

**THE CONSTRUCTION OF MUSLIM TERRORISM
IN *THE KINGDOM* MOVIE (2007)
DIRECTED BY PETER BERG: A RECEPTION THEORY**



PUBLICATION ARTICLE

**Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Getting Master
Degree of Education in Magister of Language Study**

by:
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**MAGISTER OF LANGUAGE STUDY
MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF SURAKARTA
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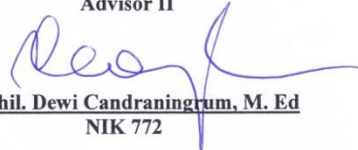
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Naskah artikel tersebut layak dan dapat disetujui untuk dipublikasikan.

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Abstract

This study belongs to the literary study. This study analyzes the construction of Muslim terrorism based on reader response reflected in *The Kingdom* Movie (2007). There are two objectives of the study, the first is to describe the dominant issues by the reviewers in applying reader response theory to Peter Berg's *The Kingdom* movie, and the second is to explain the reason why the dominant issue are perceived differently by reviewers. This study is a qualitative study and using two data sources; they are primary and secondary data. The primary data source is the reviews of *The Kingdom* movie (2007) by Peter Berg from IMDb (Internet Movie Database). The secondary data of this study are taken from other sources such as literary book, previous studies, articles, journals, and also website related to reader response theory. This study aimed to reveal how the cultural reader response reflected to *The Kingdom* movie. The dominant issue which is respond by the reviewers is the terrorism dealing with the culture reader response.

Keywords: *Culture Reader Response, Richard Beach, The Kingdom*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini termasuk dalam penelitian sastra. Penelitian ini menganalisis Konstruksi Islam teroris berdasarkan respon pembaca dalam film *The Kingdom* (2007). Ada dua objek dari penelitian ini, pertama adalah untuk mendiskripsikan isu dominan dari beberapa reviewer dengan mengaplikasikan teori respon pembaca oleh Peter Berg pada film *The Kingdom*, kedua adalah untuk menjelaskan alasan mengapa isu dominan muncul berbeda pada beberapa reviewer. Penelitian ini termasuk penelitian kualitatif dan menggunakan dua sumber data. Sumber data yang utama adalah review pada film *the Kingdom* (2007) oleh Peter Berg pada IMDb (Internet Movie Database). Data kedua dari penelitian ini adalah beberapa sumber data dari beberapa buku, penelitian sebelumnya, artikel, jurnal, dan beberapa sumber dari website berdasarkan teori respon pembaca. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana budaya response pembaca pada film *the Kingdom*. Isu dominan pada penelitian ini adalah respon dari pembaca yang menyatakan tentang teroris berdasarkan teori budaya respon pembaca.

Kata Kunci: *Budaya Respon Pembaca, Richard Beach, The Kingdom*

INTRODUCTION

Study of the reader response analysis may have been conducted by many researchers in some different ways. This study is interesting to be discussed, because by analyzing various response from reviewers, the researcher also will get various interpretations about certain text. This study analyzes various responses from the some of the researchers. Some of the study on reader response as follows;

The first previous study is Sean Carter and Klaus Dodds (2011, University of Exeter and University of London, England). The title of his research is "*Hollywood and the 'war on terror': genre-geopolitics and 'Jacksonianism' in The Kingdom*". In this research, they explored about the popular geopolitics of Hollywood cinema in the years since the terror attacks on New York city and Washington DC, on September 11, 2011. The object of their research is *The Kingdom* movie and focused to the narrative and discursive elements of the film.

The second previous study is Heidi Kay Hammond entitled *Graphic Novels and Multimodal Literacy: a Reader Response Study* (2009). The data collected with verbal and written responses by the students, student reading questionnaires, teacher and student interviews, observations as recorded in researcher field notes, and student created comics. This study is analyzed with reader response theory with qualitative methods.

The third previous study is Ann Marie Palmer's study entitled *Muslim cultures and The Walt Disney World Theme Parks: The Spread of Religious Perceptions in a lobal Market* (2009). This study is a misinterpretation to analyze a Walt Disney Theme Parks and the religious perceptions in global market. This study suggests that in order to truly understand the complexity and true nature of the Muslim cultures and Islam, it is necessary to acknowledge and critique the negative representations of Muslim culture in the theme parks. The purpose of this study is to understand the misrepresentation

of Muslim cultures and subsequent perceptions at the Walt Disney World theme parks in Orlando, Florida.

The fourth previous study is Wahyu Unggul Widodo, (2015, University of Muhammadiyah Surakarta). The title of his research is “Between Fact and Fiction in Dan Brown’s *The Da vinci Code* (2003) : Reader Response Analysis. The purpose of that study is to know kind of reader response strategies applied by the readers to respond Dan Brown’s *the Da Vinci Code*. Second is to describe how the readers apply the reader response strategies on Dan Brown’s *the Da Vinci Code*.

The fifth previous study is Mulya Diana (University of Widyatama Bandung ,2008). The title is “Analisis Percakapan Pada Naskah Film *The Kingdom*”, *Kajian Pakmatik*. The objective of this research is to describe kinds of adjacency pairs used in *The Kingdom* movie script and to find weather there are any violations over maxim of conversation in it. The method used in this research is descriptive analysis method. The data were taken from *The Kingdom* movie script written by Michael Matthew Carnahan.

The sixth previous study is Rachid Ait Abdelmouman 2014, from Salman bin Abdulaziz University- Alkharj. The title is Politicizing Trauma and Desire in American Cinema: *World Trade Center* (2006) and *The Kingdom* (2007). In this research, Abdelmouman used the images as the object of the study. He focuses mainly on the structural traumatic violence of the images that work in the context of colonialism as a desiring capitalist machine. This essay split into two aim sections. The first section aims at investigating the connections between traumatic memory and empathy and between traumatic memory and paranoid investment of social energies as represented in *World Trade Center* (2006) and *The Kingdom* (2007).

In this paper, the researcher wants to reveal the culture reader response to *The Kingdom* movie. What issues that are dominant in the responses of the reviewers also the reason why the dominant issue are perceived differently by reviewers.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

The theory of reader response by Richard Beach is divided into five types: textual, experiential, psychological, social, and cultural. In this research, Cultural reader response indicated by readers' attempt the researcher focuses the study on cultural reader response strategy. Cultural reader response indicated by the reader attempts to bring their personal background to the reading of a text. (Cordel & Penington, 2012:303). One of the reader's backgrounds that affects their ways to respond text is religious or belief background. Beach in responding the structuralisms and poststructuralists different opinions, he states that poststructuralists define the ways in which schools, businesses, religions, or governments limit the signified of the signifier to meanings consistent with their own institutional ideology (Beach, 1993:126). In this case means that when the readers read a text, they will bring their personal background. Related with the study, the personal background of the reader that gives a meaning to the text is religion or belief background. Furthermore, in this study, the researcher also focus on the cultural study of Edward Said's Post Colonial theories. Related with this study, the researcher used the perspective of cultural Post colonial perspective to identify the readers response.

Edward Said concern on the work of post-colonialism that focus about culture in stereotype. The stereotype is a miss-understanding between Western seen to Eastern or in other words means that how the person view all others with the concept about colonizers always giving influence to others. Furthermore, in covering Islam, Edward Said give the famous theory named Orientalism. The study of Orientalism is interrelations between society, history, and textual indeed in the reaction of culture by the orient in the West connect with ideology or politic of orientalism (Said, 1979:24).

Western always seen that Islam is dangerous. Said says "The hegemony of Islam grows up in Asia, Africa, and in Europe. It is the bad period and European fear in the name of growing up their religion or Christian." (Said Edward 1979:59). It means that most of the European or Western religion is

Christian, and they fear when Islam grow up in the Eastern. “For Europe, Islam facing as a terrorist, devastation, demonic, and a group of barbarians. Not only that, until the last of seventeenth century because of the tragedy peril, Islam become a last trauma for Christian.” (Said, 1979:59-60). It means that this is the way that Islam becoming an enemy for Europe. For Europe or Western Islam seen as a terrorist, destroyer, brutal, radical, and barbarian.

RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, the researcher applies a descriptive qualitative method. Creswell (1998:15), said that qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants and conducts the study in a natural setting. The primary data source in this study is reviewers of *The Kingdom* movie (2007) by Peter Berg from IMDb (Internet Movie Database). The secondary data of this study are taken from other sources such as literary book, previous studies, articles, journals, and also website related to reader response theory.

The steps for analyzing the data are as follows; 1) Collecting the data reviewer the movie from IMDb website; 2) Classifying the data according the country, year by using Microsoft Office Excel’s table; 3) Reading the data that have been classified and selecting the data for analysis and give the evidence from the responses; 4) Researcher draws the conclusion from the analyzing of data.

The techniques of data collection are as follows; 1) opening website addressed to IMDb *The Kingdom* reviews, 2) saving the file of comments the reviewer in PDF format, 3) calculating the persentase of data reviewer by country and year, 4) selecting the amount of data reviewer by year based on the interval principle, 5) analyzing the data based on the theory, 6) drawing conclusion and formulate the suggestion.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This study, the researcher focuses on the culture reader response to analyzing the reviewers of *The Kingdom* movie on IMDb. According Beach (1993 :8) stated that “cultural reader response strategies focus on how readers ‘cultural roles, attitudes, values, or historical context shape response’”. It means that this research focus on the response of reviewers about the cultural roles, attitudes, or historical context responses. After collecting the data, the researcher finds the reviewer by country as follows;

| NO | NATIONALITY | Freq | % |
|----|----------------|------|--------|
| 1 | USA | 8 | 16.67% |
| 2 | United Kingdom | 4 | 8.33% |
| 3 | Canada | 2 | 4.17% |
| 4 | Australia | 2 | 4.17% |
| 5 | Belgium | 1 | 2.08% |
| 6 | Greece | 1 | 2.08% |
| 7 | Saudi Arabia | 1 | 2.08% |
| 8 | France | 1 | 2.08% |
| 9 | UAE | 1 | 2.08% |
| 10 | Israel | 1 | 2.08% |
| 11 | Singapore | 1 | 2.08% |
| 12 | Finland | 1 | 2.08% |
| 13 | Japan | 1 | 2.08% |
| 14 | Philippines | 1 | 2.08% |

| | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|---|-------|
| 15 | South Africa | 1 | 2.08% |
| 16 | Denmark | 1 | 2.08% |
| 17 | India | 1 | 2.08% |
| 18 | Netherland | 1 | 2.08% |
| 19 | Austria | 1 | 2.08% |
| 20 | Brazil | 1 | 2.08% |
| 21 | Turkey | 1 | 2.08% |
| 22 | Hungary | 1 | 2.08% |
| 23 | Egypt | 1 | 2.08% |
| 24 | Islamic Republic of Iran | 1 | 2.08% |
| 25 | Germany | 1 | 2.08% |
| 26 | Ireland | 1 | 2.08% |
| 27 | Argentina | 1 | 2.08% |
| 28 | New Zealand | 1 | 2.08% |
| 29 | Romania | 1 | 2.08% |
| 30 | Iraq | 1 | 2.08% |
| 31 | China | 1 | 2.08% |
| 32 | Italy | 1 | 2.08% |
| 33 | Thailand | 1 | 2.08% |
| 34 | Iceland | 1 | 2.08% |

| | | | |
|----|---------------|-----------|-------------|
| 35 | North Ireland | 1 | 2.08% |
| 36 | Scotland | 1 | 2.08% |
| | TOTAL | 48 | 100% |

From the 48 reviewers *The Kingdom* movie on IMDb, the dominant reviewers by country is USA. USA is the federal country, a country which is the combination of several countries and became states of the state union. Many reviewers that commented the story of movie on the IMDb comes from America. It's related to the America case. The story of *The Kingdom* movie inspired by bomb terror at the Khobar housing complex in the east territory of Saudi Arabia on June 25, 1996 and the tragedy of 9 September 2001 that a plane was hijacked by terrorist crashed World Trade Center in USA. That's why the responses of *The Kingdom* movie mostly comes from America. After analyzing the reviewer by the country, the researcher finds the dominant issue that responded *The Kingdom* movie.

| NO | ISSUE CATEGORY | AMOUNT |
|----|----------------|-----------|
| 1 | Mise en Scene | 34 |
| 2 | Cinematography | 13 |
| 3 | Editing | 7 |
| 4 | Sound | 4 |
| 5 | Theme | 37 |
| | TOTAL | 95 |

Based on the calculation table above, it can be seen the most amount of category issue. The previous research finding shows that the dominant issues are perceived differently by different reviewer. This discussion is talk about why are the dominant issues perceived differently by reviewers.

The reviewers may response about the structural elements of the movie such as Mise en Scene. In this structural elements, they response about the subject with classification such as acting performance of the cast, the casting of

cast, and the character of the cast. Not only that, they also response about setting with classifying two types of setting namely non realistic and realistic setting, and composition is divided into two parts; project images and taking sides. Related to cinematography, the reviewers only focus on the work of the camera such as moving camera, angles and point of view and shots. In the point of aspect of cinematography, there are no reviewers that response about film stock and lighting. In aspect of editing, the reviewers may response about building block with the classification named sequence, and the element of image on image and image after image with classification named action. In the aspect of sound, the reviewers only response about soundtrack components such as background music, dialogue, and narrative structure. There are no reviewer that comment about early and recent film sound, additional uses of sound, and the close up.

The most aspect used by the reviewer is theme. It happens because reviewers focus on theme or the content of story of the film than pointed out about the structural elements of the movie itself. However, the discussion about the theme or story of the movie give more tension and they are interested in discussing about the structural elements of the movie.

As stated earlier in the theoretical approach, type of strategy dealing with reader-response by Richard Beach is connecting the story or part of it to culture. It cannot be avoided to connecting the story of The Kingdom movie to background of the reviewer's culture. In this term, especially is Islam, because the basic point of the story is about the suicidal bomb terror by terrorist. The story happens in housing of American oil worker in Saudi Arabia where the terrorist that shown in the movie is Arabian and killing most of American. In this chapter, the researcher discussed; how the readers response trough the story, by connecting it to religion, believes, values, and norm. The researcher divides those responses into five major types of responses. First is a response that supports the story of the movie that shown that Islam is terrorist. Second is responses that disagree or rejected with the story of the movie which is they argue that Islam is not terrorist, the neutral responses, the traumatic effect

response through the story of the movie, the response about the movie is a film propaganda and response that focus on racism emphasize the movie.

The theme or case about terrorist seems to happen a contradiction through the movie. Because why, because it is very possible to prove that the reviewer who describes "Islam as terrorist" is the non-Islam reviewers. In the contrary, the reviewer that pointed out "Islam is not terrorist" is Islam reviewer. Related with that reason, it can be conclude that their response is connected with the reviewer's background. The background such as background of the origin of country and background of religion or belief.

According to Edward Said through the study of Orientalism, US and Western country is always hated to Orient or eastern country, especially if talk about religion or belief, with the majority western religion is Christian, then the Eastern majority is Islam. Europe and America think that Islam is terrorist, devastation, demonic, and a group of barbarians. Related to the finding, it can be an assumption that the country describing Islam is terrorist is the reviewers that originally most of from Western country. The data based on the research finding such as 1#9 named kbigboss2000 from India, 1#2 named canuckteach from Ontario, Canada, 21#6 or Mel from Scotland, 4#4 named dromasca from Israel, 18#9 named Jakob Olesen from Denmark, 7#7 named Angelus2 from United Kingdom, 8#8 named Claudio Carvalho from Brazil, 5#5 named dunmore_ego from Los Angeles, California, and 11#1 named TxMike from Houston, USA. On the contrary, the reviewer that describes about Islam is not terrorist is the reviewer who has Islam religion or originally from Islamic country such as 3#1 named sodo_san from Saudi Arabia, 3#10 named Screen-7 from Dubai, UAE and 8#3 named torecagli from Turkey. There are also the reviewers that are neutral among both of case, the reviewers are 11#6 named helz-angel from New Zealand, 25#10 named croziac from Australia and 6#3 named Harry T. Yung from Hong Kong China

Edward Said pointed out that until the end of seventeenth century because of the tragedy peril; Islam becomes a last trauma for Christian or Western and US. Related to the data finding, there is reviewer that got the traumatic effect of

the story terror of bomb by Islam through the movie. They are 5#5 named dunmore_ego from Los Angeles, California, 4#3 named jotix100 from New York, USA, 10#9 named Patrick Mercie from Ireland, 13#6 named westreal from Romania, and 19#6 named jzappa f from Cincinnati, OH, United States.

Said also indeed comprehending about the reaction of culture by the orient in the West connect with ideology or politics of orientalism. Related with that, it is shown from the background of the ideology or politics of reviewer connecting to the movie. The reviewer used their ideology or politics to see the movie. For them, the movie is a part of propaganda. The reviewer that describes about “the movie is a propaganda” are 4#4 named dromasca from Israel, 21#2 named Superunknovvn from Austria, 19#6 named jzappa f from Cincinnati, United States, 1#1 named maarten-demont from Belgium, 5#9 named CountZero313 from Japan, 18#9 named Jakob Olesen from Denmark, 21#2 Superunknovvn from Austria, 8#3 named torecagli from Turkey, 25#10 named croziac from Australia, 9#6 named m_mehesen from Egypt, 13#6 named westreal from Romania, 15#7 named dilbertsuperman from Baghdad, Iraq, 3#7 tedg from Virginia Beach, USA and 8#9 named board-5 from Hungary.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analyzes in the previous chapter, the researcher draws the following conclusions. Firstly, based on the finding from IMDb response through The Kingdom movie, it is proved that the dominant issues of responses by the reviewers is the aspect of theme. 37 or 38.95 % describes about theme in which the reviewers talked about terrorism, traumatic effect, film propaganda, and racism. Then the second dominant aspect is Mise en Scene with 34 or 35.79% describes about it in which the reviewers focus on some elements such as subject, setting, and composition. Then, 13 or 13.68% describes about the cinematography in which the reviewers only focus on the work of camera. 7 or 7.37% in total of responses that describes about editing in which the reviewers focus on Building block response, digital editing and Image on images and Images after images. Then, the reviewers comment about sound that 4 or

4.21% describes about it in which the reviewers only focus on the soundtrack components.

Secondly, this study shows that the reviewers of IMDb connect the story of the movie to their background, especially with their nationality and religion or believe. In this term, especially Islam, because the basic point of the story is about the suicidal bomb by terrorist of Islam and killed most of American in Saudi Arabia. Related with the reviewer's background, it can be concluded that the reviewers of IMDb connect to their background that some of them believes that Islam is a terrorist. Another reviewers believe that Islam is not terrorist or radical, another reviewers are neutral in seeing a terrorism, another gets the traumatic effect and another reviewers also believes that no racism trough the story. However, it can be concluded that the reviewers from the country that majority non Islam inclined construct that Islam is identically terrorist, meanwhile the reviewers from the country that majority Islam inclined construct that Islam is not terrorist.

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