

Narrativization Of Islam And Muslim In Contemporary Screening Literature: A Content Analysis Approach

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Abstract

Muslims have historically had a significant presence in the media, and as a result, numerous Muslim icons have emerged. Islam has been portrayed badly after the September 11th attack, as the ties between the East and the West have gotten worse. As new books and essays started to appear in the press, this event completely altered the literary landscape. A bad stereotype of Muslims and Islam as a terrorist religion began to emerge in the media. This research seeks to look into how Muslims are portrayed in the Bollywood business against this background. It aims to examine the relationship between the Islamic teachings and how the Muslim community has adapted them. Data collecting was done, using the satirical science fiction and film 'PK'. Content analysis approach was used for interpretation of the characters responses to particular incidents and their dialogues. PK is unbiased in the representation of religions and their practices. In particular to Islam, it is portrayed equally to others in his visit to masjid and in song which is contradictory. As in the Holy Quran (verse 19, surah Al-Imron), the only Deen is declared Islam and the only accepted Deen and religion is Islam. On the other side, in the scene of Sarafaraz, the Muslims are represented positively. The qualities of Muslims, loyal and sincere, are shown in the final round of the film.

Key Words: Islam, Movie, Muslims, Religion.

Introduction

Movies are made to inform as well as amuse the viewers. This genre aims to entertain its viewers while teaching them what is right and wrong in society. Sometimes, it discusses a nation's pressing problems and explains them through fictional tales. In the same field of film making, a genre, screening literature, is popular. The work of Corrigan (2007), is worth mentioning in the screening

literature. The fundamental trend in cinematic history, however, is the adaptation of literature to film, which frequently uses plays, novels, or short stories as its original material before being turned into a screenplay and finally a film (Cartmell & Whelehan, 2007). It is common to involve the literature of all religion for the amusement and social integration. In the teachings of Islam, it does not allow film making and movie making for the social or any other purposes, however, Islam teaches many other ways. Islam, which means surrender or submission, is an Arabic term. Islam is characterized as a Deen, or religion, by its emphasis on complete and unreserved obedience to Allah (God). It imparts lessons about serenity and tranquility (Saleem, Khan & Naeem, 2019; Seda, 2007). Islam is narrativised differently in different eras. Narrativization, according to Fludernik (2002), is the imposition of narrativity on an item by a receiver. As a result, narrativity is not a constant property of an item but rather depends on how the receiver experiences it. According to Marty, N. (2015), there are three kinds of narrativization.

1. Egocentered, embodied narrativization is induced via focalization, which takes into account the listener's personal experience.
2. Heterocentered, ecological narrativization is brought on by focalization, which involves thinking about another person's experience. The term "ecological" refers to a comparison to the relationships seen in the natural world.
3. Exterocentered, prior to semiotic narrativization comes focalization.

This current study interprets the Bollywood film PK in content based analysis. The protagonist of the film PK was a visitor to earth from a far-off planet. As far as we know, he does not observe any religion and is unaware of the traditions, customs, and other rituals of the inhabitants of the planet. He encounters both good and terrible people here on earth, and he watched everything without having any preconceived notions. Whether the movie's protagonists truly adhere to their religion's precepts or not is something we are worried about. Through the lens of PK, we shall evaluate their words and deeds.

As far as the fundamental goal of literature is concerned, there are, as we all know, two schools of thought, each of which has a different perspective. A literary work's major purpose, according to some critics, is to impart morals, but another set of critics asserted that a literary work's primary purpose is to provide pleasure. The former group holds a devotion to art as a means of prolonging life. Therefore, a literary work's purpose is to train its audience and mold them into honorable, devout citizens of the period. The first set of critics included Plato and Aristotle, who also supported literature's moral role. The latter group supported the idea of art for art's sake. They believed that a work of literature had nothing to do with morality and has no utilitarian value. These people base their evaluation of a work of literature on its ability to make them feel good. They are referred to as aesthetes.

The fundamental tenet of morality and philosophers, according to Guerin (et al. 2005), is that literature has a greater purpose than just entertaining readers and serving as a vehicle for intellectual inquiry. The utilitarian function of literature was stressed by these critics, and morality

was seen as literature's main goal. Many authors and poets have addressed the moral subject throughout the history of English literature, as may be seen. In order to "form a gentleman or noble person in moral and gentle discipline," Spenser composed *Faery Queene*. In order to "justify the ways of God to man," Milton created *Paradise Lost*.

Matthew Arnold defined poetry as the "criticism of life" during the Victorian era, making a small compromise to the moral expectations of his day. He believed that writing should educate readers about right and wrong. After reading a work of literature, they are able to distinguish between good and terrible. In other words, it may direct individuals in the correct direction and teach them how to live their lives properly. The leaders of major Hollywood studios, A-list celebrities, record label executives, and top-charting artists have recently been under pressure from US government authorities to sign agreements pledging their abstinence from vices including drug use, gambling, and pornography. In China, movie stars are being used as moral role models. In their eyes, movie stars and other creatives should serve as moral role models that people may go to for advice.

A critic's responsibility is to evaluate a piece of literature and approach it in the right way. Some critics examine a piece of literature from a moral standpoint and point out its excellent and negative aspects. They occasionally also mentioned if a certain character was moral or immoral. Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*, in Guerin (et al., 2005), depicts the moral superiority of a hot-blooded young man like Tom. However, there are also cruel and hypocritical individuals. The morality of *Huckleberry Finn*, which is evident in some of the book's terrible deeds and depictions of men acting inhumanely toward one another, has the most influence. They claim that this is the novel's central subject and that both significant and insignificant events are variations on it.

If a writer or author critiques the current religious practices and the adherents, they are referred to be moralists. If we look back in time, we may find numerous writings that have denounced religious authorities and their adherents. Hawthorne took a direct attack on Calvinism and condemned some despicable characteristics of Puritanism in his masterwork "*The Young Goodman Brown*". The Puritans aspired to cleanse the English church of all Roman Catholic customs in the late 1700s, thus they outlawed even the most common forms of amusement. They practiced a stern and severe form of justice. They brutally punished the victims for their misdeeds by killing them. Children were not permitted to play or interact with one another at that period.

In the context of a content approach, we will study the film "*PK*." The movie's protagonist, PK, was from a far-off planet that visited the planet Earth. He does not observe any religion, and he is unaware of the traditions, customs, and other behaviors of the inhabitants of the planet, as far as we know. He encounters both good and terrible people here on earth, and he watched everything without having any preconceived notions. The protagonist and a few religious figures who are presented in the film are the major subjects of our attention. We will observe how the film portrays these figures, whether they are Muslims, Hindus, or members of other religions. We are worried about whether or not they truly adhere to their religion's principles. From the perspective of PK, we shall evaluate their words and deeds.

Hassan, Azmi & Abdullahi (2020), worked to look into the linguistic style of non-Western internet publications that cover Islam. Data was gathered and examined using content analysis. The results indicated that although relatively few publications relating to Islam were favorable, approximately half of all things related to Islam were critical. This demonstrates how excessive and improper terminology is utilized while reporting on Islam.

In the film, religion is viewed differently by each character. Some individuals believe that living entails adhering to religious precepts. Some religious adherents believe that their religion is the sole full and perfect guide of conduct. They hate other religions and incite animosity among adherents of other faiths. The current research discusses how Islam and Muslim are represented in screening literature of this era.

Analysis

PK, a name of the hero—Amir Khan—of the movie, is portrayed as an extraterrestrial who visits Earth from a far-off world. The extraterrestrial sets out in quest of the remote control he needs to contact his spaceship after a heist leaves him stranded. During his travels on earth, he meets the following characters;

- Tapasvi Maharaj (religious sect leader)
- Jaggu Sahni (a bold and tenacious television journalist)
- Bhairon Singh (a cheerful Rajasthani band master)

Characters

PK moves and speaks strangely, exuberantly, like a young child. He travels on a quest to learn more about the system and the inhabitants of the planet. He starts a quest to explore the world after that. He interacts with both morally upright and immoral individuals. As he touches down and runs into a bystander. The bystander reaches for his remote and boards the train to flee. The movie's Bhairon Singh is a decent character. He drives PK, character, to the hospital when he is struck by a car, and when he learns that PK has lost his memory, he brings him home and keeps him as a guest until he regains it. In the course of delivering the thief who has stolen PK's remote to PK, Bhairon Singh is killed in a bombing. The thief and remote are introduced to make the movie mold towards the actual aim of the movie [a search of Bagwan, and god].

Another significant figure in the film is Tapasvi Maharaj, whom viewers perceive to be a devout and a Godman. People believe in his made-up forecasts because of the appearance he takes. He claims that they are false prophesies that the deity gave him. People turn to him for guidance and adore him like a god as a result. In a later scene in the film, he asserts that God has given him the ability to use a gem found on the peak of a snow-covered mountain made from Lord Shiva's broken pellet drum to answer people's issues. Here, the audience is made aware that what is being shown is not a precious object but rather a remote control that belonged to PK at the start of the film and was taken by a villager before being sold to Tapasvi Maharaj. If we look into Tapasvi Maharaj's

character, we can see that he is a phone virtuous guy who people hold up as an example of virtue. While simultaneously delivering religious instruction to the populace, He also breaks the moral precepts of his faith by speaking lies. He takes use of religion to his own gain.

Exposition of Religions

PK is an atheist. He is unaware of what religion is or the number of different religions in the globe. He eventually learns upon his arrival on Earth that every religion has its own conventions, traditions, and standards of behavior. Even though he is unaware of the virtues and faults of many religions, he nevertheless does acts of compassion. For instance, he offers the elderly guy 500 rupees when he asks for assistance. In contrast to his lack of knowledge about right and wrong, assisting the elderly guy makes him feel good because the greatest joy comes from making other people happy. Despite knowing that the elderly guy is lying to him and that his wife is not unwell, he nevertheless gives the old man the rupees. For the first time, the elderly man and his wife dine in a five-star hotel as part of their celebration of his wife's 75th birthday. The elderly guy has been accumulating money for this special day, but he still needs 500 rupees, which is why he lies to PK. Here, lying to please her wife is an act of love and concern rather than immorality. The elderly guy tries to make his wife's wife smile.

Thematic View

The film also makes the point that measuring a person's goodness on the inside should not simply be done using their outward appearance, their language, or their chosen form of praying. When PK embarks on a new mission to investigate the fake god and false number, it is evident that the external appearances are occasionally incorrect and deceitful. Everyone sees phone religious leaders and practices wherever they go, and they criticize it and speak out against it. Given that he has a beard and wears religious clothing on one occasion, the character Baba Ji also has a religious look. By creating gold out of thin air, he demonstrates to the public his supernatural ability. These sorts of guys con the populace and fool them. They consider these people to be devout and holy. These kind of religious men solicit public money for their personal benefit after using religion for mercenary ends. Although each god has a company, god is nice but godmen are wicked, these holy men are aware that these activities, like lying, which is also boring, are what PK figures and the film is centered on.

Recurring topic in the film is the need to confront issues head-on rather than waiting for a miracle to occur. This theme emphasizes the need of using the God-given physical prowess rather than letting issues fester and wasting time. One individual in the audience does, however, challenge him, asking why, if he has the ability to create gold, he takes donations from the public rather than using it to aid the poor and alleviate poverty across the country. In this instance, the character's statements suggest that poverty is a problem that can be resolved via righteous deeds rather than passivity and superstitious beliefs. For instance, in another scenario, PK installs a stone in the college, surrounds it with money, and then pans the top of the stone to make it red. He then stands

in a corner and observes the response of the individuals. Everyone is bending in its direction. This scenario says that religion has turned into a business and that religious leaders utilize religion for their own financial gain, but it also emphasizes that if you want to pass your exam, you must study and that it is your obligation to do so rather than merely bowing down to the stone-made deity. One cannot just obtain employment by prostrating themselves before a cow. Some Indians worship cows because they are thought to be sacred. "Cow cannot transmit your CV to a corporation," asserts a character in the film. Despite not being against religion, the film's producer expresses his disapproval of superstitious ideas.

In the film, religious fanatics drive wedges amongst groups of people and sow disdain for followers of other faiths. As a result, the explosion killed several innocent bystanders. In order to carry out his study, PK and his team return to Earth from their planet at the conclusion of the film. In this section, Jesus gives instructions to his group on how to pass the time and act while on earth. He gives the following instructions: "It is banned on earth to go naked; all kissing, smooching, and getting naked are done behind locked doors out of sight; while things like fighting, swearing, and battles, etc. are done in the open." These guidelines suggest that although individuals of all the religions shown in the film, including Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity, engage in extramarital sex in dance vehicles, it is against the law and frowned upon in all of them. These behaviors are sinful and are to be avoided if one identifies with a certain faith.

Representation of Islam

In the movie, many religions are exposed to the world. The character, Amir Khan, used many film techniques to expose and highlight the religious notions of different religions. Similarly, Islam is also mentioned and exposed in the movie. The character visited masjid to show the Muslim community and Islamic teachings. In the movie, a song summarizes the entire plot in a limited collection of words. Qadri & Mufti (2016), translated this song and analyzed in their research paper. The song is translated in table 1.

Table 1: Transliteration & Translation of the song of PK movie

Song	
Transliteration	Translation
Hai suna ye poori dharti tu chalata hai	I've heard that you run the whole world,
Meri bhi sun le araj, mujhe ghar bulaata hai	Listen to my prayer too, my home calls me,
Bhagwan hai kahaan re tu, aye khuda hai kahan re tu	O Lord, where are you? O God, where are you?
Hai suna tu bhatke mann ko raah dikhata hai	I've heard that you lead the way to the hearts that are lost; nonetheless,
Main bhi khoya hoon mujhe ghar bulata hai	Even though I am lost, my home beckons to me.

Bhagwaan hai kahaan re tu, aye khuda hai kahan re tu	Where are you, Lord? Where are you, God?
Main pooja karoon, ya namaazein padhoon	Should I worship you (as Hindus do)
Ardaas karoon din rain	or should I chant your name? (like Muslims do)
Na tu mandir mile, na tu girje mile	Should I present an ardaas? (like Sikhs do)
Tujhe dhoondhein thake mere nain	My worn-out eyes search for you, but neither the temple nor the church contain you.
Tujhe dhoondhein thake mere nain	I abide by every tradition that exists (to locate you),
Jo bhi rasmein hai wo saari, main nibhaata hoon	and I bow down to you
In karoDon ki tarah main sir jhukata hoon	in the same way as these crores [a crore is equal to 10 million].
Bhagwan hai kahanre tu, aye khuda hai kahan re tu	Where have you gone, Lord? Oh God, where have you gone?
Tere naam kayi, tere chehre kayi	There are several methods to locate you,
Tujhe paaneki raah hain kai..	as well as numerous identities and faces for you.
Har raah chala, par tu na mila	I explored every avenue, but I couldn't locate you.
Tu kya chaahne main samjha nahi	I didn't grasp what you were asking for.
Soche bin samjhe jatan karta hi jaata hoon	I continue to attempt, without stopping to ponder or comprehend,
Teri zid sar-aankhon par rakh ke nibhaata hoon	and I respectfully comply with your demands.
Bhagwan hai kahan re tu,	O Lord, where are you?
aye khuda hai kahaan re tu	O God, where are you?

In table 1, the translation exposes the efforts of hero of movie—PK—to find God but he was failed to see Him. The content analysis of this song shows that the character—Amir Khan—is unbiased in the exposure of all the worldly religions. Unlike all religions, Islam is called Deen in the Holy Quran and it blesses are upon all the entire world. The Holy Quran says,

إِنَّ الدِّينَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْإِسْلَامُ ۗ وَمَا اخْتَلَفَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَغْيًا بَيْنَهُمْ وَمَنْ
يَكْفُرْ بِآيَاتِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ (آل عمران: ١٩)

"Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allah is Islam. And those who were given the Scripture did not differ except after knowledge had come to them out of jealous animosity between themselves. And whoever disbelieves in the verses of Allah, then indeed, Allah is swift in [taking] account."(Al-Quran, Al-Imron, 3:19; Husin, Supriyatin, & Zabidi, 2020)

This verse of the Holy Quran claims that Islam is the only accepted Deen to Allah, the Creator of the entire world, and all other religion are not accepted. However, in this movie, Islam is considered same like other religion and this is not accepted to the teachings of Islam.

Representation of Muslim

The movie's protagonist is, similarly, opposed to the oppressive society. The primary obstacle to her pleasure is society. She falls in love with a Muslim despite being Hindu. Her desire to marry a Muslim has caused her father to disinherit her. She, then, transitions to a career as a news reporter and sets out on a quest to expose the problematic religious restrictions put in place by the religious authorities themselves. The religious authority instructs her that a Muslim boy will deceive you. She got confused and hurt by listening so from the religious expert and saint. Internally, she trusts and believes that Sarfaraz, the she loves, will come back. The trust and believe of her signify and portray a positive image of Muslims. Finally, she meets Sarfaraz and that scene was emotional and realistic to imagine. However, this shows the loyalty and sincerity of Muslims. Here again Muslims are represented with positive image and good qualities.

Conclusion

The movie's main message is to live in peace, respect one another's beliefs, be kind to one another, and avoid doing one another any damage. Morality is a concept that goes beyond the purview of religion. It is not limited to a particular faith. This film asserts that morality is nonreligious. The religions are presented and portrayed in the real shape and practice. The religious scholars, leaders, and preachers are also exposed to the world. PK, the character and hero, show himself a search tool where through him the viewers see every possible parameters of religions. However, in its portrayal of faiths and their customs, PK is impartial. In his visit to the masjid and in the song, which is paradoxical, Islam is specifically depicted as being equally displayed to others. The only Deen announced and acknowledged is Islam, just as it is stated in the Holy Qur'an (verse 19, surah Al-Imron). On the other hand, Muslims are favourably portrayed in Sarafaraz's scenario. In the film's last scene, Muslims' loyalty and sincerity are demonstrated.

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