

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

In doing the analysis, it is important for the writer to choose the correct theory to conduct the appropriate analysis. Stuart Hall's work about *Representation* (2013) is applied in order to examine how Muslim is represented in *The Taqwacores* film. Stuart Hall also uses Richard Dyer's *Stereotyping* (2006) to understand the association between stereotyping and representation. In Hall's book, it explains the strategies of how the stereotypes will be contested. This will be applied to examine the main problem of this study that is to find how Muslims challenge the stereotypes in the film. Having the object of analysis as a film, the writer will analyse the non-narrative and narrative aspect to support the analysis and will try to focus on camera shot, camera angle, and lighting.

2.1.1. Representation

In his book, Stuart Hall explained about representation. Hall explained it as using language to represent something or to say something meaningful about, to other people. He also said that representation becomes an important part in the process of producing meaning between members of a culture. It involves the use of language, of signs and images to represent things (1). However, Hall claims that it is not that simple, the use of language to represent the meaning is capable to be understood to other people. Since representation is the production of the meaning through language, according to Hall there are two processes of

representation called as systems of representation. The first is the 'system' by which all sorts of objects, people and events are correlated with a set of concepts or *mental representations* that are carried around in the minds of others. It is called as mental representation due to the process of giving meaning that depends on the system of concepts that formed in thoughts. The second system is the language involved in the overall process of constructing meaning. In exchange or represent meaning, the use of a shared language will be important. The shared conceptual map must be translated into common language thereafter it can correlate the ideas with certain written words (Hall 3-4).

In order to look at how language is used to represent the world, there are three different accounts or theories of representation. They included the reflective approach, intentional approach and constructionist approach. Reflective approach means that language has its function as mirror that reflects the true meaning. The meaning is reflecting the truth that is already there and it can be said that this is a direct approach of representation. Intentional approach means the representation is given by the author and the words mean what the author intends they should mean. This approach becomes the opposite case to the reflective approach. The last approach is the constructionist approach. This approach recognizes the social character of language. It declares that the users of language can fix meaning in language. The representation can be constructed by social character to obtain the meaning (Hall 10-11).

From those three theories of representation, the writer will apply the constructionist approach. This approach will be applied because the writer will

use her perspective to obtain the meaning through representation. As stated before, representation through constructionist perspective making meaning by forging links between three different orders of things: the conceptual world, the mental concepts that the writer may carry in her head and the sign that arranged into languages (Hall 45). In dealing with the analysis, the writer will use the language system as the tool to communicate the fantasies, desires and imagination in her thought to other people. The writer will also translate the meaning of representation through the Muslim characters in the film.

2.1.2. Stuart Hall's Theory of Stereotype

Stuart hall explain about stereotyping as a signifying practice is central to the representation of racial difference. Hall states that stereotype without the use of *types*, would be difficult to make sense. He also explained that people are always 'making sense' of things (247). Stuart Hall in his book, *Representation Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices* also states there are three points to explain the idea of stereotype as follows:

First, stereotypes get *hold of* the few 'simple, vivid, memorable, easily grasped and widely recognized' characteristics about a person. They *reduce* everything about the person to those traits, exaggerate and simplify them. The point of the process will be, 'stereotyping reduces, essentializes, naturalizes and fixes "difference"'. Second, '*stereotyping deploys a strategy of splitting*. It is a process that divides the normal and the acceptable from the abnormal and the unacceptable. It excludes everything which is different. The last, *stereotyping tends to occur where there are*

gross inequalities of power. The power is usually directed against the subordinate or excluded group (247-248).

Hall examines more deeply the set of representational practices are also called as stereotyping. In practicing the stereotype, he examines four aspects: the construction of 'otherness' and exclusion, stereotyping and power, the role of fantasy and fetishism (248). The construction of 'otherness' and exclusion mean that "people who are in any way significantly different from majority- 'them' rather than 'us' – are frequently exposed to this binary form of representation. They seem to be represented through sharply opposed, polarized, binary extremes – good/bad, civilized/primitive, ugly/excessively attractive, repelling-because-different/compelling-because-strange-and-exotic" (Hall 219). Those who are considered as 'other' are excluded from people around them. They are also exposed in negative sense of binary form. Hall also explains that people who are required both in negative and positive sense of binary form means there is ambivalence. It is both necessary for the production of meaning, the formation of language and culture, for social identities and a subjective sense of the self as a sexed subject – and at the same time, it is threatening, a site of danger, of negative feelings, of splitting, hostility and aggression towards the 'other' (228).

In the second aspect, stereotyping and power, there is relation between power and stereotyping. Power, according to Hall, is understood not only in term of economic exploitation and physical coercion, but also in broader cultural or symbolic terms, including the power to represent someone or something in a certain way – within a certain 'regime of representation'. It includes the exercise

of symbolic power through representational practices. “Representational practices which also called as stereotyping is the key element in this exercise of symbolic violence” (Hall 249). Therefore, stereotyping is used by those who have power to represent the other as those who are powerless.

The role of fantasy, the third aspect, also has a heavy influence in the process of stereotyping. “The important point is that stereotypes refer as much to what is imagined in fantasy as to what is perceived as ‘real’. What is visually produced, by the stereotyping, is only half the story. The other half- the deeper meaning- lies in what is not being said, but is being fantasized, what is implied but cannot be shown” (253). In this process, the stereotype exists in the mind where the fantasy is created and it is perceived as if it is the reality. Furthermore, the fourth aspect of examining the practicing the stereotype is fetishism. In this analysis, fetishism is excluded in this theoretical framework due to the fact that there is no data in the movie to be analyzed using Hall’s concept of fetishism. In his book (256), Hall mentioned that fetishism relates to the fantasy of the White about Black’s sexual appeal. It involves the substitution of an ‘object’ for some dangerous and powerful but forbidden force. Since there is no data about black’s sexual appeal, fetishism is excluded. However, the construction of ‘otherness’ and exclusion, stereotyping and power, and the role of fantasy as the concepts of stereotyping that suggested by Hall will be applied by the writer to find the representational practices in order to reach the second main problem of the research which is challenging the stereotypes.

2.1.3. Contesting the Stereotype

Contesting the stereotype is the strategy that is suggested by Hall to challenge a dominant regime of representation. Hall states that meaning can never be fixed because if meaning could be fixed by representation, then there would be no change and there are also no counter strategies of stereotyping (259). This strategy will be applied by the writer to examine the main problem of this study, which is challenging the stereotypes faced by Muslim. Moreover, Hall suggests three strategies in contesting the stereotype: reversing the stereotype, providing positive and negative images, and through the eye of representation. The first strategy is reversing the stereotype, according to Hall, is not necessarily to overturn or subvert it. Escaping the grip of one stereotypical extreme may simply mean being trapped in its stereotypical 'other' (261). Hall gives example when Black tries to escape from extreme stereotype, for example the stereotype that Black's are subservient and always shown as servant. It may simply mean that Black being trapped in its stereotypical 'other' as Black's who love bossing white people around. In reversing the stereotype, it does not need to displace the stereotype with the complete opposite. When someone is being trapped in a stereotypical as 'other', the person has escaped from the grip of one stereotype and being trapped in other stereotype.

The second strategy in contesting the stereotype is providing the positive and negative images. This strategy attempts to substitute a range of 'positive' images for the 'negative' imagery that continues to dominate popular representation. This approach has the advantage of righting the balance and

therefore it is “underpinned by an acceptance of difference” (Hall 262). This strategy challenges the binaries but it does not undermine them. Sonali Fernando suggests that (stated in Hall 263) on the one hand suggesting a problematizing of racial identity as a complex dialectic of similarities as well as differences, but on the other hand it homogenizes all non-white cultures as other. This approach seems to give an underlying thought that it is an acknowledgement and celebration of diversity and difference in the world.

The third counter strategy is through the eye of representation. This strategy locates itself within the complexities and ambivalences of representation itself, and tries to contest it from within. It means that it is more concerned with the forms of racial representation than with introducing a new content. This strategy attempts to make the stereotypes work against themselves (Hall 264). Hall set an example of Black sexuality by the racialized gaze. He said that black people have been fixed by racialized gaze stereotypically, and to refuse the complex emotions by ‘looking; it. From those three strategies of contesting the stereotype, the writer will apply reversing the stereotypes and positive/negative images. The third strategy will be eliminated because the film does not contain any information of fetishism.

2.2. Review of Related Studies

In doing the analysis, the writer needs to review any previous studies related to this study in terms of the object and approach or theory applied. This review may have advantages to strengthen the point of view of the writer in doing the research. There are three people who are doing research that have relation this

study. The first research is an undergraduate thesis by Robitotul Asna entitled *The Stereotyping of Indian Muslim Immigrants in My Name is Khan the Movie*. Her research revealed the stereotyping of Indian Muslim in her undergraduate thesis, through the character of Rizvan Khan. The second study that becomes the writer's previous study is *Arab and Muslim Stereotyping in American Popular culture* by Jack G. Shaheen. Shaheen portrayed the stereotyping of Arab and Muslim in popular culture, which is related to the writer's study about the popular culture in this case referring to the film. There is also another study that is an MA thesis by Kurosh Amoui Kalareh entitled *Arabian Knights: Punk Islam and Selected Works of Michael Muhammad Knights*. The research analyzes some of Knights's works one of them is *The Taqwacores* which is also the object of this study.

This research may share similarity in terms of theory and approach applied with the study entitled *The Stereotyping of Indian Muslim Immigrants in My Name is Khan the Movie* by Robitotul Asna. This study analyses the process of stereotyping of Indian Muslim immigrants in My Name is Khan the Movie. In her thesis, she describes the Muslim character living in America named Rizvan Khan. She applies the Stuart Hall's stereotyping theory to find the representational practices toward the main character. In order to reverse the stereotype, it also used the concept of contesting the stereotype in Hall's theory. The difference between the previous study and this study is the situation of the material that is being researched. Both of the previous study and this study analyze Muslim stereotype, but in Asna's thesis, the object is an immigrant Muslim that comes to America to be married while the objects of this study are Muslim as youth. However, this

study gives the writer benefit, due to the same approach and theories applied. Although Asna's work share the similar approach and theories, but she did not mention the representation of Muslim.

The previous study in terms of issue is *Arab and Muslim Stereotyping in American Popular culture* conducted by Jack G. Shaheen. This study discusses about how Arabs and Muslims are portrayed in America. The portrayal taken from some popular American culture such as films, entertainment shows, documentaries, animated cartoons, television newscasts, soap operas, editorials, etc. The analysis provides an overview of the reports from the 1991 Gulf War, the 1993 World Trade Center explosion, the 1995 bombing in Oklahoma City and the 1996 crash of Trans World Airlines Flight 800. The aim of Shaheen's work is to examine the stereotype of Arabs and Muslims in general, while this study will analyze the issue of Muslim related to Punk in the era after 9/11 tragedy. Furthermore, both of this study and Shaheen's study carry the same object of the research, which is popular culture. This similarity will give the writer many advantages to analyze the object of the research. Unlike Shaheen, who analyze through more than one materials and media outlets such as films, entertainment shows, documentaries, animated cartoons, television newscasts, soap operas, editorials, etc, the writer only analyze one movie, *The Taqwacores*.

Beside the two previous studies, there is another study that also brings the same issue and object with this study. An MA thesis by Kurosh Amoui Kalareh entitled *Arabian Knights: Punk Islam and Selected Works of Michael Muhammad Knight* shows the similarity with this study in terms of issue and object. Kalareh

focuses the study on the relationship between Knights's work and the overlooked Islamic discourses. The study involves the explanation of the presence of Punk Islam and other Islamic phenomena in Knights's books. The idea of this study has similarity with Kalareh because the object is related to the issue of Muslims. In the first chapter, Kalareh examines the surfacing of Punk Muslim and how it becomes popular. Unlike Kalareh, the writer will analyze the object with narrative aspects and also the non-narrative aspects to give brief explanation of the analysis. In addition, these related studies have a role to strengthen the analysis of this study especially in the way Muslims are represented. However, the writer expects that those previous studies will give advantages for her in doing the analysis.