THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE ORIENTS
IN BEN AFFLECK’S ARGO (2012)

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Submitted as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Sarjana Sastra Degree in English Department
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Sebelas Maret University

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FACULTY OF LETTERS AND FINE ARTS
SEBELAS MARET UNIVERSITY
SURAKARTA
2014
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I hereby stated wholeheartedly that I write the thesis entitled *The Construction of the Orients in Ben Affleck’s Argo (2012)*. It is not a plagiarism nor made by others. The things related to other people’s work are written in the quotation and included in bibliography.

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MOTTO

“Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again, this time more intelligently” – Henry Ford
DEDICATION

I dedicate my thesis to my family especially to my loving parents for their encouragement and support so I can finish my thesis. I also dedicate this thesis to my many friends who have supported me throughout the process.
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First of all, I would like to say *Alhamdulillahi rabbil ‘alamin* to express my highest gratitude to Allah SWT who has the authority for everything in this world. Only with His blessing and guidance from Allah SWT, I can finish this thesis.

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Finally, I hope that this Thesis will be useful for all readers.

The Writer

Wiweko Aksan Nugraha
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THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE ORIENT
IN BEN AFFLECK’S ARGO (2012)

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ABSTRACT

2014. This research aims to explain how the movie Argo constructs the Orient and what are the motives of the Orient construction in Argo. Movie as one of popular culture products is a reflection of society. As film is a reflection of society, it is interesting to analyze when the film contains a theme that is in line with the contextual condition.

This is a descriptive qualitative research. The main source of the data of this research is the movie Argo directed by Ben Affleck released in 2012. There are two kinds of data; primary and secondary data. The primary data are all elements in the film including dialogues, scenes, lighting, and other cinematographic elements. The secondary data are all selected works or research related to the topic such as reference books and journals.

This research was done under the framework of American Studies. As American Studies is interdisciplinary, it involves various theories and disciplines. This research uses semiotics film theory to analyze the elements of film. As the topic is related to the construction of the Orient, Edward Said concept about the Orient stereotypes is used. Socio-cultural and socio-political context is also used to get deeper understanding and also to connect the current context condition with the movie. Then, semiotic approach is used to scrutinize the hidden meaning in the movie.

From the research analysis, it is found that there are certain elements of the movie which portrays the stereotypes of Iranian related to the construction of the Orient. In the movie, all Iranians are portrayed as Anti-American, terrorist, and an ethnic who commit to violence. However, film is still part of popular culture. No matter how the film tries to portray the real image of Iranians, the filmmaker still uses dramatization to convince the audiences that the image of Iranian in the movie is real. As film is made for certain objective, it is also found that there is a motive behind the construction of Iranian’s image in this movie. By connecting the movie contextually, it can be found that the movie is intended as a propaganda medium related to U.S. conflict to Iran. In the end, movie as product of popular culture can be an effective medium to influence or shape the audiences’ view toward an issue.

Keyword: movie, pop culture, Argo, the Orient, stereotypes, Iranian, Hostage Crisis.

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