
Infidelity-Themed Movies Viewed Through the Lens of Popular Culture

Anna Sriastuti¹

¹Universitas Kristen Satya Wacana, Salatiga, Indonesia

✉: annasriastuti@uksw.edu

ABSTRACT

In the middle of the rapid digital current, human relations are getting weaker. One of the concerns pertaining to the relationship is infidelity. It has emerged as a significant issue across various cultures, including that of Indonesia, in which infidelity has become a daily consumption topic. It is not just seen as a real scene, but also in literary works as literary works usually mirrors what happens in a society. Popular films, like "Supernova: Ksatria, Putri, & Bintang Jatuh", "Surga Yang Tak Dirindukan", "Layangan Putus" and "Ipar Adalah Maut" are some popular Indonesian films on infidelity. The popularity can be seen from the film ratings of IMDb. It arises a quest why the movie theme of infidelity becomes popular in Indonesia. This dilemma is based on Indonesia values and morals perceive infidelity as a taboo subject/issue Using a qualitative method through questions, participant context data, inductive analysis, and researcher interpretations, the popularity of infidelity through Indonesian movies is seen through the application of the elements of the house of popular culture introduced by Nachbar and Lause (1992). In the analysis it is found that although Indonesia values and laws forbid infidelity, but the fact tells that infidelity still occurs. The popularity of the films is also supported by the celebrities who become the magnets of the films. So real the actors and actresses play the roles that viewers can relate the stories with the stories in real lives.

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INTRODUCTION

Infidelity is one of the popular topics nowadays. Infidelity, which was once considered a betrayal of trust and moral values, is now reframed as part of the dynamics of modern relationships. In traditional culture, infidelity is considered as a desecration of chastity, both in the relationship between husband and wife, the relationship between two large families from each side, as well as wider relationships in society. Therefore, the perpetrators of infidelity often get social sanctions in the society. However, now the discussion around the matter has shifted. In certain circles, infidelity is normalized and even justified. The pretext that marriage remains harmonious, because infidelity is just a distraction to fill boredom to avoid divorce and the negative view of society is one of the reasons why infidelity becomes a trend that reflects a change in attitude towards relationships and loyalty in an era dominated by social media and instant connectivity. The digital space accelerates everything. Encrypted chat apps, private conversations, and the instant temptation of

social media are expanding the "grey-zone" between loyalty and freedom. Social media has created a new legitimizing space for emotional infidelity, which eventually leads to physical intimacy.

In the middle of the rapid digital current and the pressure of urban life, human relations are getting weaker. Affair is one of the evidence of the weakness of the relationship. This raises questions about how these evolving norms affect the sanctity of committed relationships and whether the increasing acceptance of infidelity is a symptom of broader societal transformation. In the public sphere, this case turned into a scandal, starting from celebrities, officials, and public figures. Even now, adultery can be done by everyone, from all classes and genders. Normalizing infidelity is a value crisis that occurs in popular culture by a society.

In Indonesia, based on a survey conducted by *Justdating*, the case of infidelity in Indonesia is considered high. Indonesia ranked second in Asia with the most respondents being the productive age group,

namely 30-39 years old. The high phenomenon of infidelity has marked the popularity of a new culture in Indonesian society, which fades the values that were once held in high regard, namely the value of loyalty and chastity in marriage. As the cases of infidelity increase, people's interest on this issue goes up, and it is captured well in literary works, in forms of stories and movies.

Literature usually mirrors or reflects what happens in a society. Society and literature are inextricably intertwined and always have been. Authors draw on their experiences living in society and society is in turn altered by literature. A literary work cannot be separated from socio-cultural and community life. Literary works are created and written by authors so that they are not read by themselves, but rather there are ideas, thoughts, experiences, and messages conveyed by the author to the readers or viewers. Film could be considered as the most sophisticated cultural product that can develop and spread very quickly. Turner & Buckham (2006, p. 3) argued that film is a social practice for its makers and its audience; in its narratives and meanings we can locate evidence of the ways in which our culture makes sense

of itself. In recent times, one of the popular film themes in Indonesia is about infidelity and affairs. In the last ten years, films with the theme of infidelity and affairs have become popular in Indonesia, where the level of popularity can be seen from the high ratings.

In 2014, Indonesian society was shocked by the film "Supernova: Ksatria, Putri, & Bintang Jatuh", which tells the story of a young woman's affair with a rich and smart executive. In just one short event, namely an interview between the two, the female protagonist in the film begins to betray her husband through engaging in an extramarital affair. One of the epic plot twists in this film is the presence of another woman in the midst of this couple's affair. The audience's interest in the multi-layered infidelity presented in the mini-fi, made this film achieve an IMDb rating of 6.2/10. A year later came a film entitled "Surga Yang Tak Dirindukan". More successful than its predecessor, this film, released in 2015, received an IMDb rating of 7.4/10. Indonesian society was shaken by a film about a Muslim woman who was forced to share a husband with another woman who was helped by her husband in an

accident. Because of sympathy for the fate of the pregnant woman who was alone, the husband married the woman he helped. This film drains the emotions of the audience to see the justification of the relationship between husband, wife, and another woman. Is it right marrying someone over a pity? Is it a good moral? In the recent past, a series that was adapted into a film entitled "Layangan Putus" is a film about infidelity a married man and again it stole the attention of Indonesian audiences. What made the audience furious was how the homewrecker dared to openly show her special relationship with a married man. The audience also seemed satisfied with the intelligence and determination of the wife in dealing with her husband's affair. Getting an IMDb rating of 6.1/10 shows that this film is popular among Indonesian people. The latest infidelity film is "Ipar Adalah Maut", which tells the story of an affair between a husband and his brother-in-law who lives with this young family. This film, which is based on a true story, is very popular with an IMDb rating of 7.6/10.

It arises a quest why the movie theme of infidelity becomes popular in Indonesia. When a value categorized as

taboo like infidelity is recently well accepted by the society, does it mean that there is a shift of cultural value in Indonesia society? This study will give a broader understanding how Indonesia ideology has changed. It refers to the manifesto from the cultural perspective. The noble manners, attitudes, and morals, like loyalty and chastity in marriage, that used to be highly respected by the Indonesian seem to get faded. It can be proven by the higher percentage of infidelity and divorces cases in Indonesia. The numbers of viewers can be used as an initial sign of the popularity of the films.



Figure 1. Graph of film popularity based from the number of viewers taken from Kompas and Liputan 6

In this perspective, movie as part of popular culture should be considered as representing the zeitgeist of our contemporary epoch. According to Storey (2015), "popular culture is simply culture that is widely favored or well-liked by many people".

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Popular Culture

An obvious starting point in any attempt to define popular culture is to say that popular culture is simply culture that is widely favoured or well-liked by many people. Williams (1983, p. 237), in broader explanation, suggests four current meanings of popular culture: 'well-liked by many people'; 'inferior kinds of work'; 'work deliberately setting out to win favour with the people'; 'culture actually made by the people for themselves'. Beside that, popular culture can also be defined as the culture that is left over after we have decided what is high culture. Popular culture, in this definition, is a residual category, there to accommodate texts and practices that fail to meet the required standards to qualify as high culture. Bourdieu (1984, p. 5) elaborated the idea of the consumption of culture is 'predisposed, consciously and deliberately or not, to fulfil a social function of legitimating social differences. This definition of popular culture is often supported by claims that popular culture is mass-produced commercial culture, whereas high culture is the result of an individual act of creation. Unfortunately, the

distinction of the high and mass culture is getting blur. William Shakespeare is now seen as the epitome of high culture, yet as late as the nineteenth century his work was very much a part of popular theatre.

The study of pop culture as a reflective mirror of individual preference, usually focuses upon two aspects of the zeitgeist - the "transitory" and the "concrete" (Nachbar and Lause, 1992, p. 4). In more detail, Nachbar and Lause explain that the zeitgeist which characterizes a particular era is composed of transitory attitudes and perspectives which last only as long as the era itself and then fade from view - perhaps to return in later times, perhaps not.

Studies about infidelity in Indonesian popular films have been done, which shows that infidelity or affair as one of the prominent issues in Indonesian cinematic narratives. A study entitled *Women and Infidelity: Female Representation in Shaping Social Reality in the Film "Selesai"* published in 'Kuriositas: Media Komunikasi Sosial dan Keagamaan' (2023) shows that Indonesian films often construct women in affair narratives as "weak, easily deceived, or temptress figures, reflecting gender bias. Another

study entitled *Analysis of Female Audience Receptions towards Infidelity in the "Ipar adalah Maut" Movie* (Jurnal Komunikasi, 2024) finds out that infidelity-themed films tend to emphasize negative emotional and moral consequences, shaping audience interpretation. As films are reflections of what happens in the society, infidelity as a popular movie theme, reflects the Indonesian's values and belief. Another finding that shows how affair narratives generate anxiety, emotional identification, and moral reflection among viewers, is found in "Syntax Literate: Jurnal Ilmiah Indonesia" in an article *Media Effects of Affairs in "Layangan Putus" Series*.

Thus, popular culture is rooted in the bedrock beliefs and values that are relatively stable and long-lasting. The "Whirlwind Tour of the House of Popular Culture" by Nachbar and Lause (1992, p. 20-27) is explained shortly by Dukut (2018) in A Module of Popular Culture. The basement of the house of the popular culture is the beliefs and values forming the cultural mindset. Beliefs and values are in the basement because they are ideas which cannot be seen in and of themselves, because they exist in the cultural mind and in the

minds of the individual members of the mass society. The first floor of the house contains pop artifacts, which consists of objects and people who are widely accepted or approved by the masses. There are two types of popular artifacts: the popular objects (icons) and popular people (heroes or celebrities). Each of these categories is further subdivided into real and imaginary types. The next is rituals. Rituals are highly patterned symbolic events in which all elements participate as a way of marking important passages. Rituals build upon the rooms by frequently integrating both heroes and icons into patterned events. The largest room of the house of popular culture is the popular arts. The arts are vast and diverse; however, they do not stand isolated from the other rooms and they derive their meaning and significance from the beliefs and values of the popular mindset that is situated in the basement. All the rooms of the house of popular culture can be seen from the daily events existed in the society.

Infidelity

Generally, infidelity is defined as any type of secret emotional, sexual or romantic behaviour that violates the exclusivity that romantic

relationships have by definition. However, there are varied definitions of infidelity, which can be divided into subtypes of sexual, emotional, combined (sexual and emotional) and internet infidelity (Weiser, 2014). Examples of the various (and sometimes contradictory) definitions, can be gleaned from Bernard who believed that partners who failed to love, honour and support their partners were engaging in infidelity, since they did not honour their vows to remain with their romantic partner. In contrast, Pittman and Wagers held a different position and maintained that the hallmark of infidelity involves the secrecy and concealment of behaviours with an individual outside of the committed relationship (Pittman, 2005). Thompson had a more comprehensive view of infidelity, and postulated that infidelity occurs if: (a) the extradyadic behavior is not condoned by one's romantic partner, (b) that behavior occurs outside of the primary relationship and (c) the behavior can be described, such as intercourse, flirting, etc. (Thompson, 1983).

Addressing the various types of infidelity, emotional infidelity includes the development of deep, intimate feelings for an extradyadic partner, while sexual

infidelity refers to engaging in sexual behavior with that person. Those who engage in both emotional and sexual behavior are said to be involved with composite infidelity, while internet infidelity is carried out (at least initially) virtually/online. Other researchers have employed even narrower definitions of infidelity by focusing on specific behaviors such as spending time with another individual and going on romantic dates, engaging in kissing, fondling, or even sexual intercourse, suggesting that they all constitute unfaithful behaviour (Blow, 2005; Luo & Snider, 2010).

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative method was used in this paper. Creswell (2014) describes the qualitative method as "an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem." The research process involves emerging questions, participant context data, inductive analysis, and researcher interpretations. The customizable report supports inductive inquiry, personal meaning, and capturing complexity in situations. Furthermore, Kumar (2011) explains that the main

objective of qualitative research is understanding, explaining, exploring, finding, and clarifying circumstances, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, and experiences of a group of people. The collection and analysis of the data was carried out in stages. The first was to apply the theory of the House of *Popular Culture* by Nachbar and Lause (1992, p. 20-27) to identify the popularity of the fidelity theme movies. All the data collected are to be grouped according to the (bedrock belief, heroes, icons, rituals, and daily life) of the house of popular culture. Following that, the data analysed will be interpreted and elaborated to explain the findings.

DISCUSSION

Religions and Laws as Indonesia Bedrock Beliefs

Indonesia's ideology is laid in its identity. Pancasila is an ideology with five principles that have cultural and religious values which have rooted in the Indonesians' lives over centuries. Although Indonesia consists of diverse cultures, ethnicities, languages, and six religions recognized by the state: Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and

Confucianism, the Indonesia agree on social cultural norms and laws, which one of them is about infidelity. Nearly all religions and value systems condemn this act.

As the majority of Indonesians are Islam, many norms and values are viewed from Islamic laws or perceptions. In Islam, infidelity, adultery, or zina, is a major sin and is strictly prohibited. The Quran explicitly forbids adultery and imposes severe penalties on those who commit it. Infidelity not only damages the marital relationship but also damages the honour of the family and society. Islam teaches the importance of maintaining the sanctity of marriage and building a family that is peaceful, loving, and compassionate. Islam is not the only religion who set strict rules about marriage. Stricker than Islam, Catholic tradition even requires a person to be married to only one person until death, as the brides and grooms take vow to remain in marriage until death do them apart.

A popular movie about infidelity with Islamic background booming in 2024 entitled "Ipar Adalah Maut". Dressing in 'hijab' as a symbol of strong religiosity does not a guarantee a good moral. This

most emotional infidelity-themed film of 2024, "Ipar adalah Maut" depicts a man's betrayal of his seemingly perfect wife. Foolishly, he cheated on her with his own sister-in-law, resulting in her pregnancy. From this movie, viewers' emotions are tossed to watch how Indonesia cultural values and moral are violated harshly through the infidelity done by a husband over a 'perfect wife' to their close family member. It breaks the image of strong kinship system that the Indonesians are proud of.

Beside religion, adultery and infidelity are already in Positive State Law since the beginning of Indonesia's history, and the nation has recognized regulations regarding acts of adultery and infidelity. These are enshrined in the old Criminal Code (KUHP), a legal legacy of the Dutch colonial government. Besides the KUHP, other legal regulations address similar issues, namely the Compilation of Islamic Law (KHI) and Law No. 1 of 1974 concerning Marriage. However, the KHI, as a legal document based on and incorporating Islamic law, makes adultery and infidelity grounds for divorce. The high respect society places on loyalty in the marriage means that in addition to prohibiting

infidelity. In the Criminal Code, adultery is specifically regulated in Article 284 paragraph (1) number 1 letter a. This article states that, *"Anyone who is still married or married, has sexual intercourse with a woman or man who is not his wife or husband, is threatened, if the complaint is withdrawn, with a maximum prison sentence of nine months."*

Although laws about infidelity have obviously mentioned the legal consequences of breaking the law, it does not stop people doing infidelity or affair. In the series of "Layangan Putus", viewers are given a show of infidelity in a successful young married couple. "Layangan Putus" tells the story of Aris and Kinan, a harmonious and loving couple who expect their second baby. Unfortunately, behind this joyous marriage, gleefully Aris is having an ongoing infidelity with a mistress he keeps secret from his wife. What makes things worst is the woman whom Aris has an affair with, named Lydia, works as a child psychologist who diligently consults with Raya, the daughter of Kinan and Aris. Just like Kinan, as people watch these series and movie, their trust has been betrayed. Watching this, people are woken

up with the realizations that there is a high crisis of marriage related to trust and loyalty especially for young couple, and that the person who betrays the marriage can be the closest one of the family. Like in here, the one having affair with the husband is the family psychologist. Similar like these series, in "Ipar Adalah Maut", the one ruins the marriage is the wife's sister. Viewers get interested to watch as they want to know whether Kinan's marriage face an uncertain future of being a detached kite, or her marriage will be back in harmony.

Ideal Marriage as Indonesia Cultural Mindset

Marriage in Indonesia is not just about finding a life partner, but also about building a harmonious relationship between two families not only involves two individuals; it also involves family, relatives, and the surrounding community. This demonstrates the importance of marriage in maintaining religious and cultural values in Indonesia," he said. In Islam, marriage is a highly recommended act of worship. The Prophet Muhammad said that marriage is Sunnah; which means maintaining the honour and integrity of an individual. Beside Islam, most religions generally support marriage

(Himawan, Bambling, and Edirippulige 2018). This argument is further interpreted by some religious adherents, who believe that the inability to marry implies a denial of religious commands, thus believing marriage to be a form of religious obedience.

The legal and ideal marriage is stated in Verse 1 of the Marriage Law or Undang-Undang Perkawinan (UUP), that mentions "*Marriage is a physical and spiritual bond between a man and a woman as husband and wife with the aim of forming a happy and eternal family (household) based on the One Almighty God.*" There are several points in the formulation of Article 1 of the UUP above that are worth nothing, as follows: (1) the use of the phrase "a man and a woman" implies that the marriage is only between persons of the opposite sex. In other words, marriage between a man and another man (gay) or between a woman and a woman (lesbian) is absolutely prohibited and not recognized in Indonesia; (2) the use of the phrase "as husband and wife" implies that marriage is the coming together of two people of different sexes in a household, not merely the term "living together"; (3) the purpose of marriage is to form a happy and everlasting household, which violates any

actions that may break the ties of the marriage, including infidelity; and (4) marriage is a promise taken under "One Almighty God", meaning that marriage is holy and anyone violates the holiness of marriage will be granted with heavenly punishment. From this, ideally if a marriage fulfils all the four points above, the marriage will last happily forever. In Islam, marriage as a form of worship (Asyari and Abid 2016, Ibrahim and Hassan 2009). Success in marriage is not only a success of worldly matters, but also heavenly matters, as the marriage couples will be rewarded heaven. Examples of the standards of successful marriage harmony are loyalty, and affair-free.

The movie "Surga Yang Tak Dirindukan" is one of the most popular movies about infidelity or affair. Although infidelity is considered unacceptable or taboo, but in this movie, religious values are shown. Set in a circle of Islamic communities, this movie tries to grab audience's attention using Islamic value of starting a relationship, that a good Islamic woman needs to be patient and not date. Being patient meaning waiting for a man to approach with the intention of marriage, not just to gain the warmth of youth.

Arini, the female main character was an obedient Islamic woman who chose not to violate the religious Islamic teachings. Arini favoured the concept of Islamic marriage. It begins with the initial exploration process (*ta'aruf*) rather than dating, followed by the engagement (*khitbah*) or proposal, and ends with the final reception (*walimah*). When a wife as good as Arini is cheated by his husband who secretly married another woman with an excuse to help this pregnant woman who was left by her boyfriend.

As the Indonesians are taught with cultural and religious morals, they have come to the same senses that there are good and bad things considered good and bad in the society. It is believed that good morals can bring goodness and is likely to be rewarded, but to break good morals will bring nothing but suffer and bad luck. Regarding to this, the idea of having affair or cheating in this movie is disliked or hated by the viewers. However, curiosity over what happens to the loyal religious wife who stays firm in front of her children, even though her heart is broken when the heaven she has built is destroyed by another woman who has created a new one for her husband; and how the wedding

will end up at the end, attract people to watch which at the end increase both the rating of the movie popularity. Arini seems to resemble an idol of a religious Islamic Indonesia woman who even though tormented by the realization of what her husband has done. she strives to maintain and fight for the integrity of the household she has built. Although this movie gives viewers positive perspectives on obedient religious Muslim wife, this movie offers a new perspective on how a husband easily decided to start polygamous marriage with no crucial issues to make it happen from this movie, the viewers learn that marriage affair can be legalized, and that patriarchal issue for man is the decision maker is somehow supported by religion. Arini has to 'share' her husband if she still wants to get 'heaven' as woman's heaven is through man, according to her religion. The higher the curiosity to know what is supposed to be counted as ideal marriage has made this movie popular.

Social Media as Popular Icons

Social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, YouTube have become effective weapons to promote narratives about how "scary" marriage is. Generally, marital affairs, especially those involving

conflict and infidelity, tend to be kept under wraps. Marital failure is a shame and a wound that should not be publicly aired. However, in the era of social media, the boundaries between the private and public spheres become blurry. Stories of divorce due to infidelity, domestic violence, and even financial conflict have become daily topics, often discussed through podcasts, talk shows, and even films about marital breakdown. Social media becomes modern online diaries in which any stories including infidelity and divorce are spread fast. The purpose to make such stories viral are a desire to share their stories as lessons for others, a desire to receive support, praise, sympathy, and to build intimacy and motivate other to share related stories.

In today's digital world, social media plays a crucial role and has a significant impact on audience satisfaction and enthusiasm. The significant increase in internet users and intensive use of social media indicate that the public's digital or language literacy is improving. Experts define digital literacy as "the ability to access and process information in all forms of delivery" (Potter, 2019). Currently, social media has become a highly effective tool

for film promotion. Indonesian filmmakers can promote the movies use the platforms of the social media to share stories about their films by creating engaging content such as cast members, behind-the-scenes stories, and engaging trailers. Filmmakers use numerous social media platforms today due to their high usage, including Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube. The film "Layangan Putus" is currently a hot topic on social media. has captivated Indonesians. It is also generating a lot of discussion on Twitter and Facebook. The more discussion it has in the social media, the more popular the movie among the people.

"Ipar Adalah Maut" is one of the 2024 films that captures the number of the audience that has attracted more than 2.6 million viewers. Social media becomes a powerful tool for its promotion. Production house marketing teams employ various strategies to generate ongoing discussion about the films, and the "Ipar Adalah Maut" marketing team seems to have succeeded in reaching social media users. Furthermore, conversations about "Ipar Adalah Maut" have grown organically on TikTok, Facebook, and Instagram, contributing to a daily buzz,

resulting in steady stream of moviegoers.

Although infidelity is not the only reasons for a divorce, but as it cannot be ignored that as the number of infidelities rises, the number of divorces is also getting higher. Therefore, the discussions about these two topics are getting more among the people. Infidelity and divorce are considered taboo or negative topics to be shared in public. However, taboo topics eventually grow curiosity. With the help of social media as means of promotion, movies with infidelity themes are accepted and well-liked by the people. The popularity of the movies can be seen through the viral discussions people have in their social media and the number of movie viewers. Therefore, social media can be said as popular icons to promote Indonesia movies of infidelity themes.

Actors as Real Heroes

In the world of film production, casting isn't just about finding the right face for the role. It is about finding someone who can bring the character to life, both on the big screen and in theatres. This process involves many considerations, from acting ability to chemistry with the other cast members. A number of

big-name actors and actresses guarantee a film's popularity. A successful movie about affair that was very popular in 2014 entitled "Supernova: Ksatria, Putri, & Bintang Jatuh" trust the casts to famous actors and actress, like Herjunot Ali, Raline Shah, Paula Verhoeven, Arifin Putra, Hamish Daud, and Fedi Nuril. Each main cast has successfully played the roles well that, viewers' attention is drawn to a complex circle of relationships and affairs. Fedi Nuril plays his role as Arwin, a perfect husband, yet he is a victim of his wife's infidelity who cannot escape the chaos of a forbidden love with a newly known male friend, Ferre. Raline Shah as Rana also successfully steals viewers' attentions when she plays as a 'loyal' wife in front of her husband, but aggressively cheats on him with. Viewers are curious to know how this marriage relationship will come at the end, especially when this disloyal wife is cheated by Ferre, who gets attracted by another woman named Diva, played well by Paula Verhoeven. So good on how the actors and actresses play their roles that the viewers are deeply involved in the plot of the story that brings the theme of infidelity soaring in the society.

The images of good and bad seem to stay in society minds.

The presence of Fedi Nuril, Laudya Cynthia Bella, and Raline Shah in the film "Surga yang Tak Dirindukan" boosts the film's success. Like the previous movie in "Supernova: Ksatria, Putri, & Bintang Jatuh", Fedi Nuril, with his mature personality and loyal husband figure, is deemed suitable to play Prasetya, a gentle and caring husband. Likewise, Laudya Cynthia Bella, a gentle and religious woman, successfully helps the audience understand the sadness of Aini, a pious wife forces to accept the reality of being polygamous with her husband. Bella herself has her popularity soaring when she acts in her debut "Virgin". As a teenager who needs money to fulfil her life style, she is willing to 'sell' her virginity for money. So good is her acting that she is known as a sensational actress. However, her decision to wear *hijab* change her image into a religious actress. Her religious image matches well with her role as Aini in "Surga yang Tak Dirindukan", that viewers are dragged to find the characteristics of solemn woman in her. Raline Shah, a modern woman, successfully presents the character of Meirose, who becomes pregnant before marriage and is left by her lover. These three celebrities become heroes in the popularity

of the film "Surga yang Tak Dirindukan"

In "Layangan Putus", Reza Rahardian successfully embodies the role of Aris, a two-faced modern husband who loves his wife but is unable to leave his mistress. Putri Marino successfully portrays Kinan, a firm, independent wife. Anya Geraldine, an actress with strong sexual appeal, successfully plays the mistress in Lydia. The actors and actresses' popularity become the popular heroes that boost the popularities of the movies. As watching the movies, viewers experience various emotions: upset toward the man, pity toward the wife, and anger toward the mistress. Nothing the viewers can do but to watch the movie and promote it through various media. Unconsciously, the viewers become the media to promote the popularity of the movies.

Films Relate to Daily Lives

Literary works are inseparable from society. Art can be linked to biography, psychology, philosophy, and society. Wellek and Austin Warren (1989, p. 109) state that literature presents life, and life is largely composed of social reality. Literary works can also be said to be a form of imitation of the subjective world of humans. Regarding the

author's society, Plato considered art to be mimesis, or an imitation of the world of figures. Therefore, Aristotle questioned the originality of art, then corrected Plato's opinion by placing more emphasis on the significance of art. For Aristotle, mimesis in art is not merely pure imitation but a creative depictive process. Works of art are depictions in the sense that what is depicted are events, figures, and forms, even though these things have similarities with real behaviour, people, and objects. The function of literature can vary from era to era in different societies. In one era and society, literature may serve as a tool for disseminating ideology; in another era and society, literature may be considered a safe escape from everyday reality. Literature may even be considered capable of providing life experiences and noble human values to readers.

Since the movies about infidelity is getting more and more popular, especially after the affairs are exposed, spouses have become concerned about their partners. In "Layangan Putus", a happy married life whose closest friends, relatives, and loved ones envy for its harmony, turns to end in a tragic way as

the husband is eventually caught cheating on his wife with another woman. In "Ipar Adalah Maut" the case is more brutal as the husband betrays his wife with his sister-in-law. The films show the viewers the grey side of marriage, that even in seemingly harmonious marriages, infidelity can still occur.

As the films relate to the daily lives, the society start to make several generalizations over infidelity or affair. The first is the idea that infidelity is open for all people. People can have affairs at any circumstances. Affair is not always about sexual attractiveness, but it can happen because low marriage commitment, high insecurity, selfishness, lack of social supports, and chances. A loyal husband like Aris in "Layangan Putus" or Prasetya in "Surga Yang Tak Dirindukan", who seem to be devoted to marriage and family, fail to escape from the affair opportunities. Opposite sex temptation, moral dilemma, challenge, or selfishness triggers the men to cheat on their wives. On the other hand, the wives' submissiveness encourages the affair itself. The films give insights for the viewers that there is no need of serious problems like economical or personal matters to cause infidelity as it is a

decision one takes. Sometimes, certain situations can trigger someone to cheat. For example, reuniting with an old friend, going on a business trip out of town, or even simply meeting someone at a bar. These situational factors can make someone tempted to engage in a relationship with someone else. No matter how good the partner is, if a person decides to have an affair, then infidelity can happen.

The second relatable issue about infidelity in the films and in real life is the agents or the people themselves. What has been popular in society is many affairs cases happen between colleagues, between boss and workers, or even between teacher and students. It seems that apart from their legal spouse, a man or a woman normally have an affair with somebody who is apart from the wife or the husband's side. Therefore, a huge shocking happens when the viewers watch "Ipar Adalah Maut" as they witness how the mistress is no others but the wife's sister herself. What is considered taboo to be talked among people, now reveals to its surface. People start to relate this with what happens in the society. Another kind of perspective has been built about infidelity. It is open to

all people, regardless the relationships they share.

CONCLUSION

The popularity of fidelity themes in Indonesian films can be attributed to various cultural influences present in Indonesian society. Religious values and norms become lens to view the popularity of these films. The portrayal of fidelity in films reflects societal norms and values, such as the significance placed on loyalty and commitment in relationships. Viewers' objectivity and curiosity how infidelity will affect the marriage become triggers for these movies soaring high in popularity. The presence of famous actors and actresses who support the films with their great performances arouse viewers' trust that the movies are worth-watching. So good that the actors and actresses to play their roles, that viewers seem to see what happens in real lives through the movies. Using this research as a preliminary study, further researches on various topics, like the influences of infidelity trends among young generations' moral issues or the psychological effects of infidelity for woman viewed from the literary works, are opened to be done.

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