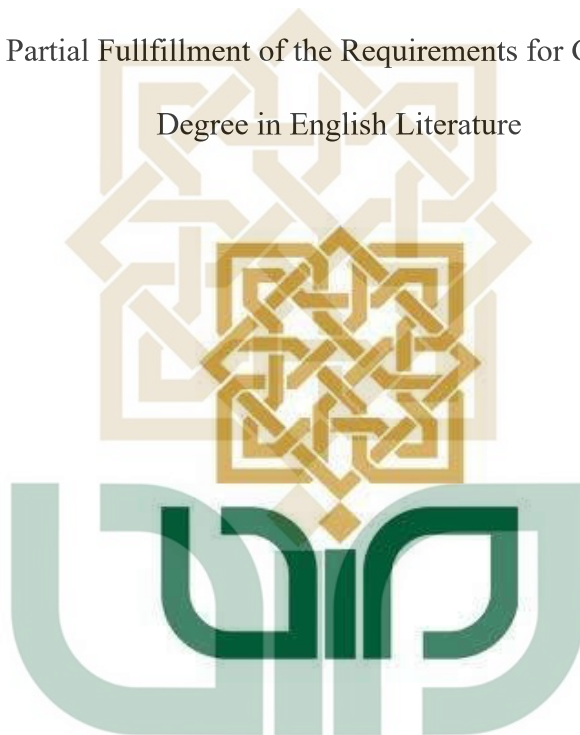


**THE REPRESENTATION OF ISLAM AND NATIONALISM IN *LION OF  
THE DESERT* (1981)**

**A GRADUATING PAPER**

Submitted in Partial Fullfillment of the Requirements for Gaining the Bachelor  
Degree in English Literature



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**2019**

## A FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

I certify that this graduating paper is definitely my own work. I am completely responsible for the content of this graduating paper. Other writer's opinions or findings included in the graduating paper are quoted or cited in accordance with ethical standards.

Yogyakarta, 26 August 2019

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*Assalamu'alaikum w.w.*

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Saya menyatakan bahwa skripsi tersebut sudah dapat diajukan pada sidang Munaqosyah untuk memenuhi sebagian syarat memperoleh gelar Sarjana Sastra Inggris.

Atas segala perhatian yang diberikan, saya ucapkan terima kasih.

*Wassalamu'alaikum w.w.*

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# **THE REPRESENTATION OF ISLAM AND NATIONALISM IN *LION OF THE DESERT* (1981)**

**By Muhammad Syaeful Rizal**

## **ABSTRACT**

The researcher took *Lion of the Desert* as an object of research because the narratives and historical facts contained in the film are full of meaning. The main point of discussion in this paper is how Islam and Nationalism are depicted in the film. Islam which is described as the religion of the majority of the population of Libya makes it a strong and influential ideology for the course of resistance to the Italian occupation. Although the major case contained in the film is about colonialism and post-colonialism, but discussing it using representation theory will open up opportunities for analysis with a variety of theories going forward. Researchers uses Representation Theory by Stuart Hall with a constructionist approach, Nation and Nationalism by Ernest Gellner and Bassam Tibi and Film Theory by Amy Villarejo as supporting theory. Aspects of the discussion in this paper include discussion of the representation of Islam and nationalism, how Islam and nationalism become a unity and what kind of nationalism is depicted in Islamic society in Libya. Qualitative research is used by researchers to compile and analyze data and important elements in the film. These data are in the form of layer captures about scenes, dialogue quotations, historical facts and events in films related to Islam and Nationalism. The representation of Islam and Nationalism can be seen from the pragmatic behavior and implications reflected on the Libyan side. Islam as a belief and nationalism as a result formed from the conditions of post-colonialism and also the involvement of Islam in Libya.

Keywords: *Film, Islam, Nationalism, Libya, Italy, Fascism.*

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## **REPRESENTASI ISLAM DAN NASIONALISME DI FILM LION OF THE DESERT (1981)**

**Oleh Muhammad Syaeful Rizal**

### **ABSTRAK**

Peneliti mengambil film *Lion of the Desert* sebagai objek penelitian karena narasi-narasi dan fakta sejarah yang terkandung dalam film ini sangat sarat akan makna. Poin utama yang didiskusikan dalam penelitian ini adalah bagaimana Islam dan Nasionalisme digambarkan dalam film. Islam yang digambarkan sebagai agama mayoritas penduduk Libya menjadikannya ideologi yang kuat dan berpengaruh bagi jalannya perlawanan terhadap pendudukan Italia. Meskipun kasus utama yang terkandung dalam film ini adalah tentang kolonialisme dan postkolonialisme, tetapi mendiskusikannya dengan menggunakan teori representasi akan membuka peluang untuk analisis dengan berbagai teori ke depan. Peneliti menggunakan Teori Representasi oleh Stuart Hall dengan pendekatan konstruksionis, Teori Nation and Nationalism oleh Ernest Gellner dan Bassam Tibi dan Teori Film oleh Amy Villarejo sebagai teori pendukung. Aspek diskusi dalam makalah ini meliputi diskusi tentang representasi Islam dan nasionalisme, bagaimana Islam dan nasionalisme menjadi satu kesatuan dan nasionalisme seperti apa yang digambarkan dalam masyarakat Islam di Libya. Penelitian kualitatif digunakan oleh peneliti untuk mengumpulkan dan menganalisis data dan elemen-elemen penting dalam film. Data-data ini berupa tangkapan layar tentang adegan, kutipan dialog, fakta sejarah, dan peristiwa dalam film yang berkaitan dengan Islam dan Nasionalisme. Representasi Islam dan Nasionalisme dapat dilihat dari perilaku pragmatik dan implikasi yang tercermin pada pihak Libya. Islam sebagai kepercayaan dan nasionalisme sebagai hasil terbentuk dari kondisi pascakolonialisme dan juga keterlibatan Islam di Libya.

Kata kunci: *Film, Islam, Nasionalisme, Libya, Italia, Fasisme*

## MOTTO

Life for afterlife.



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YOGYAKARTA



## DEDICATION

I dedicate this graduating paper to;

Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala

Muhammad Shallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam

Kyai and Ulama of Indonesia

My beloved father and mother

My big family of

English Literature Department of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta

and

The readers

STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY  
SUNAN KALIJAGA  
YOGYAKARTA

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With this, the author is very aware of the shortcomings and imperfections both in the writing or analysis of this research. Therefore, the authors submit the reader to provide input in the form of constructive criticism and suggestions for the improvement and development of this research.

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Yogyakarta, 26 August 2019

Muhammad Syaeful Rizal



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of study

In life, people have gone through various civilization and development processes. The development is a reflection of the so-called thinking process, thinking of ways to make life better, thinking of ways to live more orderly and measurable, thinking how all elements of life and their needs are continuous, and even thinking about ways of seizing and holding power. Therefore, at this stage, what so-called ideology and various theories in life that may have different forms and types depending on the needs and the thinking process of the community. Humans also experience many different circumstances and feelings in the process of life, such feelings of love, hate, resentment, compassion, struggle and sacrifice were eventually succeeded in encouraging the poets to write down these aesthetic experiences in the form of poems and other aesthetic literature works. These works of literature later become the media of people to express their thoughts, their feelings and their worldviews.

Movie is a kind of literary products. Movie is also a popular entertainment. (Barsam and Monahan, 2010: 3) Movie is a literary product that best describes a state and feeling of the author or the moviemaker. The setting of the place, time, social condition, emotion, character and biological appearance of each cast in a story can be understood by the audience more deeply and clearly. According to Barsam and Monahan, "Movies is motion picture that entertains masses at the multiplex" (2013:3). There are huge effects made by movie through the explanation

of certain story and its setting towards the emotion and the deepest mind of people. Therefore, the movie is the most important and most powerful medium in spreading propaganda, resistance, ideology, historical lapses, influencing influences and often also unifying a nation, spreading religion (as some contain religious and prophet prophets) message of kindness. It all depends on the moviemakers and the parties involved in the creation of a movie.

There are a lot of ideologies contained in the film, but what will be analyzed by the researcher in this paper is nationalism ideology. Nationalism ideology within modern nation (or the nations that we can see their existence now) is therefore a historical result brought about by a series of convergent facts. Sometimes unity has been affected by a dynasty, as was the case in France; sometimes it has been brought about by the direct will of provinces, as was the case with Holland, Switzerland, and Belgium; sometimes it has been the work of a general consciousness, belatedly victorious over the caprices of feudalism, as was the case in Italy and Germany (Bhabha, 1990: 12). Nationalism is the understanding or ideology of a nation that arises because of the sense of destiny and history and the need to live together as an independent nation, united sovereign and advanced in a unity of nation and state to achieve and maintain and devote the identity of unity, prosperity and power or nationality state power. Therefore, nationalism is often seen as a nation-state saving ideology. Nationalism is also a political and social philosophy that considers the greatest good of the nation. The conception illustrates a greater passion for national welfare and progress that it becomes a social movement or spiritual flow that can

unite the people into a nation that raises the masses in an active political and social state so that the country belongs to all the people.

According to many Islamic scholars Islam is the last religion revealed to man through Muhammad as the messenger and prophet and the messenger of God. Al-Utsaimin (2006) defined Islam as the worship of the Almighty God by the law of the act of worship that the messengers came, for God sent messengers until the Day of Resurrection. Gellner explains Islam and its relationship to nationalism and its nationalist religious leaders that Islam had been Janus-faced in the agrarian days. One face was adapted to the religiously and socially pluralistic country folk and groupings, the other set for the more fastidious, scholarly, individualist and literate urban schoolmen (Gellner, 1983: 79-80), and also says that the ideal of the ulama comes closer to reality, at least within various nation-size territories, than it had been in the days of the kin-defined fragmentation. (1983:80).

Prophet Muhammad SAW once said of his love for the motherland as a reference that the love of the homeland and nationalism is also part of the teachings of Islam, contained in the hadith narrated by Ibn Abbas: Rasulullah SAW said:

ما أطيبك من بلد، وأحبك إليّ، ولولا أن قومي أخرجوني منك ما سكنتُ غيرك.

(رواه الترمذي وصححه الترمذي والألباني في صحيح الجامع)

"How good are you as a country and how much I love you, if not my people take me out of you, I do not want to inhabit a city other than you"

(Narrated by Tirmidhi, justified by Tirmidhi and Albani in Sahih Jami')



Researching the representation of Islam and Nationalism in the film is necessary to show a fact that a great deal of history in the world is very rarely revealed. Not too many literary works in the form of films or novels that discuss Islam and Nationalism are two ideologies and social practices that can go hand in. In this film, the researcher finds that Islam and Nationalism are described as a unitary concept that reinforces one another in the decolonization and formation of national unity. Both conceptions are built by strong characters representing Islam and Nationalism in Libya in the film.

Omar Mukhtar as the main character who is also the protagonist in this movie managed to bring us as the audience to understand the conception of nationalism and anti-colonialism in Islam as well and clearly. Mukhtar, a religious teacher, should not be suitable if he also acts as a commander or leader in a war. However, the fact presented by this movie is the strength of Mukhtar in Islam that encourages him to dare to fight against the invaders and encourage his people to be ready at any time when the call to war is requested.

Various kinds of acts of Mukhtar in the form of actions and social practices also affect the formation of nationalism of indigenous people of Libya in the fight against invaders. The status of Ulama addressed by the community to Mukhtar could be used by him to encourage the youth not to remain silent in the sight of his country and society exploited by the invaders.

Researchers in this study intended to find and examine the process of formation of nationalism that is indirectly shaped by the Islamic understanding of the Libyan people and Mukhtar as perpetrators of the spread of religion as well as

a war leader who mastered the battle strategy and battlefield. Those will be examined in the process of representation of this movie along with evidence of the scenes contained in the movie.

## **B. Problem Statement**

Based on the background above, the researcher intended to discover the answer of the problem as follow: How is Islam implemented in the lives of Libyan citizens who ultimately shape their nationalism? And what kind of nationalism that finally formed in the narrative construct of representation in the film?

## **C. Objectives of Study**

From problem statement stated in this research, the objectives of study are to find out the representation of Islam and nationalism including to figure out the constructed meaning of nationalism by Islamic Scholar according to Mukhtar in the film.

## **D. Significance of Study**

The researchers compiled this paper to contribute to the discovery of how Islam and nationalism are represented in literary works so that in the future there will be more analysis of the same topic using different theories and perspectives. This paper analyzes the representation of Islam and nationalism in the colonized country so that it is expected to be a comparative study in analyzing films with a postcolonial perspective.

## **E. Literature Review**

This research requires the engagement with academic literatures in multiple fields, including nationalism, representation and Islamic thoughts itself. The researcher has not found the prior research regarding the film. The researcher has found four prior research regarding to the representation of (Islam and) Nationalism in movies. The prior research is a doctoral thesis for PhD in International Studies that researched China's Nationalism and Its Quest for Soft Power through Cinema. This research draws upon the author's personal observations of two international promotional events for Chinese films – the 2010 Beijing Screenings and the 2011 Sydney Chinese Film Festival. The researcher of that thesis researched Chinese cinemas as a nationalist enterprise and its reactions to Hollywood's (mis)representations of China, which adds another interesting dimension to the study.

## **F. Theoretical Approach**

This research will discuss the representation of Islam and nationalism constructed through the scenes in *Lion of the Desert*. Thus, the researcher will use the representation theory by Stuart Hall and besides the representation theory. The researcher will also use the theory of movie and cinematography by Amy Villarejo, theory of nations and nationalism by Ernest Gellner and the definitions of Islamic terms in many Islamic scholars as the supporting theory.



## **1. Theory of representation**

Many literary works depend on the thought of author and the social condition that author used to live or other aspects that affect author's works and art of making that literary works. These aspects and factors may be different among the authors. If one sequence of story in the real life would be written or expressed into literary work by two or more different authors, the result of their processes toward literary work are also different according to their different and various aesthetic experiences.

Movie as a kind of literary work is not much different with these. Moviemakers and directors may have differences in making a movie, especially the movie based on true story. Different perspective makes different meaning. Therefore, Stuart Hall in his theory of representation made such a clear method to identify how is something represented in many media and literary works.

There are broadly speaking three approaches to explaining how representation of meaning through language works. We may call these the reflective, the intentional and the constructionist or constructivist approaches. In the reflective approach, meaning is thought to lie in the object, person, idea reflective or event in the real world, and language functions like a mirror, to reflect the mimetic approach true meaning as it already exists in the world. The second approach or intentional approach to meaning in representation argues the opposite case. It holds that it is the speaker, the author, who imposes his or her unique meaning on the world through language. Words mean what the author intends they should mean. The third approach or constructionist / constructivist approach

recognizes the social character of language. It acknowledges that neither things in themselves nor the individual users of language can fix meaning in language. Things do not mean: we construct meaning, using representational systems - concepts and signs (Hall, 1997: 24-25).

The researcher will use the third approach or constructionist approach of theory of representation by Stuart Hall in this paper. This paper will also bring some facts about the social condition the film represented where the real story took place. The constructionist / constructivist approach allows us to see a wider area in the movie, especially towards the social practices. The representation in the movie can be related closely to the visualization of these social practices that contains myths, actions, verbal and non-verbal communication between characters.

## **2. Nations and Nationalism**

The researcher shall use the perspective and theory of nations and nationalism by Hellner in this paper to analyze the structure and the elements that construct such some nation-size territories, ideological based in post-colonialized countries and Ulama as the basic layer of citizenship.

According to Hellner (1983: 80) within the Muslim world, and particularly within the part of Arab (also, among what might be called the Arab-surrogate nations, who happen locally to define themselves as the Muslims of a given area). A nationalism based on a generalized anonymous territorial community can perpetuate the specific doctrines previously carried by a clerkly stratum, proudly and without disavowing them. The ideal of the ulama comes closer to reality, at



least within various nation-size territories than it had been in the days of the kin-defined fragmentation.

Hellner divided nationalism in the two kinds of principles. Nationalism as a sentiment, or as a movement, can best be defined in terms of this principle. Nationalist sentiment is the feeling of anger aroused by the violation of the principle, or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfilment. A nationalist movement is one actuated by a sentiment of this kind (1983:1).

In this paper, the movie researched told the story that took place in Libya and described Libyan historical events against Italian colonial. The research is to analyze and describe how Islam in this film represented not only as a religion but also as an ideology that constructs nationalism of Libyan people.

### **3. Theory of film / cinematography**

The researcher shall use theory of movie by Amy Villarejo as the supporting theory to analyze the frames of the scenes contained in the film and describe the way the moviemaker chose to take motion pictures of the movie in any perspectives and camera distances.

According to Villarejo (2007: 24), Film is structured like a language. Alternatively, is it? Composed of fundamental units, called shots, films rely upon edits to join shots together into larger strings called sequences (a series of shots united in time and space), just as words become sentences. There is no coincidence in the movie. It means all of the sequence of stories and events in the movie were structured and organized to deliver some message and signified symbol, or even such an ideology and propaganda through the movie. In line with Villarejo, Turner

said that movie is a part a wider of argument of representation – the social practices of making images, sounds, signs, stands for something (1999: 48).

Those social practices of making images, sounds and signs make an individual experiences or construct audiences' mind about something delivered and structured in the movie. The concept of mis-en-scene is used to support the analysis of movie. According to Sikov, the initial definition of mis-en-scene: all of the elements placed in front of the camera to be photographed: settings, props, lighting, costumes, makeup, and figure behavior—actors, their gestures, and their facial expressions (2010: 91). This paper shares the analyses of these elements to support the analysis about representation of Islam and Nationalism in the film.

Film studies has an anthropocentric taxonomy to describe the distances that uses human body as a part of each designation. They are Extreme Long-Shot (ELS), Long Shot (LS), Medium Long-Shot (MLS), Medium Shot (MS), Medium Close-Up (MCU), and Close-Up (CU). Hence, elements will be helpful for researcher to analyze the movie.

## **G. Method of research**

### **1. Type of research**

This research is categorized as literary criticism for it analyzes the literary work. The work is the film that tells about a figure of Ulama that led people to fight against colonialism. In this research, the researcher uses qualitative method that refers to meaning, concept, and characteristic of things (Mukhtar's character). This analysis is concerned with developing explanation of social phenomena. According to Denzin and Lincoln, qualitative approach emphasizes the qualities of entities,

process and meaning that are not experimentally examined and measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency (2000: 8). This research focuses and emphasizes how social experience is created and given meaning. The research uses observation of method by collecting data from the movie and visiting libraries to get the references. The researcher finds the data from the movie and other references such as books, articles, journals, and related websites. It also uses representation theory to analyze more deeply how Islam represents the basic ideology that constructs Nationalism and how this movie represents both as well. This study also conducts the movie theory as the supporting theory.

## **2. Data sources**

The main data of this research is the elements contained in the film including scenes and actions of the characters. The supporting data uses books, articles, journals and historical facts, which relate to the critics of movie.

The film is used to illustrate how Islam constructs the ideology of nationalism in Libya, how both are represented in the film implicitly without any declarations and religious arguments that can be used as a reference to form a nationalism. All the clips used in this paper are taken from this movie. *Lion of the Desert* is a 1981 Libyan historical action film starring Anthony Quinn as Libyan tribal leader Omar Mukhtar, a Bedouin leader fighting the Regio Esercito (Italian Royal Army) in the years leading up to World War II, and Oliver Reed as Italian General Rodolfo Graziani, who attempted to defeat Mukhtar. It was directed by Mustapha Akkad and funded by the government under Colonel Muammar Gaddafi.



### **3. Data Collection Technique**

Data collection in this research uses documentation method. The researcher uses observation by conducting some steps. First, the researcher watches the movie and analyzes the elements of it (to know the character, plot, setting, and scene). Second, the researcher sorts the data relating to the character of Omar Mukhtar and his role in the movie, the scenes that contain Islamic preaching and speeches. The data refers to the image in some scenes and the script that represent Omar Mukhtar as Libyan hero who helped his nation fend off an Italian invasion in 1929. Lastly, the researcher describes, explains, and synchronizes the data with the theory.

### **4. Data Analysis Technique**

In the analysis of data, the researcher applies representation theory by Stuart Hall in seeing the scenes related to Islam and Nationalism and how both were constructed. In the representation theory, the main point that appears is production of meaning. Production of meaning can be known with three approaches, there are reflective, intentional, and constructionist or constructivist. The researcher uses constructionist approach to know the representation of Nationalism after Islamic thoughts. The representation will explain the image and action of Omar Mukhtar and other characters. Furthermore, the researcher uses several steps to analyze the data. The steps are below:

#### **a. Categorizing Data**

The researcher categorizes the data that are classified in collecting data process. Next, the data are analyzed and the researcher obtains the answers of the

representation from the character. The classification refers to the representation and the constructed meaning of nationalism.

#### b. Analyzing Data

The researcher analyses the collected data and important elements in the film that consists of: layer captures about scenes, dialogue quotations, historical facts and events. Afterwards, these data are classified in order to analyze how Islam is implemented in the lives of Libyan citizens who ultimately shape their nationalism and what kind of nationalism that is finally formed in the narrative construct of representation in the film.

### **H. Paper Organization**

This paper consists of four chapters. Chapter one is introduction. It explains about background of study, research question, objective of study, significance of the study, literary review, theoretical approach, methods of research and paper organization. Chapter two explains about the intrinsic elements of the film. It discusses about theme, character and characterization, plot, and settings of the movie. Chapter three discusses about the analyses of the representation of Islam and Nationalism. In this chapter the researcher applies representation theory by Stuart Hall to analyze Nationalism and Islam in the movie, Nation and Nationalism theory by Gellner and The Film Theory by Villarejo. The last chapter is conclusion of the research.



## **CHAPTER IV**

### **A. CONCLUSION**

The researcher concludes that Islam depicted in the film is portrayed by persistent Bedouin Muslims and Islam which shapes the nationalism of the Libyans. Islam represented as such ultimately creates a national identity that unites Libyans. At the end of the film, it is explained that the struggle for resistance did not stop until Mukhtar's death, but continued until the achievement of Libyan independence. From the analysis of this film, it can be concluded that Islam is represented as powerful Bedouin Muslim that breaks the stereotype portraying them as backward and poor. Islam also represented as pious which seen through social and ritual practices. Both Italy and Libya are represented stereotyping each other through the occidentalism and orientalism paradigm. Nationalism of Libya in the film is represented by loyalty and patriotism of the people who never surrender in fighting against Italy. Nationalism of Libya also represented through sharing of mutual trust between Libyan civilians and resistance force led by Mukhtar.

### **B. SUGGESTION**

The Researcher suggests for the next researcher to analyze the film using other perspectives, such as: Orientalism, Occidentalism, Post-Colonialism, etc. Hopefully the paper analysis that uses the theory of representation here has opened up opportunities for further analysis with theories and methods that continue to develop.

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