



## Moral Messages in the Film Wedding Agreement The Series (Roland Barthes Semiotic Analysis)

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### ABSTRACT

*Film is a medium that is used and developed by humans to convey communication through storylines and narratives in the form of audio and visual. In the world of cinema, films have their own value. Film as an object of art should be judged artistically, not rationally. Semiotics is the study of science or analytical methods to examine signs in a context. Therefore, a good film will convey information well as well. Implicit messages in a film are the ideas, ideas, and goals of the director or film script writer.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Film is a very popular audiovisual work. Film is a means of communication that is used to convey messages to the public through a series of images arranged sequentially and sound that has a message content in it. The messages conveyed are usually related to morals, advice, culture, and social issues that occur in the general public. Film is also believed to be one of the most powerful media in conveying messages to the public because films are able to influence people's attitudes and behavior. Through film, one is able to change the mindset according to what is shown in a film.

Film is one of the communication media used by certain institutions or institutions to convey messages to the public and is included in the types of mass communication products. Communication is defined as a series of activities carried out by humans to exchange ideas, thoughts, and ideas. With communication, a person is able to add to the wealth of insight naturally through the various information received.

Communication can be said to be effective if there are similarities between the communicator and the communicant regarding the message conveyed and the media that supports the course of the communication (Syam, 2011).

Short films are films that have a shorter duration, which is less than 60 minutes (Mabruri, 2008). Therefore, with a shorter duration, filmmakers are able to present films with more concise content but without reducing the complexity of conveying the story through the scenes in it. Meanwhile, film series or serial films are films that are divided into several parts of a larger story with a specific broadcast schedule. There are many communication products used by humans today including news, advertisements, billboards, and films. This communication product is also referred to as a mass communication product that functions as a disseminator of information to the general public where informants are able to convey information quickly and thoroughly to the whole community without any space and time limitations. As well as the messages that are loaded are messages that have value in them both the value of information, entertainment, education, and social control.

Wedding Agreement the Series is an Indonesian film series produced by Starvision Plus in 2022. This series is an adaptation of the film Wedding Agreement in 2019 and premiered on Disney Hotstar on March 25, 2022. Wedding Agreement the Series is directed by Archie Hekagery and starring Archie Hekagery, Indah Permatasari, Refal Hady, Susan Sameh, Wafda Saifan, Zsazsa Utari, Cut Mini, Bucek, and Mathias Muchus. The film Wedding Agreement the Series consists of 10 episodes.

This film tells the story of an arranged marriage between Bian and Tari based on the wishes of their parents who have been friends for a long time. This arranged marriage became a big fear for Bian, because previously Bian had a fiancé named Sarah. During his marriage, Bian, who seemed forced into marriage because he was still haunted by his past, made a marriage agreement with his wife Tari through a signed written statement. Bian's indifferent attitude as a husband makes Tari give in and be patient in making Bian's heart melt. This film gives many moral messages, especially teaching the importance of a commitment in marriage.

### **Definition of Film**

Literally, film is the same as cinematographie which comes from the word cinema which means motion, and tho or phytos which means light. Therefore, film can be interpreted as painting movement with the help of light. Furthermore, film means a series of images put together to form a story. Films usually raise issues that correlate with social and cultural conditions in a society (Alfathoni, 2022).

Film contains quite complex content because it includes audio and visuals in conveying a story. If one of them is not qualified, then a film may not necessarily be able to convey an effective message to the audience. The storyline conveyed, scenes, shooting techniques, sound effects, etc. will add a pleasant impression and experience to the audience (Pratista, 2008). Therefore, to fulfill this there are two film-forming elements, namely:

#### **a. Narrative Elements**

Narrative elements are elements related to a continuous storyline and have causality in them. Narrative elements are material that will be managed into a series of stories that are bound to one another in the laws of cause and effect that occur in space and time. Narrative elements include theme, character, conflict, time, and location. These things become important elements in building a series of stories in a film.

#### **b. Cinematic Elements**

Cinematic elements are related to technical aspects which include several things, namely:

##### **a. Mise and Scene**

Mise en scene is everything that is in front of the camera frame that has been set according to the direction of the director and is ready to be captured.

The elements contained in the mise and scene include: Setting, Costume, Make Up, Lighting and others.

#### b. Cinematography

According to Joseph V. Mascelli A.S.C, cinematography is the study of the technique or art of taking pictures. Cinematography is an activity of painting, recording, capturing movement with the help of light. The people who participate in the process of making films have at least basic capabilities in mastering technology, art, communication, and good organization. A filmmaker must have the ability to arrange and control a scene by taking into account the camera angle, distance, height, image composition, and so on (Sari, 2020).

### Moral Message

Moral is something that distinguishes the good and bad of a human behavior as a human being does not discriminate between professions and social status in society. Moral is a benchmark in determining the right or wrong of an action based on the good or bad value of the act (Suseno, 1989).

The word moral is a synonym for ethics which is a branch of philosophy. Morals and ethics have the same etymology. Moral comes from the Latin word "mores" which means habit. While ethics comes from the Greek word "ethos" which also means custom. Moral is an ethical attitude that must be carried out by humans as social beings in their activities in life. Moral functions as a guardian of a person's good name or dignity, including matters relating to his profession (Santoso, 2012).

Based on the definition above, moral messages can be interpreted as messages that contain information or teachings about how humans act based on the good and bad values of an action. Moral messages are ideas or messages that have good value. Moral messages can be in the form of advice delivered in oral or written form about guidelines for taking action in life.

### Rholand Barthes' Theory of Semiotics

In general, semiotics is the study of signs or symbols found in the mass media. According to Barthes, signs are an important part of communication, because signs such as language reflect the assumptions of certain groups of people at a certain time.

Roland Barthes' Semiotic Theory divides the sign system into three meanings, namely denotation, connotation and myth. Denotative meaning is a first level meaning system, while connotative meaning is a second level meaning system formed based on other systems that have been built before, as well as myth which is an ideological operation that develops from the presence of connotative meaning.

1. <i>Signifer</i> (Penanda)	2. <i>Signified</i> (Penanda)
3. <i>Denotative sign</i> (tanda denotatif) ( <i>first system</i> )	
5. <i>Connotative Signifer</i> (penanda konotasi)	6. <i>Connotative Signified</i> (petanda konotasi)
7. <i>Connotative Sign</i> (tanda konotasi) ( <i>second system</i> )	

Table 1.1 Roland Barthes Semiotic Sign Map

In this concept, the denotative sign consists of signifier and signified. However, at the same time the denotative sign is also a connotative marker. Or it could be said that it is a material element. Denotation is the first level of significance which is collected through the closedness of meaning. While the connotative sign is the second level of significance. The connotative sign not only has an additional meaning but also contains both parts of the underlying denotative sign. The connotation sign is closely related to ideology, the connotation functions as a disclosure or epistemic of the values prevailing in a society at a certain time so that the connotation sign is able to form a level called myth.

Myth has three dimensions of marker, signified, and sign. Myth is constructed on existing interpretive relationships. Thus, myth is also said to be a second-level system of meaning. The existence of myths is based on the existence of culture, therefore Barthes says that connotations and myths are expressions of a culture. Culture is expressed through text in the form of important markers such as characters, settings, perspectives, and others (Sobur, 2013).

#### a) Denotation

Denotation is the first level sign system that explains the meaning directly and unambiguously. Denotation can also be said as the meaning as it is. For example, the sign "lion" which means a real lion (Cobley & Jansz, 1999).

#### b) Connotation

The connotation as a second level sign system arises from ideological operations. Connotation describes a sign that has the possibility of having different meanings. Connotation is a hidden or implied meaning (Christomy, 2004). The sign "lion" is connoted as the meaning of courage.

#### c) Myths

Myth is a meaning that is used as an expression or justification for values that apply and influence society in a certain period of time. Myth according to Roland Barthes is defined as a cultural way of looking at phenomena or social reality.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODE

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach. A qualitative approach leads to the basic logic of a methodology that seeks to find out more about a social phenomenon or phenomena related to humans. Through the procedure of a qualitative approach, the resulting data is narrative data, namely data in the form of words that contain a more in-depth explanation of the object under study (Siyoto, 2010).

The qualitative approach is analyzed through an inductive framework, namely explaining something from the specific and then moving on to general matters. More specifically, this research uses a descriptive qualitative approach. A descriptive qualitative approach is a research approach that aims to thoroughly examine a problem according to the data obtained and then presented, analyzed, and interpreted (Narbuko, 2015).

This research also focuses on semiotic analysis. Semiotic analysis is a science that examines signs in an object. Semiotics tries to find the deep meaning of a sign. Therefore, semiotic analysis can be examined through a qualitative approach. In this study, semiotic analysis is used to examine the signs that represent the meaning of the moral messages contained in the film *Wedding Agreement the Series*.

Sources of data used in this study are primary data and secondary data. Primary data is data obtained directly from informants through the interview stage and is the main information that is directly related to the subject matter of the research. Secondary data is data obtained by researchers from several existing sources. This secondary data can be obtained from sources such as books, journals, research reports and others.

According to (Sugiyono, 2013) data collection techniques are the most strategic techniques in research, because the main purpose of research is to find and collect data. Data collection techniques used are in-depth interviews, observation and documentation. The data analysis technique used is data reduction, presentation and conclusion.

The subject of this study was the *Wedding Agreement* the Series episode 1-10 which was uploaded on the Disney Hotstar video service platform, while the objects of research were the scenes, scenes and dialogues contained in the film.

### 3. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

#### Storyline Film *Wedding Agreement* The Series



Figure 4.1 The *Wedding Agreement* Movie Poster Series

The story begins with Bian and Tari's wedding which took place based on the wishes of their parents. Bian is a half-hearted party to carry out this marriage because he previously had a fiancé named Sarah. Bian and Tari's parents have been friends for a long time and intend to match Bian and Tari since they were little. Bian was forced to do this marriage because he wanted to grant the request of his mother who was suffering from cancer to look after Tari. During the wedding, Bian shows an attitude of dislike for Tari while Tari acts the other way around. Bian, who felt unable to carry out this marriage, finally made a marriage agreement with Tari by writing several provisions on a piece of paper affixed with a stamp. Bian plans to separate from Tari after their marriage has lasted one year, but Tari doesn't think their marriage isn't to be played with. Every day, Tari carries out her duties as a good wife, but Bian cannot accept this and is constantly curt at Tari. In fact, Bian did not allow Tari to sleep with him and gave Tari boundaries. Bian still can't accept Tari and he still has memories of his ex-fiancé, Sarah. Bian is still trying to contact and meet Sarah and promises to marry Sarah when Bian separates from Tari later. Sarah, who is considered the third person, often causes chaos in their household.

Day after day they live it, Tari with patience and love continues to give in until it slowly makes Bian's heart melt. Bian is also haunted by anxiety because on the one hand he already loves Tari but on the other hand he still wants Sarah. Bian has started to open his heart to Tari, but at the same time Bian still cares about Sarah. Tari feels hurt again, so in the end she chooses to leave until Bian can decide to choose. Bian feels that he has lost Tari and spends his days empty. Bian kept looking for Tari and finally decided to choose Tari to be his lifelong friend. Bian and Tari

live a happy household life like a married couple in general. Tari doesn't want the bitter incident in her household to happen again. This time, Tari makes a proposed marriage agreement for her husband. Just like what Bian did, Tari wrote several points of the agreement on a piece of paper and asked Bian to agree and sign the agreement. The ups and downs they live and the longer they get to know and understand each other.

Problems in their household still arise, but over time they are able to overcome them and maintain their marriage bond. Finally, Bian and Tari's marriage, which started out badly, found a bright spot and happiness when they were blessed with a child.

Wedding Agreement The Series is a film series that can be accessed through Disney Hotstar. This series consists of 1 season and 10 episodes with broadcast dates March 25 2022-May 27 2022.

### **Data Findings and Analysis**

From the entire plot of the film in this research, the film in conveying messages is not always explicit, but there are messages conveyed implicitly. Messages that are latent in nature are not easy for the audience to understand if the audience does not have a specific understanding of the film being watched. Therefore, this research was made so that the hidden messages in a film can be understood using Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis. Here the researcher will show several related scenes and form a scene in the film Wedding Agreement The Series then the researcher will analyze these scenes by looking for meaning in denotation, connotation, and myth which can finally construct the moral message in the film.

In addition to using Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis method, here the researcher will present the results of interviews with the people of Medan City who watched the film Wedding Agreement The Series. It is hoped that the results of this interview can be used to complement the results of the analysis and see the existence of myths that develop in society through each film scene that has been analyzed previously. Through this interview method, later researchers will find out how the film is able to build social reality in society. The following is an attachment to the results of interviews from 5 informants who watched the film Wedding Agreement The Series:

1. Name of source: Wahyu Pramudita Results of interview: 56 This film constructs several important issues in marriage that people may rarely realize. After watching this film, a belief arises about how to respect your partner, especially to stay loyal and not involve people from the past or third parties in a relationship. Moreover, several appearances of conflict about the third person which are shown repeatedly seem to give a view to the audience that the topic of discussion about the past is a sensitive topic that couples should not talk about. It becomes an ideology that is believed and most likely can be applied to anyone who watches it. The results of this interview have provided an explanation of the mythical meaning of scene 1 and scene 3.
2. Name of the interviewee: Tengku Lisa Oktawi Result of the interview: There are several main points in this film that need to be underlined regarding the morals in marriage. As an audience who has entered a mature age and wants to enter the marriage stage, this film gives several messages that can later be applied in everyday life. Some of the things in question are morals about honesty in marriage, maintaining marriage, and building complete trust in partners. After watching this film, some of the marriage moral messages mentioned above can be understood and become a good lesson that can be trusted. The results of this interview have provided an explanation of the mythical meaning of scene 4, scene 7, and scene 9.

3. Name of source: Rizky Pratama Results of interview: 57 This film conveys a message to put your trust in and surrender to the destiny of Allah SWT. After understanding the contents of this film, it turns out that there is a message built by the filmmakers to the audience that is conveyed indirectly. The message contains how we as humans are able to accept provisions from Allah SWT and let go of what is not our right, as in the scene when Bian dared to break up with Sarah. This becomes something that is believed that Allah's destiny is the best and there are reasonable reasons why humans are not destined for something. The results of this interview have provided an explanation of the mythical meaning of scene 5 and scene 6.
4. Name of source: Sunarsih Interview result: Film Wedding Agreement The Series has conveyed the important values in marriage including fighting for the integrity of marriage and a sense of devotion to the husband, even though the husband has not been a good husband as played by the character Bian. The appearance of the scene when Tari experiences an accident because Bian does not allow her to go, is a belief that a wife who leaves without her husband's permission will experience a disaster later. This film teaches a lesson to be a devoted wife and not to leave without her husband's permission. The results of this interview have provided an explanation of the mythical meaning of scene 2.
5. Nama narasumber: Syafira Rahma Putri Hasil wawancara: Selain pesan moral dalam pernikahan, film ini juga memberi pesan tentang pentingnya ridho orang tua dalam segala hal. Setelah menonton film ini, ada kepercayaan yang muncul bahwa ridho Allah adalah ridho orangtua juga. Pesan ini disampaikan melalui beberapa 58 karakter yang berbeda tetapi dengan maksud yang sama yaitu memberi pesan tentang bahwa orang tua mengetahui apa yang terbaik untuk anaknya. Pesan moral tersebut menjadi satu hal yang diyakini dan menjadi pegangan bagi siapa saja yang menonton untuk berbakti dan percaya dengan apa yang orang tua katakan. Hasil wawancara ini telah memberi penjelasan makna mitos dari scene 8.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the description above, there is a moral message as follows:

- a. Get up and live with what is now, don't give up and then return to the past.
- b. You have to go with your husband's permission.
- c. Don't hurt your partner's feelings by talking about the past with him.
- d. The marriage relationship is not domination and must be fought for by both parties.
- e. Confident that the destiny of Allah SWT is the best.
- f. Letting go of something that doesn't belong to us is the way to get something better.
- g. Be honest and transparent with your partner so that there is no suspicion that ends in a fight.
- h. Believing in parents because God's blessing lies in the blessing of parents.
- i. Marriage is not only built because of love, but also followed by trust.

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