

**The Shadow of Divine Intervention and Mortal Fear:**

**Comparing Anxiety and Religiosity in *Fury* (2014) and *Merah-Putih* (2009)**

A GRADATING PAPER

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Gaining

the Bachelor Degree in English Department



By

**Muhammad Faqih Sampurno**

20101050001

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT**

**FACULTY OF ADAB & CULTURAL SCIENCES**

**SUNAN KALIJAGA STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY**

**YOGYAKARTA**

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## MOTTO

“Be a goldfish”

- Ted Lasso



## DEDICATION

*Tis not fair nor sufficient, for I to give recognition  
To this humble, ink-printed paper for graduation  
Of the persons, of which I highly regard  
Is just to plenty to leave names apart  
But amongst few I shall represent  
Those, the persons, I humbly thank to many extents  
To the beings who bear me to the world  
Many thanks to my parents who are aging old  
To the peers whom I've share my dreams with no ends  
Many thanks to the people who I dearly regard as friends  
To the most recent positive mentor  
Many thanks my dosbing, of which I put to Google translate becomes supervisor  
To the woman who holds the dearest to my heart  
Many thanks to the girl who can bear the smell of my fart  
And to the person of which I do not bear the power to remember  
I thank you now and forever  
And of course, to the almighty God  
I also thank you*

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## VALIDATION



KEMENTERIAN AGAMA  
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI SUNAN KALIJAGA  
FAKULTAS ADAB DAN ILMU BUDAYA  
Jl. Marsda Adisucipto Telp. (0274) 513949 Fax. (0274) 552883 Yogyakarta 55281

### PENGESAHAN TUGAS AKHIR

Nomor : B-224/Un.02/DA/PP.00.9/01/2024

Tugas Akhir dengan judul : The Shadow of Divine Intervention and Mortal Fear:  
Comparing Anxiety and Religiosity in Fury (2014) and Merah-Putih (2009)

yang dipersiapkan dan disusun oleh:

Nama : MUHAMMAD FAQIH SAMPURNO  
Nomor Induk Mahasiswa : 20101050001  
Telah diujikan pada : Senin, 15 Januari 2024  
Nilai ujian Tugas Akhir : A

dinyatakan telah diterima oleh Fakultas Adab dan Ilmu Budaya UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta

### TIM UJIAN TUGAS AKHIR



Ketua Sidang

Dr. Danial Hidayatullah, SS., M.Hum  
SIGNED

Valid ID: 65b32ec30da92



Penguji I

Febriyanti Dwiratna Lestari, SS., MA  
SIGNED

Valid ID: 65b32c37e66a7



Penguji II

Dr. Witriani, S.S. M.Hum.  
SIGNED

Valid ID: 65b2f3c02c698



Yogyakarta, 15 Januari 2024  
UIN Sunan Kalijaga  
Dekan Fakultas Adab dan Ilmu Budaya

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Wildan, M.A.  
SIGNED

Valid ID: 65b336159f16d



KEMENTERIAN AGAMA REPUBLIK INDONESIA  
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI SUNAN KALIJAGA  
FAKULTAS ADAB DAN ILMU BUDAYA  
Jl. Marsda Adi Sucipto, Yogyakarta, 55281, Telp./Fax. (0274) 513949  
Web: <http://adab.uin-suka.ac.id> Email: [adab@uin-suka.ac.id](mailto:adab@uin-suka.ac.id)

## NOTA DINAS

Hal: Skripsi  
a.n.Muhammad Faqih Sampurno

Yth.  
Dekan Fakultas Adab dan Ilmu Budaya  
UIN Sunan Kalijaga  
Di Yogyakarta

***Assalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb***

Setelah memeriksa, meneliti, dan memberikan arahan untuk perbaikan atas skripsi saudara:

Nama : Muhammad Faqih Sampurno  
NIM : 20101050001  
Prodi : Sastra Inggris  
Fakultas : Adab dan Ilmu Budaya  
Judul : **The Shadow of Divine Intervention and Mortal Fear:  
Comparing Anxiety and Religiosity in Fury (2014) and Merah-Putih (2009**

kami menyatakan bahwa skripsi tersebut sudah dapat diajukan pada sidang Munaqosyah untuk memenuhi salah satu syarat memperoleh gelar Sarjana Sastra Inggris.

Atas perhatiannya, kami mengucapkan terima kasih.

***Wassalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb***

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YOGYAKARTA

Yogyakarta, 11 Januari, 2024  
Pembimbing

Dr. Danial Hidayatullah, SS., M.Hum

NIP: 19760405 200901 1 016

## FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

I hereby submit my graduating paper, entitled *The Shadow of Divine Intervention and Mortal Fear: Comparing Anxiety and Religiosity in Fury (2014) and Merah-Putih (2009)*. I declare this graduating paper is the product of my own research. Any references I used and quoted, are cited accordingly. This graduating paper is also part of a research that I wrote entitled: *The Help of God and Fear of Man: Comparing Anxiety and Religiosity in Fury (2014) and Merah-Putih (2009)*, of which has been published in Journal of Language and Literature (JOLL): <https://doi.org/10.24071/joll.v23i2.6196>.

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Muhammad Faqih Sampurno

NIM: 20101050001

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YOGYAKARTA

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## **The Shadow of Divine Intervention and Mortal Fear:**

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By: Muhammad Faqih Sampurno

#### **ABSTRACT**

This research aims at investigating the influence of religiosity on anxiety during war. This research compares two contrasting military leader characters to identify the influence the way that these characters cope with war-induced anxiety. The main comparative objects are the characters Don from the film *Fury* (2014) and Amir in *Merah-Putih* (2009). Both characters show similar anxiety and religiosity but differ in how they cope with anxiety. The general assumption is that religiosity helps to cope with anxiety. This research uses Freud's psychoanalysis theory to study the characters. By comparing these characters, we may find the relation of religiosity towards anxiety, and we may also find other influences such as the character's motivation and backstory. The five dimensions of religiosity, as explained by Glock & Stark and Freud's psychoanalytic theory on anxiety, determine religiosity and anxiety. The variables are expressed through practice, discourse, and symbols by both characters in scenes and dialogues. The findings are listed in three items: 1) The coping mechanism for anxiety works not only to repress but also to create new anxiety. 2) The new anxiety can be so much worse than the initial anxiety. 3) Religiosity is not a necessary variable in dealing with anxiety. Additionally, the founding of new anxiety contributes to previous theory on anxiety.

Keywords: religiosity; anxiety; war-induced anxiety; new anxiety

## **The Shadow of Divine Intervention and Mortal Fear:**

### **Comparing Anxiety and Religiosity in *Fury* (2014) and *Merah-Putih* (2009)**

*Oleh:* Muhammad Faqih Sampurno

#### **ABSTRAK**

*Penelitian ini ditujukan untuk menyelidiki pengaruh religiusitas terhadap kecemasan selama perang. Penelitian ini membandingkan dua karakter pemimpin militer yang kontras untuk mengidentifikasi pengaruhnya terhadap cara karakter-karakter tersebut mengatasi kecemasan akibat perang. Objek perbandingan utama adalah karakter Don dari film *Fury* (2014) dan Amir dalam film *Merah-Putih* (2009). Kedua karakter tersebut menunjukkan kecemasan dan religiusitas yang serupa, namun berbeda dalam cara mereka mengatasi kecemasan. Asumsi umumnya adalah bahwa religiusitas membantu mengatasi kecemasan. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori psikoanalisis Freud untuk mempelajari karakter-karakter tersebut. Dengan membandingkan karakter-karakter tersebut, kita dapat menemukan hubungan religiusitas terhadap kecemasan, dan kita juga dapat menemukan pengaruh lain seperti motivasi dan latar belakang karakter. Lima dimensi religiusitas, seperti yang dijelaskan oleh Glock & Stark dan teori psikoanalisis Freud tentang kecemasan, menentukan religiusitas dan kecemasan. Variabel-variabel tersebut diekspresikan melalui praktik, wacana, dan simbol-simbol oleh kedua karakter dalam adegan dan dialog. Temuan-temuannya tercantum dalam tiga hal: 1) Mekanisme koping terhadap kecemasan tidak hanya berfungsi untuk merepresi tetapi juga menciptakan kecemasan baru. 2) Kecemasan yang baru bisa jauh lebih buruk dari kecemasan awal. 3) Religiusitas bukanlah variabel yang penting dalam menghadapi kecemasan. Selain itu, ditemukannya kecemasan baru memberikan kontribusi terhadap teori kecemasan sebelumnya.*

*Kata kunci:* religiusitas; kecemasan; kecemasan akibat perang; kecemasan baru

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. 1 Background of Study

War is a recurring theme in films that have been told and retold multiple times. Films enable audiences to view and experience events happening during war, be it stories of civilian life during the war, the social criticism about the war, what it is like to be a soldier during the war, and even a fictional reimagining of famous war events. War creates situations that are far from comfortable for any individual. Though it is an unfortunate and unforgiving event, war is fascinating to observe anxiety.

The films this research focuses on are *Fury* (2014) and *Merah-Putih* (2009). These films show the general view of what happens during war and what the soldiers must endure. Both films show characters dealing with highly intense situations and spontaneous events on the battlefield, military leader characters having to deal with this highly intense situation while trying to maintain the morale of their crew, the military leader characters having to struggle with the stress of the high intense situation-anxiety, and the explicit or imp

licit religiosity of the military leader characters. The military leader characters of these films are Don “Wardaddy” Collier (Brad Pitt) from *Fury* and Amir (Lukman Sardi) from *Merah-Putih*.

Anxiety is expressed in these films as the character’s motivation. It adds depth to the character for the audiences to relate better to them. Don and Amir share similar pressure on the battlefield and presumably experience the same struggle in facing war-induced anxiety. However, both characters differ in how they cope with their anxiety, despite both being military leaders and being faced with the same pressure on the battlefield, and both are “men of the gospel.” Don knows the gospel of Jesus well in the scene where he and his crew are about to face Nazi soldiers, and Amir practices the commands of God faithfully through the Quran in the scene where he prays in the middle of the jungle. The aim is to compare these two contrasting military leader characters to determine and find the things that influence the way that these characters cope with war-induced anxiety. The characters to be the main comparative object are different in character traits and behavior.

The role of religiosity in relation to anxiety plays differently for Don and Amir. In *Merah-Putih*, Amir is explicitly shown to be religious. Amir is a Muslim, and his identity as a Muslim is expressed through his practices. He obediently prays,



even in the most inconvenient situation possible. In one scene, Amir is shown praying in the Indonesian jungle after the Dutch ambushed him and his friends. A keen eye is barely needed to identify that Amir is religious. His religiosity is explicitly shown and seems to be one of his most significant traits.

In *Fury*, Don's religiosity needs a keen eye to be identified. At a glance, Don does not seem to be the most religious character in *Fury*. In one scene, Don jokingly asks the most religious character of his crew, called Bible, that: "if Hitler were to accept Jesus as his savior in his last moments, would he go to Heaven?". Don would not be the first character anyone would think of as the most religious in *Fury*. Despite that, it is appropriate to assume that Don is religious. One scene, in particular, is significant in supporting the argument that Don is religious. In the film's last scene, in the part where Nazi soldiers surround Don and his crew, Bible quotes a verse from The Bible. As Bible was done quoting the verse, Don mentioned what verse it was. They both laughed at the realization that it turned Don memorized a verse from the Bible. Again, it is safe to assume that Don is religious; it is just that he does not show it. Adding to the argument, Don hides his "true character" from his friends. He is constantly seen hiding behind a tank and trying to control his breathing whenever he returns from the battlefield. Presumably, he does the same

thing with his religiosity, keeping it to himself. However, in relation to anxiety and their similar religiosity, Amir and Don differ in how they cope with anxiety. The general assumption is that religion or religiosity helps people cope with stressful situations, including anxiety. Wansink & Wansink (2013) mentions “some people participate in religion because they consider religion to be a way to better themselves (intrinsic religiousness)” (Wansink & Wansink, 2013).

Seeing that some soldiers seem more religious than others, what dictates one to be religious or not? Barbara Holdcroft (2006) explains that Glock and Stark have identified five dimensions in relation to religiosity, of which are: experiential, ritualistic, ideological, intellectual, and consequential (Holdcroft, 2006). Therefore, this research assumes that religiosity has some relation or influence on anxiety and how people cope with it.

## **1.2 Research Question**

Following the background of the study, this research aims to answer the following questions:

1. How does religiosity influence war-induced anxiety?
2. Why do two similarly religious characters respond differently towards anxiety?

### 1.3 Objective and Significance of Study

This research aims at investigating the influence of religiosity on anxiety during war. This research aims to investigate contrasting military leader characters within the two objects of study by comparing anxiety and religiosity within both characters. The general assumption is that religiosity helps to cope with anxiety. This research uses Freud's psychoanalysis theory to study the characters. By comparing these characters, we may find the relation of religiosity towards anxiety, and we may also find other influences such as the character's motivation and backstory.

### 1.4 Literature Review

Alexander Patrick Langer (2014) did a similar analysis on comparing *Dr. No* (1962) and *Dr. Strangelove* (1964). The research focuses on a broader context, saying that "...spy films grappled with the new realities of the changing Cold War by introducing heroes who dealt with realistic crises in satisfyingly unrealistic ways" (Dr. No and Dr. Strangelove, 2014). This research, however, focuses on the characters and their traits, and examining their character traits to find the things that influence how they cope with their anxiety. Other studies vary regarding the relationship between religiosity and anxiety. Most current studies investigate the

relationship between religiosity and other medical and mental conditions. Those such studies are those conducted by Chaiwutikornwanich (2015), Khalaf (2015), Upenieks (2022), Koenig (2018), Sakellari (2018), Mahmood (2021), Shiah (2015), and Abdel-Khalek (2019). Many of those studies show varying results. Regardless, there is little to no current research discussing religiosity, anxiety, and war-induced anxiety as a part of one study. This research, however, aims to investigate those discussions into one study which focuses on comparing the two elements in two different objects of study.

### **1.5 Theoretical Framework**

This research intends to compare these two characters with an in-depth character study comparison of the two characters. This research will take a psychoanalytic approach into studying these characters. By comparing these characters, we may find the relation of religiosity towards anxiety, and we may also find other influences contributing to the way these characters cope with anxiety.

In psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud describes anxiety as “...the reproduction of an old event which brought a threat of danger; anxiety serves the purpose of self-preservation and is a signal of new danger...” (Freud, 1933). Quite interestingly, anxiety is described in psychiatry as “...disorders that share features of excessive

fear and anxiety and related behavioral disturbances. Fear is the emotional response to a real or perceived imminent threat, whereas anxiety is the anticipation of future threat” (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). The theme of fear and threat plays in both fields of study, but enough derailing, this discussion will henceforth seek to view from a psychoanalytical standpoint. Lastly, to clarify “what is anxiety?” let us boil down the definition to an absolute pulp of it. Therefore, what is anxiety? In Freud's description of anxiety, a critical statement is very apparent and is most relevant: “an affective state,” in Layman's terms, a response. Lacan describes it in one of his many lectures that: What is anxiety? We have ruled out the idea that it might be an emotion. To introduce it, I will say that it's an effect (Lacan, 2016).

In psychoanalysis, Freud classifies anxiety into three kinds: real, neurotic, and moral or social (Cole, 2014). Real anxiety is caused by an identifiable threat. An unknown threat causes neurotic anxiety. Freud believed that neurotic anxiety is caused by internal drives—libido. Moral or social anxiety is caused by a person's conscience. Doing something unheard of or unusual to the applied social norms can cause someone to be anxious. This type of anxiety is repressed by conforming to

society's norms. It is believed that one person can experience all three anxieties simultaneously.

Religiosity is defined by Glock & Stark as something that comprises of five dimensions: experiential, ritualistic, ideological, intellectual, and consequential (Glock & Stark, 1966). These dimensions are generally present in the world's known religions. The experiential dimension is when a person gives experience and emotional connection with their respective deity or God. The ritualistic dimension refers to religious practices such as prayers. The ideological dimension is the belief system that a religion expects their follower or believers to follow, i.e., the rules of the religion. The intellectual dimension covers the basic knowledge of the faith and beliefs of a religion. The consequential dimension focuses on man's relation to man. It is a person's action due to what religions tell them to do. These five dimensions encompass religiosity, as described by Glock & Stark (1966).

## **1.6 Method of Research**

### **1.6.1 Type of Research**

The investigation of this research uses qualitative method.

Researchers using an inductive emic approach (1) begin with observing

specific interactions; (2) conceptualize general patterns from these observations; (3) make tentative claims (that are then re-examined in the field); and (4) draw conclusions that build theory or create an interesting story (Tracy, 2020). Therefore, the approach is expressed within the structure of the analysis of this research. Beginning with the pattern or data, tentative claim or analysis, and conclusion.

### **1.6.2 Data Source**

The primary data used in this research is mainly the object of study of the research: *Fury* (2014) and *Merah-Putih* (2009). The objects of study are then fitted within the theory used in this research, which is Freud's psychoanalysis theory and Glock and Stark's dimension of religiosity. The theory used in this research is utilized as a tool for identifying anxiety and religiosity within the objects. The object of study, and the two theories applied in this research are the two primary data in this research.

### **1.6.3 Data Collection**

Close reading of both object is the main method for identifying, and comparing anxiety and religiosity within the object of study. The main



element read is the plot and dialogue. The events present within the plot, and the discourse spoken through the dialogue contains the most relevant data to this research. Additionally, to support the data found through the plot and dialogue, this research also analyzes the *mise-en-scene* of the film. Sikov (2010) describes *mis-en-scene* as all the elements which are present in camera. These elements includes props, lighting, costumes, sets, make-up, and character behavior (Sikov, 2010). The analysis of *mis-en-scene* helps with understanding the discourse of within a scene. The data found within each object are compared with each other. The necessary data for this research is then compiled into a database containing practice, discourse, and symbol that correlates with the theory on anxiety and religiosity.

#### **1.6.4 Data Analysis Technique**

To determine the relationship between religiosity towards anxiety, this research identifies first the traits of religiosity and symptoms of anxiety from Don and Amir. Glock and Stark stated, “A first and obvious requirement if religious commitment is to be comprehensively assessed is to establish the different ways in which individuals can be religious” (Glock & Stark, 1966). Seeing that, Glock and Clark identify the dimensions of

religiosity, which are experiential, ritualistic, ideological, intellectual, and consequential.

Those dimensions of religiosity are criteria for what qualifies as being religious. As for anxiety, this research uses Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis theory. Freud explains that the symptoms of anxiety include: reproduction of old events, the threat of danger, and the sign of new danger, are the criteria used to determine Don's and Amir's anxiety. These criteria of religiosity and anxiety will be determined through images and dialogues which reflect practice, discourse, and symbols that correlate with the criteria mentioned.

### **1.7 Paper Organization**

This research is divided into four chapters, namely: Chapter I: Introduction, Chapter II: Intrinsic Elements, Chapter III: Discussion, and Chapter IV: Conclusion. As for Chapter III: Discussion, it is broken down to another three sub-chapters, with the main purpose of breaking down the discussion focusing on anxiety, religiosity, and the relation between both anxiety and religiosity.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **4.1 Conclusion**

Upon analyzing and comparing anxiety in Don and Amir, this research discovered that their response towards anxiety, coping mechanism, works as a repressing tool for anxiety and triggers a new anxious response. It is evident in Don and Amir. Don's coping mechanism of "walking off" from his current anxiety makes him more anxious in the following event. With Amir, his initial guilt-driven moral anxiety is repressed by joining the war. But it also causes him to experience a new kind of anxiety, making him hide from any form of conflict.

Furthermore, the new anxiety, resulting from the coping mechanism for previously existing anxiety, can be so much worse than the initial anxiety. The coping mechanism does not resolve the anxiety. For Don, it is his response to hiding behind a truck, smoking, and breathing heavily after every battle. And for Amir, it is his constant response of hiding and running away from conflict caused by the initial repression of anxiety.

It is also evident that religiosity is not a necessary variable in dealing with anxiety. Religiosity, though it does have an influence, is just one variable among many that temporarily suppresses anxiety, but it is not necessary. In the context of war, the primary variable that influences Don and Amir's coping mechanism is their motivation for joining the war. Don's personal vendetta and responsibility made him more capable and focused. At the same time, Amir is motivated by guilt. Therefore, he does not have a personal stance on joining the war, resulting in his being passive.

Additionally, compared to the previous theory, the finding of new anxiety adds to the previous theory on anxiety, as it was not mentioned in the previous theory. The previous theory only explains how one would react to the response to anxiety. Freud only explains how and what causes anxiety. Freud does not elaborate the effect of a person's response to anxiety to their initial anxiety. At the same time, this research found that the coping mechanism actually resulted in a new anxiety response.

## 4.2 Suggestion

It is important to highlight that this research is only limited to discussing religiosity and anxiety within two texts. Therefore, the findings presented in this research are constricted to those two texts. Future research can take a less constricted study by including multiple texts and analyze how religiosity and anxiety are expressed within those texts.



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