

Long Text to Support Drama in the Film Women from Rote Island Director Jeremias Nyangoen

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to reveal, examine, and analyze how the long take technique can support the dramatic elements in the film *Women From Rote Island* directed by Jeremias Nyangoen. The research method used is qualitative with a descriptive analysis approach. The results of the study show that the application of the long take technique in the film *Women From Rote Island* proves that the long take does not stand alone, but is combined with other cinematographic elements such as camera movement, framing, camera angle, and lighting, which is in accordance with the theories of Bordwell, Thompson & Smith, Blain Brown, Joseph Mascelli. This combination successfully supports the dramatic elements of conflict, suspense, surprise, and curiosity. The effective use of long takes provides an opportunity for the audience to feel the tension and emotions of the characters directly.

Keywords: *Long Take, Dramatic Elements, Cinematography, Women From Rote Island.*

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INTRODUCTION

Film is a form of art and visual communication media that is expressed through thought processes, resulting in a combination of audio and visuals. Film can be used as a medium to convey messages to a wide audience and provide entertainment for filmgoers. It can also convey moral messages, important issues, and cultural influences. Film can also be used to challenge commonly held beliefs.

Film has two elements: narrative and cinematic. A film is composed of two components: narrative and cinematic. Narrative elements relate to the story aspect of a film, while cinematic elements are the technical aspects of film production, including mise-en-scène, cinematography, editing, and sound (Pratista, 2017). Overall, a film contains a narrative visualized through moving images. The combination of carefully edited moving images, complemented by sound and music, creates a fluid and coherent work.

One of the Indonesian films, titled "*Women From Rote Island*," is directed and written by Jeremias Nyangoen, and has a running time of 1 hour and 46 minutes. Produced by Bintang Cahaya Sinema and Langit Terang Sinema, the film stars Irma Rih, Linda Adoe, and Sallum Ratu Ke. "*Women*

From Rote Island" premiered at the Busan International Film Festival in 2023 and was shown in Indonesian theaters in 2024.

"Women From Rote Island" begins with Martha, an illegal migrant worker in Malaysia, returning to her hometown on Rote Island to attend her father's funeral. Meanwhile, she must confront her own trauma after experiencing sexual violence at the hands of her employer, nicknamed "Datuk" (a man named "Datuk") at work. Orpa, Martha's mother, and her family are victims of discrimination from their extended family and the surrounding community after witnessing Martha's change in behavior. Martha, in turn, becomes a victim of sexual violence in her hometown. Due to Martha's strange behavior, she is eventually shackled in her home. While shackled, someone secretly rapes Martha repeatedly, resulting in her pregnancy.

One of the elements found in the film "Women From Rote Island" is the dramatic element. Dramatic elements play a crucial role in strengthening the visual language and supporting the delivery of information in the story. Drama is divided into four elements: conflict, curiosity, surprise, and suspense, each with its own distinct yet interrelated roles (Lutters, 2010). "Women From Rote Island" features a dramatic sequence that ascends and descends, enabling the audience to experience the emotions conveyed within the film. To create more captivating dramatic scenes, cinematographic creativity is essential.

The visuals in "Women From Rote Island" are inseparable from cinematographic techniques, creating compelling drama. Visuals play a crucial role in conveying information and building the narrative. To achieve optimal results, the director must be able to determine shots that align with the requirements of the script. The director also considers cinematographic elements, including shooting techniques, camera angles, framing, composition, lighting, and camera movement. All of these elements can be combined into a single long shot, called a long take.

A long take is a shooting technique that lasts longer than the average duration of a single shot. A long take is the use of a shot duration longer than the average duration of a single shot (Bordwell, 2008). A shot can be considered a single shot or long take if its duration exceeds 9 to 10 seconds per shot (Pratista, 2017). However, some directors apply this long take technique for several minutes to hours in their films. The purpose of a long take is to highlight a scene and convey information continuously. Long takes give the audience the opportunity to feel the tension and emotions of the characters directly. The audience can see changes in the characters' expressions and reactions in a continuous flow and create a closer experience. This is important in building drama, where emotional moments can be reviewed in more depth. The long take technique has the potential to cause boredom due to excessively long durations. To avoid boredom, camera angles are needed in shooting.

Camera angle is the camera's perspective on an object in the frame. Through experience, the decision to choose a camera angle determines the viewer's perspective and the area covered in a shot (Mascelli, 2010). The application of camera angles in film can influence the viewer's psychology. To focus the image on the camera angle, proper composition is required.

Composition is the way visual elements are arranged within the camera frame, thus focusing the viewer's gaze on the main object or story being emphasized. Informal balance composition is one in which the actor or more important object is placed at the center of attention (Mascelli, 2010). Determining what is and is not included in an image within the camera's frame is called framing.

Framing is the process of capturing a shot that determines the visual distance between the main object and other objects. Framing is also inseparable from the overall composition of the image, which is closely related to the position of objects within the frame (Pratista, 2017). Framing

in film plays a crucial role in defining the message a scene is intended to convey. To achieve the desired message, a supportive atmosphere is needed, one of which is the use of lighting.

Lighting can play a crucial role in determining visual aesthetics. Lighting not only ensures each scene is clearly visible but also supports the feeling and atmosphere of the story. This lighting concept creates a chiaroscuro effect, a contrast between dark and light areas that creates an intimate, tense, gloomy, and mysterious atmosphere (Pratista, 2017). The depiction of a film's atmosphere can be conveyed through camera movement.

Camera movement is frequently found in films. Movement itself is a style and timing that relates to all actions that contribute to the atmosphere of the image (Brown, 2012). Camera movement can clarify the details of a scene, conveying the information within the film. A popular camera movement technique today is handheld.

The handheld camera style has several distinctive characteristics that distinguish it from other styles. The resulting shaking and dynamic movement create a strong impression on the viewer. Handheld techniques typically neglect visual composition and emphasize the subject being filmed (Pratista, 2017). Handheld cameras are considered more effective in enhancing drama than static cameras, but this does not preclude the use of static cameras. The author chose to analyze the long takes in the film "Women From Rote Island" because it is packaged entirely using long takes, making the audience feel as if they are drawn into the story. This combines cinematographic elements such as camera angles, changing compositions, framing that depicts a particular point of view, lighting that always creates a different atmosphere, and camera movements that contribute to supporting the story. The feelings of anxiety experienced by the main character are directly felt by the audience, waiting for something uncertain about what will happen, adding to the audience's sense of anticipation. The use of long takes in this film has its own motivations and purposes, each of which aims to convey information that aligns with the script. Long takes in "Women From Rote Island" serve several purposes: to support visuals that fit the scenario, such as moments of stress, to show an object that is intended to highlight the harassment of women, and to depict the complex dynamics of relationships between the characters. This film has won numerous awards at the Indonesian Film Festival (FFI), including one for Best Cinematography Director (2023). Therefore, the author is interested in researching "Women From Rote Island." This research will focus on analyzing long takes to support the drama.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative method with a descriptive analysis approach. In descriptive analysis, data is presented in written form and can be presented in graphs, diagrams, and tables to facilitate understanding. Therefore, qualitative research is holistic, interpreting data in relation to various possible aspects. A descriptive approach collects data in the form of text, words, symbols, and images, although the data collected may be quantitative (Kaelan, 2012). This method aims to provide an overview of the data and explain the situation under study, supported by the data. The descriptive approach collects data in the form of text, words, and images. The focus of the research is the analysis of long takes to support the drama in the film Women From Rote Island.

Data sources are divided into two, where primary data is the data source that directly provides data to the collector. The primary data in this study is the film Women From Rote Island downloaded via the internet in 720p HD quality, and secondary data is the

source that does not directly provide data, obtained from library materials such as books related to long takes, theses, and scientific articles.

The data collection techniques used include, indirect observation by observing the film *Women From Rote Island* by analyzing the visuals and identifying the use of long takes that support the drama, interviews with sources namely Jeremias Nyangoen as the director of the film *Women From Rote Island*, to determine the effectiveness and reasons for choosing the long take technique, literature studies by collecting data and theoretical information about cinematography and dramatic elements from books, journals, and theses and finally documentation by capturing scenes in the film that become research evidence.

Data analysis techniques are carried out by searching for and compiling data systematically, grouping data and analyzing the material using cinematography theory, then analyzing it using dramatic elements theory and drawing conclusions.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

RESEARCH RESULT

In the film “*Women From Rote Island*”, 10 scenes were identified that employed long takes to support drama, including scenes 2, 3, 11, 16, 25, 28, 29, 38, 42, and 58. The analysis focused on how the combination of cinematographic elements in these long takes builds dramatic elements that is conflict, suspense, curiosity, and surprise.

1. Camera Movement

The camera movement in scene 2 of *Women From Rote Island* is strategically designed to actively follow and reinforce the emotional and dramatic developments experienced by the main character, Orpa. The scene opens with the camera moving out of an enclosed area, following Orpa as she walks out, using a handheld technique. This use of handheld effectively adds to the sense of anxiety, anger, and worry experienced by Orpa, making the scene feel real, as if the audience is in the midst of the conflict.

After Orpa takes center stage, the camera movement continues with a pan right. This subtle shift to the right occurs, initially focusing on Orpa and Abel, then focusing entirely on Orpa as she receives a phone call. This movement indicates a dramatic shift in focus in the narrative, from the external conflict between Orpa and Abel to Orpa's internal conflict, now directly confronting the organization for which Martha works. The entire camera movement from the restless move out to the isolating pan right consistently serves as a key visual support that builds and carries the tension of the conflict until it reaches Orpa's emotional climax.



Figure 1. camera movement towards long takes
(source: Muhammad Asyraf)

2. Camera Angle

Nearly all of the scenes in scene 3 are shot from an eye-level perspective. This eye-level perspective plays a crucial role in establishing a sense of realism and the audience's emotional involvement in the profound conflict between Orpa and Mama. By placing the camera at the same level as the characters, the audience is generally positioned at their level, as if they were direct witnesses or even active participants in the events. This directly enhances the audience's empathy, allowing the emotions and drama of this family dispute to speak for themselves without the distractions of a high or low angle.

This approach aligns with cinematographic principles, eye-level is the most common perspective because it replicates the way we see the world in everyday life (Mascelli, 1965). Thus, the use of this camera angle ultimately enhances the dramatic elements of conflict, suspense, and fear, making the audience feel truly present and involved amidst the tension of the room.



Figure 2. camera angle for long take
(source: Muhammad Asyraf)

3. Lighting

The lighting in scene 16 is designed to create a profound psychological impact and reinforce Martha's trauma. While the basic lighting is natural, this scene relies heavily on hard light, characterized by sharp shadows, distinct shadow lines, and abrupt transitions from light to darkness. This use of hard light visually reflects Martha's sudden, fearful reaction, creating tension and internal conflict. This lighting creates a strong

contrast, with half of the subject's face illuminated, effectively highlighting Martha's emotional shift and panic.

In addition to hard light, backlighting and side lighting are used to add visual depth and support the drama. Backlighting Martha separates her from the darker background, symbolizing the pressure of her trauma. Meanwhile, side lighting, which comes from the side, creates further tension by highlighting Martha's conflict, adding texture to the space and adding visual dimension to the scene. This combination of lighting, from the sharp contrast of hard light to the emphasis of backlighting and side lighting, overall supports the dramatic elements of suspense and fear, allowing the audience to feel the emotional impact of the trauma triggered by the reflection in the mirror.



Figure 3. lighting for long takes
(source: Muhammad Asyraf)

4. Framing

The framing in scene 38 is designed to immediately draw the audience's attention from the oppressive environment to the extreme details of Martha's suffering and helplessness. The scene opens with a full shot showing Orpah carrying food into a cramped, dingy room to establish the spatial context and demonstrate the oppressive physical conditions of the surrounding area. The framing then shifts to a medium shot to reveal Martha's hidden position under the mattress, highlighting her oppressed and trapped physical condition. The rapid framing shift focuses on the characters' expressions to depict the main character's psychological state in a situation of stress, limitations, and loss of control.



Figure 4. Framing towards long takes
(source: Muhammad Asyraf)

5. Composition

The composition in scene 58 is designed for threat, violent action, and decision-making. At the beginning of the scene, the composition utilizes the principle of leading lines, drawing the viewer's eye into the room through the placement of Habel feet at the bottom of the frame. These leading lines, combined with the use of negative space above them, effectively build a sense of mystery and approaching threat. During the beating, the composition utilizes dynamic, diagonal lines created by attacking or parrying body postures. These diagonal lines not only convey the brutal physical movement but also visually reinforce the tension and conflict escalating within the frame.

After the fight the composition shifts to support a crucial decision-making moment. Triangular composition is used when the three family members are grouped tightly together during a discussion. This triangular composition visually enhances their sense of unity and decisiveness in the face of Habel betrayal. Finally, the framing of the padlock utilizes the golden mean area principle, or rule of thirds. By placing the padlock as a prominent object at the center or strong point of the frame, the composition ensures the viewer's eye is immediately drawn to the symbol of vengeance and Habel capture. This composition effectively ends the prolonged physical conflict, begins the conflict of punishment, and makes the padlock the primary visual focus in the scene's resolution.





Figure 5. composition towards long takes
(source: Muhammad Asyraf)

One of the key findings is the use of a dynamic combination of framing, camera angle, lighting, composition, and camera movement in long takes to produce a strong dramatic effect.

DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that the long take technique employed in *Women From Rote Island* is not static, but rather a complex and dynamic cinematographic composition. Frame mobility often breaks down long takes into smaller, significant units (Bordwell, 2020).

In Scene 28, the change in framing from a medium close-up to a close-up of Martha, even in one long shot, serves to direct the audience's attention and create an intense emotional focus, in accordance with the concept of framing that places more important objects in the center of attention (Mascelli, 2010). The use of long takes and handholds in Scene 28 and Scene 29 effectively supports the dramatic elements of suspense and conflict (Lutters, 2004) and (Biran, 2006). Handhelds are able to elevate the dramatic element because their dynamic shaking and movement give a strong impression.

The results of the thesis entitled *Camera Movement to Strengthen Dramatic in the cinematography of the film "Bajing Loncat"*, Indonesian Institute of the Arts Yogyakarta, Rizky (2020) explains that by using the application of camera movement to strengthen the drama of the film. The cinematography aspect plays a significant role in increasing drama in the film. Because the camera movement dynamically creates tempo and rhythm in the film. so that the audience feels what the characters feel through the visuals presented. The realization of this work is done through an analysis of the application of camera movement so that it can strengthen the conflict in the story. In his research, the author used it as a reference because both discuss drama while the difference from Rizky's research is that the author analyzes long takes, while Rizky focuses on camera movement.

Scene 29 shows how pan and tilt camera movements are used to guide the audience through chaotic action and support the climax of the conflict. Camera movement provides subtext and emotion (Brown, 2012). The use of a low angle on the fire at the end of the scene reinforces the sense of fear and threat, giving emotional weight to the consequences of the conflict.

This study focused solely on 10 long takes deemed to be the most dramatic. The film may have other long takes that could be analyzed, so the analysis does not encompass the entire film's runtime. Another limitation is that the analysis focused solely on cinematography, while narrative and sound design were not the primary focus.

Practically, this research provides readers, particularly aspiring cinematographers and filmmakers, with knowledge about the effective use of long takes to build and strengthen drama. Theoretically, this research adds insight into film analysis, particularly regarding the long take as a primary support for the audience's focus on the story.

CONCLUSION

The long take in *Women From Rote Island* serves as a primary cinematographic technique, effectively supporting the dramatic elements. Dramatic support, particularly conflict and suspense, is achieved through a dynamic combination of cinematographic elements, such as shifting framing from long shots to close up to emphasize emotion, the use of eye-level camera angles for realism, the application of natural lighting for a gloomy atmosphere, and rapid camera movements handheld, pan, and tilt to convey tension and chaos. Overall, the use of long takes successfully creates a sense of direct involvement in the characters' emotions, particularly the anxiety and tension experienced by the main character.

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