

Red Badge of Courage and *Jalan Tak Ada Ujung*: Comparing Indonesia's and America's National Masculinity

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Article Info:

Received: 9 December 2022

Accepted: 13 June 2023

Keywords:

America,
gender,
Indonesia,
masculinity,
national

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ABSTRACT

Masculinity linked to conflict or war is often seen as hegemonic. This research offers two literary texts from two different countries: Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* (2005) and Mughtar Lubis' *Jalan Tak Ada Ujung* (*The Endless Road*) (1952). By comparing and contrasting both countries in terms of non-hegemonic masculinities of the protagonist characters, the pattern of masculinities of each nation, which is often overlooked, can be explainable. We can identify variations of masculinities in classic fiction, which reflect the national discourses. By utilizing the notion of focalization, the method of narratology can locate the power relation and agency in the story. Post-war anxiety as well as the ideology of fatherism and momism constructs the national gendered discourses. Indonesia's masculinity resists the legitimate and privileged as well as the status-quo concept of national masculinity. The resistance implies that Indonesia's national masculinity is more diverse and progressive than America's is.

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INTRODUCTION

A conflict between men may be the ideal setting for observing masculinities because its contestation and circularity are at their most strong and visible in the form of violence. One example of this in literature is war. Wartime creates its heroes as well as its anti-heroes, which convey their kind of masculinity. As non-monolithic notions, masculinities diverge according to their social and cultural settings.

America and Indonesia have a long history of struggles in wars. These struggles shaped each nations' ideal masculinities. Some of these ideas arise through national literature. By comparing and contrasting both countries in terms of ideal masculinities, the pattern of masculinities of each nation is explainable. Eventually, we can identify variations of masculinities. The comparative studies on masculinities are critical and attempt to explore gender phenomena from a less employed method.

Contemporary Indonesian literature has given us a diverse model of masculinities. As Marshall Clack (2004) says, some "new" maleness has been created through the Indonesian popular culture characters after Soeharto's fall. This new type of masculinity, according to Clark, is a departure from the archetype masculinity and patriarchal culture that has long been adopted in Indonesian culture. Intan Paramaditha (2007) echoes similar ideas as Clark's. She gives an example of military generals as the heroic father figure of the New Order Era's dominant national masculinity model. Furthermore, she asserts that the young filmmakers eventually replaced

the New Order dominant masculinity model with the more fluid ones. Some new types of masculinities were shown in the characters in the Post-New Order or the Reform Era films. On the American side, masculinity has also evolved. In contemporary pop culture, such as films, heroes' images have shifted from muscular archaic figures to leaner ones. *Terminator* (1984), *Rambo* (1989), to *The Matrix* (1999) gives us clear examples. The sex-craved hero like James Bond (1962-2021) has also changed to be a feminist-aware man. Yet, are those new types of masculinities really new? In my opinion, claiming that those masculinities previously unknown is a premature claim and myopic.

The study of comparative literature is crucial. We may comprehend the human experience and the ways that literature reflects and influences our reality better by comparing and contrasting literary works from other cultures and historical periods. Comparative literature reveals the depths and subtleties of the links between works rather than simply pointing out their surface parallels or contrasts (Bassnett, 1993). The similarities between the compared texts serve as sufficient balance variables. Nevertheless, the writings can be compared based on common themes, motifs, or literary devices from very dissimilar cultures and circumstances. This allows us to see how literature transcends cultural boundaries and speaks to universal human concerns.

Comparative studies fill the gap of masculinities studies in the global arena; as Kimmel (2005) says, the research in this field is uneven in the worldwide arena, mainly dominated by the First World countries. Kimmel's statement inspires me to conduct this comparative research to compare and contrast how masculinities are portrayed through literature in the same situation but in a different cultural context. This research offers two literary texts from two countries: Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* and Muchtar Lubis' *Jalan Tak Ada Ujung (The Endless Road)*. The reasons of selecting these two texts are:

- (1) both provide excellent examples of how masculinities are portrayed from non-hegemonic perspectives. As the marginal end of the binary, non-hegemonic masculinities are less prominent in a wartime context.
- (2) both of them have the same setting: wartime. Wartime needs its heroes with masculine qualities such as patriotism, bravery, agility, and toughness.
- (3) both are considered classic texts, which means that they are part of the national discourse. To be considered classic, a text must be culturally significant. In other words, these two texts represent the national ideology.

Therefore, the main question for this research is how non-hegemonic masculinities are portrayed through both novels? How do those portrayals of masculinity embody the national identity of both nations?

As this research is the study of characters, I believe that the protagonist of a story can be seen as the author's agent in advancing a particular notion or worldview. The protagonist often embodies the author's values and beliefs, and their actions and decisions serve to advance the author's agenda. Edward Said argues that the author's agent is the protagonist, who is the most powerful figure in any narrative, whose will and consciousness move the story forward, and who often embodies the author's own ideas and beliefs:

...[R]epresentations of the intellectual tended to stress individuality, the fact that very often the intellectual is, like Turgenev's Bazarov or James Joyce's Stephen Dedalus, a solitary, somehow aloof figure, who does not conform to society at all and is consequently a rebel completely outside established opinion. (Said, 1996, p.68)

Masculinity can be said to be a relatively new gender theory compared to feminism. The masculinity theory has developed quite progressively after R.W. Connell (1995) defined his concept of hegemonic masculinity. This hegemonic masculinity has four supporting concepts: hegemony, subordination, implicit, and marginalization. The masculine figure of Connell's theory is a heterosexual male who is white and economically positioned as the upper class in the Western setting and dominates and marginalizes women and other masculinities whose

norms do not conform to him. For this reason, Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity has been criticized. Demetriou (2001, p. 344-345) views this as an elitist form that deviates from Gramsci's concept of hegemony. Gramscian hegemony, according to Demetriou, between the dominator and the dominated is dialectical in which there are reciprocal and mutual interactions. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005, p. 840) also clarify that hegemonic masculinity is not a singularity because the form of hegemonic masculinity follows the place and culture. Therefore, national masculinity becomes important to be re-articulated because this national masculinity will also become a part and color global masculinity. In my opinion, masculinity with a poststructuralist paradigm is more appropriate to read national cross-sections with its four derived concepts, namely representation, discourse, power, and instability. As Connell himself divides masculinity into three levels: local, national, and global, reading national masculinity means rethinking how national politics is gendered so that discursive approaches, representation, power, and instability are appropriate. If Connell always uses concepts such as model, ideal, fantasy and desire, collective image, common cultural template and examples (Beasley, 2008, p. 95) in referring to masculinity, In that case, the discussion of national masculinity is in the context of this research will be not only interesting but also important.

METHOD

I employ Bal's narratology (2009) as my reading tool in reading these two texts. With the notions of focalization, narratology is able to identify the power relation and agency (who speaks and who is spoken of) in the story. Narratology, in turn, is also able to capture ideology through discourse well. The discussion with the narratology method also opens up opportunities to read masculinity. Bal's narratology examines the text from three levels: fabula, story, and text. At the fabula level, power relations between the characters will be observed. At the story level, the perspectives over the events and characters will be observable. Last but not least, at the level of text, the focalization will be obvious.

DISCUSSION

The Red Badge of Courage is a novel set during the American Civil War, and it follows the story of a young soldier named Henry Fleming. Henry is unsure of his courage and joins the Confederate regiment hoping for victory. However, he becomes disappointed when he realizes that his regiment is only waiting for engagement. When Henry's regiment gets into an engagement, he becomes anxious and afraid. The enemy ultimately defeats his regiment, and Henry flees across the countryside, feeling ashamed but convincing himself that he made the right decision.

While running, Henry meets a group of wounded soldiers who have their wounds as a sign of bravery. He feels envious and uneasy when one wounded soldier keeps asking if Henry has a wound. Later, Henry sees his regiment in retreat and is hit on the head by another retreating soldier's gun. Henry is taken back to the army camp, where he meets his friends and fights bravely in the following battles, finally overcoming his fears and guilt. Eventually, Henry becomes the troop leader because he carries the regiment's flag.

Jalan Tak Ada Ujung recounts the story of a man named Isa, set in the 1940s when Indonesia struggled for independence from the Dutch colonialism. Isa, a school teacher, is respected in his community, but his meager salary cannot support his family. His wife, Fatimah, is unable to have children because of Isa's impotence, which causes him anxiety every time he faces conflicts. His fear escalates when he hears the Gurkha army's voices, the Dutch's mercenary soldiers, and sees a Chinese man covered in blood.

At a meeting with other revolutionary fighters, Isa is appointed the courier, a role he reluctantly accepts despite his fear. Alongside a young soldier named Hazil, Isa secretly delivers weaponry and letters to Asem Renges, borrowing a truck from Mr. Hamidy. Although they are terrified, they successfully complete the mission.

Hazil visits Isa after he becomes ill. Hazil meets Fatimah for the first time, and they cheat on Isa. When Isa and Hazil plan to blow up a movie theater, injuring Dutch soldiers, Isa is caught and tortured. Hazil betrays Isa's hiding place, leading to Isa's arrest. Although he is tortured, Isa remains silent, eventually overcoming his impotence.

Momism vs. Fatherism

According to Paramaditha, gender constructs politics by defining the relationship between the dominant power and the subordinate (2007, p. 44). Yet, gender can also construct a nation by defining the function of the sexes. Women are constructed as biological reproducers of the nation (Yuval-Davis, 1997) or bearers of the nation (McClintock, 1995, p. 354), whereas men are constructed as the national agency or intelligentsia. These notions prove that, like men, women are also central to the construction and reproduction of a nation. Momism and fatherism are gendered national construction.

Momism is a concept of a discourse of the dominance in the voice and vision of mothers (van den Oever, 2012, p. 2). Philip Wylie first coined this concept in his prominent book *Generation of Vipers* (1955), originally published in 1942. Momism is an idea that attacks the myth of the overvalue of motherhood in American society. The mother myth had been considered a threat to society when two-thirds of Americans were neurotic, most of them made so by their mother (Coontz, 2011). Contrary to momism, fatherism is an idea that overvalues the father's role. The concept of fatherism comes from the culture that believes the ideal manhood must come from military culture. Momism and fatherism could be the effect of post-war anxiety.

In *The Red Badge of Courage*, Fleming's mom shows at the beginning of the story in the form of memory or flashback. She's the only female character in the story, implying that Fleming had no connection to other girls or women but her mom. In *Jalan Tak Ada Ujung*, Isa's wife, Fatimah is also the only female character. Fleming's departure to the battlefield is initiated with the parting of mother and son. Fleming's mother, of course, is not letting her son go to the battle:

But his mother had discouraged him. She had affected to look with some contempt upon the quality of his war ardor and patriotism. She could calmly seat herself and, with no apparent difficulty, give him many hundreds of reasons why he was of vastly more importance on the farm than on the field of battle. She had had certain ways of expression that told him that her statement on the subject came from a deep conviction. Moreover, on her side was his belief that her ethical motive in the argument was impregnable. (Crane, 2005, p. 34)

The mother's domination is evident from the passage above. This domination becomes a dilemma for Fleming. In the passages above, she is the active agent by becoming the subject in every sentence. The Masculinity of Henry's mother becomes the opposition of Henry's Masculinity. In fact, her over-masculine position diminutives Henry's masculinity. In my opinion, with his mom discouraging him, she symbolically castrates him. By saying 'contempt upon the quality of his war ardor and patriotism, the narrator sees her as the 'passion distinguisher.' On the one hand, the narrator dislikes the mom's idea. On the other hand, the narrator sees Henry as the son who can't escape from the mom's domination.

What Henry's mom asserts in the passage above seems natural because her reason not to let Henry go to war is for his good. Yet, Wylie (1955, p. 185) states, 'The spectacle of the female devouring her young in the firm belief that it is for their own good' is strong evidence of momism. To keep their son close to her (mom) is an

indication of the mom's link to the military through her ruination of the American child (Fischer in Cohan and Hark, 1993, p. 80). Even though Henry manages to enlist in the army, in the process, he still can't escape from his mom's figure by telling her every step he takes. "Ma, I'm going to enlist" (Crane, 2005, p. 35) to "Ma, I've enlisted" (Crane, 2005, p. 35) clearly shows how Henry can't get away from his mother's shadow. No matter what his decision is, his mom must know it. The story also gives an implicit sign that Henry will go home to his mother when the war is over, and Henry does not get killed, which he seemingly doesn't.

A different situation occurs in *Jalan Tak Ada Ujung*. Isa is only bound to his wife, Fatimah. The shadow of fatherism emerges from the beginning of the story when Isa is on his way to the school where he works. That morning a regiment of Gurkha –Indian troops hired by the Dutch- sweeps a district or a *kampung* from the Indonesian guerilla fighters. When the troops start to fire, Isa hides in a nearby house. A moment later, the Gurkha searches the house where Isa hides.

A soldier kicked at the bedroom door, and a moment later, the host, his wife, and their two small children stepped out. Trembling, pale, and full of fear. The troops were continuously searched. Disgust and fear rose in Isa's heart to see that the army's rough and hairy hands searched the host's wife. It searched violently, and his hands were too long to stop on the woman's chest. Her husband turned his head, reluctant to see his wife being harassed.

Isa thought of his wife, and for a moment, he asked himself, what would he do if their house was ransacked and the rude soldiers searched his wife? Will he fight them? He didn't think about it for a long time because, deep down, he knew that he wouldn't dare to fight either. (Lubis, 2010, p. 11-12).

The passages above connotatively show us the ideology of fatherism: Isa is what fatherism is not. The two questions are but a rhetoric function because the reader and the narrator already know the answer. Isa knows that he is not an ideal husband who will protect his wife at all costs. Isa is aware that he doesn't have the guts to fight if he were in that situation. The word 'fight' in this context denotes hard masculinity. What Isa undergoes is a crisis of masculinity.

In wartime like this, the portrayal of the ideal masculinity is the hard or heroic one. If we look at the Javanese mythology like the *wayang* tradition or the leather puppet, which tells the heroic story of Ramayana or Mahabarata, Gatotkaca or Bima is two of the prominent heroes, who construct themselves as "unifying and all-conquering" (Clark, 2004, p. 131) hero, are the opposite of what Isa is. Isa is portrayed as a soft-hearted, sensitive, and compassionate male protagonist. He cannot stand to see the man lying, covered with blood after the troop shot him up: "Such a sight wounded his tender heart. Feels like rape to human honor for him" (Lubis, 2010, p. 12).

Isa is not as common as Muhammad, Ahmad, or Mat in Indonesian, especially in Java. Unlike Muhammad, although Isa is from Arabic, it is not an exclusively used name for Muslims. For Indonesian, Isa sounds 'less Arabic' compared to Hazil. In Java, a pious name is nearly always an Arabic name (Kuipers & Askuri, 2017, p.32). Christians use this name as well. In Indonesian Islamic tradition, Isa is one of the prophets known as Jesus in Christianity. Jesus is known as a compassionate, sensitive, and forgiving figure. Besides, it is essential to see how some scholars examine the constructions of the image of Jesus in terms of his maleness. Rosemary Radford Ruether explores the feminine side of Jesus (1983, p. 116). Furthermore, Ruether asserts that maleness for Jesus is insignificant. Ruether says that in theological terms, one could say that Jesus' maleness had no utmost importance. So, she continues that it has social symbolic meaning in the context of patriarchal societies. In this view, Jesus as the Christ, the representative of emancipated humanity and the liberating Word of God, shows the kenosis [emptying] of patriarchy (1983, p. 137).

A feminist Christology, Elizabeth Johnson attempts to construct Jesus from Hebrew scriptures. She believes that the story of Jesus is Sophia Incarnate:

Even in his human maleness, can be thought to be revelatory of the graciousness of God imaged as female...Not incidentally, the typical stereotypes of masculine and feminine are subverted as female Sophia represents creative transcendence, primordial passion for justice, and knowledge of the truth while Jesus incarnates their divine characteristics in an immanent way relative to bodiliness and the earth. (1992, p. 165)

Isa's sexual impotence can be drawn in this context. His impotence is not a symbol of the lack or absence of masculinity but a symbol of innocence. In other words, it replaces the phallus as the symbol of male dominance. This kind of analogy can also be found in Javanese dance theatrical performances; Arjuna, a male hero, is usually played by a female dancer because of Arjuna's gentleness, sensitivity, and loving characterization.

Guru Isa's masculinity resembles that of Saman, a male protagonist of Ayu Utami's *Saman* (1998), who is created forty years later. Saman is a young priest who advocates the rubber plantation farmers of a small village in Sumatra from a big corporation. The corporation uses thugs and police officers to terrorize and kill the villagers and the farmers, so they are willing to sell their plantation to the company. Yet, the farmers refuse that and fight back and kill one of the police officers. Saman is suspected as the provocateur of the farmers. The police get and torture Saman to tell where the farmers who kill the police officer, but Saman doesn't give any clue to them. Saman, who is a compassionate and loving person, is a bachelor. It is difficult not to say that his quality resembles Guru Isa.

The police officers catch Isa after bombing the theatre. He got caught because Hazil, previously, tells the police where Isa hides. Hazil can't stand the torture, so he gives the information of Isa to the police. However, Isa refuses to tell where the third person committing the bombing is. From this perspective, Mochtar Lubis wants to escape from the myth of Bapakisme, which many scholars (Clark, 2014 and Paramaditha, 2007) believe that the myth comes from the traditional manhood as the Hindu-Javanese tradition or the upper class, *priyayi*.

Resurrecting Male Hysteria

Henry Fleming fights in the frontline with their regiment as the weaponless soldier, for he is the flag bearer. Isa is a sexually dysfunctional husband. The weapon and the penis is the representation of a phallus. As a discourse, the absence of phallus in both novels is in contestation with the other discourse. In *The Red Badge of Courage*, the discourse of the heroic troops who always go to the battlefields with their rifles in their hands is in the contestation with the newer discourse: a soldier in the frontline without any rifles but a flag. In *Jalan Tak Ada Ujung*, Isa's sexual impotence becomes his attribute in opposition to Hazil's manliness. The 'new' discourse of the absence of an erect penis can be interpreted using Kroker's notion that the erect penis is predatory power against women and children (Kroker & Kroker, 1991, p. xiii).

Another crucial thing that happened to both Henry Fleming and Guru Isa was that they were both hysterical. Hysteria is a concept that is of importance in the world of psychoanalysis. This notion comes from the ancient Greek term, which indicates a female disease, namely uterine dysfunction (hysteron) (Rycroft, 1995, p. 72). Freud said that hysteria is a symptom caused by sexual trauma and psychological disorders due to war or 'war neurosis' characterized by symptoms such as fantasies, hallucinations, feelings of extreme fear, and terror (de Lauretis, 2008, p. 5).

Guru Isa and Henry Fleming experienced war neurosis and sexual trauma, although their experiences are different for the latter. Guru Isa often experiences hysteria that is a war neurosis with various responses, for

example, when he scribbles on paper in red ink, and suddenly Guru Isa experiences a tremendous fear. Guru Isa hallucinates:

After a while, the scribbles on the tip of the pen grew more and more, until suddenly, with a shock, he threw the pen on the floor. The red ink he had scribbled reminded him of the injured person shot earlier. Isa covered his face with both hands and groaned slowly. He did not know. But what he felt now was the slow reaction, which had arisen from his earlier suppressed fears. Now everything came out in other forms. His fears arose. (Lubis, 2010, p. 18)

Guru Isa's hysteria in the form of war neurosis also cannot be separated from his hysteria that comes from his sexual trauma to his wife, namely the impotence he experienced so that he felt like a failure as a husband:

His soul is suffering. Even after all these years, when all his attempts at treatment were unsuccessful, this suffering of his soul had been pushed downwards into his unconscious soul. Only now, he does not know, that his sufferings and disappointments are gnawing at the bottom of his conscious soul, changing his outlook on life, his thoughts, and his attitude towards the life around him. (Lubis, 2010, p. 30)

The quotation above implies that there is a causal relationship between war neurosis and Guru Isa's impotence, which is a symptom of hysteria. The influence of the subconscious mind that affects his 'view of life, attitudes, thoughts, and attitudes to his surroundings' is a clear indicator of his hysteria. This influence is corroborated by the narration, "[a]ll feelings of disappointment, near despair, come out in other forms" (Lubis, 2010, p. 30). "These other forms" can be interpreted as a symptom of hysteria. Hysteria has recurring symptoms of painful experiences (de Lauretis, 2008, p. 5), and this can be found throughout the story of how Guru Isa experienced hysteria. Henry Fleming also experienced hysteria, although this was not as intense as what was experienced by Guru Isa. Henry's decision to join the war can be interpreted as an attempt to escape maternal restraints, which shows that Henry is a passive masculine image. The hysteria experienced by Hendri was quite evident when he ran helter-skelter when the opponent repulsed his regiment. In his escape, this great anxiety struck Henry. In his escape, Henry is always looking for justifications that what he is doing is the right thing to do. Henry realized that his flight was not acceptable for a soldier.

The idea that the ideal masculinity is supposed to be in the center of the binary is diminished by the character of Guru Isa. As Connell (1995) says, hegemonic masculinity works inside and outside gender configuration. Inside means, hegemonic masculinity relates to non-hegemonic masculinity, and outside means its relation with femininity. Thus, the narrative of masculinity of Guru Isa operates with the aim of two things: other masculinities and another femininity. The other masculinities that confront Guru Isa's are Hazil and the colonials. Those masculinities are the violent type, which, of course, is more hegemonic than Guru Isa's is.

The anxiety experienced by Guru Isa comes from the encounter between the masculinity of Guru Isa and the others in the realm of war violence. Encountering and conflicting the other masculinities positioned as the nation's enemy in the battlefield cause hysteria. This process turns the anxiety to hysteria, which is not uncommon in that situation. It is known as "shell shock" (Scull, 2011, p. 161) or male hysteria with symptoms such as fear, unbearable tension, disgust, grief, and horror. The soldiers who were experiencing shell shock were trapped in a dilemma: to flee would for many be a deeply cowardly and unmanly act, but staying meant more daily trauma (Scull, 2011, p. 162). Guru Isa's case is even more severe and intense because he is a pacifist.

In the domestic realm, Guru Isa is conflicting with his sexuality, his ability to have a penile erection, and eventually sexually satisfying his wife as well as impregnating her. It is worsened with the existence of Hazil, his only best friend, who substitutes his sexual position toward his wife, Fatimah. In addition, the fact that Guru Isa knows what's happening between his wife and Hazil intensifies his mental burden.

The public and domestic hysteria that Guru Isa faces are different from the hysteria of Henry Fleming, which mainly occurs in the public spheres as he struggles to maintain his manly act on the battlefield. Not only that, Henry Flemming's immaturity also plays a role in causing the hysteria. Henri Fleming's shell shock comes mainly from his romantic expectation of war victory, which doesn't come into reality. The hysteria of Guru Isa and Henry Fleming denotes a critical process of gender undoing because both characters portray the gendered reconstruction of hysteria, which has been generally feminized. The historical construction of hysteria is traced very well by Judith Mitchel (2000) and Mark S. Micale (2008). Hysteria was initially a common symptom in men and women, but for some reason, the thought of male hysteria is rejected, and women are made to be the predominant carriers of the hysterical condition (Mitchel, 2000. p. 320-321).

According to Micale, there are three reasons why hysteria becomes a gendered symptom: epistemological, political, and psychological (Micale, 2008, p. 280-281). The epistemological reason, Micale says, means that the psychologists and doctors, who have been dominated by males, as the subject of the study cannot at the same time become the object of the study. The male-dominated subject, of course, represents the masculine medical gaze. Therefore, it cannot objectify the same gender as the subject. The objectification here means to-be-looked-at-ness. The object must be female.

The political reason, according to Micale, involves the subject's position in society. As the mid-upper class bourgeoisie, the subject of the science, who is authoritative to the masculine medical gaze, needs to preserve the hegemonic bourgeois masculinity as well as idealize the virtue of hegemonic patriarchy so to be positioned as the object of scrutiny of the subject was not an option for becoming an object will only represent them as vulnerable.

The psychological reason relates to the discourse of self. The subject of science cannot examine the self or 'turning the male gaze inward' (Micale, 2008, p. 281). It will be considered as unmasculine:

In a related threat, just as the male medical gaze on female hysteria repeatedly produced a sexualized discourse, so the specter of male physicians gazing with passionate intensity on other adult men in intimate emotional distress suggested an unacceptable homoerotic intimacy (Micale, 2008, p.281).

The denials of hysteria also come from homophobic thought.

To sum up, the male hysteria shown in both characters gives the idea that the non-hegemonic masculinities are more colorful than their counterpart at the other end of the binary. Their strengths come from their durability in facing their anxiety and finally overcoming it.

National Masculinity and Colonialism

When people talk about hegemonic masculinity, a collective image, ideal, template of collective culture will emerge, so this will also be directly proportional when national masculinity is discussed. *Jalan Tak Ada Ujung* and *The Red Badge of Courage* move in the realm of discourse that leads to a certain ideology that is different from the dominant masculinity at that time because the context of both, in this case, is war. Nevertheless, the concept of hegemonic masculinity is needed to see how masculinity is related to hierarchy.

The values of militaristic masculinity that are 'accepted' by ordinary people are that the military is always associated not only with essential practices, skills, and symbols of warfare but also with authority and leadership control (Duncanson, 2020, p. 471). Duncanson later called this public acceptance as consent. This issue is what the two novels then questioned, although from different perspectives. The concept of hegemonic masculinity, according to Connell, does not always win or sometimes fail.

The identity of the militaristic masculinity that is constructed in these two novels needs to be intersected with class, nation, and race (Duncanson, 2020, p. 470) to see how the idealized militaristic masculinity works. This militaristic masculinity is in line with *The Red Badge of Courage*, although in the end, the form of masculinity is different from the mainstream narrative, which is fighting on the front lines without taking up arms. In *Jalan Tak Ada Ujung*, the main character is narrated from the very beginning against the current of the great narrative. Guru Isa provides a portrait that is very different from the spirit of his era. Militarism, which is considered the norm in Indonesia's social, cultural, and political leadership, is countered by presenting a teacher with anxiety and impotence disorders. What Foucault said, that power will always get resistance, is proven to be true in both novels. If Foucault calls power a name when someone is in a complex strategic situation, then Guru Isa resists that power by sticking with what he believes in war. This situation also became a binary for what Hazil experienced.

Guru Isa is not an ideal figure in Indonesian national masculinity. This is in contrast to Henry Fleming, which is not difficult to intertextualize in the discourse of American heroes, for example, with the portrait of *The Flag of Our Father*, or with other stories such as *Hacksaw Ridge* (2016), which is based on a true story in the battle of Okinawa. It tells about the warrior Desmond T. Doss who joins the fight but refuses to take up arms because all he wants is to help other wounded soldiers or the story of a disabled person who goes to war in Vietnam in *Forest Gump*. In the stories or myths above, the elements of heroism and courage are still clearly visible even though they have different forms. Henry Fleming's unwillingness to take the rifle and his insistence only to be a flag carrier on the battlefield is also echoed in the more modern version superheroes series of Captain America (Steven, 2015, p. 262). This element of heroism is not found in the *Jalan Tak Ada Ujung*. Guru Isa is narrated on getting his manhood back and struggling and recovering from his anxiety. Guru Isa portrays masculine anxiety against the expression of violent and hard masculinity. Guru Isa's masculinity, then, can be read as an expression that goes against the grain. It doesn't maintain the status quo as what hero narrative does (Knowles, 2007, quoted in Steven, 2015, p. 11).

Masculinity and nationalism in Indonesian context, especially in *Jalan Tak Ada Ujung*, depicts Indonesian versus non-Indonesian masculinities because it is the contestation between East and West masculinities. Colonialism was a highly gendered process (Morrell & Swart, 2005, p. 91). Therefore, (post)colonial masculinity is an inevitable topic. Discussing the masculinity of Guru Isa is also asserting about subject-position, geospatial, and (post)colonial experiences. When seen through a postcolonial lens, Guru Isa represents gendered national masculinity because gender, race, and class are not distinct realms of experiences, existing in splendid isolation from each other (McClintock, 1995, p. 4-5).

The violence and poverty in *Jalan Tak Ada Ujung* mark the story's setting as a third-world country for war, violence, and poverty are the characteristics of the third world (Morrell & Swart, 2005, p. 100). Poverty is not an issue in *The Red Badge of Courage*. The description of the poverty in the country is depicted in *Jalan Tak Ada Ujung*:

Baba Tan sat on a chair in front of his stall, smoking his long bamboo pipe. A woman carrying a little child stopped in front of her shop, looking at Baba Tan. Baba Tan didn't look at her or pretended not to. The woman seemed to be hesitating, whether to continue or stop. Finally, he turned and entered the shop. "Give me two liters of rice," she said to Baba Tan's son guarding the shop. The boy wrapped two liters of rice and placed it on the table in front of the girl. "six rupiahs!" "Ah, up again. Yesterday it was not as expensive," the woman argued. "Rice is hard to come in now," the boy defended the price. "I just pay it later," the woman said, and her hand reached for the rice packet. "No more debt now." The woman pulled her hand back from the rice packet and stood still. "Where should I borrow the money?", she thought. In her heart, she was angry. (Lubis, 1952, p. 4-5).

The passage above gives a prominent picture of poverty and its victim. As the main staple of the Indonesian diet, the price of rice is the subsistence level standard. The housewife takes most of this burden because she is the household manager. The man of the household or the breadwinner has less burden than his spouse has, as long as he can give whatever salary he's got, and most of the time, the breadwinner is not home because he's got to work. 'A woman carrying a little child' denotes another issue that she is responsible for raising her child. Guru Isa also lives in poverty. Although he works as a teacher, his salary is hardly enough to feed his family. This condition almost forces him to steal some notebooks in his school and to sell them later, just to be able to buy some rice:

Guru Isa sharpened his ears. The school was deserted. The other teachers have gone home. He felt dizzy. Some bring their homework to be done at home. Notebooks were expensive out there. And at home, the money has run out. If he took a pack, no one would know, he thought. And with that money, he will be able to buy rice. shame ran through his heart as this thought flashed through his head. "How the intent of stealing gets into my head," he thought, ashamed of himself (Lubis, 1952, p. 23-24).

Guru Isa is facing a tough dilemma; survival vs. morals. The conflict between need and morality is a cliché in terms of the condition of poverty.

CONCLUSION

From the analysis, it can be argued that Indonesia's national masculinity, as viewed through a gender lens, has a positive impact. This is evident in the character of Guru Isa, whose masculinity resists the conventional and privileged concept of national masculinity, thus implying a little more diverse and progressive pattern of representation of masculinity in Indonesia compared to the United States. In contrast, the American national non-hegemonic masculinity represented by Henry Fleming tends to follow a more static pattern, specifically in terms of the re-identification of the subject with the setting, in this case, the battlefield. Moreover, in the socio-cultural context of a less democratic Indonesia, the character of Isa transcends the spirit of the age, while Indonesian anti-war masculinity deviates from the established setting. Historically speaking, the spectrum of masculinity in the Indonesian literary universe is more visible, providing opportunities for re-reading and re-interpreting gender and masculinity in general. This process of deconstructing and reconstructing traditional notions of gender and masculinity is indicative of progress in the national discourse on gender. It is worth noting that Indonesia's colonial masculinity continues to influence the Post-Reformation Era and may continue to do so in the future. However, the progress made in rethinking and reconstructing gendered discourse in Indonesia suggests a willingness to challenge and move beyond such historical legacies. As such, there is cause for optimism that Indonesia's national masculinity will continue to evolve in a positive and inclusive direction.

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