did not file a report to the police, and the reason given for not reporting the rape crime to the police was the fear that the rape victims would be blamed (Saraswati, 2016). Likewise, in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), Alisa is blamed for causing the rape that happens to her because she was a prostitute. This is depicted during the court trial scene, wherein the audience blame Alisa after hearing a prosecutor's statement that her gang rape must have been consensual, and so her statement of being an honourable woman is doubted. In the film, the male audience in the court start to laugh, mock and blame Alisa. The patriarchal society does not believe Alisa's statements because of her past as a prostitute. She is doubly victimized; she is gang raped and patriarchal society disbelieves her story. This marks a clear masculine-feminine binary opposition: the woman is labelled wrong, and the patriarchal society's judgement is right to blame her.

Victim blaming is a dominant form of symbolic violence done by a patriarchal society to maintain its power. It is an "invisible domination" which is legitimised in the society and in mass culture such as in film (Coy, Wakeling & Garner, 2011, p. 442). In the film scene, the prosecutor blames and ridicules Alisa's past directly in front of the audience. His action is one of non-physical violence, yet it is a form of violence in that it symbolises invisible forms of domination by patriarchal society in Indonesia. Symbolic violence is a misrecognition of power inequalities (Bourdieu, 2004). It is a way of replicating gender hierarchy, strengthening the gender order by treating women as inferior to men (Bourdieu, 2004; Millet, 2016). In *Sundel Bolong* (1981), Alisa experiences the symbolic violence by being cast out after her gang rape.

Sexual violence occurs in *Gairah Malam III* (1996). Much of Indonesian patriarchal society believes that if there is a rape, it occurs because the women wear revealing clothes that attract men. Women are forced to take on the responsibility for men's sexual arousal. The rape scene in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) is portrayed in a film within a film, where four women who wear revealing clothes are raped by a group of men. This film conveys a global issue

message that women have to wear modest clothing to avoid unwanted attention from the opposite sex. In Indonesia, showing a generous amount of skin is against Islamic norms, and is condemned by many in Indonesian society (Candraningrum, 2018). Indonesian norms, influenced by those of Islam, also define an ideal woman as an untainted being who preserves virginity until her marriage (Puspabening, 2016). In Indonesian society, if women are not virgins, men will not marry them; this is because they are labelled as 'damaged products' (Puspabening, 2016). Indonesian patriarchal society has had power over women and their bodies, and this continues into present-day Indonesia.

It is not surprising, then, that sexual violence also occurs in the more recent film, *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009); women who wear clothes that are too revealing and publicly show their promiscuousness are slashed and killed. It is Islamic 'common sense' that promiscuous women are considered as whores or prostitutes because they were deflowered before marriage (Dialmy, 2010). Without an unbroken hymen, Muslim women are considered as 'damaged' (Dialmy, 2010). In the film, the women's revealing clothes and sexual promiscuousness attract the unwanted attention of a psychopathic and sadomasochistic *dukun*. They are taught a 'lesson' by patriarchal society for their behaviour. However, sexual morality is context-dependent in the Post-New Order period (Beazley, 2015), which is shown in Tiara's character who also engages in non-marital sex and wears revealing clothes. Tiara, the female lead, is the one who gives a 'lesson' to the psychopathic and sadomasochistic *dukun* for misusing his gaze toward, and his sexual power over women. In Indonesia, women who wear sexy clothing are mainly targeted for sexual harassment in the street (South China Morning Post, 2019). The harassment usually takes the form of catcalling to get a woman's attention regarding her body or clothing, and sometimes that leads to touching or poking women's private parts such as breasts or buttocks because women are still the object of sexual consumption (Wright & Tokunaga, 2016). If they are raped, the patriarchal society will blame the women for their minimalist clothing.

Sexual violence repetitively occurs in the three Indonesian horror films. The depiction of sexual violence has both positive and negative implications for Indonesian society. The positive side is the occurrence of sexual violence against women in these films highlights

that Indonesia still faces an alarming level of gender-based violence. It provides strong evidence for Indonesian policy makers to end sexual violence against women. On the other hand, the portrayal of sexual violence in Indonesian horror films, has negative implications because 'normalising' sexual violence against women through popular media can lead to promiscuity, rape and prostitution (Zae, 2002).

In conclusion, comparing the stories of *Sundel Bolong* (1981), *Gairah Malam III* (1996) and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) with Indonesia's real situation, based on sexual violence data, is a way to underline an alarming issue using pop culture products. The narratives of these three films reveal a strong connection between violence against the injustice suffered by Indonesian women. Alisa's suicidal death in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) can be avoided if she receives emergency reproductive healthcare. Strict punishment for the rapists will also prevent *Sundel Bolong* from having her own revenge. In Indonesia, fewer than 22 percent of men who committed sexual violence suffered legal consequences (Damayana, 2017). If Indonesia does not improve its reproductive health services for rape victims and allows rape perpetrators to go free, then Indonesia will continue *Sundel Bolong's* legacy on to Indonesia's next generation. The three films demonstrate a deep ambivalence towards women and sexuality that mirrors many of the inequalities that women face in everyday life in Indonesian society.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

This research was guided by two research questions: “How is female sexploitation portrayed in Indonesian horror films?” and “How are female characters in Indonesian horror films represented over the New Order, the Transition and the Post-New Order time frame?” Three parts contributed to answering these questions. First, this thesis analysed the female sexploitation and representation that has shaped the portrayal of women in Indonesian patriarchal culture. Second, this thesis progressively built up a picture of female sexploitation and representation in three Indonesian horror films, *Sundel Bolong (A Perforated Prostitute Ghost, 1981)*, *Gairah Malam III (1996)* and *Air Terjun Pengantin (2009)*. Third, this thesis explored the concepts and meanings around gender-based issues in Indonesia during the New Order, the Transition and the Post-New Order periods.

This chapter summarises the major findings of the thesis, the aim of which was to bring attention to the portrayal of female sexploitation and female representation in Indonesian horror films using three examples from different time periods. Female sexploitation and representation are always carry more than just their literal meaning. The research revealed that female sexploitation is presented in each film by sexualising females’ bodies through the over-lengthy and lingering *male gaze* in each film, in order to lower production costs and at the same time to lure viewers. In addition, female representations have changed from those in the New Order period to those in the Post-New Order period due to the demise of Suharto’s regime and the rise of feminism in Indonesia. Female characters in the newer Indonesian horror film, as exemplified by *Air Terjun Pengantin (2009)*, appear to be more independent, active and no long victims compared to female characters in *Sundel Bolong (1981)*, and *Gairah Malam III (1996)* who become victims.

6.1 Summary of key findings

In analysing *Sundel Bolong (1981)*, *Gairah Malam III (1996)* and *Air Terjun Pengantin (2009)*, some important issues were discovered regarding female sexploitation and representation. The three films consistently present female sexploitation in ways that objectify female sexual attractiveness; they are often mistreated in a degrading manner for the commercial

purpose of luring viewers (Imanjaya, 2010; Murtagh, 2011). However, it should be noted female sexploitation in these three Indonesian horror films have less nudity compared to the Western horror film context that presents gratuitous nudity or softcore pornography (Schaefer, 2007). The consistency of female sexploitation in the three Indonesian horror films emphasise Indonesian women still cannot escape being objects of the look through the *male gaze* (Mulvey, 1975). In addition, Indonesian horror films, especially during the Transition period, cannot survive from the times of economic crisis without profiteering from the display of women's sexualised bodies.

The three films were produced in three different political periods, which affected the female representation in each film. The main female characters, Alisa and Darmi, in the two films during the New Order and the Transition periods, are portrayed as *abject* beings - respectively, as a ghost in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), and a witch in *Gairah Malam* (1996), - and both are depicted as promiscuous women. In contrast, the main female character, Tiara, in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) is not an *abject* being. Furthermore, the three films adhere to Creed's (1993) *monstrous feminine*, which has many forms such as a *vagina dentata* and a *femme castratrice* in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), a witch and a *femme castratrice* in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) and a *femme castratrice* in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009). All three female characters are monstrous in different forms, and they try to break through the boundary and threaten the patriarchal system order. Even though *femme castratrice* presents in each of the three films, the threatening *femme castratrice* in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) and in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) meet their demise at the end of the films; they still cannot win against patriarchal society. In contrast, Tiara in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) is a *femme castratrice* who stays alive and wins against the male antagonist character, which can be understood as a result of the rise of feminism during the Post-New Order period.

Female representation in this thesis is also analysed in relation to *ibuism* notion, which is based on Indonesian patriarchal ideology that characterises ideal womanhood in terms of being a 'good' wife and mother (Suryakusuma, 2011). *Ibuism* can be seen clearly in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) and *Gairah Malam III* (1996), which both support women's subordination to men, which indirectly normalises the construction of the ideal women as helpless, passive

and submissive. Furthermore, women who are against the patriarchal rule will be eliminated by patriarchal figures: Alisa in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) is banished by *kyai* (a Muslim male religious leader); and Darmi in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) is destroyed by a male protagonist character. Both promiscuous women in *Sundel Bolong* (1981) and *Gairah Malam III* (1996) are punished. Nevertheless, during the Post-New Order period, the *ibuism* notion does not appear as strongly as in the two previous films. However, it is still there, lingering like a shadow in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009). Tiara's family demands that she get married soon. She does not get killed or punished, even though she goes against patriarchal rule. Instead, she defeats the antagonist male character. She constructs a more empowering image of a modern Indonesian woman who survives through to the end of the film.

6.1.1 *Sundel Bolong* (1981)

The portrayals of females' sexualized bodies in the *Sundel Bolong* (1981) narrative highlight during the time that this film was made, Indonesian society was marked by a gender power imbalance. For example, female sexual exploitation within the film shows that women are merely sex objects and are inferior to men. The gang rape in the film reflects that Indonesia, at this time, faced gender-based sexual violence. Alisa kills herself because of the injustice that she experienced that led to her depression, yet her rapists do not face legal repercussions. Indonesian law is supposed to protect a rape victim, but the law victimises and blames Alisa's past as a prostitute. Thus, this film can be interpreted as the female gender responding to male sexual violence and power dominance because, after Alisa's death, she seeks revenge in the form of a ghost, killing her rapists. She is depicted as an example of Kristeva's (1982) *abject* being with her new Sundel Bolong ghost form, which has a bloody hole in the back filled with living maggots. The hole represents that which Creed (1993) termed *vagina dentata*, which she only shows to her former rapists once she is ready to kill them one by one after luring them with offers that are hard to deny. Her revengeful actions also categorise her Creed's (1993) *femme castratrice*, who actively looks for her former rapists to exact her revenge. After Alisa revenges her unjust death and kills all her rapists, she still cannot win against the patriarchy. She is rejected by her husband and banished to the afterlife. Alisa/Sundel Bolong's character is banished by a patriarchal figure because of

her transgression and promiscuousness. Her banishment is to restore the patriarchal order, which implies that women must follow the patriarchal rules, but even women who do follow the rules still appear to become victims during the New Order period. Women are only accepted in patriarchal society when they are under the control and protection of their husbands.

6.1.2 *Gairah Malam III* (1996)

Female sexploitation in *Gairah Malam III* (1996) is presented by depicting the female characters in a sexualised and degrading manner in order to lure viewers. They are portrayed by accentuating the females' breasts and other sexualised body parts. These characters are reduced to sexual objects in order to maximise the film's profit (Murtagh, 2011). In other words, women are depicted as less worthy of respect than men. The female character representation in this film shows that Darmi is depicted as one of Creed's (1993) *monstrous feminine* categories, the promiscuous and monstrous *witch*. Darmi is also punished by a patriarchal figure because she does not follow the patriarchal set of rules and does not adhere to Suryakusuma's (2011) notion of *ibuism* for being a 'good' wife and mother; these are the characteristics of an ideal woman that are advantageous for Indonesian patriarchal society to control woman. Darmi actively kills her male victims during sexual rituals, which makes her one of Creed's (1993) *femme castratrice* in order to maintain her magical power for being youthful. Thus, Darmi's transgression is eradicated to safeguard the patriarchal order because she is seen as a threat.

6.1.3 *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009)

The female sexploitation trend continued during the Post-New Order period in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009). The female sexploitation scenes are portrayed in ways that sexualise women's bodies more than men's. The camera lingers and consumes the female body through what Mulvey (1975) called the *male gaze*; this serves not just to market the film, but to do so in such a way as to ensure maximum revenue while keeping the film production costs low (Murtagh, 2011). The female sexploitation in *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) is used to lure viewers by offering them the over-lengthy gaze on the females' sexualised bodies.

In this film, female bodies are still objectified and degraded in ways that are misogynistic and sadomasochistic.

In addition, *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) also depicts the ultimate clash between the reality of female autonomy and male desire, by having the main female character, Tiara, rebel against the antagonistic male character, *dukun*. Tiara, with her revenging gaze, looks for *dukun*, who killed her boyfriend. Her new active role in looking for *dukun* and defeating him make her a *femme castratrice* (one of the *monstrous feminine* explored by Creed, 1993). Tiara kills him, a punishment for abusing his patriarchal power. Thus, this film challenges the sexual politics that positions women as unequal to men by having a female survivor who defeats the antagonistic male character. Her victory is a form of empowerment for women. However, Tiara still cannot escape from the shadow of the New Order patriarchal ideology that demands she get married and start a family. For her, marriage in the future remains an unknown.

6.1.4 Limitations and recommendation

Several limitations are present in this research. First, there are newer examples of Indonesian horror films between 2009 and the present time that are left unexplored. However, the three films analysed were chosen because they were representative of particular key eras in Indonesia's history. This field of research would benefit from future investigations into trends appearing across Indonesian horror films after 2009. Second, the appearance in the films of castrating women or *femme castratrice* puts into question Mulvey's (1975) *visual pleasure* theory, which positions the male viewers with the controlling gaze and positions the females on screen display as the object of the gaze. When women are portrayed as the active castrator or *femme castratrice* in the horror genre, are they allowed to access a position of empowerment? Or, are they fetishised as dangerous sex objects? Thus, further research regarding women as *femme castratrice* in relation to their position from the viewers' point of view would be a matter of theoretical and empirical interest.

6.2 Conclusion

Female sexploitation in *Sundel Bolong* (1981), *Gairah Malam III* (1996), and *Air Terjun Pengantin* (2009) is used for Indonesia's sexual politics, where the social reality is constructed based on the interests of the dominant group in patriarchal society. The ongoing theme of female sexploitation in the three horror films by depicting women as sexual objects indirectly reinforces that social reality whereby women's sexuality is dominated by men. Women are positioned as sexual objects in the three films only to satisfy male characters' sexual needs, and to confirm the privilege of men's power over women. The three Indonesian horror films contain female character representation that changes over the New Order, the Transition and the Post-New Order time frame. During the New Order and the Transition periods, Indonesian women were confined to the domestic sphere, and were required to be passive, submissive and dependent upon men, thus adhering to the *ibuism* notion of wifedom and motherhood (Suryakusuma, 2011). In contrast, during the Post-New Order period, women are not confined to domestic spheres, but they are still urged to get married and start a family.

Comparing the issues of abortion, prostitution, and sexual violence in the three films and in the 'real' life in Indonesian society, is a way to underline alarming issues using pop culture products. The narratives of these three films reveal a strong connection between violence against the injustice suffered by Indonesian women. The three films demonstrate a deep ambivalence towards women and sexuality that mirrors many of the inequalities that women face in everyday life in Indonesian society.

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Appendix

Some terminologies that have been used in this thesis are:

Objectification:	Treating a woman as a sexual object. The phenomenon celebrates women exploitation by the reduction of women to sexual body parts (Nussbaum, 1995)
Sexual object:	A woman viewed by a man only in terms of her sexual attractiveness (<i>Oxford Dictionary</i> , 2006). “sexual representation that examines how woman functions as a sign for patriarchy as its other, its spectacle and its subordinate thing” (Attwood, 2004, p. 7)
Female sexploitation (in Indonesian horror films):	The portrayal of female characters as seductive and as sex symbols, their bodies are exploited to sell the films for easy profit (Imanjaya, 2010).
Sexual politics:	“The principles determining the relationship of the sexes; relations between the sexes regarded in terms of power” (<i>Oxford Dictionary</i> , 2006). A regulation that links sexuality to power-structured relationships and, as such, it involves control techniques that are designed to maintain power (Wieringa, 2002).