

THE SHIFTING DEPICTION OF THE PROPHET NOAH AND ANGELS IN

NOAH (2014)

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

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

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THE SHIFTING DEPICTION OF THE PROPHET NOAH AND ANGELS IN *NOAH* (2014)

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ABSTRACT

This research discusses the depiction of the Prophet Noah and angels in *Noah* (2014). In this film, the figures of Noah and angels are depicted differently from the depictions generally known to both Muslims and Christians. This research aims to find out the shift in meaning regarding the depiction of the Prophet Noah and angels themselves through the characteristics of Noah and angels in the film. The researcher compares *Noah* (2014) with Qur'an and Bible by using *Comparative* Theory and also *Mise-en-scene* Theory from Sikov as a supporting theory in analyzing this film. This research is qualitative research with descriptive data analysis techniques. The data used in the form of scripts, dialogues, clips, and scenes in the film relating to the depiction of the Prophet Noah and angels. This research shows a shift in the meaning of the depiction of the Prophet Noah and angels, which is different from what is described according to some religions in general, and the depiction of the Prophet Noah is the same as humans in general. In addition, the sacredness of angels is not shown in *Noah* (2014).

Keywords: *Film, Prophet Noah, Angel, Comparative*

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THE SHIFTING DEPICTION OF THE PROPHET NOAH AND ANGELS IN *NOAH* (2014)

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini membahas tentang penggambaran sosok nabi Nuh dan malaikat dalam *Noah* (2014). Dalam film ini sosok Nabi Nuh dan malaikat digambarkan berbeda dengan penggambaran yang diketahui pada umumnya, baik umat muslim maupun nasrani. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui pergeseran penggambaran sosok Nabi Nuh dan malaikat itu sendiri melalui karakteristik Noah dan malaikat dalam film. Peneliti membandingkan *Noah* (2014) dengan Al-Quran dan Bible dengan menggunakan teori perbandingan dan juga teori film Mise-en-scene dari sikov sebagai teori pendukung dalam menganalisis film ini. Penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif dengan teknik analisis data secara deskriptif. Data-data yang digunakan berupa naskah, dialog, potongan gambar dan adegan-adegan di dalam film yang berkaitan dengan penggambaran Nabi Nuh dan malaikat. Hasil dari penelitian ini yaitu terjadinya pergeseran penggambaran nabi nuh dan malaikat sehingga berbeda dengan apa yang digambarkan menurut beberapa agama secara umum dan penggambaran Nabi Nuh sama dengan manusia pada umumnya. Serta adanya ketidaksakralan malaikat di dalam *Noah* (2014).

Kata kunci: *Film, Nabi Nuh, Malaikat, Sastra Bandingan*

MOTTO

مَنْ جَدَّ وَجَدَّ

Whoever Does Something Persistently Will Succeed



DEDICATION

I dedicate this graduating paper to:

My beloved Parents Abdul Kadir and Kasma Wati

My little brothers Luthfi Reza Pahlefi, Alfian Reza Syahrani and

Muhammad Reza Fahrezi

All my lecturers in Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University

My family of

The English literature department, faculty, and university of Sunan

Kalijaga State Islamic University

My friends, students of English literature 2016

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of Study

The prophetic film is one type of film whose story has drawn controversy. This is because the films that raise this genre have the sensitivity to the depiction of the prophet if it is not by the known story. Thus, it can lead to the emergence of two views of the prophet's figures: the prophet in (Quran and Bible) and the prophet in the film. However, films with this genre are still being produced. One of the controversial films is *Noah* (2014) by Darren Aronofsky. He made literary works by including religious elements in this film; there is about the prophet. According to Darren, who is an atheist, he said that this *Noah* (2014) is the most appropriate or the same as the Bible, but the story that he makes is very different from the stories that we know in the Qur'an and the Bible. This is not the first time a film about the prophet has been made. In 2012, *Innocence of Muslims* film appeared, which raised the story of the Prophet Muhammad, and in 2015, *Exodus: Gods and King* film appeared, which told the story of the Prophet Moses. Even the film about the prophet Noah has been made four times, but it seems this *Noah* (2014) by Darren Aronofsky has caused a lot of controversy in Indonesia and the world.

Noah (2014) tells about the Prophet Noah, who gets a warning from God through a dream for the coming flood disaster that will destroy all creatures on earth. Noah tries to tell his people to stop the sins they have committed on earth to be safe.

No one listens to his warnings, and Noah and his family are driven out and left to fend for themselves in the desert. After getting advice from the grandfather, Noah gets a clue to save the ‘innocent’, including the animals, by building an ark. Assisted by angels, he and his family manage to make the ark to save themselves from the world’s destruction. This film was released on 28 March 2014 and played by famous Hollywood stars like Russell Crowe, Jennifer Connelly, Anthony Hopkins, Logan Lerman, Douglas Booth, and Emma Watson.

This film is interesting to be analyzed because it tells about the Prophet Noah, who is also found in the Quran. One of the verses of the Quran which tells about the command to make an ark to the Prophet Noah is in Q.S Hud; 37:

وَاصْنَعِ الْفُلْكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحْيِنَا وَلَا تُخَاطِبْنِي فِي الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِنَّهُمْ مُّعْرِضُونَ

“And make the ark with the supervision and guidance of our revelation, and do not discuss with me about the wrongdoers. Surely they will be drowned.” (Q.S. Hud: 37).

The researcher found that the depiction of the Prophet Noah and Angels in this film is not entirely the same as the known story in the Qur’an and the Bible. There are so many differences between the story presented by Derren Aronofsky, *Noah* (2014), and the story of the Prophet Noah that many people know. The first thing that makes this film controversial is that, in Islam, Muslims are forbidden to portray the figure of the prophet, the apostles, and his friends. Of course, this film gets much rejection from Muslims in the world.

This film is also banned in several countries, especially Muslim-majority countries such as the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Bahrain. These Middle Eastern countries prohibit the screening of *Noah* (2014) because it is considered violating the teachings of Islam by portraying the figure of the prophet.

“There are scenes that contradict Islam and the Bible, so we decided not to screen the film,” said Juma Al-Leem of the United Arab Emirates National Center Media. “It is important to respect these religions and not show the film,” Mr. Al-Leem told the Associated Press. (BBC.com 14/3/2014)

Not only do Muslims denounce *Noah* (2014), but Christians and Jews in Arizona and California are also furious about *Noah* (2014) for deviating from their holy books. The Prophet Noah is a respected prophet of the three celestial religions, namely Islam, Christianity, and Jews. The story of the Prophet Noah is found in the holy books of Christianity, Jews, and the Quran, even; in the Quran, the story of the Prophet Noah is told in one whole surah, there is in surah Noah (71): 1-28.

Because the storyline is well known, there are not many surprises presented to the audience. This film offers more details in the big plot. There are quite a few differences from the scriptures, for example, the role of Methuselah and the people who enter the ark. To build plot dynamics, the antagonist Tubal-Cain is added. Apart from that, the depiction of an angel in the film is also very different.

However, in popular culture, the text is considered the same as other texts, and in popular texts, there can be desacralization in the text. Hence, it makes the writer free to express his opinion about the figure of the prophet and angels. The

existence of the author's opinion in *Noah* (2014) makes many differences in the depiction of the figure of the prophet Noah and angels himself. The depiction of the prophet Noah and angels in this film as having negative things.

This is what makes researchers interested in analyzing *Noah* (2014) by comparing it with Qur'an (Tafsir and Hadits) and Bible. The description above is enough to be the reason why the researcher chooses *Noah* (2014) to be used as the research object. It can be concluded that this research entitled *The Shifting Depiction of The Prophet Noah and Angels in Noah (2014)* has never been done before. Here, the researcher will focus on analyzing the negative shifting of the depiction of the Prophet and Angels through characters and characterization in *Noah* (2014) by comparing the film with Qur'an and Bible.

1.2. Research Question

Based on the background of the study above, the researcher discusses the following question: How is the shifting depiction of the Prophet Noah and Angels in *Noah* (2014) by Darren Aronofsky and Qur'an and Bible?

1.3. Objective of Study

Related to the problem statement above, the objective of this research is to find out that there is a shifting depiction of the Prophet Noah and Angels in *Noah* (2014) and Qur'an and Bible by applying a comparative analysis.

1.4. Significances of Study

Theoretically, the researcher hopes that this research can be used as a helpful reference to understand the film's content and how the Comparative literature is applied in this research. The researcher also hopes the results of the research can give more knowledge about A Comparative Theory. By relating to the problem statement above, this research aims to find out the shifting depiction of the prophet Noah and Angels in *Noah* (2014) by comparing with Qur'an and Bible. The researcher hopes the research can contribute in the form of new knowledge to the field of literature, especially English literature.

Practically, this research can expand the reader's view about how the story about the Prophet Noah in Islam and Christianity. This research is valuable for the reader, especially English literature academics interested in studying Comparative Theory, and provides knowledge to the reader about the shifting depiction of Prophet and Angels in *Noah* (2014). The researcher hopes that this research can make the readers will be able to know the history of prophethood.

1.5. Literature Review

The researcher has found several previous studies that have similarities and differences from this study. Previous researches here prove that this research has not been done yet by other researchers. For the researcher, these researches will help one's analysis because they provide a model of study.

The first research is Ganisa Kurniasih's thesis paper entitled "*Muslim Viewers Receptions of Noah in Noah Movie*". She was an English Department student at Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University, and her thesis was written in 2016. The research has the same object as the researcher's, that is *Noah* (2014). However, the research is different from the researcher's in theory. She uses the reception theory by Hall to know how the audience receives Noah in *Noah* (2014) and to show how the media can influence people by trying to understand how the dominant ideology can be replicated or changed through audience receptions.

The second research is Farida Dian Qonita's thesis paper entitled "*Citra Sosok Nuh dalam Film Noah karya Darren Aronofsky*". She was a student of Islamic Communication and Broadcasting at Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University, and her thesis was written in 2019. The research has the same object as the researcher's, that is *Noah* (2014). However, the research is different from the researcher's in theory. She uses semiotic theory to know the Noah's image in *Noah* (2014) by Darren Aronofsky. She wants to show the reader the image of Noah in the film and the Noah that Muslims know. This is similar to the researcher regarding the object of the problem taken.

The third research is Achmad Muhaiminin's thesis paper entitled "*Kontroversi Pesan Dakwah Dalam Film 'Noah' (semiotic analysis model of Charles Sander Peirce)*". He was a student of Islamic Communication and Broadcasting at Sunan Ampel State Islamic University of Surabaya, and his thesis was written in 2015. The research has the same object as the researcher's, that is *Noah* (2014).

However, the research is different from the researcher's in theory. He uses the semiotic theory model by Charles Sander Peirce to find out the controversy of *dakwah* messages in *Noah* (2014). In the research, Achmad discusses the figure of the Prophet Noah, reaping much controversy in terms of life and delivery of *dakwah* message. The method used is descriptive. This research aims to make the audience do not follow the teachings that are contrary to the prophethood in this film.

The fourth research is a graduating paper by Senna Aditya entitled "*Existential Choice in the Film Noah an Analysis of Soren Kierkegaard's Existentialism*" in 2014. The paper is similar to the researcher's object, *Noah* (2014), but the theory and the method are different. He uses Soren Kierkegaard's Existential theory. He wants to tell the readers that Noah in *Noah* (2014) is a figure that represents Kierkegaard's Existential understanding. In this movie, Noah deals with existential choices that make him experience an existential moment.

The fifth research is a graduating paper by Muhammad Zainul Arifin entitled "*Comparative Study The Main Characters Of Bridget Jones's Diary In The Novel And Movie*". He was an English Department student at State Islamic University of Sunan Ampel Surabaya, and the thesis was written in 2019. The paper is similar to the researcher's theory, which is Comparative Theory. However, the objects are the Novel and Movie of Bridget Jones's Diary. He uses the comparative theory to compare the main characters of Bridget Jones's Diary in the Novel and Movie. The writer also analyzes the research that has the same theories and methods as Arifin's paper.

The last research is a graduating paper by Herawati Dea entitled “*Comparative study on the plot of Percy Jackson and the Olympians the lightning thief’s novel and movie*”. She was an English Department student at State Islamic University of Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung and the thesis was written in 2016. The paper is similar to the researcher’s theory that is Comparative Theory. She uses the comparative theory to compare the plot of Percy Jackson and The Olympians the lightning thief’s novel and movie. The method used is descriptive. This research discusses the comparison between the similarities and differences plot in the novel and movie Percy Jackson and the Olympians the Lightning Thief.

Those are some papers that have similarities in objects, theories, and methods. There are many more related papers; however, all can be summarized in the paper above. Therefore, the researcher does not need to include more because almost all have in common. After reviewing some researches above, it can be concluded that this research is different from the previous researches. The differences all research above compare to this research is about the problem that the researcher wants to bring about how the shifting depiction of the Prophet Noah and Angels in *Noah* (2014). This study focuses on the shift in the depiction of the main character, Prophet Noah and Angels in terms of characters and characteristics in the film that are different from Qur'an (Tafsir and Hadits) and Bible.

1.6. Theoretical Approach

In this research, the researcher uses comparative theory as the main theory. The researcher also uses the film theory as the second theory to research *Noah* (2014) by Darren Aronofsky.

1.6.1. Comparative Theory

Comparative literature is as the study of comparing two or more literature works. It is to connect the differences and similarities, the influence between one literary work and another. The term "comparative" literature has covered and still includes somewhat different fields of study and groups of problems. This can mean, firstly the study of oral literature, especially on the themes of folklore and their migration; about how and when they entered. "higher" literature, artistic. Comparison is the method used by all criticism and science. "Comparative literature is the study of the relationship between two or more literature" (Rene & Austin 38-39).

According to Endraswara comparative study is a new method to examine literature proportionally and critically (2010:17). He added that comparative analysis positions literature in several aspects, for example, aesthetics, sociologists, psychologists, and pragmatists concerning other fields of knowledge. In addition, the purpose of comparative analysis is to criticize literary studies by considering the concepts of understanding a text. According to Corstius, when we conduct a comparative analysis, we place ourselves as special readers of literature as an object of analysis (1968: 4).

Furthermore, comparative literature analysis acknowledges the researcher to interpret and explain such literature works to analyze its language, modus, structure, and recognize way deeper through literature historical context and its cultural background. Based on those analyses it will sharpen the analysis toward the comparative study. In line with that, the theory of comparative study has a creative and proportional method. Procedural of the research using literary works as subject and compare it to other literary works to get a comprehensive understanding. That principle will create a proper comparative analysis product. According to Jost, the main principle of comparative study need critical thinking to present the parallelism of two literature works or more (1993).

According to Koentjoroningrat, five essential problems emphasize human value-oriented, namely problems of human life, problems of human creation such as literary works, problems of human position in places, problems of human relations with the environment, and problems of human relations with other environments (2009:157). In addition, the researcher finds the similarities and differences of two or more literary works to get a comprehensive analysis.

1.6.2. Film theory

The researcher uses Film theory as the second theory to support how the analysis can be described. Film theory can describe and explore the meaning of the film. Ed Sikov in his book entitled *Film Studies* said that *Mise-en-scene* can help to deal with the problem of reality and representation by divining the assumption and

problems and proceeding logically toward the evidence in these elements (Sikov, 2009: 6).

Mise-en-scene is the step to understand how the film 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). With the help of *Mise-en-scene* analysis, the film can show a more complex and complete depiction than the written one with its various genres, and it is why the researcher uses *Mise-en-scene* theory.

1.7. Methods of Research

This part of the paper contains the type of research, data sources, data collecting technique, and data analysis technique.

1.7.1. Type of Research

The researcher uses the Qualitative research method. As the purpose of the method helps the researcher's way of doing something, quality of being well planned and organized. Qualitative research is collecting any data that can help the researcher in researching this research. The researcher does not make observations or interviews in collecting data, but the researcher collects data from books, journals, or other related research objects.

1.8. Data Sources

In this research, there are two kinds of sources of data: primary and secondary data. In this research, the primary source of data is *Noah* (2014) produced by Darren Aronofsky. The data unit comes from film descriptions (dialogs, scenes, and script) about the shifting of the depiction of the Prophet Noah and angels in *Noah* (2014) and the data about Prophet Noah and Angel in Qur'an (Hadits) and Bible. This research uses comparative theory as the main theory and film theory by Ed Sikov as the second theory for analyzing it. The secondary data contains the information and ideas about the concepts that the researcher needs to analyze, and the data are also taken from books and the internet (journals, e-books, and other related resources).

1.8.1. Data Collection Technique

This research is qualitative research that uses the film as the object of research, the researcher uses documentation techniques by watching the movie and taking a picture in any scene. The researcher collects data from the film; it can be a script and review of the film. Besides that, the researcher also searches for data from books, journals, the internet, and others related to the object of study.

In the method of data, the researcher makes some steps to collect the data. First, the researcher looked for data in the Qur'an (hadith and interpretations) and the Bible about the depiction of the prophet Noah and the angels through the Qur'an, journals, and Bible links on the internet. Second, the researcher collects data by download *Noah* (2014) and its script on the Internet. Third, the researcher watches the

film to find scenes that show a shift in the depiction of Prophet Noah and angels in the film. Fourth, the researcher takes of the screen shooting the scene from the film. Fifth, the researcher reads the script of the film profoundly and intensively according to the scene that has been found while watching *Noah* (2014) until getting the supporting data needed (in the form of dialogue) especially in shifting of the negative depiction of Prophet Noah and Angels in the film. The last, the researcher categorizes the data and categorizes the picture from the film according to the variables of the depiction of Prophet Noah and Angels.

1.8.2. Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis technique begins with collecting data and pieces of evidence from library research. After the data was collected, the researcher analyzed the data as follows: first, the researcher identified each scene that had been obtained (screen shoots) and dialogues from the film *Noah* (2014). Second, the researcher compares the data obtained from the Qur'an (hadith and Tafsir) and the Bible using comparative theory. after that, the researcher uses film theory to analyze each scene obtained, to strengthen the shift in the depiction of Noah and Angels in the film. Finally, the researcher draws a conclusion based on these results.

1.9. Paper Organization

This paper is divided into four chapters: first is the background, which contains the background of the study, research question, and objectives of the study, significances of the study, literature review, theoretical approach, method of research,

and paper organization. The second chapter contains the element of *Noah* (2014), which presents the intrinsic elements that include character and characterization, theme, setting, and plot. The third chapter discusses the analysis of the problem statement. The final chapter consists of conclusions from the analysis and suggestions for future researchers.



CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter consists of the conclusions and the suggestions of the research. There will be two parts: the first is conclusions and the second is suggestions. The conclusions contain some concluding points related to the negative side of the Prophet Noah and the shifting depiction of Angels as portrayed in *Noah* (2014) by comparing the film with Qur'an and Bible. Some points are reflected in the analysis finding in the previous chapter. Last, the suggestions contain some suggestions pointed by the researcher. It can be suggestions to further researchers, the use of theory, or others.

4.1 Conclusion

From what has been analyzed in some of the previous chapters, the researcher concludes that there is a shifting depiction of the Prophet and Angels contained in *Noah* (2014). It is a shift in meaning from sacred to profane about the depiction of the figures of the Prophet Noah and angels between the story in the film and the stories in several religions.

Here the researcher found two findings in analyzing *The Shifting Depiction of The Prophet and Angels in Noah (2014)* by Comparative theory. First, Noah as human, there is a shift in the depiction of the Prophet Noah from sacred to profane, where the depiction of a prophet as a chosen human (sacred) is the same as a human being in general, and the shift in the depiction of Prophet Noah is more inclined to the

negative. In the holy book, both Qur'an and Bible have explained the nature of the prophet Noah very clearly, including strong, brave, patient, steadfast, persistent, obedient, courageous, firm in speaking, wise, and wisdom. However, in *Noah* (2014) the prophet, Noah is described as bad-tempered or the Prophet Noah is described as a person who gets angry quickly or cannot control his emotions when facing things that are not following what the Creator orders, either to his followers or to his family, besides that, Prophet Noah is also described as desperate when he feels he has failed to carry out the tasks given by the creator, and a drunkard.

Secondly, there is no sacred angelic figure in this film. As is well known, in Qur'an and Bible have also been explained about the characteristics and physical figures of angels, such as: obedient, purified from the sins, avoid desires that arise as a result of lust, holy beings, created from the light and winged. But, Angels are also depicted as almost humans in terms of physicals and characteristics, for example, having characters of being irritable, disappointed, and distrustful as humans. In terms of the form of an Angel, it is depicted like a big and scary stone man. It is very different from the image of an angel who is made of light and has no lust.

4.2 Suggestion

Noah (2014) tells the story of the Prophet Noah in carrying out his duties. The researcher uses Comparative theory to compare *Noah* (2014) with Qur'an (Tafsir and Hadits) and Bible, to find out a shift in the negative depiction of the Prophet Noah and Angels. The researcher realizes that this research is still far from perfection.

Thus, the researcher suggests that further researchers analyze *Noah* (2014) using other broader perspectives, such as Representation, Psychoanalysis, Deconstruction, and Semiotic theories. However, the researcher hopes that the next researchers interested in analyzing *Noah* (2014) will be better than it.



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