

The Relevance of Bong Joon-ho's *Parasite* Movie to the Holy Book of the Islamic Religion

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Abstract

Research on the relevance of the first South Korean film winning the 92th Academy Award with Islamic teachings found in the Koran is important to conduct because of the popularity of South Korean films in Indonesia. The phenomenon that South Korean films have become the favourite films of young people has been acknowledged. Due to the popularity of Korean films among young Indonesians, the researcher would like to describe the relevance of Bong Joon-ho's movie *Parasite* to Islamic teachings found in the Koran. Because most of Indonesia's population (86.7%) are Islam followers, the findings will be of necessity. The method used is the Mixed Method (Hesse-Biber, 2010) involving a triangulation approach (Oliver-Hayo and Allen, 2006). The data is mainly obtained from the available English subtitles belonging to the film. Based on the analysis and interpretation of the data, the researcher describes the relevance of the movie to the verses in the Koran. Kim Ki-taek, one of the main characters, believes that life is merely to undergo, no need to plan. This is in accordance with the verses in the Koran that support the concept of Jabariyah (at least 2 verses). Kim Ki-woo, another main character, believes the opposite, namely that life needs to be planned. And this is in accordance with the concept of Qadariyah which is contained in the verses of the Koran (at least in 3 verses). There are couples or binary opposition between rich and poor, innocent and sly, etc. that can easily be found. This is in accordance with the verses of the Koran about creatures that were created in pairs (at least 3 verses). In the film there is a scholar's rock, which becomes something special. In the Koran, the special wooden staff or rod belonging to the Prophet Moses can be found (at least 3 verses). And as a whole the movie metaphorically depicts the world and its contents which are just mere games and jokes that can be found in the verses of the Koran (at least 2 verses).

Keywords: Bong Joon-ho's Movie *Parasite*, the Koran verses, the English subtitles

1. Introduction

Research on the relevance of the first South Korean movie winning the 92th Academy Awards with Islamic teachings found in the Koran is important to conduct because of the popularity of South Korean movies in Indonesia. The phenomenon that South Korean movies have become the favourite movies of young people has been acknowledged. Due to the popularity of Korean movies among young Indonesians, the researcher would like to describe the relevance of Bong Joon-ho's movie *Parasite* to Islamic teachings found in the Koran. This is also important because most of Indonesia's population (86.7%) are Islam followers. In contrast to Indonesia, according to the national census held in 2015 it is known that of the approximately 51 million population of South Korea, most of the population is irreligious (56.1%). And, of the approximately 200 thousand (0.39%) residents who are Muslim, only 35,000 (0.07%) are native South Koreans. Thus researching the relevance of the film *Parasite* to Islamic teachings is interesting to do considering that researcher knows that Islamic teachings are *rahmatan lil alamin*, or mercy for all nature.

The method used is the Mixed Method (Hesse-Biber, 2010). He states that in general, researchers who use mixed methods employ a research design that uses both quantitative and qualitative data to answer a particular question or set of questions. This combination of methods involves the collection, analysis, and integration of

quantitative and qualitative data in a single or multiphase study. Furthermore, he states ... triangulation, seems to be the most commonly cited reason that mixed methods are incorporated into research. Triangulation refers to the use of more than one method while studying the same research question in order to examine the same dimension of a research problem. Oliver-Hayo and Allen (2006) states that triangulation involves the careful reviewing of data collected through different methods in order to achieve a more accurate and valid estimate of qualitative results for a particular construct. Furthermore, they state that the development of more integrated assessment strategies can create a system of checks and balances to ensure the validity of results.

Some studies on Bong Joon-ho's movie *Parasite* have been done by some researchers. Dianiya (2020) states that this *Parasite* film shows that class differences are in fact not just the words "rich" and "poor" that can be displayed in the dialogue, but can be shown through signs that can be socially interpreted by the audience themselves which are basically we can find in everyday social life. In addition, the presence of upper class domination that looks positive is very much shown in this film. Therefore, the representation of social class in the film *Parasite* is very perfectly depicted, both from the way each scene is selected, the very supportive properties, to the extraordinary cinematography and design. The research on such a film conducted by Khatami and Koiri (2021) found that each family member can be found their part directly stated in two factors of manipulative behaviour toward the Park's family as victim. They also give the victim as a media to fulfil their desire throughout the manipulative behaviour.

Bong Joon-ho's movie *Parasite* has a certain relevance to the international relation. Conley (2022) found the relevance of the film to the international relation. He states that international relations constructivist perspective has shaped the framework of this study, demonstrating through the case study of *Parasite* how institutions are driven by self-interest and identity. South Korea's proportion of inherited wealth and socioeconomic disparities, its geopolitical importance in the region, and *Parasite*'s constructivist analysis supports the relevance of this thesis in International Relations. Besides depicting the international relation, the film has a relationship with social inequality. After conducting the research on the film, Noviana and Simanjuntak (2022) write that *Parasite* film represents social inequality in South Korea which is presented in audio and visual through scenes, settings, and dialogues. In it there are social inequalities, such as education gaps, living environment gaps, and opportunity gaps. In the *Parasite* film, we can see that there are several factors. The main factors causing social inequality such as lack of employment, differences in natural resources, demographic conditions, and location of residence. So that it can have negative impacts, namely social discrimination, social jealousy, crime, and social conflict. However, no research on the film *Parasite* which was related to religious issues, let alone Islam religion.

There is quite a lot of research on the relevance of South Korean films – other than Bong Joon-ho's movie *Parasite* – to religion. Some of those studies were conducted by Rositama and Furaida (2021). Their analysis shows that Seong Gi Hun, a character of the movie, shows his good behavior towards others in all episodes. Seong Gi Hun acts well towards his daughter, mother, old man, woman, childhood friend, and playmates. Besides, he fulfills his promises after winning the game. Therefore, Seong Gi Hun's religiosity is included in the religious effect dimension because it is motivated by the teachings of religion in his social life. The research on South Korean movies and their relevance to Christianity has been done by Seung Min Hong (2016). She states that like other cultural forms and practices, religion travels around the globe and becomes represented in the media. In certain contexts, it can be neither "too foreign" to be relatable nor embraced as part of the local culture. Instead, it may be perceived as a cultural villain that is, paradoxically, familiar yet alien. There is, however, a difference between a familiar villain on a screen or in a story and what she call a cultural villain.

Beside Christianity, the South Korean movies have relationship with Confucianism. Sleziak (2013) conducted a research on the relevance of South Korean movies to Confucianism. He states that the young generations bring new momentum to the development of this country, indirectly causing changes of the state's political structure and the underlying rules of the economic conduct along with the evolving model of Korean family. Another crucial issue that should be raised in the research of the modern aspects of South Korean Confucianism is the factor of the individual as confronted with the collectivistic traditional mentality, and which of these should be the beacon of Korea's development. Furthermore, there is the case of the lack of clear distinguishing between Korean tradition and Confucian influence.

The research on the relation between South Korean movies and Islamic religiosity was already conducted. Mujani et al (2022) held a research on the relevance of South Korean movies to Islamic religiosity. They state that from a socio-cultural point of view, the Korean Wave or any foreign culture as a matter of fact, is of an unhealthy influence. Malaysians should retain their identities and not allow themselves to be too easily influenced by foreign culture, especially when a culture is not suitable with ours. For example, in the issue of 'the hug culture' promoted by Korean artists with their fans on stage received great criticism from the masses. However, the films studied did not include the film *Parasite* in it. In addition, there is no connection between South Korean films and religious activities that refer to Islam in Indonesia.

2. Research Methods

The method used is the Mixed Method (Hesse-Biber, 2010) involving the triangulation approach (Oliver-Hayo and Allen, 2006). Data sources can be of both the film and the script or screenplay. Within the film, the data is mainly in the form the English subtitle. Data collection techniques done is mainly reading intensively and note taking. Data collection instruments is in the form of the table or matrix. Data collection procedures is taking the evidence from both the subtitle and screenplay. Data analysis methods is comparing the data from the subtitle (and screenplay) and from the Koran verses (translated from Arabic into English by Abdullah Yusuf Ali). Finally, based on the analysis and interpretation of the data, the researcher describes the relevance of the movie to the verses in the Koran.

Regarding the validity of this study, the researcher refers to the concept of descriptive validity proposed by Maxwell. Maxwell (1992) states that validity has long been a key issue in debates over the legitimacy of qualitative research; if qualitative studies cannot consistently produce valid results, then policies, programs, or predictions based on these studies cannot be relied on. He will refer to this first type of validity as descriptive validity; it corresponds, to some extent, to the category of understanding.

By considering the method employed, the steps done are as follows:

Bong Joon-ho's Movie Parasites	The Holy Book of the Islamic Religion
Dialogue or Utterances in the Movie	Verses of the Koran



<i>Dialogue and Verses Related to Jabariyah Concept</i>	
Dialogue or Utterances in the Movie	Verses of the Koran
KI-TEK: If you plan, something will always go wrong. That's life. (then) Look around. Do you think these people got up this morning and said "Tonight I'm going to sleep on a dirty floor with hundreds of strangers"? But look where they are now. Look where we are.	As Saffat 96. "But Allah has created you and your handiwork!"
KI-TEK: That's why you should never plan. If you don't have a plan, you can't fail. You can't do anything wrong. Doesn't matter if you kill someone or commit fucking treason. Nothing fucking matters. You understand?	Ad Dahr 30. But ye will not, except as Allah wills; for Allah is full of Knowledge and Wisdom.



etc,

3. Results and Discussion

Kim Ki-taek, one of the main characters, believes that life is merely to undergo, no need to plan. This is in accordance with the verses in the Koran that support the concept of Jabariyah (at least in 2 verses). Kim Ki-woo, another main character, believes the opposite, namely that life needs to be planned. And this is in accordance with the ideology of Qadariyah which is found in the verses of the Koran (at least in 3 verses). There are couples or binary opposition between rich and poor, innocent and sly, gentle and coarse, etc. that can easily be found especially in the movie's scenes. This is in accordance with the verses of the Koran about creatures that were created in pairs (at least in 4 verses). In the film there is a scholar's rock or viewing stone, which becomes something special. In the Koran, the special wooden staff or rod belonging to the Prophet Moses can be found (at least in 3 verses). And as a whole the movie metaphorically depicts the world and its contents which are just mere games and jokes that can be found in the verses of the Koran (at least in 4 verses).

3.1. Verses Related to Jabariyah Concept

Kim Ki-taek, one of the main characters, believes that life is merely to undergo, no need to plan. This is in accordance with the verses in the Koran that support the concept of Jabariyah (at least in 2 verses: [a] "But Allah has created you and your handiwork!" [b] But ye will not, except as Allah wills; for Allah is full of Knowledge and Wisdom.) This main character certainly does not understand, even does not know about this religious concept. However, by connecting with the proper verses of the Koran, Muslim may say that the actions and utterances of the main character is closely related to this religious concept. The following table can clarify the relation:

Table 1. Verses Related to Jabariyah Concept

Bong Joon-ho's Movie Parasites	The Holy Book of the Islamic Religion
Dialogue or Utterances in the Movie	Verses of the Koran
<p>KI-TEK Don't plan at all. Have no plan.</p> <p>KI-TEK: If you plan, something will always go wrong. That's life. (then) Look around. Do you think these people got up this morning and said "Tonight I'm going to sleep on a dirty floor with hundreds of strangers"? But look where they are now. Look where we are.</p> <p>KI-TEK: That's why you should never plan. If you don't have a plan, you can't fail. You can't do anything wrong. Doesn't matter if you kill someone or commit fucking treason. Nothing fucking matters. You understand?</p>	<p>As Saffat 96. "But Allah has created you and your handiwork!"</p> <p>Ad Dahr 30. But ye will not, except as Allah wills; for Allah is full of Knowledge and Wisdom.</p>

3.2. Verses Related to Qadariyah Concept

Kim Ki-woo, another main character, believes the opposite, namely that life needs to be planned. And this is in accordance with the ideology of Qadariyah which is contained in the verses of the Koran (at least in 3 verses: [a] For each (such person) there are (angels) in succession, before and behind him; They guard him by command of Allah. Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves (with their own souls). But when (once) Allah willeth a people's punishment, there can be no turning it back, nor will they find, beside Him, any to protect. [b] Say, "The Truth is from your Lord": Let him who will, believe, and let him who will, reject (it): For the wrongdoers We have prepared a Fire whose (smoke and flames), like the walls and roof of a tent, will hem them in: If they implore relief they will be granted water like melted brass, that will scald their faces. How dreadful the drink! How uncomfortable a couch to recline on. [c] Those who pervert the Truth in Our Signs are not hidden from Us. Which is better? --He that is cast into a Fire, or he that comes safe through, on the Day of Judgment? Do what ye will: Verily He seeth (clearly) all that ye do.). This main character certainly does not understand, even does not know about this religious concept. However, by connecting with the proper verses of the Koran, Muslim may say that the actions and utterances of the main character is closely related to this religious concept. The following table can clarify the relation:

Table 2. Verses Related to Qodariyah Concept

Bong Joon-ho's Movie Parasites	The Holy Book of the Islamic Religion
Dialogue or Utterances in the Movie	Verses of the Koran
<p>KI-WOO: I don't consider this a crime. No. Because I plan on going to this school next year.</p> <p>KI-TEK: That's my son. Man with a plan.</p> <p>KI-WOO: That's right. We need a plan.</p> <p>KI-WOO: This wasn't in our plan.</p> <p>KI-WOO: I don't know... This wasn't part of the plan.</p> <p>KI-JUNG: What do we do now? What's the goddamn plan? Ki-Tek doesn't have one. Rain drowns the silence.</p>	<p>Ar Ra'd 11. For each (such person) there are (angels) in succession, before and behind him; They guard him by command of Allah. Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves (with their own souls). But when (once) Allah willeth a people's punishment, there can be no turning it back, nor will they find, beside Him, any to protect.</p> <p>Al Kahf 29. Say, "The Truth is from your Lord": Let him who will, believe, and let him who will, reject (it): For the wrongdoers We have prepared a Fire whose (smoke and flames), like the walls and roof of a tent, will hem them in: If they implore relief they</p>

KI-WOO: Your plan. What is it? KI-TEK What are you talking about?	will be granted water like melted brass, that will scald their faces. How dreadful the drink! How uncomfortable a couch to recline on.
KI-WOO: You said you had a plan. What are we going to do about--	As Sajdah 40. Those who pervert the Truth in Our Signs are not hidden from Us. Which is better? --He that is cast into a Fire, or he that comes safe through, on the Day of Judgment? Do what ye will: Verily He seeth (clearly) all that ye do.

3.3. Binary Opposition Concept

There are couples or binary opposition between rich and poor, innocent and sly, gentle and coarse, etc. that can easily be found. This is in accordance with the verses of the Koran about creatures that were created in pairs (at least in 3 verses: [a] Glory to Allah, Who created, in pairs, all things that the earth produces, as well as their own (human) kind and (other) things of which they have no knowledge. [b] In them will be Fruits of every kind, two and two. [c] That He did create in pairs, --male and female.). In this film, the concept of binary opposition is mostly shown in the language of pictures or scenes. In conversation, the concept of binary opposition appears more implicitly than explicitly. Yon-Kyo's words can represent the words of a good, unsuspecting rich man. Meanwhile, Ki-Tek's utterance can represent the words of the cunning poor, whose actions are full of deception. The following table can clarify the relation:

Table 3. Binary Opposition Concept

Bong Joon-ho's Movie Parasites	The Holy Book of the Islamic Religion
Dialogue or Utterances in the Movie	Verses of the Koran
YON-KYO: I'm very interested in this person, Ms. Jessica. Do you think I could meet him? As you can see, it's becoming harder and harder for me to trust people. I won't hire anyone unless they're recommended by people I absolutely, positively trust. I just have a feeling he could be a great candidate since you grew up with him and all.	Ya Sin 36. Glory to Allah, Who created, in pairs, all things that the earth produces, as well as their own (human) kind and (other) things of which they have no knowledge.
KI-TEK: Forget about that. This is a good problem to have. Think about our lives before. It's a dog-eat-dog world out there. Hundreds of college graduates compete for a security guard job for Chrissake. (emotional) Not us. We are all gainfully employed.	Ar Rahman 52. In them will be Fruits of every kind, two and two. An Najm 45. That He did create in pairs, --male and female,

3.4. Things Represented Heavenly Power

In the film there is a scholar's rock or viewing stone, which becomes something special. In the Koran, the special wooden staff or rod belonging to the Prophet Musa can be found (at least in 3 verses: [a] Then (Moses) threw his rod, and behold! It was a serpent, plain (for all to see)! [b] He said: "Nay, throw ye first!" Then behold their ropes and their rods--so it seemed to him on account of their magic--began to be in lively motion! [c] (Allah) said, "Throw it, O Moses!").

In this film, a stone called the viewing stone has an important role. The stone really colors the life of one of the main characters, namely Ki-Woo. There is a transcendental atmosphere to the appearance of the stone in this film. In the Holy Book of the Koran there are many descriptions of objects that have transcendental powers. Regarding the staff or rod of the Prophet Musa alone can actually be found in more than 20 verses. The following table can clarify the relation:

Table 4. Things Represented Heavenly Power

Bong Joon-ho's Movie Parasites	The Holy Book of the Islamic Religion
Dialogue or Utterances in the Movie	Verses of the Koran
KI-TEK: This is a precious viewing stone. Is this an abstract specimen?	Al A'raf 107. Then (Moses) threw his rod, and behold! It was a serpent, plain (for all to see)!
MIN-HYUK: You know your stones, Mr. Kim. Pop-Pop's been collecting viewing stones since his academy days. Our house is literally filled with these	Ta Ha 66. He said: "Nay, throw ye first!" Then behold their ropes and their rods--so it seemed to him

things -- living room, study, basement... This one is supposed to bring luck. And money.	on account of their magic—began to be in lively motion!
KI-WOO: It wants to be with me. Ki-Tek looks at Ki-Woo. He's acting strange.	Ta Ha 19. (Allah) said, "Throw it, O Moses!"
KI-WOO: It's true. It keeps following me.	

3.5. World as Trivial Phenomena

And as a whole the movie metaphorically depicts the world and its contents which are just mere games and jokes that can be found in the verses of the Koran (at least in 2 verses: [a] What is the life of this world but play and amusement? But best is the Home in the Hereafter, for those who are righteous. Will ye not then understand? [b] What is the life of this world but amusement and play? But verily the Home in the Hereafter, --that is life indeed, if they but knew.). The depiction that the world and everything in it is just a game and mere joke is more in the form of pictorial language and scenes in this film. If it is in the form of a conversation, the conversation implicitly, rather than explicitly, refers to the theological concept in the Koran. The following table can clarify the relation:

Table 5. World as Trivial Phenomena

Bong Joon-ho's Movie Parasites	The Holy Book of the Islamic Religion
Dialogue or Utterances in the Movie	Verses of the Koran
KI-WOO: Cut, stop right there. Dad, you're overdoing it. The worrying thing. Tone it down. I can tell you're acting. Ki-Tek rehearses his 'scene,' holding a piece of paper with his lines. KI-WOO: Action!	Al An'am 32. What is the life of this world but play and amusement? But best is the Home in the Hereafter, for those who are righteous. Will ye not then understand?
CHUNG-SOOK She could have won an Oscar if she became an actress.	Al 'Ankabut 64. What is the life of this world but amusement and play? But verily the Home in the Hereafter, --that is life indeed, if they but knew.
CHUNG-SOOK (laughs) That's how you became such a good actress!	
KI-WOO Please. We really need these jobs, and we went through a lot to get them. We're not scam artists. We're--	

By analyzing and interpreting such findings above, the researcher describes the relevance of Bong Joon-ho's movie *Parasite* to Islamic teachings found in the Koran. The relevance is like when we read Kauniyah's verses in the Koran. The Kauniyah verse itself means the signs of the greatness of Allah which can be seen from natural phenomena to recognize and strengthen faith in God, in order to meet the needs of human life and fulfill the duties as caliph. Thus, it is true that Islamic teachings are not only verbally visible, but, we, especially Muslim viewers, will be able to see the quite obvious relevance.

Among Islamologists there are those who argue that Islam is not a formal institution, but more as an attitude of life. Thus, in contrast to institutions whose institutional attributes can be visibly clear, followers of Islam are actually not visible. A true Islam follower can only be seen from his or her noble character.

Bong Joon-ho's movie *Parasite*, like Kauniyah's verses, is a lesson for Muslims. Watching the film can clarify what is meant by that the world and everything in it is just a game and joke. There are so many verses in the Koran that talk about the world, both on earth, in outer space, in the depths of the oceans, in the cavities of living things, whether they can be felt by the five senses or not (Rusydi, 2016).

In the socio-cultural field, Nurcholish Madjid, a well-known Indonesian scholar, saw that since the time of the Prophet Muhammad, Islam was formed by the socio-cultural background that surrounded it. Likewise, Islam in Indonesia cannot ignore itself from the existing socio-cultural background. For Madjid, although the truth of Islam is universal, it often appears in different outward appearances from time to time and from place to place. This can be explained from various aspects, one of which is the issue of language in the broadest sense, including cultural language. Therefore, universal Islamic truth has the ability to adapt to the cultural environment in which it develops, authentically (loyal to its own principles) and creatively (including critically). It is in the interests of Muslims in Southeast Asia, especially in Indonesia, to materialize these universal teachings in such a way as to bring blessings to all, not only Muslims but also non-Muslims (Abidin, 2014).

4. Conclusion

The problem of the relevance of Bong Joon-ho's movie *Parasite* to the Muslim Holy Book is found in the dialogues or utterances of the main characters in the form of English subtitle and in the scenes as a whole. The purpose of the research, i.e. to find the relevance of such a film to the Islamic teachings, can be described by showing evidence in the film and their relevant verses. This research proves that this good film can more or less be related to the Holy Book of Muslims. This is because the Holy Book is for all mankind. Islam is basically not only a formal institution whose physical characteristics can usually be seen. Instead, Islam is good morals or good ethics that can be seen from words, actions, which can be identified by how useful a person's existence is for the other people around him.

Watching this film is like reading Kauniyah's verses in the Koran. Indeed, there is no verbal explanation of Islamic teachings in the film, but the viewer can see the relevance of Islamic teachings in the film. At least the film shows how life in this world is just a game and a joke, so do not be fooled.

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