

PLIGHTS OF TURKISH MUSLIMS AS SEEN IN *THE PROMISE* (2016)

A GRADUATING PAPER

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



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2020

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 writers opinions or findings included in the graduating paper are quoted or cited in accordance with ethical standards.

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Tugas Akhir dengan judul : PLIGHTS OF TURKISH MUSLIMS AS SEEN IN THE PROMISE MOVIE

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Atas perhatian yang diberikan, kami ucapkan terima kasih.

Wassalamualaikum Wr.Wb.

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ABSTRACT

The Promise tells the story of a conflict between Turks and Armenians. The Turks are Turkish Muslims who are major and powerful in Turkey. Armenians are Armenian race who are minor and discriminated race in Turkey. In *The Promise*, Turkish Muslims are portrayed as people who do bad things for their own good. This research is merited to be done because it sees something differently. The purpose of this study is to identify the representation construction of Turkish Muslims through the movie. The researcher analyses the plights of what Turkish Muslims did, especially during a historic event, namely the massacre of Armenians. The researcher focuses on portraying the characters of Turkish Muslims in the movie that are depicted as inhuman criminals for committing crimes such as genocide. This research is a qualitative study by using Representation theory from Stuart Hall and Mise-en-scene theory as a movie theory. The conclusion of this study is that Turkish Muslims are represented as bad people in the film in connection with the issue of the Armenian genocide in 1915. They are represented through negative stereotypes such as violence, misrepresentation of Islamic concepts, and uncivilized people.

Keywords: *Representation, Turkish Muslims, Genocide, Negative Stereotypes , misrepresentation, uncivilized*

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PLIGHTS OF TURKISH MUSLIMS AS SEEN IN *THE PROMISE* MOVIE

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ABSTRAK

The Promise bercerita tentang konflik antara orang Turki dan orang Armenia. Orang Turki adalah orang-orang Turki yang beragama Islam, mayoritas dan berkuasa di Turki. Orang Armenia adalah orang-orang yang memiliki ras Armenia yang beragama Kristen dalam film ini, minoritas dan didiskriminasi di Turki. Di dalam *The Promise*, Turkish Muslims digambarkan sebagai orang-orang yang melakukan hal-hal buruk demi kebaikan mereka sendiri. Penelitian ini layak untuk dilakukan karena penelitian ini memandang sesuatu dengan berbeda. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi konstruksi representasi orang muslim Turki melalui film ini. Peneliti menganalisa gambaran buruk terhadap apa yang dilakukan oleh orang muslim Turki, khususnya saat kejadian bersejarah yaitu pembantaian besar-besaran terhadap orang Armenia. Peneliti berfokus pada penggambaran karakter orang muslim Turki dalam film ini yang digambarkan sebagai penjahat yang tidak berperikemanusiaan karena melakukan kejahatan seperti genosida. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif yang menggunakan teori representasi dari Stuart Hall dan teori Mise-en-scene sebagai teori film. Kesimpulan dari penelitian ini adalah orang-orang Muslim Turki direpresentasikan sebagai orang-orang jahat dalam film sehubungan dengan isu genosida Armenia pada tahun 1915. Mereka direpresentasikan melalui stereotip negatif seperti kekerasan, interpretasi yang keliru tentang konsep Islam, dan orang-orang yang tidak beradab.

Kata kunci: *Representasi, Muslim Turki, Genosida, stereotip negatif, konsep Islam, tidak beradab*

MOTTO

Respect others, do good to others. Kindness will be rewarded with kindness.



DEDICATION

I dedicate this graduating paper to;

My beloved father and mother

My big family of

English Literature Department of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta

and

the readers



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Assalamualaikum Wr.Wb

First of all, my greatest thankful appreciation is to Allah SWT who has been giving me His mercy and blessing so that I am able to finish my graduating paper. In finishing this graduating paper, I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciations for people who have helped me, namely;

1. Dr. Ubaidillah as the Head of English Literature Department of Faculty of Adab and Cultural Sciences, at State Islamic University of Sunan Kalijaga.
2. Ulyati Retno Sari, S.S., M.Hum as my both academic supervisor and advisor for this graduating paper.
3. All of the lectures of English Literature Department: Dr. Witriani, Danial Hidayatullah, M.Hum., Fuad Arif Fudiyartanto, M.Hum., M.Ed., Dwi Margo Yuwono, M.Hum., Arif Budiman, M.A., Bambang Hariyanto, M.A., Aninda Aji Siwi, M.Pd., Harsiwi Fajar Sari, M.A., Nisa Syuhda, M.Hum., Rosiana Rizky, M.A, and Febrianti Dwi Ratna Lestari, M.A. Thank you for knowledge, advice, and motivation.
4. The special ones, my beloved parents, Purwono and Turi Hendrawiyatiningsih, and my beloved big brother, Kurniawan Wisnu Jati. Thank you for all prayers, supports, motivations and everything that I cannot mention one by one. I love you, Mom, Dad, Brother.
5. My Friends at *Home*; Elga, Ferdi, Vendi, and Wahyu. Thank you for always acting crazy and bringing a lot of happiness guys.

6. My friends in *Semacam Grup*; Yahya, Zahid, Udin, Zaki, Fer, Rahmat, Lukman, Dika, Ilham, Bara, Yuda, Dimas, Pandu, Luqman, and Riqi. Thanks for staying in every year together although a lot of bad things have happened.
7. My friends in *Sinau Basa Krama*; Lukman, Ilham, and Rahmat. Thank you for always staying in *Sinau Basa Krama* a whole days, guys.
8. All my friends in English Literature chapter 15 especially Class A. Thank you for all experiences we have been through in almost 4 years. You guys helped me so much.

Finally, I realize that there are many lacks in writing this graduating paper. Thus, I would appreciate if there are suggestions to improve this graduating paper.

Wassalamualaikum Wr. Wb.

Yogyakarta, April 2020



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Literature is the result of human work. Literary works include many types such as movies, novels, short stories, poems, dramas and other literary works. Literature is a popular art and expression and a positive effect on human life or the development of human behavior. By understanding the literary works, humans become more able to think creatively and spill all imaginations into literary works. Literature is the fictional and imaginative writings including philosophy, history, and even scientific works that are especially distinguished in form, expression and poetry, prose fiction, and drama (Abrams: 177-178).

Movie is a very popular medium in this era. Many people often watch movies as a means of entertainment because the movie is a mass communication media that is very important to be communicated about life stories that occur in everyday life. Basically, some people in the world love watching movies rather than playing outside or when there is no activity and indeed some people like the media that can present interesting performances. According to Michael Rabiger (2009) movie is a video-shaped media that begins or generated in a real idea, then inside must contain elements of entertainment and meaning. This element of entertainment and meaning lies with the conditions of movie making that can sometimes be in the form of comedy can also in the form of history.

This movie tells the story of Michael, a young Armenian who dreams of studying medicine. When he went to Constantinople to study, he met an artist named Ana and fell in love with her, even though she was dating an American journalist named Chris, sent to Turkey to record the first genocide of the 20th century when Turkey exterminated the Armenian minority. The love triangle settles in the midst of the horrors of war. In this movie it can be seen that actually presents a story with an event background in 1915 when the armenia genocide was carried out in a structured manner by the Turkish government.

“The Promise” (2016), American drama movie directed by Terry George and produced by Survival Picture. Actually there are various versions of the movie whose story is similar to this movie such as *The Ottoman Lieutenant*, *Aghet*, *Screamers*, *1915*, *Auction of Souls*, etc. Terry George himself is a director who always picks up a dark true story. The movie he once worked on and invited controversy was the *Rwanda Hotel* movie, which was released in 2004. Besides, the moviemaker has his own characteristics to flavor his movies to be memorable and memorable.

The researcher chooses *The Promise* by Terry George because, first, the Turks are Muslims who are described as being cruel. That can be seen in several scenes in the film when Turkish Muslims take actions that do not behave humanely towards Armenians. Turkish Muslims deliberately do things that can make them powerful and get rid of Armenians. The prove that Turkish people are Muslim can be seen in several scenes in the film using the greeting "*Assalamualaikum*" that Muslims usually say it to greet. Overall Turkish Muslims

do everything they can do to make Armenians disappear from the Ottoman territories. Second, Armenians are described as a race that is oppressed and suffering. They are treated inhumanely. That can be seen also in some scenes in the film. When Michael runs in a hurry to see the family and people in his village who are being herded, finally he sees that they all have been slaughtered alongside the river. The researcher wants to analyze how bad Turkish Muslims behave in The Promise movie. The last, the researcher focuses not only on how Turkish Muslims are constructed as bad people, but also wants to analyze how movie which contains Islamic sign is described by a moviemaker.

This graduating paper is to identify how this movie is portrayed by the moviemaker. Islam does have a black history in Turkey that the moviemaker wants to convey. The movie tells about the minority of Armenians living in Turkish territories. Armenia is a Christian race that has no state of its own, and is forced to live in Turkey as a minority citizen. Turkish people are Muslims who feel that the presence of Armenians as infidels is a terrible concern that makes the power of the ottoman collapse in the future. Therefore, Turkish Muslims treat Armenians arbitrarily and inhumanely. One of the bad treatments that are obtained by Armenia is that they are discriminated openly. Then, the conflict began when Michael looks for his uncle who is being captured by Turkish troops. He innocently tried to free his uncle by bribing the officer with gold coins. He was allowed to enter to see his uncle, in the prison there were many Armenians who were seen being tortured. Michael insisted that his uncle be released, but what he got was a blow that made him faint and become a slave. This paper examines that

the Turkey is more powerful and feels right because of the religion of Islam even though the teachings of Islam are not as described in the film. Even though this film is about the conflict between Turkey and Armenia which is a nightmare for Armenia, the plights that shown by Turkey in this movie are very inclined. The researcher uses Representation theory to analyze the plights of Turkish muslims that is shown in this movie.

1.2. Research Question

How are the Turkish Muslims described in *The Promise* Movie in relation to their ways to treat Armenians?

1.3. Objective of Study

The objective of this research is to find out the representation of Turkish Muslims *The Promise* movie in relation to their ways to treat Armenians.

1.4. Significance of Study

This research is conducted significantly, first, to find out the voice of Armenians who lived in the post 1915 genocide through the representation of Turkish Muslims in *The Promise* movie; second, to prove that the Western view of Muslims is actually wrong and the actions of Turkish Muslims in the incident are not in accordance with Islamic law; third, became one of the references for those who want to analyze several cases using representation theory.

1.5. Literature Review

The researcher has not found any researchers that used *The Promise* Movie as an object of study, but the researcher has reviewed other researchers who also apply the same theory. The first research is entitled “*The Representation of Rwandan Conflicts in Hotel Rwanda Movie*”. This graduating paper written by Nur Hafidh. He uses representation theory by Stuart Hall. The result of this research is how the conflict in someone’s environment can influence many things that relate to life and society.

The second research entitled “*The Representation of Moslem as Seen in Dracula Untold Movie*” is a graduating paper written by Afdika Rinaldi. This is a graduating paper that uses the theory of representation from Stuart Hall with a constructionist as approach and movie theory as a supporting theory. The researcher also uses qualitative methods. The results of his study is to identify Islamic representations that can be seen from the behavior of Mehmed and the Turkish army which in turn are divided into positive and negative representations.

The third research is written by Iwan Prabowo entitled “*The Representation of White People in 12 Years a Slave Movie*”. The researcher uses qualitative methods and applies supporting theories that are in accordance with the data. The researcher uses representation theory carried by Stuart Hall as the main theory and post-colonial theory by Ashcroft as its supporting theory. The results of this study is to determine the construction of white people who try to change the stereotypes shown in the movie.

The last research is the graduating paper with the same discussion that relate to representation and the same theory. The title of this research is “*The Representation of Muslim Immigrants in American East Movie*” by Retno Dwi Wulandari. In the results of her research there are several analysis and knowledge that previously nobody knew what happened in the history of the 9/11 attacks in America. This research also emphasizes the truth about America as being racist to Middle Eastern-faced Muslim immigrants and American media that have created negative stereotypes about Moslem immigrants.

From the explanation above, the researcher can conclude that this research has a novelty in an academic research in relation to the object of research and its issues.

1.6. Theoretical Approach

In this graduating paper, the researcher uses Representation Theory as the main theory to analyze the object of the movie entitled *The Promise*(2016). According to Stuart Hall, Representation connects meaning and language to culture. Representation means using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent, the world meaningfully, to other people. Representation is an essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture. It does involve the use of language, of signs and images which stand for or represent things (Hall, 1997: 15). Representation is the production of the meaning of the concepts in our minds through language. It is the link between concepts and language which enables us to *refer* to either the „real’

world of objects, people or events, or indeed to imaginary worlds of fictional objects, people and events.

Ferdinand De Saussure (via Jonathan Culler, 1976: 19) said that the production of meaning depends on language. Language is a system of signs; sounds, images, written words, painting, photographs and others. They are used as a sign within language only when they serve to express communicated ideas. Saussure analyzed the sign into two further elements. The first is *signifier* that contains the actual word, image, photo and others, and the second is *signified* that contains the idea or the concept that carries on our head. Thus, the sign is the form of signifier (*signifier*) and an idea (*signified*) (Hall, 1997: 31).

As cited in *The Oxford English Dictionary*, there are two relevant suggested meanings for the word. First, to represent something is to describe or depict it; second, to represent also means to symbolize, stand for or substitute for. The sounds, words, notes, gestures, expressions, clothes are part of the elements that are linked together. These elements function as a sign arranged with other sign into a system which is capable carrying and expressing meaning. Therefore, representation is the link between the concept and language which enable us to differ between the real world and the imaginary world.

There are three approaches in representation theory. The first is reflective approach, reflective approach is thought to lie on the the object, person, idea or event in the real world. The second is intentional approach, intentional approach is to meaning in representation argues the opposite case. The last is constructionist

approach, constructionist approach is construct meaning using representational systems - concepts and signs.

In this graduating paper, the researcher prefers to use the third approach to analyze, that is constructionist approach, to analyze the conflicts in *The Promise* movie. According to this approach, “we must not confuse to the *material* word, where things and people exist, and the symbolic practices processes through which representation, meaning and language operate” (Hall, 1997: 25).

The second of the theory that researcher uses is Movie Theory. Movie theory is an important part that is needed in analyzing a character in the writing of literary works. According to Sapardi Djoko Damono in his book *Politics, Ideology, and Hybrid Literature* said that when Britain undergoes the initial process of industrialization, its people are not familiar with television, radio and recording devices; which is known only to print mass media.

Rudolf Arnheim in his book *Movie as Art* published in 1932 mentions that movie can achieve its status as 'art' when the movie has its own essence and proves to be different from other artistic essence, such as art and theater. The aesthetic potential of the movie lies precisely at its medium limitations; when the movie proves unable to present everyday real life, the movie can dig its own creative potential.

Therefore, the researcher applies movie theory by Ed Sikov to help the analysis of the object. There is the term called *Mise-en-scene* that describes the primary feature cinematic representation. *Mise-en-scene* is the step to understand how movie is produced and reflected through the meaning. *Mise-en-scene*

consists of the elements placed in front of the camera to be photographed such as settings, props, lighting, costumes, make up, figure behavior, camera angle and cinematography (Sikov, 2010: 16).

1.7. Method of Research

1.7.1. Type of Research

The author uses qualitative methods to complete this paper. According to Judith Preissle in Cresswell, J. (1998: 24) states about the notion of qualitative research as follows: "Qualitative research is a loosely defined category of research design or models, all of which elicit verbal, visual, tactile, olfactory, and gustatory data in the form of descriptive narratives like field notes, recordings, or other transcripts from audio and videotapes and other written records and pictures or movies."

1.7.2. Data Sources

The researcher uses two sources, the primary and secondary data. The primary data is taken from *The Promise* movie. The data of it comes from the movie descriptions regarding the representation of the Turkish Muslims as seen in *The Promise* movie. The Representation theory as the main theory is used to analyze the movie. The secondary data is chosen from the other data which contain the information and ideas about the concepts that the researcher needs to analyze, and the data are also taken from books and internet (e-books, journals and other related sources).

1.7.3. Data Collection Technique

There are some steps to collect the data of this research. First, the researcher watched the movie closely to find the meaning in *The Promise* movie that could be understood by looking at the intrinsic elements of the movie. Second, the researcher listed the events of the story based on representation theories variable. Third, the researcher looked and screen shot the frames related to the representation theory. The researcher also added the frames with movie dialogues and timing to make them more detailed.

1.7.4. Data Analysis Technique

The researcher analyses the data by using Representation Theory in order to find the results of the analysis. The data are from Turkish Muslims characterization. Also, the researcher uses Film Theory as the secondary theory and also supporting theory. Next, the researcher should be able to answer the research problems as the final result of the analysis.

1.7.5. Paper Organization

This researcher paper is divided into four chapters. The first chapter is the introduction of the research. This chapter contains the background of study, problem statement, objective of study, significance of study, literary review, theoretical approach, method of research, and paper organization. Chapter two deals with intrinsic elements of *The Promise* movie. The third chapter shows the discussion about the representation of Turkish Muslims in Armenian genocide as seen in this movie. The final chapter consists of the conclusion from the analysis and suggestion for the future researcher.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

4.1. Conclusion

From what have been analyzed in the previous sub-chapter, the conclusion that can be drawn from this research is that the movie maker is able to present *The Promise* movie as the response of bad treatment experienced by Armenians in Turkey in the post 1915 Genocide. In this movie, the moviemaker shows that Turkish Muslims are perceived as bad people. They act inhumanely and make the people of Armenian miserable. For them the Armenian people do not deserve to live in turkey territory.

The movie maker also emphasizes American evaluations of Muslims which make them feel depressed. This has an impact on the history that Turkey wants to hide. The movie maker tries to tell stories according to history and show how Muslims have attitudes dealing with conflict in cruel ways without considering their religion and social standing.

Furthermore, the researcher also finds how Turkish Muslims are represented as bad people in the movie in relation to the issues of Armenian Genocide in 1915. They are represented through negative stereotypes such as violence, misrepresentation of the concept of Islam, and uncivilized. The negative stereotype makes many people including Americans often misunderstand about Muslim especially in Western although in reality Islam is a religion that loves peace or *rahmatan lil alamin*. If a Muslim wants to fight then war should be

carried out in a manner determined by the Shari'a, the right intention, and pay attention to the limits of Allah and Islamic morals. As a result, *The Promise* movie is presented as the response of bad treatment experienced by Armenians in Turkey in the post 1915 Genocide. In this movie, Turkish Muslims are perceived as bad people. They act inhumanely and make the people of Armenian miserable. This film emphasizes the American evaluation of Turkish Muslims and Armenians relations which makes them feel depressed. This has an impact on the history that Turkey wants to hide.

4.2. Suggestion

Turkey have until now been denying the existence of massacres or genocide. Since the 1970s, the Turkish government's denial campaign have been extensive. In the United States alone, to prevent US recognition of the Genocide, it expends significant diplomatic resources, even to the point of ambassadorial visits to state governments in the United States. It also pays millions for the lobbying of US legislators. The Turkish government and private supporters also promote various efforts in journalistic circles as well as academia, including the funding of university positions for deniers (Theriault, 2009: 86). The representation of those issues can be seen in the movie that has the theme. One of those movie is *The Promise* talking about genocide. The researcher has decided that Turkish Muslims is one the cases that can be analyzed from this movie. This graduating paper focuses on the Turkish Muslims characters that also can be related to the Armenians directly, such as the relation between majority and

minority populations. There are many cases and aspects that can be analyzed to the next researcher from this movie, the binary opposition theory and post-colonial theory are theory examples that can be used to examine this movie because this movie also shows the life between the East and the West.



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MOVIE

The Promise Directed by Terry George. Survival Pictures; Film Nation Entertainment. 2016



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Skills

- Able to speak Javanese, Indonesian, and English.
- Musical instruments and basketball sports strategies
- Photography and videography
- Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, Powerpoint, etc.

FORMAL EDUCATION

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