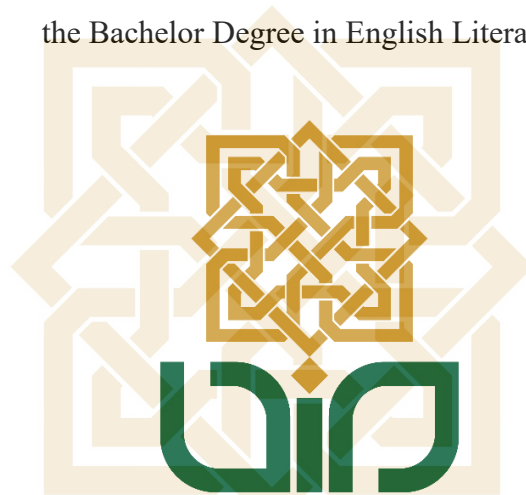


Portrayal of Muslims as a Minority in *The Taqwacores* (2010)

A GRADUATING PAPER

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Gaining

the Bachelor Degree in English Literature



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

Atas perhatian Bapak Dekan, kami mengucapkan terima kasih.

Wassalamu'alaikum Warohmatullahi Wabarakatuh.



Yogyakarta, 30 April 2025

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I would like to thank Allah SWT for giving me his grace and mercy so that I can complete this thesis. Secondly, I would like to express my gratitude to the Prophet Muhammad SAW, who has provided teachings illuminating the hearts and minds of those seeking the truth. This thesis is one of the processes for me to recognize the meaning of struggle more deeply, and is one of the requirements for college graduation. Without the help of various parties, this thesis could not have been completed properly. Therefore, the researcher would like to express gratitude to:

1. Rector of UIN Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta, Prof. Noorhaidi Hasan, S.Ag., M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.
2. The Dean of Adab and Cultural Sciences Faculty, Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta, Prof. Dr. Nurdin, S.Ag., S.S., M.A.
3. The Head of English Department, my thesis consultant, and my academic advisor, Dr. Ulyati Retno Sari, S.S., M.Hum.
4. The Secretary of the English Department, Dr. Dwi Margo Yuwono, M.Hum.
5. Dr. Ubaidillah, S.S., M.Hum., Febriyanti Dwiratna Lestari, S.S., M.A., Aninda Aji Siwi, S.Pd., M.Pd, Anisah Durrotul Fajri, S.S., M.Hum., Fuad Arif Fudiyartanto, S.Pd., M.Hum., M.Ed., Ph.D., Dr Witriani, S.S., M.Hum., Harsiwi Fajar Sari, S.S., M.A., Dr. Arif Budiman, S.S., M.A., Dr. Danial Hidayatullah, S.S., M.Hum., Bambang Hariyanto, S.S., M.A., Ph.D.

6. All of my family, my father Amlan Hasyim, my mother Susdiyani, and also my brothers Deni Suwanda and M. Irfan Busyra.
7. To the holder of student ID number 21101020013, thank you sincerely for your kind support throughout the process of writing this thesis
8. All of my friends, Afifah, Salsabila, Najwa, Alia, Anis, Nadya, Istiq, Jihan, Farah, Putri, Fadila, and Dian.
9. All 2021 English Literature students, especially class A members.
10. All members of the English Literature Student Association of 2023.
11. All of the people who are accompanying me on my thesis journey. May Allah bless you

Lastly, I hope this graduation paper will be helpful for people in need, and I apologize for any imperfections. Therefore, the researcher hopes for criticism and suggestions for better writing in the future.

Yogyakarta, 30 April 2023

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Portrayal of Muslims as a Minority in *The Taqwacores* (2010)

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze how narrative elements in *The Taqwacores* are used in describing how the characters show their Muslim identity and identify the causes. The object of this research is *The Taqwacores* (2010). This research uses a qualitative-descriptive research method, using scenes and dialogue from the object as sources. Based on Seymour Chatman's theory, this research focuses on story and discourse elements. It is found that, through the actions and happenings depicted in the film, the narrative manages to show the uniquely diverse ways in which the Muslim characters show their Muslim identity. The narrative elements used in *The Taqwacores* also succeeds in creating an understanding that the discriminatory treatment from the American majority group is a factor that causes the characters of *The Taqwacores* not to be able to show their Muslim identity in public, which causes them to choose other ways to show their Muslim identity.

Keywords: *Story and discourse, Muslim characters, religious minority*



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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana narrative elemen di The Taqwacores digunakan dalam menggambarkan cara yang digunakan para tokoh dalam menunjukkan identitas Muslim mereka dan mengidentifikasi penyebabnya. Objek penelitian ini adalah film The Taqwacores (2010). Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian kualitatif-deskriptif dengan menggunakan adegan dan dialog dari objek sebagai sumber. Berdasarkan teori Chatman yang digunakan, penelitian ini berfokus pada elements of story dan discourse. Hasilnya ditemukan bahwa, melalui tindakan dan kejadian yang digambarkan dalam film, narasi berhasil menunjukkan cara unik yang beragam yang digunakan para tokoh Muslim dalam menunjukkan identitas Muslim mereka. Unsur-unsur naratif yang digunakan dalam The Taqwacores juga berhasil menciptakan pemahaman bahwa perlakuan diskriminatif dari kelompok mayoritas Amerika yang menjadi faktor penyebab para tokoh The Taqwacores tidak bisa menunjukkan identitas Muslim mereka di publik yang menyebabkan mereka memilih cara lain dalam menunjukkan identitas Muslim mereka.

Kata kunci: *cerita dan wacana, karakter Muslim, agama minoritas*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of Study

According to M. Ali Kettani in his book entitled *Muslim Minorities in the World Today* translated by Zarkowi Soejoeti, a minority is a group in an association that has different characteristics, such as religion, skin color, language, or others, which then also gets different treatment from other groups. This is reinforced when the majority group realizes the difference and begins to consider the difference as an advantage or weakness that can cause different treatment for the group. In short, a minority is a group that is not dominant in an association, which causes them to receive different treatment from other groups (Kettani, 1986, p.1).

This research refers to the minority group of Muslims in the country. The definition of Muslim, based on the explanation of M. Ali Kettani, is everyone who believes in the Qur'an as a guide to life, which is brought by the Prophet Muhammad SAW, who is also the last prophet sent by Allah SWT, regardless of whether the person studies Islam and applies it in everyday life or not (Kettani, 1986, p.2). This definition refers to everyone who, even though they do not study Islam in depth and apply it in everyday life, as long as the person still feels like a person who adheres to Islam, then they are called Muslims.

This study focuses on the Muslim community as a minority group portrayed in *The Taqwacores*. *The Taqwacores* (2010) is a film directed by Eyad Zahra that tells how Muslim characters are depicted in a non-Muslim majority

environment. In the midst of a non-Muslim environment, the characters are placed as Muslim punks who have diverse ways of showing their Muslim identity. In addition, the characters in this film are also portrayed as Muslims who choose to interact with local culture even though it is contrary to Islamic principles. This film also shows how the characters combine their religion with their lifestyle, inseparable from the American cultural environment.

This research uses the theory of story and discourse by Seymour Chatman. By using Seymour Chatman's story and discourse theory, it can help to understand how the narrative elements in this movie are constructed to portray the diverse ways the characters have of showing their Muslim identity. Through some of the key points in this theory, the researcher can also see some of the reasons for this diversity.

Research with topics related to the portrayal of characters who are placed on two sides that have contrasting ideologies, Islam which is synonymous with peace and wisdom, while punk which is synonymous with rebellion and violence, make this topic important to be researched in terms of how narrative elements in the story are used in describing the way characters show their Muslim identity, because the portrayal of Muslims in films has a great influence on how society views Muslims or Islam itself.

1.2. Research Question

Based on the background of the study explained above, the researcher formulates the research question, namely how does *The Taqwacores* use narrative

elements to show that Muslim characters express their identity in diverse ways, and what causes this diversity?

1.3. Objective of Study

Based on the research of this paper, the objective of this study is to know and explain how story and discourse elements in *The Taqwacores* are used to portray Muslims as a minority group and show the factors that cause the characters to have diverse ways of showing their Muslim identity.

1.4. Significance of the Study

Hopefully, this research can contribute to literary research related to narrative elements, especially those that examine how Muslims as a minority group are portrayed, and show the factors that cause the characters to have diverse ways of showing their identity as Muslims.

1.5. Literature Review

The researcher found several previous studies that contain the same object. The first literature review is the research of Angger Bagus Wicaksono, a student of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, entitled *The Portrayal of Women in Islam in The Taqwacores* (2010): *A Critical Discourse Analysis*. The focus of this research is to examine how the portrayal of the main character of Muslim women in this film portrays women who are oppressed by social culture and Islamic rules, and examine the reasons behind it. This research uses critical discourse analysis (CDA) with feminist theory proposed by Mary Wollstonecraft. As a result, this research finds that the Muslim protagonist in this film is portrayed as a character

who channels women's power by fighting oppression and Islamic rules. This research also highlights the importance of viewing women as beings with the freedom to make choices, just like men.

The second is research by Ahmad Lukman Hakim, a student of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, entitled *Reconciling Anarchy and Islamic Value as Seen in The Taqwacores* (2010). This research focuses on how efforts are made to reconcile two opposing ideologies, namely anarchy and Islam. This research uses representation theory by Stuart Hall and mise-en-scène theory by Ed Sikov as film theory. The result of this research is the failure of reconciliation or efforts to harmonize two opposing ideologies, namely anarchy and Islam. This failure is marked by the death of the main character, Jahangir, at the end of the story.

The third literature review is research by Anggia Bagas Setyoko, a student of UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, entitled *Flouting Conversational Maxims Performed by the Characters in The Taqwacores Movie*. The focus of this research is to find out the flouting of conversational maxims in the cooperative principle performed by the characters in the film entitled *The Taqwacores*. This study uses a qualitative research method with the theory of cooperative principle and conversational implicature by Grice. As a result, it is found that the characters in *The Taqwacores* violate all types of conversational maxims. The violation of quantity maxims is done by giving too much or too little information. Then, in the violation of quality maxims, the characters do it with the strategies of hyperbole, metaphor, irony, patent lies, and rhetorical questions. In violating relationship maxims, the characters use the strategy of saying something irrelevant. And the

last is the violation of the maxims of manners, where the characters use strategies that are not clear.

The fourth literature review is research by Abdul Halim Hadi Santoso, a student of UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, entitled *Analisis Nilai-nilai Akhlak Komunitas Punk Muslim Amerika dalam Film The Taqwacores*. The focus of this research is to identify how the morals of the members of the Muslim punk community in America are portrayed in the film *The Taqwacores*. This research uses a type of literature study research with a semiotic approach. The result is that there are praiseworthy morals and despicable morals possessed by the characters in *The Taqwacores*. The praiseworthy morals possessed by the characters in this film include worshipping Allah, optimism, tolerance, deliberation, and reconciling disputing parties. While the disgraceful morals possessed by the characters in this film include consuming alcoholic beverages, committing adultery, and a lack of ethics in daily life.

This research aims to fill the gap of previous research to examine how the various ways the Muslim characters in *The Taqwacores* show their Muslim identity and also discusses the main factors that cause the characters to have diverse ways of showing their Muslim identity. Using Seymour Chatman's theory of story and discourse, this research focuses on how the narrative elements portray the diverse ways characters express their Muslim identity and identifies the main factors behind this diversity.

1.6. Theoretical Frameworks

The researcher uses Seymour Chatman's story and discourse theory in this research. The theory of story and discourse in film, as discussed in depth in the book *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* by Seymour Chatman, explains that in its application, narrative is divided into two main elements, namely:

1. According to Chatman (1978:19), a story is the content of what is told, which has two main elements: events and existents. Events consist of action and happening elements, while existents consist of character and setting. These elements focus on forming the story's core of how the Muslim characters are portrayed and showing their Muslim identity in diverse ways.
2. Chatman (1987) also says that discourse is about how the story is told and presented to the audience, which gives a broad picture of how Muslim characters are portrayed in showing their Muslim identity in diverse ways. This is conveyed through the structure of narrative transmission that is present through forms of discourse that include real author, implied author, narrator, real reader, implied reader, and narratee (Chatman, 1987:19).

Chatman (1978) also emphasizes that story and discourse have a strong relationship that influences each other in shaping audience understanding. Thus, this theory is very relevant to analyzing *The Taqwacores*, especially in seeing how Muslim characters are portrayed in showing their Muslim identity in various ways. This theory becomes even more relevant because it can analyze the film as

a whole by distinguishing story elements and the way they are presented (discourse). By using qualitative methods, this research is expected to find out how the narrative in the story is built to show how Muslim characters are portrayed in showing their Muslim identity in various ways, and find out the factors that cause it.

According to Bordwell and Thompson (2004), film is an art form that works together between moving images and sound to create an excellent experience for the audience. He also says that in the film, there is a narrative that supports the visuals, usually in the form of character introduction, conflict, and resolution. Also, shooting techniques such as lighting, image composition, editing, and camera movement are important in films to convey the story and create good film quality (Bordwell & Thompson, 2004, p.2-8). In short, a film is a moving picture supported by various aspects to tell a story to the audience, but the audience also has the right to interpret the film based on their views. This means social and cultural contexts can influence how people view films. In this research, film theory becomes a supporting theory to identify how Muslim characters in the film are portrayed. Important parts of film theory, such as lighting, sound, and camera movement are also analyzed to support research related to how Muslim characters in this film are portrayed and how the environment affects them.

1.7. Method of Research

This part explains the type of research, data source, data collection technique, and data analysis technique.

1.7.1. Types of Research

In this research, the researcher uses a qualitative method. The researcher uses qualitative methods because they relate to the perspective of the group depicted in the drama script. Qualitative research is chosen because it allows the researcher to understand and interpret social events in their natural context. By using this method, the researcher tries to collect more information and gain a more detailed understanding of the issue, case, or event being studied. According to Creswell (2014), the qualitative method is a method that relies on text and images as the primary data source. This method focuses on studying the meaning contained in the research object, identifying factors related to a particular situation, and understanding the overall context. The result is an in-depth description, contextual interpretation, and rich narrative of the analysis conducted (Creswell, 2014, p.246-249).

1.7.2. Data Source

The researcher uses primary data sources for this research. In qualitative analysis, primary data consist of words and actions, while other types are considered supplementary (Lofland et al, 1984, p.47). The data come from parts of scenes, monologues, dialogues, utterances, and interactions between characters in *The Taqwacores*.

1.7.3. Data Collection Technique

According to Creswell (2014), collecting data is a formal process that is essential for defining the scope of the data, particularly documentation and visual

materials collected to remain appropriate to the problem to be studied (Creswell, 2014, p. 253). Then, the researcher collects data from dialogues and text in this case. The researcher also uses documentation techniques to collect data. There are several steps that the researcher must take to collect data. First, the researcher watches the film carefully to understand the storyline. Second, the researcher divides the actions and dialogue related to the problem. Third, the data are categorized into several groups based on Seymour Chatman's story and discourse theory.

1.7.4. Data Analysis Technique

According to Creswell (2014), data analysis is a formal process that seeks to make meaning of the data that has been collected in the form of both text and images. He also says that this process involves selecting and reorganising data to stay focused on the problem under study (Creswell, 2014, p. 260). Based on this explanation, the data in this research are analyzed using qualitative methods.

The researcher uses qualitative research methods because they focus more on linguistics than numerical data, which follows the problems the researcher wants to study. The researcher takes several steps in the data analysis technique. The first step is for the researcher to watch *The Taqwacores* (2010). Then the researcher collects data from the film and classifies the data into several related variables according to Seymour Chatman's narrative theory. Next, the researcher explains the data that have been collected and its relationship with the existing theoretical variables. The final step is for the researcher to summarize the data that have been identified and explained above.

1.8. Paper Organization

This research is divided into four chapters. The first chapter is an introduction consisting of the background of the study, the research question, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, the literature review, the theoretical frameworks, the method of research, and the presentation. The second chapter presents the intrinsic elements of the film. The third chapter consists of the findings and discussion of the analysis. The last chapter contains the conclusion and suggestions for further research.



CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

4.1. Conclusion

Based on the research that has been conducted, the narrative structure used to describe the diverse ways that Muslim characters show their Muslim identity focuses on two main elements, namely story and discourse. Through the story element, the narrative successfully describes the ways chosen by Muslim characters in showing their Muslim identity through action events where characters act as actors and happenings where characters become objects. While in the existens point, through the data found, the narrative succeeds in describing the characters' traits and characterizations that can influence how they show their Muslim identity, or even characteristics that are opposite to how they show their Muslim identity.

At the point of setting, based on the data found, the narrative tries to describe how diversity is united in a place and a time. For example, one place is used for various activities, or one crucial time is used to display the unique way Muslim characters show their Muslim identity. For example, the scene of the Friday prayer time is repeated to emphasize that Friday prayers performed in different ways become a routine and natural activity, or when the call to prayer is replaced with punk music. In addition, in the social setting, the narrative succeeds in providing an understanding of the reasons behind the Muslim characters in this film choosing a different way from most Muslims in general in showing their Muslim identity.

Then, at the discourse point, the way the story is told succeeds in strengthening the presentation of events related to the way the characters, as Muslim minorities, show their Muslim identity, both through action, happening, setting, and character portrayal. Through Yusef's point of view, the audience is invited to see the diversity of Muslims in the story and feel Yusef's confusion in a foreign environment that is contrary to the religious principles he has held so far. The way the story is conveyed through the activities and dialogues of the characters succeeds in providing direct experience to the reader to see the position of the Muslim characters as a minority group, and see the diverse ways they choose to show their Muslim identity, and identify the causes.

Thus, the results of the research on the portrayal of Muslims as a minority in *The Taqwacores* have fully described how the narrative elements in the film are used to portray the diverse ways the characters choose to show their Muslim identity and identify the causes based on Seymour Chatman's perspective.

4.2. Suggestion

The researcher realizes that this research still has many limitations regarding knowledge, data sources, and other factors. Nevertheless, the researcher hopes that future researcher who are interested in analyzing *The Taqwacores* can do it better. The researcher suggests a discussion related to the influence of punk subculture on the representation of Islam. Thus, this research can explore how the Muslim punk community in the film functions as a space of resistance, whether the Muslim punk characters fight against Islamic norms or replace them with

something new. The subculture theory by Dick Hebdige can be used in this research. Thus, further research is expected to complete the gaps in this research.



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