

**TATTOO AND AMERICAN MASCULINITY DEPICTED
IN *THE EXPENDABLES 3* MOVIE**

UNDERGRADUATE THESIS

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**STUDY PROGRAM OF ENGLISH
DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES
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UNIVERSITAS BRAWIJAYA**

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DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

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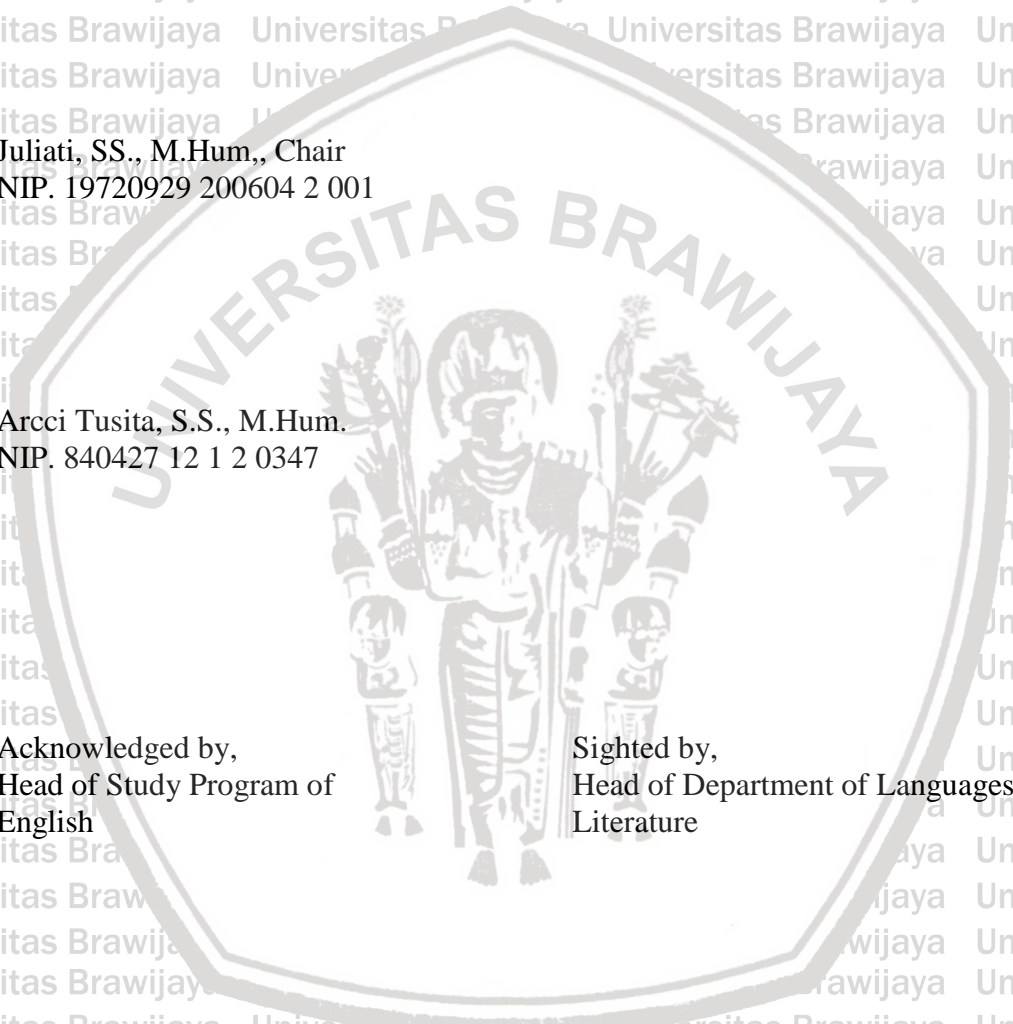
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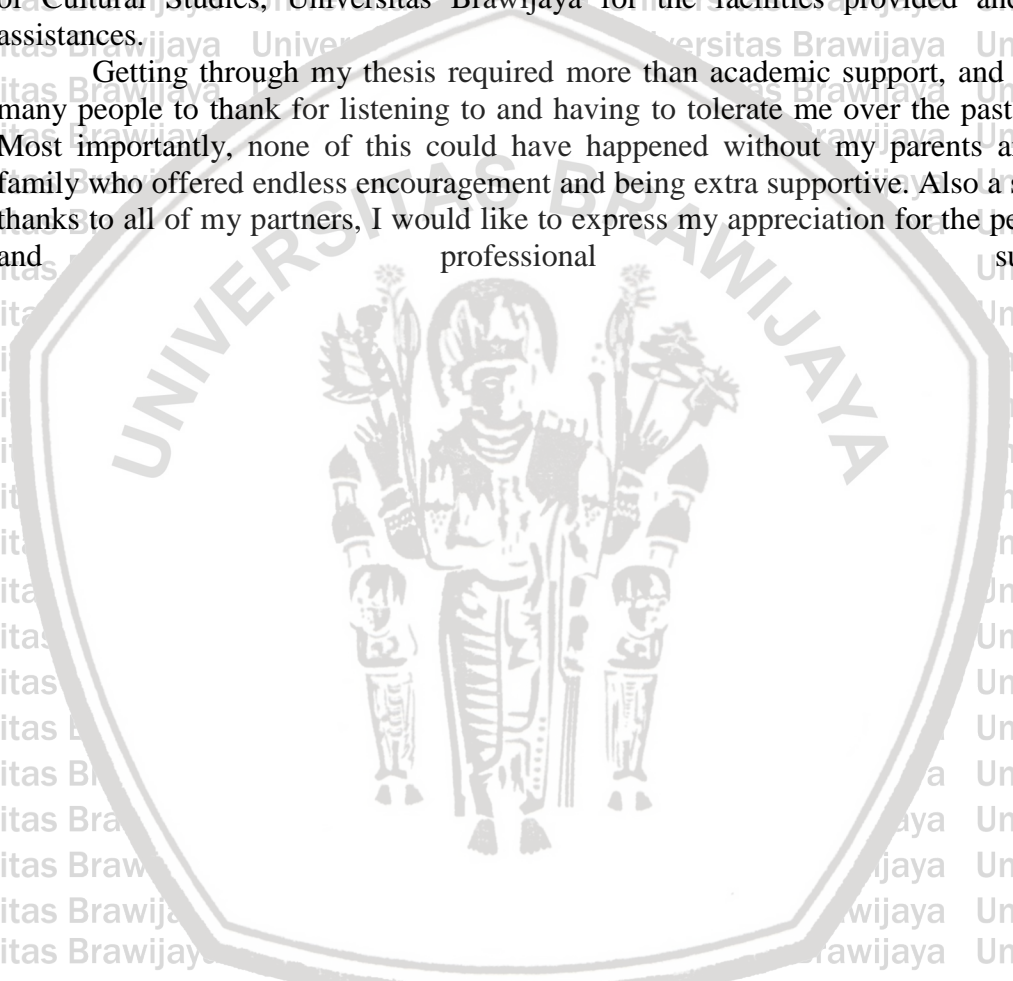
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ABSTRACT

Gumay, Tegar Prahara. 2015., **Tattoo And American Masculinity Depicted In *The Expendables 3* Movie**. Study program of English, Department of Language and Literature, Faculty of Cultural Studies, Universitas Brawijaya. Supervisor: Arcci Tusita.

Keywords: Symbol, Tattoo, Masculinity, Dyadic model, *The Expendables 3*.

Since violence is closely related with masculinity in America, there are some American movies that have those concept and theme to bring up the issues of masculinity. One of the movies that has those theme and issues is third sequel of *The Expendables* movie by Patrick Huges entitled *The Expendables 3*. The movie is included as an action movie when the act of the characters exploits man power with violence. All of the characters has various tattoos that stand as a symbol which described their man power. The purpose of the research is to elaborate the relation between the meanings of the symbol and masculinity aspect.

This research uses Dyadic theory of sign by Saussure to discover the meaning and read what are the tattoos symbolize. Because of the object is tattoos which exist in reality, Dyadic theory will be implied in more materialistic way than what Saussure stated in his theory before. Researcher uses tattoos as the signifier and analyzes them to find what those are signified, related with masculinity. This also uses verbal data to support the primary data which are tattoos.

In this movie, the characters have various tattoos that has some different meanings. The tattoos symbolize their attitude, behavior and also their personality. Some tattoos also have similar shape but different meaning. It is like what tiger tattoo suitable with Barney Ross, because of his attitude and also personality as an American man that can be stand as a figure of American masculinity.

The writer suggests that the other researcher can analyze another issue about tattoo on female character, because there is also a female character that has a tattoo. There are also some movies that have some tattoo and also symbol, such as *Da Vinci code*

ABSTRAK

Gumay, Tegar Prahara. 2015., *Tato Dan Maskulinitas Amerika Tergambar Dalam Film The Expendables 3*. Studi Program Sastra Inggris, Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra, Fakultas Ilmu Budaya, Universitas Brawijaya. Pembimbing: Arcci Tusita.

Kata kunci: Simbol, Tato, Maskulinitas, Dyadic model, *The Expendables 3*.

Kekerasan sangat kental hubungannya dengan maskulinitas, beberapa film yang diproduksi di Amerika mengangkat konsep kekerasan tersebut untuk memunculkan persoalan dalam ranah maskulinitas. Salah satu film yang mengangkat tema tersebut adalah film karya Patrick Huges yang merupakan film ketiga *The Expendables* yang berjudul *The Expendables 3*. Film yang termasuk dalam genre aksi yang memunculkan kekerasan serta kekuatan fisik tokoh-tokohnya. Semua tokoh dalam film ini memiliki beberapa tato berbeda yang berperan sebagai simbol yang mewakili kepribadiannya masing-masing. Tujuan dari penelitian ini untuk mengetahui hubungan antara arti dari simbol tato dan maskulinitas.

Penelitian ini menggunakan teori “Dyadic model” milik Saussure untuk menggali arti serta membaca simbol yang ada pada tato. Dikarenakan objek penelitian adalah tato, maka dari itu penerapan teori tersebut akan lebih mengarah lebih ke ranah relistis, dibandingkan dengan apa yang Saussure sebutkan. Peneliti disini menggunakan tato sebagai “signifier” atau penanda dan menganalisa penanda tersebut untuk menemukan arti dari penanda tersebut, hubungannya dengan maskulinitas. Penelitian ini menyertakan dialog sebagai objek pendukung dalam penelitian tato sebagai objek utama penelitiannya.

Dalam film tersebut, masing-masing karakter memiliki tato yang berbeda bentuk serta artinya. Tato tersebut menyimbolkan kepribadian serta perilaku dari tokoh tersebut. Beberapa tokoh memiliki bentuk tato yang hampir sama namun memiliki arti yang berbeda. Seperti contoh tato milik Barney Ross yang berbentuk harimau, memiliki kecocokan dengan karakter dan kekuatan fisik pemilik tato tersebut yang ideal sebagai figure maskulinitas Amerika.

Penulis menyarankan kepada peneliti lain untuk menganalisa tato yang terdapat pada karakter perempuan dalam film tersebut. Selain itu penelitian terhadap beberapa simbol dan tanda dapat dilakukan juga pada film lain, seperti *Da Vinci code*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

Literary works is a kind of human invention comes from people's creativity or idea. It is generally described as a written or spoken material. But broadly it is used to describe anything that come from human's idea and works. In literary works there is a kind of work that presents to the people called drama. Drama is specific of fiction represented in performance (Elam, 1980, 98). Nowadays, people are less familiar with drama that perform on the stage, but mostly know about film in television which has the same elements of drama. Having all the elements such as plot, characterization and also theme, film can be analyzed by using the same technique as drama.

The Expendables is an American action film directed by Patrick Hughes and written by Creighton Rothenberger, Katrin Benedikt, and an American actor Sylvester Stallone. It is divided into three sequels which the first *Expendables* was released in 2010, the second was released two years after that, and the third movie was released in 2014. Its story is about the mercenaries in America that mostly take a job from the American government like CIA and FBI to confront any kind of terrorism. Eventhough the movie is divided into three sequels, but the plot is not connected to each other. The story in the movie is finished in one sequel, so the others have their own plot, only the characters that connected within the sequels.

Considering that tattoo as the object of the research found in the third movie, the writer chooses to analyze it rather than the first and the second one.

Since the film contains violence, the character is mostly a man with the capability to kill people, martial art, and also weapon professional. In that case, the film is trying to show the value of masculinity for man, with showing the man with violence, physical strength, aggressive, and also the body full of tattoo. As Loeser (2002 p. 56) states that postures, tension and texture of a muscular body are one of the main ways in which the power of men is seen. Since the movie consists of the data needed by the writer, in this case tattoos, the writer chooses this movie as a data source.

In *The Expendables 3*, people often see the tattoo that make the actor not only look aggressive and manly, but also the tattoo contains a value for the character that has it. The tattoo that seen in it has an important symbol, although it is not a part of the main story itself. However, making a tattoo for men is like using their body as a display for the others to show that well shaped body is one of the important points that must emerge in man.

Tattoo was firstly known in United States shortly after the revolution, it was used to avoid the British navy to recognize the American sailor, but now tattoo is more like lifestyle in western civilization. For young American, tattoo can be described as a symbol to make them different from the generation before.

The tattoo “undergone dramatic redefinition” and has shifted from a form of deviance to an acceptable form of expression (Roberts, 2012, 153). It became a

popular culture in many part of the word, such as Europe, America and Asia. It is the same with what Foxnews has posted in their official website (foxnews.com) a poll result about tattoo in U.S that the number of people wearing tattoo is increasing. The growth of tattoo make some of the people use it as an industry, like a fashion. Using artist to draw a tattoo with such a modern tool and design, also use public figure to wear the tattoo that make people want to do so. It is stated also in Ibisworld industrial article in ibisworld.com that tattoo artist industry has exhibited growth over the past five years. Many people draw a tattoo in his body for some reasons, for man, it is used to describe their power, and also their faith of something. For women, it is also as a symbol of beauty and emotion. Those all described in article entitle *50 Most Popular Tattoo Designs and Meanings for Men and Women* in stylesatlife.com.

The writer will conduct a research about tattoo as a symbol by using a Semiotic approach and theory. One of the theories used to analyze symbol as a sign of something is a theory about sign that consist of two different elements that connected to each other. It is called dyadic model by Saussure, which is a model of sign composed by signifier and signified that cannot be separated. The relation between signifier and signified create a signification that is psychologically accepted. It is like illustration using Saussurean diagram in Chandler's book entitle *Semiotics the Basic*. He states about word "tree" that stand as a signifier, can signify what a tree looks like in our fundamental idea, although it is not related to real thing (Chandler 2007, 15). Saussure stressed in verbal sign in linguistics scale, but it also can be used in nonverbal sign, such as written literary works. The

idea is to transcript a sign by analyzing what is the signifier and what the signifier signify something.

Ferrante (1963, 269) states that masculinity also called manliness is a value that associated with boys and men. The value is including behavior, characteristic, and also biological role. This makes it distinct from the sex definition of male and female, but also both men and women can treat by this value. The concept of masculinity can vary from one culture to another that has different point of view in masculinity. The value about masculinity is told through generation by the culture. It is like an ideology that shaped into people mind by society. Proven by Murray (2000, 248) in his book about human development, he states that traits traditionally cited as masculine include courage, independence and asservativeness.

Consider that the part of tattoo symbolizes many purpose and meaning for the wearer, the specific tattoo that shown in *The Expendables 3* film consist of a skull with the crow in the top, and a ribbon written expendable below the skull, which all of the expendables members has it. Some people see that the tattoo is only for a style like cloth or jeans, but this movie has another point of view about the tattoo. In the beginning of the story, new recruit of expendables are not wearing the tattoo and the entire former member underestimate the new recruit due to their age and style. However in the end, after the mission is accomplished, the former members of *The Expendables* believe that all of the new recruits are worthy to wear the tattoo. It seems that the tattoo has symbol and meaning that not

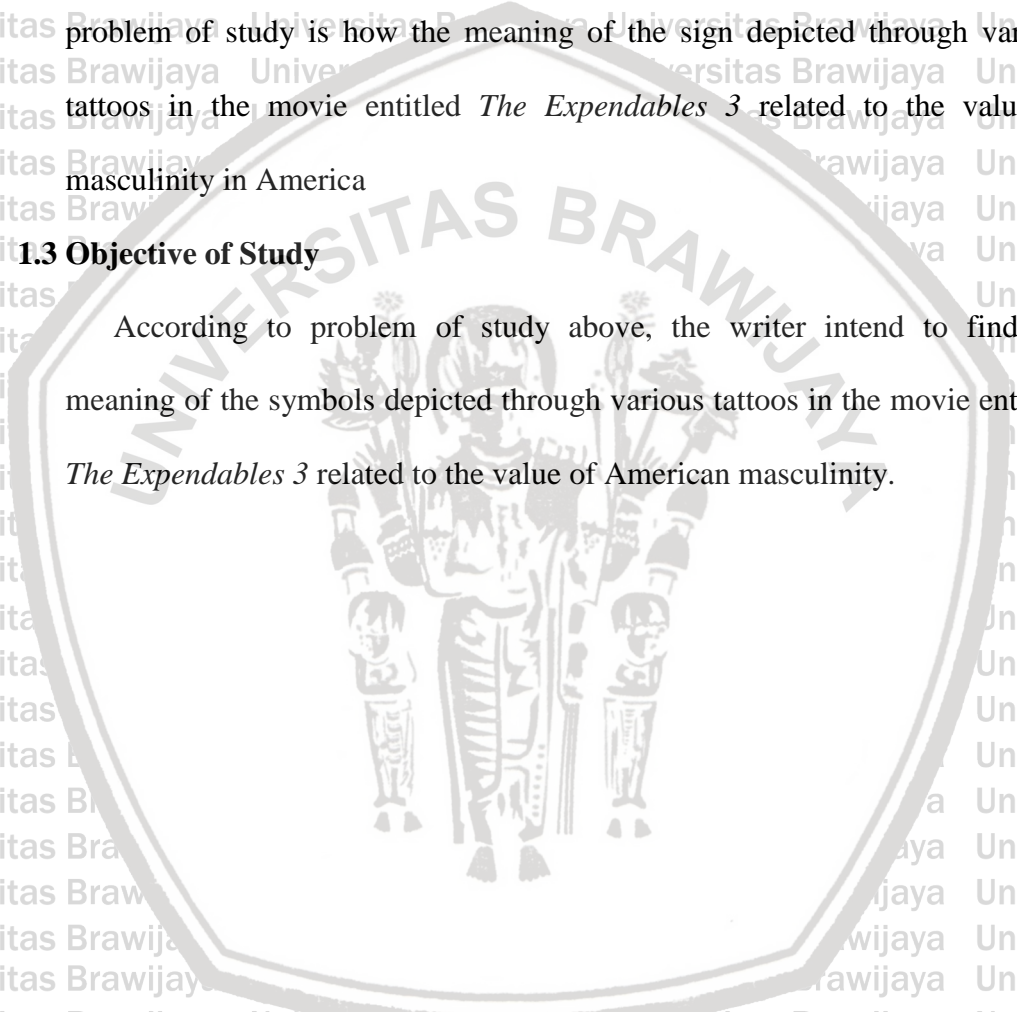
all people can wear it. Intended to determine the definition of the symbol, reason and value of the expendables tattoo in this film, this research is conducted.

1.2 Problem of Study

Based on the introduction about the background of the study above, the problem of study is how the meaning of the sign depicted through various tattoos in the movie entitled *The Expendables 3* related to the value of masculinity in America

1.3 Objective of Study

According to problem of study above, the writer intend to find the meaning of the symbols depicted through various tattoos in the movie entitled *The Expendables 3* related to the value of American masculinity.



CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED THEORY AND LITERATURE

2.1 Review of Related Theories

In this chapter, the writer will explain about the theories and approaches that used to analyze the tattoo as a symbol of masculinity and acknowledgement in *The Expendables 3* movie. The approaches and the theories are described as follow,

2.1.1 Structuralism Approach

Structuralism is a theory that human's culture must be understood in terms of their relationship to larger system of structure. It deals to uncover the structures that lie beneath the things that humans do, feel and think. Simply, as what philosopher Simon Blackburn (2008, p.323) summarized that structuralism is the belief that phenomena of human life are not intelligible except through their interrelations. These relations constitute a structure, and behind local variations in the surface phenomena there are constant laws of abstract culture.

In literary theory criticism, structuralism argues that there must be a structure within every text, which can explain why it is easier for experienced readers to interpret a text than non-experienced. Barry (2002, 39-60) also states that in literary theory, structuralist criticism relates literary text to a larger structure, which may be a particular genre, a range of intertextual connections, a model of a universal narrative structure, or a system of recurrent patterns or motifs.

2.1.2 Semiotic Theories about Sign

The research using semiotics theory to analyze the meaning of the tattoo in the movie. The tattoo which is stand as a symbol that take the important role in the movie itself. Semiotics itself is a study of sign system. It explores how words and other sign make meaning. In semiotics, a sign is anything that stand for something other than itself. One of the famous theories is Dyadic model of sign by Ferdinand de Saussure.

Saussure in his book entitled Course in General Linguistics, published in 1974 declares that semiotics is a science which studies the role of signs as part of social life. While according to Charles Pierce, semiotics is the formal doctrine of signs which was closely related to logic (Pierce in Chandler, 2007, 3).

2.1.3 Dyadic Model of Sign by Saussure

Saussure's model of sign is called Dyadic model of sign. The model consists of two part of sign vehicle, called signifier and signifier, and its meaning.

Saussure is focusing the theory of Dyadic model in the concept of linguistics sign.

He states about the linguistics concept that:

A linguistic sign is not a link between a thing and a name, but between a concept [*signified*] and a sound pattern [*signifier*]. The sound pattern is not actually a sound; for a sound is something physical. A sound pattern is the hearer's psychological impression of a sound, as given to him by the evidence of his senses. This sound pattern may be called a 'material' element only in that it is the representation of our sensory impressions. The sound pattern may thus be distinguished from the other element associated with it in a linguistic sign. This other element is generally of a more abstract kind: the concept. (Saussure 1983, 66)

According to Saussure, both part of the dyadic model about linguistics sign, signifier and signified, is merely the abstract form or only the concept in human mind. However, nowadays the dyadic concept is adopted to be more realistic than only the concept. The signifier is now commonly interpreted as the material or physical or form of the sign, it is something which can be seen, heard, touched, smelled, or tasted, as with Roman Jakobson's *signans*, which he described as the external and perceptible part of the sign (Jakobson 1963b, 111; 1984b, 98).

Dyadic model of sign by Saussure consists of signifier and signified which is cannot be separated, Saussure stressed that signifier and signified were as inseparable as the two sides of a piece of paper (Saussure 1983, 111). Saussure presented these elements as wholly interdependent, neither pre-existing the other.

Within the context of spoken language, a sign could not consist of sound without sense or of sense without sound. Saussure argued that signs only make sense as part of a formal, generalized and abstract system. His conception of meaning is purely *structural* and *relational* rather than *referential*, the purpose of his theory

about sign is given to relationships rather than to things, the meaning of the sign is focus in the result of the relation between signifier and signified. In addition

Saussure only believes that sign only gives meaning in relation of signifier and signified which is only exist in human mind. Saussure define signs in terms of systematic relationship between signifier and signified rather than the reference of any material things. Saussure not define signs in terms of some essential or intrinsic nature. For Saussure, signs refer primarily to each other. Within the

language system, ‘everything depends on relations’ (Saussure 1983, 121). No sign makes sense on its own but only relation to other sign.

2.1.3.1 Signifier and Signified

According to Saussure, a sign consists of two elements that cannot be separated, which is called “signifier” and “signified”. These elements of the dyadic model emerge in abstract form which only exist in psychological field.

Signifier is terms that use in the component of sign, simply refers to word or sound pattern. As what Saussure (1983, 66) states that a linguistic sign is not a link between a thing and a name, but it is between a concept (signified) and sound pattern (signifier). Relation between signifier and signified called signification.

The illustration is when people listening about sound “chair”, that sound is stand as a signifier. Meanwhile a signified is what the signifier denotes, so the sound “chair” will make the idea of the chair itself emerge in human mind.

These elements of sign model will be used to analyze the data, which are tattoos in The Expendables 3 movie. To find a meaning from the tattoos, the writer will determine first which one is the signifier and which one is called signified from the particular tattoos. After those two elements are found, the writer will analyze the meaning from each tattoos using the others approaches in this research. Signifier and signified from the Saussure will guide the writer to know well about the elements of the sign in the tattoos.

2.1.4 Film Studies

To interpret the film, the writer needs to use film studies to understand the meaning of the movie itself. Sikov (2010, p.5) stated that film studies deals with the problem of reality and representation by making an initial assumption and proceeding logically from it, this assumption is that all representation have meaning. The writer will apply the film studies to help in interpreting the scene from the movie entitle *The Expendables 3*.

Sikov (2010, p.6) also states that whoever wants to understand how film produce and reflect meaning the need to know about Mise-en-Scene first. Sikov also stated about the importance of mise-en-scene in film studies

Since everything in the filmed image comes under the heading of mise-en-scene is a mouthful, so a shorter definition is this: Mise-en-scene is the totality of expressiveness content within the image. Film studies assumes that everything within the image has expressive meanings. By analyzing mise-en-scene, we begin to see what those meanings might be.

More than that, the writer uses mise-en-scene to acknowledge the meaning of *The Expendables 3* movie. Mise-en-scene consist of some elements that placed in front of camera to be recorded: set design, space, lighting composition, costume, acting, make up and hairstyle, filmstock, and aspect ratio. The writer also use angles and camera action and the cinematography. However the writer will focus on figure behavior from the characters that having tattoo, subject camera distance and also camera angle regarding to Sikov and only focusing on some elements of mise-en-

seen: acting, make up, composition and set design, to interpret the meaning of the tattoo in *The Expendables 3* movie.

1. Subject camera distance, providing an expressive shading to each shot by varying the distance between the camera and subject being filmed.

Sikov said that the more closer the camera to the subject, means that the more emotional gains, when camera shot Ross' emotional face with anger and looks frightening as what men should be.

- (a) Close up and extreme close up. Close up is a shot isolate an object in the image, make it appears relatively large. A close up of human being is commonly of the person's face. In addition extreme close up might be of person's part of body such as mouth or eyes depicted in a very close range of image. Both of them are found in *The Expendables 3* movie to emphasize the masculine emotion from the character and also close up for the tattoo that not only once.

- (b) Long shot shows the complete space context of the character. It is very important to focusing the camera to shot what the character does and how they move. Because it is describing how the masculine value in characters of *The Expendables 3* movie take a role. In this movie, it is usually to show the event of fighting and gunfighting.

(c) Medium shot appears to be taken from medium distance, in form of human body, it is from the waist up. In this shot, the importance of gestures and character's body shape are shown. Exploiting the gesture of well shaped body soldier who can fight and kill in this movie.

2. Camera angle, the directors of the movie is always using different camera angle in the movie, to showing different expressive content on the subject they film.

- a. Low angle shot when camera take picture of the subject from below. Low angle shot is used to describing superiority of the subject they filming. For the example is describing the power of Stonebanks.
- b. Bird's eye shot is an extreme far overhead shot, taken something from above might be from sky or around the ceiling and looking straight down on the subject. It emphasize that the character who see from the distance or from the camera view is someone with power, look down to people who can do nothing.
- c. High angle shot the camera shoots the subject from above so the camera is look down. This type of shot may suggest certain importance over the image. In the movie used to shoot the image of tattoo and some of the character.

3. Set design or setting, can be used to amplify characters dominant emotion and mood, in physical, social, psychological, and also economic. In the movie it shows how the characters depicted in masculinity concept.
4. Composition, the organization of object, actors and space within frame. Unbalanced composition can be used to emphasize certain thing that needs particular attention. Also the movie use this to give attention in the tattoo in characters' hand.
5. Make up and acting, performance style in front of camera to show the characteristic and role in movie. Make up such as body painting to create certain character and also drawing the tattoo in the movie.

2.1.5 Men and Masculinity

Masculinity also called manliness or manhood is a kind of attributes that is given to man. Masculinity made up by both socially defined and also biological.

This makes it distinct from the definition of the male anatomical sex (Joan 1991, 269). However, both men and women can exhibit masculine traits and behavior.

Value of masculinity is courage, independence and assertiveness, but the value associated with masculinity is difference depending on location and context, and also influenced by social and cultural factors (Witt 2000, p. 60)

Masculine characteristics or role are generally associated or appropriate with man. In the culture, it can have degrees of comparison, such as more

masculine or the most masculine. Otherwise it can be said that the opposite as an unmanly or epicene (Rogers 1995, p.46). Construction of masculinity varies across the history and culture context. For the example is the Dandy which is regarded as an ideal of masculinity in the 19th century, but it considered effeminate by modern standard (Todd 2010, p.3). The famous values of traditional masculinity describe men with the power, strength and aggressiveness, these values are giving an extreme influence toward a gender especially male. It is like what Dr. Ronald F. Levant (1995, p.60) described that traditional masculine norms are avoidance of femininity, restricted emotions, sex disconnected from intimacy, pursuit of achievement and status, self-reliance, strength and aggression, and homophobia. These norms serve to produce gender role within society.

History of masculinity, especially in United States began since it is ever become a nation and struggling for its independent and several wars after it becomes a nation known as America. According to Kimmel (2006, p.2), a man's masculinity contributes to his exploits in the fields of military, science and literatures. In 1980s to 1990s according to Osella and Osella (2000, p.120) man should be prohibited to do female things, and also masculinity can be measured only from the power, success and worshipping from other people. Those all information about traditional value will be valuable when conducting this research, because the movie as the data in this thesis referring to the traditional beliefs of masculinity in America.

2.2 Synopsis of *The Expendables 3* Movie

The Expendables led by Barney Ross (Sylvester Stallone) and formed by Lee Christmas (Jason Statham), Gunnar Jensen (Dolph Lundgren), and Toll Road (Couture) save former member Doctor Death (Snipes), a knives specialist and a medic, from a military prison during his transfer on train. He states that he is the real member of Expendables by showing his authentic tattoo to Lee Christmas.

They recruit Doc to assist them in intercepting a shipment of bombs meant to be delivered to a warlord in Somalia. Arriving there, they reunite with Caesar, a former founder of the Expendables who drop them to the destination, where Ross is surprised to find out that the arms dealer who providing bomb is Conrad Stonebanks (Mel Gibson), a former co-founder of Expendables who went rouge and was presumed dead. In the firefight they are forced to retreat because Stonebanks has advanced weaponry and Caesar is severely injured.

Then, Ross tries to arrest Stonebanks with the recruit mercenaries. He neglect their old member because he does not want their friends die with him, knows that Stonebanks is not an undisputed enemy. When Stonebanks is captured, on the way to United States, he tells the new member a little story about him and Ross. He shows that he still has a tattoo of Expendables, showing that he is also a former member that cannot be underestimated. On the way to US, Stonebanks prove himself as a strong enemy by losing from Ross and succesfully arrests the new member and challenges Ross to save them.

Finally Ross reunites with the old member and save the new recruit and also he successfully kills Stonebanks. After those events, all of the old members accept the new recruit who firstly they hate. Then the new recruit also wearing the tattoo that make them as a legit member of The Expendables, and all of the old members declared that they accept the new recruit and believe in them, by letting them wearing the tattoo.

2.3 Previous Study

The writer uses three previous studies to support the research. Since the research is talking about tattoo as a symbol and analyzing the meaning related to the concept of masculinity, a study about semiotics is necessary as the theory is use to analyzing the data. In addition using the study about a meaning and tattoo phenomenon also can support the research which the writer is conducted. First previous study is a thesis by Dedi Trisnanto entitle *A Semiotic Study on Symbolism in Wayang*, second is from article by Marthe Deschenes entitled *Are Tattooing and Piercing Indicators of Risk-taking Behaviors Among High School Students?*. The third previous study from thesis by Silvia Maulana Sari, student of Brawijaya University entitled *A Semiotic Study On Non-Verbal Symbolic Mode Of Myth Found In Seblang Ceremony By Osing Community In Olehsari Village, Banyuwangi*.

First previous study is a thesis conducted to analyze the meaning of characters in wayang, also what are the characters in wayang symbolize. One of

the result in this thesis is an analysis about one of the famous character in wayang, “Semar”. In this thesis, the writer describes what is “Semar” symbolize in wayang, and also the relation in the society. This thesis also uses semiotics theory, otherwise the data is wayang, not tattoo. According to Trisnanto’s research, it gives the important information to the other researchers. To the writer, this thesis gives helpful information about how implementing semiotics theory to analyze the data such as wayang and tattoo.

Second previous study is a journal conducted to know the phenomena of tattooing and body piercing among the high school students as an indicators of risk taking behaviour. The result of the study shows that there are many students having tattoo and body piercing. Deschenes states that externalized risk behaviour such as multiple drugs use, illegal activities, gambling problem, and gang affiliation contribute most to likelihood of teenagers, male and female, being tattooed or pierced.

Deschanes’ research also gives important information to the other researchers who conduct the research about tattoo and the relation with the social phenomena and behaviour. Since this thesis also try to find the relation between tattoo and concept of masculinity, the writer consider the journal is helpful.

Third previous study is a thesis of students from Brawijaya University that also analyzes about non verbal symbol. In this thesis, Silvia shows the result of analyzing non verbal symbol in Seblang Ceremony. It gives valuable information about how implementing semiotics theory toward symbo

2.4 Research Method

This section presents the research method which includes deciding the object of study, gathering the data and also analyzing the data and making a conclusion.

2.4.1 Deciding The Object of the Research

In conducting the research, the writer uses a qualitative method with textual analysis. Qualitative data is usually describing in form of words rather than a number and always been staple of some fields in the social science.

The writer uses visual data and also the dialog from the characters among the plot since the object is a movie. In this research a movie entitle *The Expendables 3* has been decided as the object of the research. This movie might be full of gender issues, especially about masculinity value in the characters and also symbolized by the tattoo, which fits with the purpose of the writer to analyzing masculinity value in relation with the meaning of the tattoo. In using visual object of research, Ary (2002, p. 442) stated that the textual analysis is research method applied to written or visual material for the purpose of identifying specified characteristics of the material. It could be a textbook, newspaper, TV programs, musical composition, or any other types of document.

2.4.2 Deciding the Theory

This research uses tattoos as an object, to analyze it the writer will decide the suitable theory. Because the object is tattoo, to read down its meaning beneath those symbols in *The Expendables 3* tattoos, writer chooses the Saussure theory, known as dyadic model of sign. The writer also chooses American masculinity concept with its values to relate the meaning of the symbol with the masculinity.

2.4.3 Implementing Dyadic Theory by Saussure and Masculinity Concept

In this research, the writer uses semiotics theory to interpret the meaning of the tattoo in the character's body in the movie. The movie is showing the action of characters with a lot of fighting event, from a bare hand martial art until gunfight with modern weapon, which is closely related to men. That is why semiotics theory and gender differences are appropriate to analyze the data.

After implementing Dyadic theory by Saussure, the result will be analyzed by the writer using the concept of masculinity. This action is necessary because after knowing the meaning of the symbol in the tattoos, this research means also to shows the relation between the meaning of the tattoos and masculinity concept in America.

2.4.4 Gathering The Data

There are three steps that is used by the writer when gathering the data.

The steps are follow

1. Watching *The Expendables 3* movie
2. Reading the movie script
3. Finding the images that corelated with the the problem of study

2.4.5 Data Analysis Procedure

In analysing the data in this thesis, the writer will focus on implementing the theory of dyadic model of sign by Saussure to find the meaning of the tattoo in *The Expendables 3* movie. The writer also uses the concept of masculinity to a correlation between the tattoo and the gender issue in the movie, especially about masculinity. Those concepts will be conducted after the data are successfully gathered.

CHAPTER III

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The thesis is about analyzing the meaning of the symbol that exist within the various tattoos that can be found in *The Expendables 3* movie using Semiotic theory from Saussure, which is known as Dyadic model of sign. Dyadic model of sign consist of signifier and also signified, this two elements will construct the meaning of the symbol in the tattoo itself. It seems that the meaning of the symbol that stands in *The Expendables 3* tattoo reflects American society's concept of masculinity.

Before going to draw a relation between the meaning of the various tattoos and concept of masculinity, it is worth to know how the symbol is constructed. To analyze the tattoos in the movie, this study uses dyadic model of sign by Saussure. This is the analysis of the various tattoos in *The Expendables 3* movie:

The first is the tattoo from one of *The Expendables 3* members, Barney Ross. He is also the leader of this group. His tattoo consists of image of tiger showing its fang and ferocious looking. The image of the tattoo taken from the movie is below.

3.1 Masculinity Value in Barney Ross' Tattoo

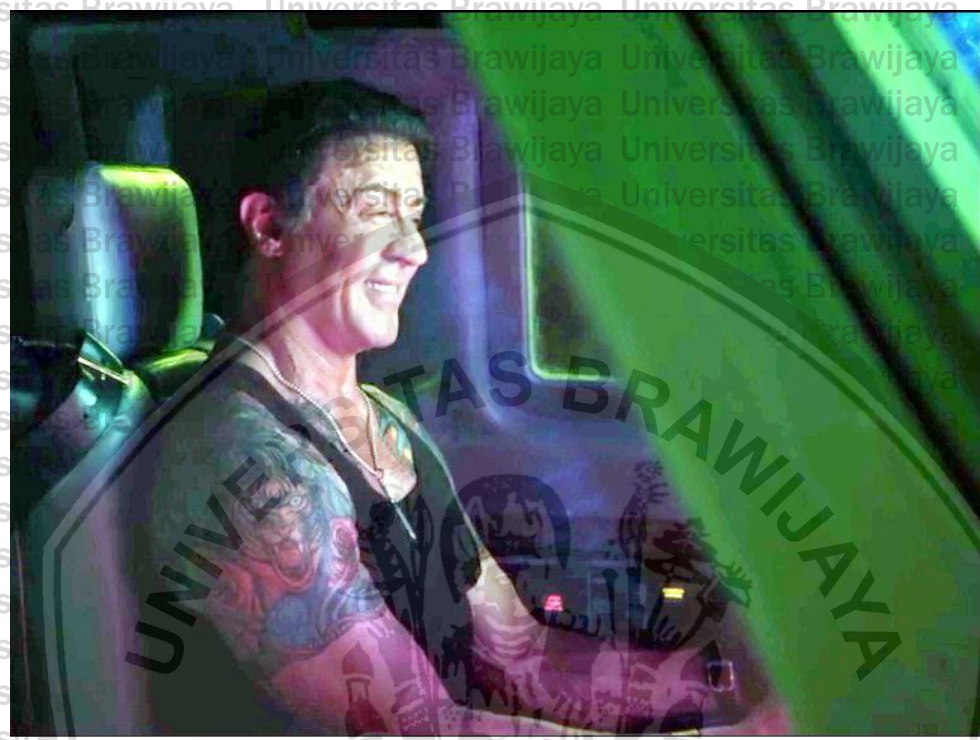


Figure 1 (Hudges, *The Expendables 3*, 2014, 00:09:58)

Picture is taken from the movie; the scene use medium shot to make the upper body of Barney Ross appear in camera (Sikov 2009, 10). It makes Ross' tattoo, on his shoulder also appear on the screen. The tattoo stands as a meaningful sign and also as a signifier that already known as a sign physical form, it is same as what states clearly in oxford dictionary website (oxforddictionaries.com). Major element of that tattoo is an image of ferocious Tiger with black and yellow color as what the most of tiger looks, the tiger watching throughout the bush angrily, seems ready to attack. Tiger tattoo represent the wilderness, power and also untamable behavior. It also states in the Tattoo Design official website (itattoodesigns.com) that Tiger represents the way

of how human want to live their lives, without inhibitions. They are sensual and beautiful, wild and untamable, also powerful and strong animal. Driven only by instincts and passion, nothing can hold them back, neither ration nor reason. Power and wilderness is not only the meaning, Tiger also symbolize the meaning of love and sensuality, as well as what state on the website. Those statements also supported by tattoodle.net which said that when person choose tiger for their tattoo, it means that they convey the meaning of strength, power, pride and also beauty and passion.

From those all meanings that found in Tiger tattoo, it can be said that people who have those tattoos, signified that they are who want to show their strength, as well as they want to live like what the Tiger lives, untamable and inhibitions. Also shows to others that they have such power like what tiger has. According to native America beliefs, each person has an animal totem, stated in examiner.com, people has special appeal and connection to represent their personality with some kind of animals, such as tiger that known as symbol of power and energy. The specific shape of the tiger can be seen as a black and yellow colored as what the ordinary tiger has, it is also look like watching throughout bush, aiming its prey. In addition, Barney Ross as the leader of The Expendables group, and a character which has such a power, wilderness and strength in the movie can be use as the good example about men who convey the representation of that tattoo.

In Saussure dyadic model there is a sign vehicle, where all of the sign and symbol take form. Even Saussure itself said that sign is more in abstract concept

rather than realistic representation, but now those are known more in material form of sign, like what Jakobson said. According to them, Barney Ross' tattoo is a sign vehicle and it signified that he is a man that has strength and courage like what the tattoo symbolize. The concept is signified by the tattoo is built through the character of Barney Ross who stands as the leader and also the master mind of the Expendables.

He has a long story from the first sequel until the latest one. He capable of taking down his enemies and give order to the member of his mercenary as the leader.

Barney is an iron willed man, skilled combatant and expert in using gun and hand to hand combat. With those all his personality, he emerges as the suitable figure of masculinity, and absolutely with all those characteristics symbolize in his tiger tattoo,

it can be said that his masculinity can be seen through the tattoo. Towards the tattoo, the character of Barney Ross emerges the value of masculinity. He stands as a role

model that created in the movie and brings the masculine value to the audience. The

character itself takes place in United States so that it depicted the value of American

and also western masculinity among the power, strength and even aggressive

behavior, also supported by Dr. C. Goerge Boeree in website (web.space.ship.edu)

that in other societies, assertive and competitive even aggressive are the most

admired example of masculine values. The tiger tattoo on Barney Ross signifies a

concept that Barney Ross is a man with courage and great power.

Masculinity is depicted not only from the symbol of the tattoo, it also comes with the verbal language that the characters use in the movie. For the example is when Barney Ross is talking to Doc, his friend in *Expendables* he says, “If you'd have done that to me, I would've chopped you into pieces” (*The Expendables 3*, 00:07:04).

He said that to show that he is the leader and not holding back show his power if something is gone wrong. Barney also shows what he has as men when he confronts Stonebanks, answering Stonebank's threat he says, “I'm gonna break every bone in your body” (*The Expendables 3*, 01:07:30).

Second tattoo is a tattoo which has an image of unique skull. In the movie, Gunner Jensen which is played by Swedish actor Dolph Lundgren has this tattoo. The tattoo in the movie is below.

3.2 Masculinity Value in Gunnar Jensen's Skull Tattoo



Figure 2 (Hudges, *The Expendables 3*, 2014, 01:26:39)

Medium shot in this scene emerging make up element from *Mise en scene* such as body painting or tattoo (Sikov 2009, 10-18). The unique shaped skull tattoo on Gunnar's right arm stands as a sign vehicle or well known as signifier. The tattoo consists of skull as a major element yet it is not the ordinary skull. That is kind of skull also known as *Sugar Skull*, which is pretty famous in Mexican culture known as the day of the dead (mexicansugarskull.com), which has a purpose to realize that every living things are dead, even the one who loved. Skull signifying mortality means that everything which have life will be vanish. It also stands as a symbol of power. Sarcone (2015) also states in the journal entitle *The Skull, symbol of duality of life* that skull often stand as symbol of death, power and also some romantic notion of immortality. From the meaning that implied by the tattoo, it signified that people who has skull tattoo represent their power and they also want to show everyone who has soul will die. In the movie itself the tattoo signified Gunnar as the one who has the tattoo as the one who has power and capable to show what "dead" means to his enemy. Gunnar's skull tattoo is shaped by a unique skull and also surrounds by blue fire and also chained in the forehead that emerge the sense of mortality is bounded and unbreakable.

In dyadic model, the skull tattoo surround with fire from Gunnar Jensen is a signifier where the sign took form. In addition, the skull tattoo signified about strength of the people who has the tattoo and also about undeniable death. Because of the tattoo symbolize death, power and also bad omen; it signified that Gunnar is not a

man that can be underestimated. With the tattoo in his arm, he sends the message to the people that they must be fear of him.

Gunnar Jensen is a member of Expendables, and he is highly dangerous. With his big muscle on his body and also the tallest among the other members, he is completely undone. His skull tattoo on his right arm, represents his personality and power. Expert in using machine gun and with his favorite big knife, he has a great power that unmatched. All of the value of masculinity in Gunnar represented in his skull tattoo. Since the Gunnar Jensen is character that mostly contributes in combat and fighting action, it shows the violence and also strength of his body. Those explained that the skull tattoo signifies the concept that Gunnar is a man that capable of killing people with his power.

Gunnar also frequently shows his muscular body and he is the man with the biggest physical muscle in the movie. Compare to what American society sees about physical body of masculinity, Gunnar Jensen character stand as a men with routine of bodybuilding and which shown as a big muscle and a figure of perfect male body. It is also stated by Wiegers (2004) that bodybuilders pursue a hypermasculine self identity, they aspired by well developed chest and arm muscles and wide shoulders.

This type of body is tied with cultural views of American masculinity. In addition, the skull tattoo symbolism of power and death bringer is described through his physical characteristics and appearance.

Gunnar as one of the best member in Expendables also has masculine characteristics in his words choice. Although he is not much talking in this movie, he states about his family that has a tough life, he says, “My mom drove a tank back in Sweden” (The Expendables 3, 01:23:43).

3.3 Masculinity Value in Demon Tattoo on Smilee’s arm



Figure 3 (Hudges, The Expendables 3, 2014, 00:45:13)

There is a medium close ups shot that focus the camera on take a picture from the chest up (Sikov 2009, 10) that makes the tattoo appears in camera. John Smilee is one of the new members in Expendables mercenary group. He is a former member of US army and takes as a second man in the group, especially he is leading the other young member in combat. Most of his right arm, from upper until lower arm covered

with tattoo, tribal tattoo in the lower and an imagery of demonic face on the upper arm. Image of demon is known among the various society. The certain culture has their fundamental idea about the meaning of the image of demon.

The demonic tattoo that sinks in Smilee's arm also signifies something. Even in some condition, demon is closely related with religion and has a bad omen in most of beliefs, especially in America; demon tattoo is still stood as a kind of self expressions through one of the kind of art, which is a visual form. As what Emily Fajt stated in the journal entitled *Analyzing Self Expression Through Art* that people has their own way expressing their selves through various form of art. In the form of art, the image of demon in tattoo comes with the meaning of deceit, revenge, bad temper, darkness and power, as what stated in Hubpages's article about body art, tattoo and piercing (hubpage.com).

In dyadic model of sign, the Smilee's tattoo itself stands as signifier, as the form that the sign or symbol takes. So the signifier is a known demon face tattoo on Smilee's arm. In addition the tattoo signified that Smilee as a man who has the tattoo can be concluded as a man who has such power, that proved in his combat ability in the movie. In dyadic diagram, the demon tattoo stands as signifier.

As what John Smilee is depicted in the movie with such condition that is emerging the sense of power and male strength. The character of John Smilee for being cool, hot tensed emotion and skillful fighter are based on what American people believes about how should men looks like. The tattoo that he has is showing

only power and fears nothing but him to be feared by others. Because of the tattoo that emerging the Smilee character of no fear, it has the relation why this tattoo is showing the value of masculinity in America. Smilee is a character that show rebellion attitude, even toward Barney Ross, the leader. It is proved in the movie that Barney Ross said to Smilee because he cannot take the orders, he says, “you have hard times taking orders, don’t you”(The Expendables 3, 00:52:42). That attitude gives sense that Smilee is a figure of man that afraid of nothing. His personality is a mystery; he seldom talks and has bad temper. His character makes him become a figure of masculine man, it also supported in The Line official website that to become a masculine man, even a young male student said that man should be physically and emotionally strong. Man can shows anger, but not weakness, pain, fear or self-doubt (theline.org.au). Smilee’s personalities and behavior as man who has the tattoo create a *Signified* concept that: Smilee is a bad tempered man, also emotionally and physically strong.

The other tattoo is a well known tattoo for *The Expendables 3* fans because all members have this tattoo. This tattoo appears from first sequel, but in the third sequel it takes important role in the story. The antagonist, Stonebanks, who is former member of Expendables, has this kind of tattoo. In the end of story, the new recruits of Expendables are finally accepted as member and worthy to have this tattoo. The tattoo from the movie can be seen as follow,

3.4 Conrad Stonebanks' Skull and Crow Tattoo



Figure 4 (Hudges, The Expendables 3, 2014, 01:08:02)

An extreme close-up-shot that has a purpose to isolate the object in the camera, and making it relatively large, it is used in certain purpose such as underlined the certain meaning of the image appears (Sikov 2009, !0). Extreme close-up-shot in this scene capture the image of tattoo above. The Expendables tattoo which consist of skull with crow cling on it, is a tattoo that all of the member should have. One of people who have the tattoo is Conrad Stonebanks, the enemy and also former member of Expendable. He was showing his tattoo in his forearm in the movie, when he captured by Barney Ross and all of new members. He is showing it to the new

members who does not have yet. In Saussure's dyadic model, the tattoo explains as a signifier.

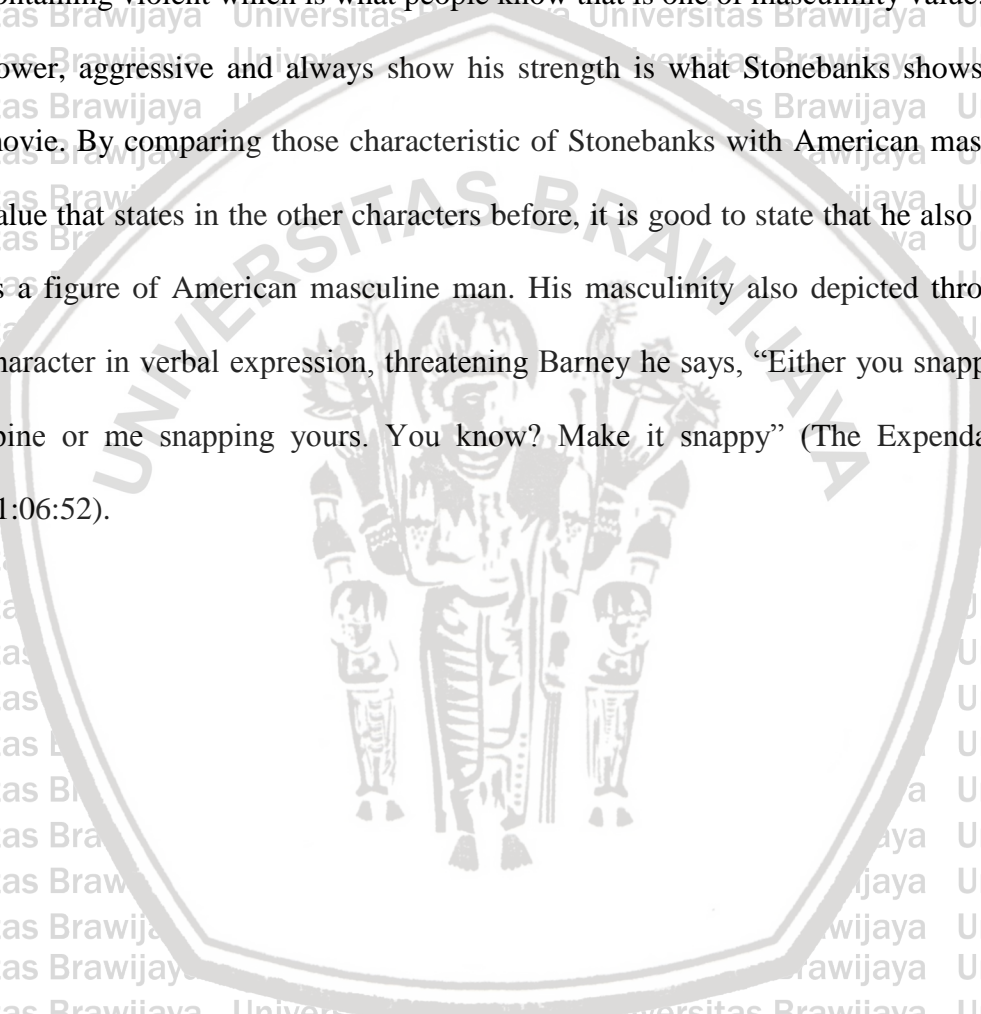
The tattoo above constructed by two major elements, skull with crow clings on it. Since it is stand as signifier, this tattoo has a certain meaning. First is the skull that generally known as power and imagery of death. While crow is generally known as bad omen, also for Native American known as Indian, black feathered crow is a symbol of death to the enemy, as what states in crow symbol in signology.org. It also supported by the statement from Richard Lemay's eBook entitled *Black Book*, he said that crow or raven means Gods messenger, death and also bad luck. The word "Expendables" also painted in it indicates the name of this group of mercenaries. The different between this tattoo and Gunnar's skull tattoo is on the figure of black crow which emphasize on the meaning of bad omen.

From all those meaning of every element in that tattoo, the researcher can concludes that the tattoo has a representation about death are coming to the one who see it, in this movie means the enemy. It also an imagery of the person who has this tattoo is one of God messenger who bring death to one who deserve it. In addition the tattoo signified about Expendables is a bad omen or death bringer to the enemy.

Those all signifies a concept: that the members of The Expendables are dangerous

Stonebanks is a former member of Expendables but become rouge and the most fearsome enemy. In the story Barney and Stonebanks once was a friend until Stonebanks become an illegal arm dealer. With Stonebanks skill and power in

combat, even Barney itself desperately takes him down. Stonebanks is the one who worthy to have the Expendables tattoo which represents his power, ability, physical strength which all exploit the masculine aspect. As what state before, the movie is containing violent which is what people know that is one of masculinity value. Full of power, aggressive and always show his strength is what Stonebanks shows in this movie. By comparing those characteristic of Stonebanks with American masculinity value that states in the other characters before, it is good to state that he also suitable as a figure of American masculine man. His masculinity also depicted through his character in verbal expression, threatening Barney he says, "Either you snapping my spine or me snapping yours. You know? Make it snappy" (The Expendables 3, 01:06:52).



3.5 Meaning and Masculinity Value in Thorn's tattoo



Figure 5 (Hudges, The Expendables 3, 2014, 00:50:05)

A close up shot take the image or the object looks larger in the camera, generally it isolates person's face (sikov 2010, 10). The scene captured close up shot from behind Thorn's head, makes the tattoo appear and also Gunnar's expression. Thorn is a new member of Expendables. Physically he does not has big muscle like other members. However he is expert in technology and also a maniac in extreme mountain climbing. He does not has much tattoo or big shape tattoo like the others, yet he has unique tattoo in his neck, right below his right ear. For some culture, especially Celtic, thorn has a meaning of blackthorn tree which symbolize challenges ahead and means that keep pushing and no giving up. Those can be found in Celtic culture website, whatsyoursymbol.com, also declared that thorn symbolize strife, inevitable and constrain.

Others state that thorn tattoo is like kind of borders, it is common to found image of thorn blend with Rose and also crown tattoo. In umich.edu, thorn also symbol of denoting sin, pain, and also religious meaning in Christian. Thorns tattoo also known as the indication of “the cause of suffering”. The tattoo in Thorn’s neck emerging the representation of his ability, which is his agility and also expert in technology rather than weaponry.

In dyadic model of sign analyzes, the tattoo stands as *Signifier* which *Signifies* something. Dyadic model explain *Signifier*: Thorn figure tattoo. In the movie, Thorn has the tattoo and showing the ability and skill that can be said as the interpretation of the tattoo itself. In addition the tattoo signified about Thorn ability as genius, fearless and has an iron will, like what the tattoo signified. Thorn masculinity also depicted his tattoo, it proven when he doing his extreme hobby without fear and success in admitting his fear and keep pushing forward, as what stated by Atalwin Pilon (2011).

Although Thorn has not a really big muscle and well shaped body, but he still has courage and does not know about giving up. The personality of this character has what David and Branon (1976) state about traditional American masculinity value, which is known as “be sturdy oak” means that man should avoid vulnerability, stay composed and in control, also be tough. It concludes that tattoo signifies the concept that Thorn is a man who are not easily give up reaching his goal.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In this chapter, researcher will give the conclusion about this research conducted, and also give suggestion to the others researchers who want to conduct the same research.

4.1 CONCLUSION

From the research that already conducted about the relation of American masculinity and the symbol of tattoo that found in *The Expendables 3* movie, the researcher draws the conclusions as follow:

First, tattoo that nowadays stands as a kind of art that broadly use by people in many country and culture has the certain value and also meaning behind the image of the tattoo itself. The meaning and the symbol from tattoo also vary among culture, also has different meaning according to the gender role. In *The Expendables 3*, various tattoos found stick in the character's body, and with the characters role, attitude and also behavior, the tattoo has a meaning of power, strength, bravery, and also courage. Those all major aspects have a relation with American masculinity.

Because of the value of American masculinity is mostly about how men should do about his power, strength and courage, the tattoo that found in the movie also has American culture and point of view. Basically, the tattoos are analyzed in the field of American culture.

Second, the tattoos analyzed using Dyadic model of sign by Saussure, which means that the tattoo itself stand as a signifier or sign vehicle and those all signified meaning that related with American culture, especially masculinity. Researcher also using film studies to analyze the scene and determine the suitable scene that can stand as a major data. By those all elements from the film studies, researcher found some supporting data such as the camera shot and angle also the composition on the scene. In addition, because of masculinity not only depicted though the expression and behavior, researcher also use some of the dialog that indicates the masculinity from the characters that supporting the major data

4.2 SUGGESTION

Suggestion for the other researchers who want to analyze the same movie is there also a women character that stands as a member of the mercenary. The women have a tough character and good ability in combat and fighting. She also has the tattoo. In addition, it is worth to analyze the relation of the tattoo and the women in this movie.

Another suggestion for the other researcher who interested in analyzing the symbol is there also movies that contain some symbols which can be analyzed using semiotics theory.

Two movies that have some kind of symbols are *The Da Vinci Code* and *Pulp Fiction*.



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UNIVERSITAS BRAWIJAYA

APPENDICES





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- 5. Judul Skripsi : TATTOO AND AMERICAN MASCULINITY
DEPICTED IN *THE EXPENDABLES 3* MOVIE
- 6. Tanggal Mengajukan : 23 Februari 2015
- 7. Tanggal Selesai Revisi : 25 Januari 2016
- 8. Nama Pembimbing : Arcci Tusita, S.S., M.Hum

9. Keterangan Konsultasi

No.	Tanggal	Materi	Pembimbing	Paraf
1.	23 Februari 2015	Pengajuan judul	Pembimbing I	
2.	07 Maret 2015	Persetujuan judul	Pembimbing I	
3.	16 Maret 2015	Pengajuan Bab 1	Pembimbing I	
4.	20 Maret 2015	Revisi Bab 1	Pembimbing I	
5.	25 Maret 2015	Revisi Bab 1	Pembimbing I	
6.	01 April 2015	Revisi Bab 1	Pembimbing I	

7.	07 April 2015	Revisi Bab 1	Pembimbing I
8.	27 April 2015	Revisi Bab 1	Pembimbing I
9.	04 Mei 2015	Pengajuan 2	Pembimbing I
10.	12 Mei 2015	Revisi Bab 2	Pembimbing I
11.	20 Mei 2015	Revisi Bab 2	Pembimbing I
12.	24 Mei 2015	Revisi Bab 2	Pembimbing I
13.	28 Mei 2015	ACC Bab 1,2	Pembimbing I
14.	01 Juni 2015	Seminar Proposal	Pembimbing I
15.	02 Desember 2015	Pengajuan Bab 3-4	Pembimbing I
16.	08 Desember 2015	Revisi Bab 3	Pembimbing I
17.	11 Desember 2015	Revisi Bab 3-4	Pembimbing I
18.	14 Desember 2015	ACC Bab 1-4	Pembimbing I
19.	17 Desember 2015	Seminar Hasil	Pembimbing I
20.	21 Desember 2015	ACC Ujian Skripsi	Pembimbing I
21.	12 Januari 2016	Ujian Skripsi	Pembimbing I
22.	15 Januari 2016	Revisi Skripsi	Pembimbing I
23.	21 Januari 2016	Revisi Skripsi	Pembimbing I

10. Telah dievaluasi dan diuji dengan nilai :

Malang, 25 Januari 2016
Dosen Pembimbing

Mengetahui,
Ketua Jurusan

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