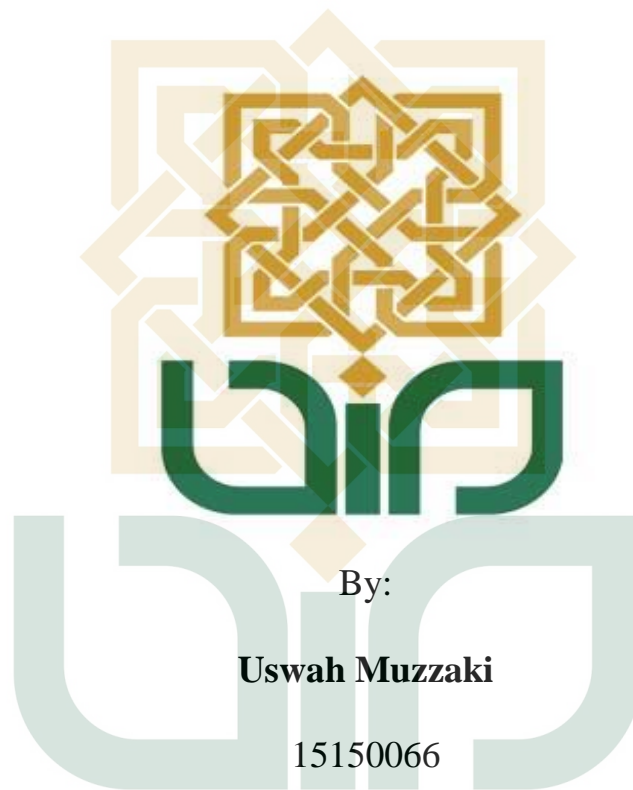


**AMERICAN VS UN-AMERICAN AS SEEN IN
THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST (2012)**

A GRADUATING PAPER

Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for Gaining the Bachelor

Degree in English Literature



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FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

I certify that this research is originally my own work. As the sole writer of this graduating paper, I am responsible for the content of this research. Other researchers' opinions or findings included in this research quoted or cited in accordance with ethical standards.

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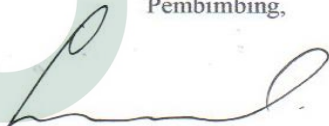
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Atas perhatiannya, kami ucapkan terima kasih

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ABSTRACT

The presence of Muslims, as immigrants and minority, in America is one of the most interesting topics to discuss. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2012) is one of films that tell a story about a Muslim immigrant in America. This film is important to analyse because the film depicts how Muslim is treated in America. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2012) might be a representation of how America discriminates its immigrants and minority. Changez Khan is a main character of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* film that has a paradoxical characterization. This research aims at paradoxical characterization in facing a discrimination of America. The researcher uses binary opposition theory by Claude Levi-Strauss to analyse the paradoxical characterization of Changez Khan. Furthermore, film theory was also employed to analyse the pictures of the film. In the analysis, the researcher found some binary oppositions. They are “Ambition” – “Neglect”, “Acceptance” – “Rejection”, “Provoked” – “Ignored” and “Conceal” – “Reveal”. The binary opposition makes a pattern that is appropriate with the plot. Then, the researcher concludes that the paradoxical characterization of Changez Khan is represented as “American” – “Un-American”. The American side refers to the fact Changez Khan is an ambitious man in chasing his dream. While, the “Un-American” refers to when he feels discriminated by America, so “Un-American” side might be a representation of immigrant in America.

Keywords: *Binary Opposition, Paradoxical Characterization, Immigrant, Muslim, Discrimination.*

**AMERICAN VS UN-AMERICAN AS SEEN IN
THE RELUCTANT FUNDAMENTALIST (2012)**

Oleh: Uswah Muzzaki

ABSTRAK

Muslim sebagai seorang imigran dan minoritas di Amerika adalah salah satu topik yang menarik untuk didiskusikan. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2012) adalah salah satu film yang bercerita tentang seorang Imigran Muslim di Amerika. Film ini sangat penting untuk dianalisis karena film ini menggambarkan bagaimana Muslim diperlakukan di Amerika. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2012) dapat menjadi sebuah representasi bagaimana Amerika mendiskriminasi imigran dan minoritas. Changez Khan adalah tokoh utama dalam Film *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* yang mempunyai perwatakan yang bersifat paradoks. Penelitian ini mengarah pada perwatakan paradoks tersebut dalam menghadapi diskriminasi dari Amerika. Penulis menggunakan teori oposisi biner dari Claude Levi-Strauss dalam menganalisis perwatakan paradoks dari Changez Khan. Selanjutnya, teori film juga digunakan untuk menganalisis gambar – gambar dari film. Dalam analisisnya, penulis menemukan beberapa oposisi biner, yaitu “Ambisi” – “Kelengahan”, “Penerimaan” – “Penolakan”, “Terprovokasi” – “Mengabaikan”, “Menyembunyikan” – “Mengungkapkan”. Oposisi biner tersebut membuat sebuah pola yang sesuai dengan alur cerita. Kemudian, peneliti menyimpulkan bahwa perwatakan paradoks dari Changez Khan direpresentasikan sebagai “Mengamerika” – “Tidak mengamerika”. Sisi “mengamerika” mengacu ketika Changez Khan adalah seorang ambisius dalam mengejar mimpinya. Sedangkan, sisi “tidak mengamerika” mengacu ketika Changez Khan merasa terdiskriminasi oleh Amerika, sehingga sisi “tidak mengamerika” dapat menjadi sebuah representasi tersendiri dari imigran di Amerika.

Kata Kunci: *Oposisi Biner, Perwatakan Paradoks, Imigran, Muslim, Diskriminasi.*

MOTTO

Let it flows and just do it!

- **Uswah Muzzaki**

The only way of finding the limits of the possible is by going beyond them into
the impossible.

- **Arthur C. Clarke**



DEDICATION

My precious mom, Siti Khotijah

My greatest father, Hadi Prihatin

My Lovely Sisters, Fifi and Nisa'

My dearest future soulmate

The awesome of I, me and my self

My horrible best friends ever

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Finally, I do realize that there are still many errors in my research in this graduating paper. Therefore, I do feel gladly to hear any suggestion and correction of the readers to improve this graduating paper.

Yogyakarta, January 29th, 2019

Uswah Muzzaki

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1. 1. Background of The Study

The Reluctant Fundamentalist film is directed by Mira Nair and was launched in 2012. Actually, fundamentalist is a person who adheres strictly to the basic principles of any subject or discipline (English Oxford Living Dictionaries, 2018). It means that someone is a fundamentalist when he or she follows something strictly without thinking about the effects. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* tells about a Pakistani Muslim Man called Changez Khan who has stayed in America since he was 18 years old to follow his dream. How is the life of Changez Khan as a Muslim in America and what is the relation with the fundamentalist? Before the discussion about *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* film further, it is necessary to understand what film is. Film is an audio-visual literature work (Adi, 2016:53). Film is supported by lighting, music effect, and make up to deliver the message. Film has important element that other literary works do not have, it is camera eye (Adi, 2016:59). Audiences watch film through camera eye whether it is from antagonist side or protagonist side. The camera eye shows everything that the director wants to say through the film. That element makes film more interesting to study. Therefore, the researcher chose film as an object to this research.

Nowadays, many films are deliberately produced to serve as the responses to the issue that affect the world. The issues cover many aspects of life. For example, there is racism of black people in America, so that many films are produced concerning with that issue. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* has the same concern in this regard. The film is a response to 9/11 attack. There are only few films of 9/11 attack that have a Muslim as a main character. Majority of 9/11 film has a non-Muslim as a main character and places Muslim only as a supporting character. For examples, *World Trade Centre*, *September 11*, *Twin Tower*, and *United 93*. Since *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* has a Muslim as its main character so, it is important to analyse. The Muslim character also show how Islam can influences a characterization.

In fact, the characterization of Changez Khan is very interesting to discuss. Changez Khan greatly loves America. He says it by himself that he is a lover of America.

CHANGEZ. "Looks can be deceiving. I am a lover of America. Although I was raised to feel very Pakistani. After all, the blood of princes runs in my veins. Perhaps that's an exaggeration. Let's say the princes and I moved in the same circles. We attended the same schools... Lived in the same neighborhoods. But all of a sudden, there were new princes in town"
(*The Reluctant Fundamentalist* 00:12:24 → 00:12:56)

When he stays in America, he can adapt to American as an immigrant so well. He forgets who he is and what his identity is, such as religion, land, and his family. He does not perform some religious activities. He drinks and he has sex before marriage although he is a Muslim. Moreover, he prefers to reach his dream

in America than Pakistan. He thinks that Pakistan does not provide anything to him. On the other hand, he hates America. He feels that he gets so many pressures from America. Although he says that he loves America, but he does not like the treatments of America to him. America discriminates him, especially when 9/11 attack comes. America treats Muslim badly and unfair. It makes he views America in different form. America is the best place to reach his dream but also the worst place to him. Thus, that condition makes a conflict within himself. He has to negotiate with his both characterization or both view.

From the depiction above, the researcher finds an issue. Changez Khan has a contradictory characterization. The contradiction is called paradox. In literature, paradox is someone or something that contains contradictions at the same time. For example, I close my eyes so I can see. Then, a character who is both charming and rude (as cited in <https://literaryterms.net/paradox/>). Hence, Changez Khan has a paradoxical characterization.

The portrayal of paradox in Changez Khan is analyzed in this research with the title “American vs Un-American as Seen in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2012)”. This research is an initial effort to examine the character as a part of American experience that is paradoxical view by looking at Changez Khan’s life experience in America. His life experience shows that Changez Khan has a structure of characterization, which always changes.

1. 2. Research Question

The characterization of Changez Khan is analyzed with questions as follows; how is Changez Khan as a Muslim with his paradoxical views explained in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* film?

1. 3. Objective of The Study

The objective of the study of this research is to find out how the paradoxical Muslim character is explained in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* film.

1. 4. Significance of The Study

This research signifies to discover how a Muslim character is portrayed in Hollywood film through a structure of characterization. The application of binary opposition theory proves that Muslim immigrant is depicted in a periphery not in a center of binary opposition. The pattern that find from the application of binary opposition theory also shows the representation of an immigrant in America.

1. 5. Literature Review

The researcher found several journals that discussed and analysed *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* film. Each journal is described thoroughly as follows.

The first journal is entitled “Post-9/11 re-orientalism: Confrontation and Conciliation in Mohsin Hamid’s and Mira Nair’s *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*” (2016) by Lisa Lau and Ana Christina Mendes. The journal compares between the original book by Mohsin Hamid and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* film adaptation by Mira Nair. The study used re-orientalism theory. Based on the results of the

analysis, both of the film and the novel of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* demonstrate that representations are still unable to escape from the loop of orientalism and re-orientalism. They also highlight the tension the East and the West. Yet, the film has a subtle difference from the original book. The film adaptation attempts to stress the tragedy of cultural suspicion and mistrust that besets the relationships between Pakistan and the US.

The second journal is entitled “‘Tired of Taking Sides’: Repressive Tolerance in Mira Nair’s *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*” (2017) by Eric D. Smith and Hannah Ross. The journal found that the story of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* film was quite different from the original book by Mohsin Hamid. The original book explicitly tells about the struggle of Muslim in Western Capitalism. However, the film concerns the important of cultural tolerance. The writer of the journals asserted that *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* film focused on political and economic issues consequently irresolvable antagonism.

Another journal is “Translating Multiple Wavelengths: Mira Nair’s *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*” by Luisa Caiazzo. The journal tells that Mira Nair’s film concerns the crucial issues about emigration and the identity journey of the Eastern people in West. The man is caught between two cultures, the East and the West, trying to live his own culture in another culture. However, the study analyzed Mira Nair’s film from the linguistic point of view by exploring the language.

The next research is an article entitled “Using Jacques Lacan to Understand Postcolonial Identity in Society of Enjoyment” by Abhishek Bhati. The article used

postcolonial concept by Lacan. It investigated the identity of the protagonist of the film and the original book, in order to understand the construction of immigrant identity. The writer of the article argued that immigrant (the others) are often confused about their identity. Besides, the colonial subject is still facing subjugation and exploitation by the State and public agencies and objectified.

From the explanation above, there are four previous researches about *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* film. Yet, there has not been any research that discusses the paradoxical characterization of Changez Khan. Therefore, the researcher chooses the issue to complete the research.

1. 6. Theoretical Approach

The researcher used binary opposition theory. According to Jakobson, linguists connect various phonemes based on the presence or the absence of a particular value in it. For example, there is /p/ because of the existence of /b/. They have a contradictory phoneme and it causes them to be known. Language is built up on contrasts between sounds. The contrast is called binary opposition (as cited in Putra, 2013: 57). In structural analysis of phonemes, a phoneme is seen as a collection of distinctive features. These distinctive features can only be known if phonemes are placed in a context with other phonemes, the opposite. In Bali, phoneme /t/ does not have any meaning because they only know /th/. They consider that /t/ and /th/ is same. In Java, /t/ and /th/ are different. Each of them has different meaning in a context. The phoneme /t/ will become valuable because it has a distinctive feature or opposite, /th/. Thus, they are not meaningful by themselves

and must be combined according to a pattern or a context (Ahimsa-Putra, 2013: 84-85).

It is binary opposition, where something can be known or has a meaning because there is an existence of its opposite. Then according to Lane, the example of binary opposition is water and fire, day and night, the sun and the moon (as cited in Putra, 2013:70). A very basic mental operation consists of the creation of opposites: some things are edible, others are not; some creatures are dangerous, others are not (Bertens, 2001:62). Thus, Levi-Strauss sees that human mind operates along lines of contrasts such as good, bad; up, down; light, dark. The water and fire are accompanied by another (Levi-Strauss, 1964:285). This means that meaning is not something absolute but relative and depends on binary opposition. Something cannot be understood unless it is different from something else, or its opposition. For example, there is no meaning “hot” unless there is also “cold”, no “good” without “evil”, no “male” without “female”.

In fact, the opposition constitutes a tacit hierarchy, in which the first term function as privileged and superior and the second term as derivative and inferior (Abrams, 2009:88). If there is “black” and “white”, it means the “black” is more privileged than “white”. “White” is inferior of “black”. It also means that the “black” is the centre while the “white” is the margin. That is a form of unconscious nature of human mind.

Furthermore, the researcher also uses a film theory to conduct this research analysis. The film theory which is used by the researcher is *Mise-en-scene*. *Mise-*

en-scene is a way to understand how film produces and reflects the meaning. *Mise-en-scene* consists of all elements such as settings, property, lighting, costumes, and camera angle (Sikov, 2010). According to Sikov (2010) cinematography is included in *Mise-en-scene*. Through cinematography, film can tell a story. A director uses cinematography to control what the audience will see on the film. The cinematography is important to give a meaning. In the film, each picture always has a meaning. Hence, by using *Mise-en-scene* the researcher is able to find out the meaning of the film.

1.7. Methods of Research

1.7.1. Type of Research

The research used qualitative method to carry out this research. Qualitative method is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning of social or human problem. Using qualitative method, the researcher interpreted the meanings of the data (Creswell, 2009:4). It means that discovering the meaning of social phenomenon or problem in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* film, especially the paradoxical characterization of Changez Khan, the researcher collected the data and interpreted them.

1.7.2. Data Sources

In this research, the data sources were divided into two types of data. *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* film was the primary data of this research. The elements of the film, such as dialogue or utterance, scene, event, and story were also included.

Hence, the elements are called unit data. Then, there were secondary data. They are the data from journals, articles or books.

1.7.3. Data Collecting Technique

As for the data collection, the researcher performed library research. According to Kothari, library research is the research technique that applies recording of notes, content analysis, tape and film listening and research records analysis (Kothari, 2004:4). Therefore, the researcher collected the data through some steps. First, the primary data were collected by reading the film. By taking this step, the researcher was able to gather the intrinsic elements of the film, they are plot, theme, characters and characterizations, and settings. The second step was data recording. The researcher determined some variables to classify the data based on paradoxical characterizations. Third, the researcher collected the data through classifying the pictures, utterances, and actions in the film which relate and deal with the theory and the paradoxical characterization of Changez Khan.

1.7.4. Data Analysis Technique

After collecting the data, the researcher analysed the data to complete the research. Intrinsic elements were analysed in the first step by the researcher. Secondly, analyzing the primary data, the researcher categorized the unit data. The researcher categorized it into practices, myth, discourse and sign that relates to the paradoxical characterization of Changez Khan. Then, the researcher analysed the data that have been categorized. It means that researcher tries to find the connection among the data. For analysing the data, the researcher used two theories. They were

binary opposition theory and film theory. The last, the researcher made a conclusion from the analysis.

1. 8. Paper Organization

This research paper is divided into four chapters. The first chapter consists of background of the study, research question, objective of the study, significances of the study, literature reviews, theoretical approach, methods of research and paper organization. The second chapter provides the intrinsic elements of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* film. The third chapter is discussion chapter. The chapter analyses the Muslim paradoxical view explanation in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* film by Mira Nair. The last chapter is conclusion chapter that contains conclusion and suggestion of the researcher.



CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

4.1. Conclusion

The research focuses on the paradoxical characterizations of Changez Khan. He admits that he loves America, but at the same time, he also hates America's treatments to him. In fact, the name "Changez Khan" refers to the title of the film, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. Changez Khan is a fundamentalist at first, because he only follows his dream, American dream, without thinks the effects. Along the way, he gets some negative effects because of that. He upsets so that he becomes reluctant with the fundamentalism. Afterward, his name, "Changez Khan" represents his characterization that always varies, "the changes". Then, his characterization is more detailed in the pattern of binary oppositions mentioned in the analysis chapter and concluded in the following paragraph.

Through the application of binary opposition, the pattern of the plot can be described in such a way that the changes made by Changez Khan can also be identified as well. Those changes (from Pakistan to US) represent the name "Changez Khan" as well as his ideology of fundamentalism. From these arguments, the researcher can make binary opposition term that also represent Changez: American and Un-American.

The American side refers to the fact Changez Khan is an ambitious man and the only reason of Changez Khan moved to America is the American dream. When the 9/11 attack happens, Changez Khan curses the attack although at the same time he is amazed with the tragedy. As a Muslim, Changez Khan feels discriminated by the Americans and the government. Changez Khan responds to these discriminations by overtly expressing his feelings before he is going back to Pakistan. Hence, he is also Un-American and it might be a representation of immigrant in America.

From the characterization of Changez Khan, the researcher also concludes that Islam has a role in making an identity. Changez Khan already forgets his identity as a Muslim but at the end he realizes that it is wrong. Islam makes him aware, so that he turns to Islam. Although the Muslim do not obey the religion, Islam still cling on them and it has a great influence in a characterization.

4.2. Suggestion

The Reluctant Fundamentalist film tells a Pakistani immigrant man. Actually, the film not only tells about chasing dream but also shows how the life of the East and the West. The researcher analysed the chasing dream issue from the paradoxical characterization viewpoint. Furthermore, the future researches can apply Marxism to discuss the chasing dream issue also. Another theory that might use is post-colonialism theory. It will explain the life of East and West portraying in *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*.

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