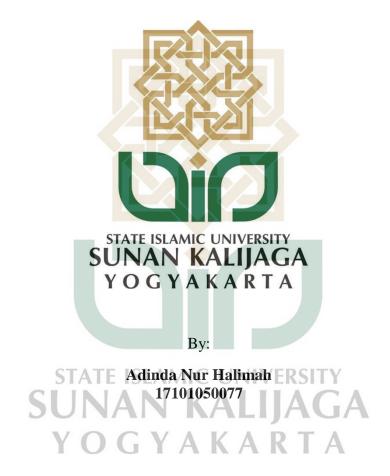
# THE FUNCTIONS OF HUMOUR IN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE AS SEEN IN *EVAN ALMIGHTY* (2007)

#### A GRADUATING PAPER

Submitted in Partial fulfillment of the Requirement for Gaining the Bachelor Degree in English Literature



ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF ADAB AND CULTURAL SCIENCES
STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY SUNAN KALIJAGA
YOGYAKARTA
2021

#### A FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

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

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# THE FUNCTIONS OF HUMOUR IN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE AS SEEN IN EVAN ALMIGHTY (2007)

By: Adinda Nur Halimah

#### **ABSTRACT**

In today's society, humor is frequently presented unconsciously—humor to insulting, mocking, or simply a joke. Humor has a hidden purpose. In this case, it frequently causes frictions among people, as seen in the Evan Almighty film. The figure of Evan gives a task to build an ark to save his citizens then become subjected to insult. This study aims to discover what and how the functions of humor in Islamic perspective in *Evan Almighty* (2007). This research also makes use of Freud's concept of humor and its functions. This research applies a qualitative method to answer questions about what, how, and why a phenomenon occurs. Based on the current analysis, there are three functions of humor in the film: humor for ridicule, humor to reduce tension, and humor for power or position. This analysis can be seen in the various dominances of citizens and superiors in displaying indifferent attitudes and not caring about things they have said to Evan.

**Keywords**: Evan Almighty, Freud, functions of humor, Islamic perspective



# THE FUNCTIONS OF HUMOUR IN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE AS SEEN IN EVAN ALMIGHTY (2007)

By: Adinda Nur Halimah

#### **ABSTRAK**

Di lingkungan masyarakat, humor seringkali muncul tanpa disadari. Humor memiliki maksud dan tujuan yang tersembunyi baik itu bertujuan menghina, mencemooh, atau hanya sekadar gurauan. Dalam hal ini, humor kerap kali juga menimbulkan suatu perpecahan di antara sesama dan hal ini juga terjadi di film Evan Almighty, sosok Evan yang diberi tugas untuk membuat bahtera untuk menyelamatkan warganya justru mendapat hinaan yang bertubi-tubi. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui apa saja dan bagaimana fungsi humor dalam perspektif Islam pada film Evan Almighty (2007). Penelitian ini juga menggunakan konsep humor Freud dan fungsinya. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif yang digunakan untuk menjawab pertanyaan tentang apa, bagaimana, dan mengapa suatu fenomena terjadi. Berdasarkan hasil analisis ditemukan tiga fungsi humor dalam film tersebut, yaitu humor untuk ejekan, humor untuk meredam ketegangan, dan humor kekuasaan atau kedudukan seseorang. Analisis ini terlihat dari berbagai dominasi warga dan atasan dalam menunjukkan sikap acuh tak acuh dan tidak peduli terhadap apa yang mereka katakan kepada Evan.

Kata kunci: Evan Almighty, fungsi humor, Freud, perspektif Islam



#### **MOTTO**

"Give your humor to everyone in order to keep them entertained."ANH05

"Life's ups and downs will make you more mature in your thinking."ANH05

"Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage."-Anais Nin
"Be first rate version of yourself, not a second rate version of someone else."-Judy Garland



#### **DEDICATION**

This thesis is proudly dedicated to...

All my beloved family

(My mother, my father, my brothers, and my sisters)

Thank you for endless love, sacrifies, prayers, and advices.



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SUNAN KALIJAGA Y O G Y A K A R T A

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#### **CHAPTER I**

#### INTRODUCTION

# 1.1 Background of Study

Humor comes from the word "*umor*" (you-moors). Humor is innate in humans as a source of joy in one's life. Humans have a strong instinct to seek joy and entertainment (Hendarto, 1990). According to James humor, humor is caused by hearing or seeing to feel touched by funny feelings, so humor can make us laugh (Rahmanadji: 2007).

According to Sujoko (1982), humor can function as: (1) to do all the wishes and aims of the idea or message; (2) to make people aware of themselves not consistently accurate; (3) to teach people to see the problem from different angles; (4) to entertain; (5) to make people tolerate something; (7) to make people understand complicated matters; (2007: 219). Of the many positive benefits of humor, humor may also have negative consequences. Some people will think humor is ordinary, but some will also judge that a funny thing contains mockery, sarcasm, and ridicule. The researcher in this study discovered some of the same functions in the film to be studied.

Evan Almighty is a film produced by Universal Pictures (Yosefel, 2007). This film is classified as a biblical comedy. Everything related to the Alkitabiah or the Bible is referred to as biblical. So biblical comedy is a story based on the bible or the bible with elements of antics, humor, and so on (Woods, 2015). Marc Shmuger, Chairman of Universal Pictures, said that this film is the greatest fantasy and the funniest comedy. Evan Almighty is one of the most successful movies in the history of Universal Production. Evan Baxter is the main character in this

film. As a member of Congress, Evan Baxter is played by Steve Carell. In this film, God assigns the character Evan the task of building an ark.

There are some reasons why the researcher chooses this film because many films about the Prophet with different versions, stories and contain positive reactions from the community, such as The Message, Uwais al Qarni, Omar ibn Al Khattab, and others. Many films also received adverse reactions from different groups, such as films about the Prophet Noah (Noah and Evan Almighty). These films have become controversial because the contents of the stories are not like the original stories of the Qur'an. The storytelling here is different, too. In this case, Evan Almighty's film enters the two main arenas of today's global controversy (religion and politics) in such a toothless manner that no one can be offended (Newman, Kim., 2007). Noah's story (2014) is earnest, but the genre is humor in Evan Almighty's film. This attraction is what makes this film a choice for the researcher. Of many films about the prophet not also shown negative. The film may also serve a good purpose. Like the Evan Almighty film, which has a biblical comedy genre, there may also be other intentions. In the Islamic perspective, the form of the prophet should not be shown, let alone described ridiculously. Especially when God is replaced with a human form. This is not true. It is explained in Surah of the Qur'an (Al Imran, 3: 190-191), which means: "Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of night and day there are signs for people of understanding. Namely, those who remember Allah while standing or sitting or lying down and thinking about creating the heavens and the earth (saying): O our Lord, You did not create this in vain. Glory be to You, so save us from the torment of hell." From the verse, it is natural

that humans believe in the existence of God (Sasongko, 2015). Of the many films mentioned above including *Evan Almigthy* films are indeed like taboos in Islam. But on the other hand although this film was made so as not to offend but also many people who do not approve of it. As well as a film about the Prophet *Muhammad* entitled The Message (1976). Syrian director Moustapha al-Akkad worked on it. Actor Anthony Quinn became the prophet Muhammad's uncle. The film does not show *Muhammad*'s face on screen (Afrisia, Rizky Sekar, 2019). As is the rule in Islam the face of the Prophet *Muhammad* should not be shown at all. Even though there are still many Muslims who are offended even though they have realized the Prophet *Muhammad* with parables or likens.

Another reason why the researcher chose an Islamic perspective is because of the many movies mentioned earlier, which made Muslims feel offended and humiliated by the different stories in Islam. It made the researcher interested in researching. Malaysia's Muslim Consumers Association said the comedy, which plays on the story of Noah's ark and features actor Morgan Freeman as God, was insulting to Islam. "The movie refers to the big flood during the time of Prophet Noah, but this has been turned into a comedy which is insulting to Islam," association secretary-general Maamor Osman said. "Featuring a human being like God in the movie is also against Islam," he added (Malaysian Muslims Object to 'Evan Almighty', 2007). Looking back in Islam, humor has also been described. In a hadith, it is narrated that the Prophet once joked with an old woman who was sobbing because she did not enter heaven (In heaven, there are no grandmothers but) (HR. Thabrani and Baihaqi) (Istiningtyas, L., 2014). This makes the researcher interested even more

deeply than the humor in a film in the humor genre does not necessarily have the meaning to offend other religions.

From the summary of the film that the researcher in the previous paragraph has described, the story is different from the Al-Qur'an story of the Prophet Noah. It has at least 28 Surahs that tell the story of the Prophet Noah. The story varies from time to time and is expressed in several verses in row, for example, in surah al-Qamar (54) from verses 9 to 17, surah al-A'raf (7) from verse 59-64, surah ash-Syu'araa (26): 105 to 122, surah Yunus (10): 71 to 73, surah Hud (11): 25 to 49, surah ash-Shafaat (37): 75 to 82, and surah al-Mukminiin (23): 23 to 31. Furthermore, it is revealed explicitly in one chapter, namely the 71st surah, in as many as 28 verses. Aside from that, the stories of Noah can be found in several verses surah that is revealed separately. One of the Prophet Noah's stories is found in QS. Al-Qamar (54): 9-17; 1) Drowned and received no help from anyone other than Allah, 2) His people denied Prophet Noah, claiming he was insane and threatening him, 3) The start of the devastation caused by heavy rains, 4) The earth emits springs (meets) rainwater, and water radiates from the earth (there was a flood). QS. 54: 12, "And we made the earth shine with springs, and when the waters met, it was for a pre-determined business.", 5) Noah was told to board an ark that was sailing under God's supervision (K, M. D 2013: ) G Y A K A R T A 77-84).

Evan Almighty (2007) is a fascinating film to investigate for a variety of reasons. The story in this film differs from the verses written in Al-Qur'an, as mentioned in several surahs. Among these distinctions, the film is humorous and concludes with a happy ending. Then the event of the arrival of water is shown with a broken dam. The disaster due to

the dam's breakdown makes sense, but scientifically, the disaster that has occured in the original story cannot be understood by humans. No one knows where the flood comes from. The last is that the meeting with God is performed only once. After that, they separate. In this case, the relationship between man and God will continue. There is no separation from God in our life (https://jeffrysudirgo.org).

In this case, the production of the Prophet's films was shown more freely without prior screening from time to time. So that this has led to much controversy all over the places. From there, the researcher expresses an opinion supported by Freud's theory of the function of humor, where humor is not only a form of entertainment on its own, but that entertainment also has purposes and objectives.

This is why the researcher chooses *Evan Almighty* film produced by Universal Pictures. The researcher then focuses on Freud's theory of the function of humor and how the function of humor in Islamic perspective, which no one has analysed before. This research is entitled *The Functions of Humor in Islamic Perspective in Evan Almighty* (2007).

In addition, to deepen the analysis, the researcher uses film theory to support the data analysis. Getting an explicit meaning explanation requires imagination in framing techniques and camera angles in each scene of the figure. A color scheme to associate a specific color with a character or situation or a specific color shows a character's development. Then, mise-en-scene describes the film's composition as seen through the setting or background, lighting, costumes, makeup, and acting and movement actors.

# 1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background of the study, the researcher aims to find the following answers to the problems:

- 1) What are the functions of humor in Tom Syadyac's film, *Evan Almighty*?
- 2) How are the functions of humor in Tom Syadyac's film, *Evan Almighty* portrayed?
- 3) How the function of humour in Islamic perspective as seen in *Evan Almighty*?

## 1.3 Objective of Study

In this study the researcher is to find out the functions of the humor of the prophet Noah in Tom Syadyac's *Evan Almighty* (2007) movie by using the Freud's theory of humor and how their functions are portrayed.

# **1.4 Significance of Study**

This research is expected to contribute to theoretical discourse research in literature studies examining the function of humor using humor function theory. As shown by this research, the function of humor is not only for entertainment but also as a form of mockery, humor that shows the existence of a person's power or position, and humor as a way of releasing someone's tension. Second, this research is to help to show how Freud's concept of humor functions in *Evan Almighty's* film (2007). Third, it is expected that this research will improve the quality of critical thinking and filter all information in understanding a purpose and objective in the form of film literature and also certainly in Islamic perspective.

#### 1.5 Literature review

The researcher has found out that there is no research on the film to be analysed. However, there are same research papers that by using the same humor function. The theory and research focus on distinguishing this study from previous studies.

The first research is a graduating paper written by Ade Mukhlisin from English Department of Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University and published in 2016. The research is entitled *The Form and the Function of Humor in Mark Twain's Short Stories Entitled the Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County and Steamboat Race*. This research is about to describe the form and the function of humor in the Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County and Steamboat Race. The research uses the psychoanalysis theory presented by Sigmund Freud about the classification and the function of humor. Here, there are similarities in the use of theory.

The second research is a graduating paper written by Dian Palupi from State University Yogyakarta and published in 2014. The research is entitled *Bentuk dan Fungsi Humor dalam Serial Drama Komedi Ekstra Francais Karya Whitney Barros*. This study has similarities with the author, namely the use of humor function theory. This study aims to describe; 1) humorous forms in the comedy-drama series Extra Français, Episode 1 "L'arrivée De Sam" and Episode 2 "Sam Fait Du Shopping," 2) humorous functions of each humorous form in the comedy-drama series Extra Français, Episode 1 "L'arrivée De Sam" and Episode 2 "Sam Fait Du Shopping."

The third research is a graduating paper written by M. Putra Fajarna. He is a Faculty of Education and Teacher Training student,

Department of English Language Education and published in 2018/1439 H. The research is entitled Analyzing the Language of Humour in "Little Mosque on the Prairie" TV Series. The study also has similarities with the research, namely the uses of humor theory. This study analyzes the language of humor in the Little Mosque on the Prairie TV series. This study aims to identify the mechanisms of humor and the types of humor in Little Mosque on the Prairie TV series. The qualitative research approach was implemented for identification, classification, and understanding the material of analysis regarding the use of the theory and the type of humor in the Little Mosque on The Prairie TV series. The overall results demonstrated that incongruity theory is the most widely used theory, which consists of (54%), superiority (40%), and release theory (6%). Based on the analysis of the research that the percentage of Insult and Irony is about (37%), next self-deprecation consists of (18%) while the use of wordplay is only (8%) which makes wordplay is the minor type is used.

The last research is a graduating paper written by Ayudya Wardhani from English Department of Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University and published in 2013. The research is entitled *Humor as Reflected in the Use Cooperative and Politeness Principles in Yes Man Movie*. In this study, the writer analyzes verbal communications which exist in some humorous scenes shown by the producers of humor, which involve the main character named Carl and some supporting characters. Moreover, the humorous scenes are focused only on the use of cooperative and politeness principles. Since the movie genre is a comedy, the writer also analyzes the connection between cooperative and

politeness principles used by the characters with humor. Here is the object differs from the researcher.

In contrast to the above research, the research focuses on the function of humor in the Islamic perspective as seen in *Evan Almighty* (2007) through the use of Freud's theory, mainly the function of humor. Although the objects are different, the theory is the same. This research differs from this research because the researcher uses film theory as a supporting theory to support data analysis.

#### 1.6 Theoretical Framework

# 1.6.1 Humor Theory

Sigmund Freud's theory of humor synthesized the three theories of humor (an example: incongruity, relief, and conflict theories). Another theory proposed is superiority (an example: when we laugh at someone who has been duped). Freud postulated that humor works through two main mechanisms, 'condensation' and 'displacement.' Condensation involves an economy of thought and expression and conserves psychic energy and displacement shifts that psychic energy from conflict or incongruity to a humorous anecdote that brings relief. Freud believed that cultivating a sense of humor could help lift repression (conflicting unconscious material) and be harmful, especially in certain forms of sarcasm and irony directed at oneself (Swaminath: 2006).

Humor has four advantages:

# 1. Physiological

According to Klein's report (Hasanat and Subadi, 1998: 18), humor can change someone's internal chemical makeup. Humor also significantly impacts the body's systems, such as the nervous system,

blood circulation, endometrial, and immune system (as cited Istiningtyas, L., 5).

## 2. Psychology

Humor can help people when they have difficulties. According to Nilson, humor is an effective tool to achieve status (as cited Istiningtyas, L., 4-5).

#### 3. Education

According to Stopsky (Whisonant, 1998: 10), humor is a crucial component of encouraging students to think critically (as cited Istiningtyas, L., 4-5).

#### 4. Social

Humor can bind a person or a group they like, but it can also distance themselves from other people (Webb dan Jones, 2006) (as cited Istiningtyas, L., 5). Some experts say that humor is not just a joke. However, humor is a way to see, react, interact with the world. People with a humorous nature are the main characteristics of a creative, healthy, and successful individual. Humorous people are also easier to deal with the stresses caused by the business.

# 1.6.2 Film Theory

The second theory used to analyse is film theory. Films based on literature serving the same purpose, namely to entertain. According to Winokur (2001: 8-9), the two main functions of a film are entertainment and didacticism (deducts) (as cited in Riyadi S., 244). As for who is meant by the didactic function, this is a function in which film frequently contains allegory, meaningful texts on the surface frequently referred to political, ethical, religious, and broader social contexts. In other words,

films frequently contain cultural messages, either intentionally or unintentionally, which we can find by way of reflection. Based on that statement, the theoretical film is required to support the analysis in this research. The cinematography in this research focuses on framing techniques, camera angles, and mise-en-scene.

Frame size (image size) that is suitable for exposure, such as: (as cited in Fikriangga, 36).

## 1) Extreen close-up (ECU)

The shot is very close, showing only the part particular on the body of the object. Its function is for the clarity of an object.

# 2) Big Close-up (BCU)

Taking pictures is limited to the head to the chin of the object.

This functions to highlight the expressions issued by the object.

# 3) Close-up (CU)

Image size is limited only from head to neck. This functions to give a clear picture of the object.

# 4) Medium Close-up (MCU)

Pictures taken are limited from head to chest. Its function is to reinforce someone's profile so that the audience is clear.

# 5) Medium Shoot (MS)

Taking pictures from head to waist. Its function is showing the object's figure.

## 6) Knee Shoot (KS)

Head to knee shooting. The function is almost the same as Mid Shoot.

# 7) Full Shoot (FS)

The capture of full objects from head to toe. Its function shows the object and its environment.

# 8) Long Shoot (LS)

Shooting is broader than the whole shoot. Its function shows an object with its background.

Mise-en-scene is divided into four main parts (Pratista (2008, 1):

## 1. Setting (background)

It is the entire background with all of its properties. In this case, its properties include all immovable objects such as furniture, doors, windows, chairs, lamps, trees, and so on. With the context of the film's story, the background used in the film is generally made as natural as possible.

# 2. Costumes and makeup (makeup)

Costumes are everything that a player wears while acting, including accessories. Hats, jewelry, watches, glasses, shoes, sticks, and other costume accessories are examples. Clothing or costumes serve a variety of functions depending on the context of the story in the film. According to Pratista (2008:71), "some of the functions are related to clothing or costumes, namely: a pointer for space and time, a pointer to social status, a pointer to the personality of the story actor, the color of the costume as a symbol, the motive for the story, image."

In general, makeup in films represents three purposes: it shows age, depicts non-human faces, and shows the effects of a situation. For example, showing a blow or wound mark.

#### 3. Lighting

Basically, without light, all objects would not have a form seen. Without light, a film will not exist. The whole picture is appearing on film is the result of light manipulation. According to Pratista (2008:75), "in general, lighting in films can be divided into four elements: quality, direction, source, and light color." These four elements have a significant impact on lighting when shaping the atmosphere and mood of a film.

## 4. The actors and their movements (acting)

The movement of an actor is an essential aspect of the mise-enscene; a filmmaker must control the players and their movements—the story's perpetrator who will motivate the narrative and always move in acting.

#### 1.7 Method of Research

# 1.7. 1 Type of Research

This type of research is based on qualitative research. According to McCusker et. al (2015) qualitative methods answer questions about what, how, and why a phenomenon occurs. In terms of data collection, Gill et al.; suggest several types of data collection methods in qualitative research, namely observation, visual analysis, literature study, and interviews (individually or in groups) (Ardianto: 2019). Researchers collect data from journals, books, articles, and other research-related sources in collecting data.

#### 1.7. 2 Data Sources

The data source for this research is divided into two, namely primary and secondary data. Primary data was taken from the film *Evan Almighty* produced by Universal Pictures and directed by Tom Syadyac. Secondary data is then obtained from other sources, such as journals, books, articles, the internet, and other sources related to this research.

# 1.7.3 Data Collection Technique

The method used to collect data from this research is the method of documentation. The researcher collects data from scripts and film reviews and journals, books, articles, and other research related to research. It is helpful to add references to research.

The following are some of the steps the researcher has taken to watch the film, Evan Almighty, to see what humor is in the film. Second, looking for variables of the function of Freud's humor theory. The third is to find out the concept of the function of Freud's humor theory. Four researchers will find out how these variables relate to each other. Finally, the variables and concepts that have been searched are then matched to the material object data.

# 1.7.4 Data Analysis Technique KALIJAGA

Bogdan Data Analysis is a process of systematically searching and compiling the data obtained from the results of the literature review and so on to be understood and informed to others (Sugiyono, 2009:244) (as cited in Indriani et.al., 2019, 15). The researcher shall make a list of the data sets that have been searched for. After that, the researcher

analyzed the data to find out what and how Freud's humor theory works. The researcher then concluded from the results of the data analyzed.

# 1.8 Paper Organization

This research consists of four chapters. The first chapter is an introduction. There are eight sections: background of the study, research question, objectives of the study, literature review, theoretical approach, method of research, and paper organization. The second chapter is about intrinsic elements. This chapter provides support for the third chapter, namely analysis, by explaining the intrinsic elements. The third chapter is analysis. The fourth chapter covers conclusion and suggestion.



#### **CHAPTER IV**

#### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

#### 4.1 Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the theory of humor, the researcher finds several functions of humor that are displayed, namely based on three main theories that influence humor: superiority, incongruity, and humor release. The superiority displayed shows the existence of a higher party placement and the act of laughing at others or commonly referred to as mockery or design. The incongruity here indicates an event that one thinks is unusual, incoherent, wrong, and inappropriate. While the release here shows that the joke can reduce a person's tension or anxiety.

Superiority is demonstrated when Evan does silly things that enrage the other congressmen and displays his high power attitude, accompanied by hurtful humor that makes him a laughing stock. In the meeting room, for example, Evan is revealed to be the figure of Prophet Noah. Then there is incongruity, which happens when things or Evan's personality change and people are taken back by him. For example, in the process of making the ark, Evan is assisted by animals. In the release, feeling nervous and tense make him act silly, so he tries to hide it by remaining calm and not anxious. As a result, the humor shown in this case is aimed at dealing with tension and anxiety.

The functions of humor in Islamic perspective as seen in *Evan Almighty* (2007) are found in *Surah Ali Imran* verse 26 which explains about human power on earth and the function of humor to relieve tension or anxiety has been taught by the Prophet since ancient times in which the description allows humor but does not hurt other people.

# 4.2 Suggestion

The researcher hopes that other researchers will continue investigating the film *Evan Almighty* (2007) by using psychological theory, masculine theory, and other theories as its knife of analysis.



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