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Justice as Myth: A Barthesian Reading of Keadilan (The Verdict) through Surah An-Nisa: 135

*Keadilan sebagai Mitos: Pembacaan Barthesian atas Film Keadilan
(The Verdict) melalui Surah An-Nisa: 135*

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Abstract

This study examines the representation of justice in *Keadilan (The Verdict)* through Roland Barthes' semiotic framework, using QS. An-Nisa 4:135 as an ethical and interpretive anchor. Existing studies on Indonesian legal films have largely focused on narrative and social criticism, while limited attention has been given to the relationship between Qur'anic values and cinematic meaning-making. Employing a qualitative interpretive approach, this research analyzes key scenes through the levels of denotation, connotation, and myth. The findings reveal that the film positions QS. An-Nisa 4:135 as a moral reference for justice, yet simultaneously constructs ideological tensions through representations of legal inequality, vigilantism, and the marginalization of idealism. Three dominant myths emerge: law serves the powerful, vigilantism becomes an alternative form of justice, and idealism is sacrificed within corrupt systems. The study contributes to the intersection of Islamic media studies and film semiotics by demonstrating how Qur'anic ethics can function as a critical lens for examining ideological constructions in popular cinema.

Keywords: Justice; Roland Barthes; Film Semiotics; Surah An-Nisa; Ideological Myth

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji representasi keadilan dalam film *Keadilan (The Verdict)* melalui kerangka semiotika Roland Barthes dengan menjadikan QS. An-Nisa: 135 sebagai jangkar etis dan interpretatif. Kajian mengenai film hukum Indonesia umumnya berfokus pada narasi dan kritik sosial, sementara hubungan antara nilai-nilai Al-Qur'an dan konstruksi makna sinematik masih jarang diteliti. Dengan pendekatan kualitatif interpretatif, penelitian ini menganalisis sejumlah adegan kunci melalui tingkat denotasi, konotasi, dan mitos. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa film menempatkan QS. An-Nisa: 135 sebagai rujukan moral keadilan, namun secara bersamaan membangun ketegangan ideologis melalui representasi ketimpangan hukum, vigilantisme, dan marginalisasi idealisme. Terdapat tiga mitos dominan yang dihasilkan, yaitu hukum berpihak kepada yang berkuasa, vigilantisme sebagai alternatif keadilan, dan idealisme sebagai korban dalam sistem yang korup. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada kajian media Islam dan semiotika film dengan menunjukkan bagaimana etika Al-Qur'an dapat digunakan sebagai lensa kritis untuk membaca konstruksi ideologi dalam sinema populer.

Kata Kunci: Keadilan; Semiotika Roland Barthes; Film; Surah An-Nisa; Mitos Ideologis



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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia harbors a painful paradox behind the existence of its legal institutions: violence against human life continues to occur, while justice for victims often falls by the wayside at the hands of the very system that is supposed to protect them. The 2023 annual report of the National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM) recorded 2,753 complaints of human rights violations received throughout the year, with the right to justice ranking as the second most frequently violated right, with 896 complaints.¹ Indonesia harbors a painful paradox behind its legal institutions: violence against human life continues to occur, while justice for the victims is often neglected by the very system that is supposed to protect them. The 2023 annual report of the National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM) recorded 2,753 complaints of human rights violations received throughout the year, with the right to justice ranking second as the most frequently violated right, with 896 complaints.² Among the seven high-profile cases handled by the National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM) throughout 2023, the abduction and mistreatment of civilians stand out as some of the most damaging incidents for Indonesia's law enforcement, demonstrating that physical violence and murder are not merely ordinary criminal problems, but systemic issues that strike at the heart of state institutions.

In its 2023/24 report, Amnesty International Indonesia specifically highlights that unlawful killings continue to rise in Indonesia, while the cycle of impunity for perpetrators has never been fully broken through fair legal proceedings.³ The National Commission on Human Rights' 2024 Year-End Report reinforces these findings by documenting alleged acts of torture, violence, and inconsistencies in legal proceedings in a number of high-profile murder cases, including cases in which perpetrators with ties to power or capital have managed to evade the legal consequences that should apply equally to all.⁴ These conditions have created a social reality that serves as the most powerful backdrop for the film *Keadilan (The Verdict) (2025)*: a story about a wife murdered as a result of physical violence that is buried by the power of money, a husband criminalized for the death of the person he loved most, and a judicial system that, instead of uncovering the truth, twists it. In this context, the constitutional guarantee of human rights feels like an empty promise, and this film serves to reignite the question that has long been silenced: where is justice for those without power?

Within the tradition of semiotic studies, Roland Barthes has developed an analytical framework that goes beyond the mere identification of signs by establishing a system of two orders of signification, which allows researchers to read not only what appears on the surface of a text, but also the ideology operating covertly behind it. In *Mythologies (1957/1972)*, Barthes demonstrates how signs of popular culture function to construct "myths": an ideological discourse that naturalizes cultural constructions as something inevitable and universal.⁵

1 KOMNAS HAM RI, *Laporan Tahunan Komnas HAM RI 2023*, Jakarta 2024, <https://share.google/hPsDBv8ntp2GIBgBN>.

2 Singgih Wiryono, Diamanty Meiliana, *7 Kasus Yang Berhasil Diproses Ke Tahap Rekomendasi Oleh Komnas HAM Sepanjang Tahun 2023*, June 10, 2024, https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2024/06/10/14103231/7-kasus-yang-berhasil-diproses-ke-tahap-rekomendasi-oleh-komnas-ham?utm_source=Various&utm_medium=Referral&utm_campaign=AIML_Widget_Desktop.

3 Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Indonesia, "Situasi Hak Asasi Manusia Di Indonesia 2023/24,"* 2024, April 29, 2025, <https://www.amnesty.id/kabar-terbaru/siaran-pers/laporan-ham-amnesty-international-2024-tahun-menguatnya-praktik-otoriter-di-indonesia-dan-dunia/04/2025/>.

4 Komnas HAM RI, *Catatan Akhir Tahun 2024 HAM Di Indonesia*, n.d., [https://www.komnasham.go.id/files/20241210-catatan-akhir-tahun-2024-hak-asasi-\\$WSV79CZD.pdf](https://www.komnasham.go.id/files/20241210-catatan-akhir-tahun-2024-hak-asasi-$WSV79CZD.pdf).

5 Roland Barthes, *Mythologies. Selected and Trans. Annette Lavers*, 1972.

Furthermore, in his seminal essay “The Rhetoric of the Image,” included in *Image, Music, Text* (1977), Barthes introduced the concept of “anchorage” the role of verbal text in reducing the polysemy of images by directing the reader toward a specific meaning among the many possible ones which has become one of the most productive analytical tools in the study of film and visual media.⁶ In *Elements of Semiology* (1968), Barthes explains that at the level of connotation, the sign no longer functions as a neutral medium of communication but rather as a carrier of ideological content that operates covertly through the process of “ideological naturalization”: whereas at the first level (denotation) we read what appears literally, at the second level (connotation) we read the values and ideologies embedded in the sign; and when that connotation solidifies into something that appears “natural” and beyond question, it has transformed into a myth.⁷ Sobur adapts this framework to the context of Indonesian film studies by asserting that every cinematic element lighting, costumes, dialogue, space, and music is a sign that operates within a system of connotations and can be analyzed to uncover the ideologies produced by films.⁸ Meanwhile, the strength of Barthes’s semiotics compared to other semiotic theories lies precisely in its ability to uncover the ideologies hidden behind the signs that appear most “natural” in popular media.⁹

A number of previous studies have pioneered the study of film semiotics across various dimensions. Alfathah and Maulana (2023) pioneered a semiotic study of the use of Qur’anic verses in Indonesian films using Pierce’s theory, but their focus was on symbolic identity in general and did not address the specific function of a single verse as an anchor of meaning.¹⁰ Ananda et al. (2022) examined representations of injustice and violence in the film “Penyalin Cahaya” using semiotics, but without a Qur’anic values perspective. Puri (2024) analyzed representations of legal justice in Indonesian films using Barthes’s semiotics, but also without the values dimension of Qur’anic verses.¹¹ Meanwhile, Pratiwi and Afidah (2022) draw on Barthes to analyze the religious messages in films without focusing on the anchoring function of specific verses.¹² Thus, there is a clear gap in the research: no study has yet been conducted using a methodologically rigorous approach that employs Barthes’s two systems of signification to analyze how a specific verse of the Qur’an functions as an anchorage that constructs a system of meaning regarding justice in Indonesian non-religious legal films, including in its most critical dimension: does the myth of justice produced by the film reinforce or, conversely, betray the values of the verse it uses as a moral compass?

This study aims to conduct a systematic and multi-layered semiotic analysis of the film *Keadilan* (The Verdict) using Roland Barthes’s framework of the two orders of signification, grounded

6 James S. Hans, “Image-Music-Text by Roland Barthes, Stephen Heath,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 37, no. 2 (1978): 235–36.

7 Barthes, *Mythologies. Selected and Trans. Annette Lavers.*

8 Alex Sobur, “Analisis Teks Media: Suatu Pengantar Untuk Analisis Wacana, Analisis Semiotik Dan Analisis Framing, (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2001) Alex Sobur, *Semiotika Komunikasi* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2009) Ali Aziz, *Ilmu Dakwah*, (Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media Group, 2004) Andi Fikra Pratiwi Afruddin, “Film Sebagai Media Dakwah,” *Jurnal Aqlam Journal Of Islam and Plurality* 2, no. 2 (2017).

9 Arini Rahmawati Sansan, *Representasi Kelas Sosial Film 48 Jam untuk Indab Karya Jose Poernomo dan Implikasinya pada Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia di Sma: Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes*, 2024.

10 Suryana Alfathah and Rizqi Akbar Maulana, “Simbol Identitas Penggunaan Ayat Al-Qur’an Dalam Film Indonesia (Kajian Semiotika Film Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijck Dan Makmum),” *Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu Ushuluddin* 3, no. 2 (2023): 210–35.

11 Luki Kristina Puri and Hani Astuti, “Representasi Keadilan Hukum pada Film ‘Miracle In Cell No 7 Versi Indonesia’ (Analisis Semiotika),” *Forum Ilmiah* 21, no. 2 (2024), <https://share.google/9Df4fT7Om1NI3LwgY>.

12 Nurulita Danty Intan Pratiwi and Ida Afidah, “Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes Pesan Dakwah Dalam Film *Merindu Cahaya De Amstel*,” *Jurnal Riset Komunikasi Penyiaran Islam*, 2022, 93–98.

in Quranic Surah An-Nisa: 135 as the axis of analysis and the interpretations of *Al-Misbah*, *Ibn Kathir's commentary*, and *Al-Jami' li Ahkam Al-Qur'an* as a benchmark for values. Specifically, this study seeks to uncover the function of QS. An-Nisa: 135 as an anchorage that anchors the audience's interpretive framework to the film's narrative starting at minute 13:14; to identify the connotative meanings of justice constructed through visual and verbal signs in key scenes, including representations of violence, murder, and courtroom manipulation; as well as to deconstruct the myths of justice produced and naturalized by the film, including the ideological contradictions between the values claimed by the verse and the narrative presented by the film. In this way, this study is expected to make a methodological contribution to Indonesian film studies, Islamic media studies, and cultural studies, while offering a critical analysis of how popular media constructs and reinforces collective understandings of justice amidst the legal and human rights crisis currently facing Indonesia.

Method

This study is a qualitative research employing an interpretive-critical media text analysis design, chosen because the research objective is not to measure the frequency of signs but to gain an in-depth understanding of how the system of signs in the film works to construct, maintain, and challenge the meaning of justice within the tradition of critical cultural studies, which positions media texts as arenas of ideological struggle. The primary data source for this study is the film *Keadilan (The Verdict)* (2025), with four scene units as the focus of analysis: the scene at minute 13:14 containing a dialogue between Yanwar and Nina regarding QS. An-Nisa: 135 as text on the entrance to Harvard Law School; the courtroom scenes depicting the confrontation between Raka and attorney Timo; the scenes representing physical violence and murder as the primary triggers of the narrative; and the climactic scene where Raka brings a gun into the courtroom, while secondary data sources include three exegetical works as benchmarks for the meaning of the verses, namely *Tafsir Al-Misbah by M. Quraish Shihab*, *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, and *Al-Jami' li Ahkam Al-Qur'an by Al-Qurthubi*, as well as relevant semiotic literature. Data collection was conducted using three complementary techniques: systematic textual observation (close viewing) with scene notation based on time-code, dialogue, and mise-en-scène (set design, costumes, lighting); documentation of screenshots of scenes containing significant signs; and a literature review of exegetical works and semiotic literature as a theoretical foundation and point of comparison.

Data analysis is operationalized through Barthes's two-tiered sign system model in three sequential stages: first, denotative analysis that interprets each sign at the literal level using a table with columns for signifier, signified, and sign per scene unit; second, a connotative analysis that interprets denotative signs as new signifiers carrying cultural and ideological content, with the value of QS. An-Nisa: 135 as presented in the three exegetical works serving as a benchmark to measure the gap between the film's connotative meaning and the value declared by the verse; and third, a mythological analysis that identifies patterns of connotation that have solidified into ideological naturalization, moving from a textual reading to a reading of social ideology to unpack the myth of justice produced by the film and whether it reinforces or betrays the spirit of QS. An-Nisa: 135. The overall results of the analysis are presented in a scene-by-scene analysis table containing columns for denotation, connotation, and myth.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Surah An-Nisa': 135 as the Foundation of Justice

At the 13:14 mark, the film *Keadilan (The Verdict)* features a conversation between Raka Yanwar and his wife, Nina. In the scene, Nina reveals her aspiration to become a lawyer. Nina's greatest motivation is not merely professional ambition, but is rooted in a text she found inscribed at the entrance to Harvard Law School: QS. An-Nisa [4]: 135

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوِ الْوَالِدِينَ وَالْأَقْرَبِينَ إِن يَكُنْ غَنِيًّا أَوْ فَقِيرًا فَاللَّهُ أَوْلَىٰ بِهِمَا فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَىٰ أَن تَعْدِلُوا وَإِن تَلَوَّا أَوْ تَعْرِضُوا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ خَبِيرًا ﴿١٣٥﴾

“O you who believe, be upholders of justice and witnesses for the sake of Allah, even if the testimony is against yourselves, your parents, or your relatives. Whether the person (against whom the testimony is given) is rich or poor, Allah knows best the interests of both. Therefore, do not follow your desires, lest you deviate (from the truth). If you distort (the truth) or turn away (from bearing witness), know that Allah is fully aware of all that you do. [135]” – Surah An-Nisa: 4

The presence of this verse in an intimate conversation between husband and wife serves as the starting point for the film’s system of signs. Denotatively, this scene presents two things simultaneously: an intimate husband-wife conversation on one hand, and a reference to the world’s most prestigious legal institution (Harvard Law School) on the other. However, on a connotative level, the combination of the two yields something far more complex: a statement that true justice, even in the eyes of a world-class legal institution, stems from a transcendent value. The appearance of QS. An-Nisa: 135 in this scene holds a unique distinction compared to other signs in the film: it exists in two mediums simultaneously as written text (on the Harvard door) and as a verbal narrative through Nina’s dialogue. This allows the verse to function as a rich (polysemic) sign before ultimately being anchored by the film’s narrative context.

At the first level (denotation), this verse is a literal sign of a quotation from the Qur’an containing a command to uphold justice regardless of a person’s social status or wealth. In Tafsir Al-Misbah, M. Quraish Shihab explains that the word *قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ* implies a sincere and consistent commitment, not merely an occasional gesture, but a comprehensive commitment to justice.¹³ Ibn Kathir, in his commentary, also emphasizes that the command *شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ* to bear witness for the sake of Allah requires testimony that is pure, free from the influence of kinship or material interests.¹⁴ This is directly relevant to the film’s context, where Nina, as a law student, chooses this verse as the foundation of her aspirations; she wishes to be a witness to pure justice within the legal system she is about to enter. On the second level (connotation), the same verse shifts into a far broader connotative signifier; it represents the ideal of universal justice that transcends the boundaries of religion, culture, and even any positive legal system, including the Western legal system symbolized by Harvard Law School. The fact that this verse is inscribed at the entrance to the world’s most influential legal institution reinforces this connotation: the value of Islamic justice is not only relevant in a religious context but is also recognized within the discourse of universal law. Barthes explains that in the relationship between verbal text and image, the text functions as an anchor that limits the polysemy of a visual and directs the reader toward a specific meaning.¹⁵

Without an anchor, an image can be interpreted in various conflicting ways. In the film *Keadilan* (The Verdict), Quranic verse 4:135, which appears at 13:14 through the character Nina, serves precisely as a highly effective anchor. Without this verse, viewers might interpret the film as merely a story of personal revenge, a secular critique of legal corruption, or an action-thriller set in a courtroom. However, with the inclusion of An-Nisa: 135 through Nina’s dialogue, all these potential interpretations are anchored to a specific interpretive framework: justice as an

13 M. Quraish Shihab, “Tafsir Al-Misbah,” *Jakarta: Lentera Hati* 2 (2002): 52–54.

14 Ismail ibn Katsir, *Tafsir Al-Qur’an Al-‘Azim, Jilid I* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyah, 1998).

15 Azwar Azwar and Irvanti Auliana, “The Representasi Rekayasa Sosial Dalam Film *Unlocked* (Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes),” *Ekspresi Dan Persepsi: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi* 7, no. 1 (2024): 91–105.

absolute, universal, and transcendent value not merely an institutional construct. From that 13:14-minute scene onward, the audience is unconsciously invited to measure every event in the film against a pre-established moral standard: does the justice unfolding on screen align with the justice intended by the verse? Regarding the verse fragment *فَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا الْهَوَى* which means “do not follow your desires,” Shihab explains this as a strict prohibition against yielding to subjective inclinations that could distort the truth during a trial.¹⁶ It is this prohibition that subsequently becomes the unspoken benchmark for the audience in evaluating every action of the character Timo as a lawyer who manipulates the trial.

What makes the anchorage function in this film so powerful semiotically is the tension it creates between genre and values. The film *Keadilan* (The Verdict) is a secular legal thriller not a religious film, nor a proselytizing film. Yet it consciously positions the Qur’anic verse as the moral compass of the narrative through the character of Nina. This tension is not a weakness but a deliberate semiotic strategy by the filmmakers. By placing the verse in the mouth of a young, idealistic aspiring lawyer rather than a religious scholar or figure the film conveys the message that the value of justice in An-Nisa: 135 is a universal value alive in civic consciousness, not the exclusive domain of formal religious discourse. Nina’s death, which subsequently becomes the driving force of the entire film’s narrative, creates a profound semiotic irony: the woman who made the verse on justice the motivation of her life becomes the very victim of a system that is the furthest from the values of that verse. It is here that anchorage works most sharply; it not only anchors meaning but also constructs the contradictions that drive the entire narrative.¹⁷

Representations of Justice: An Analysis of Denotative and Connotative Meanings

An analysis of the second order of Roland Barthes’s semiotics moves from the surface of the sign toward the hidden layers beneath it. If denotation is the literal meaning that can be seen and heard directly in a scene, then connotation is the cultural, ideological, and social meaning operating behind those signs something Barthes refers to as the system of “ideological naturalization”: the way certain values are made to appear natural and unquestionable.¹⁸ In the film *Keadilan* (The Verdict), seven key scenes were selected as units of analysis because each represents a critical moment that, through connotation, constructs, tests, or dismantles the meaning of justice in relation to the value of QS. An-Nisa: 135. These seven scenes can be understood as a multi-layered narrative unit: from the failure of the legal system (06:33), the declaration of ideal values (13:14), the murder that triggers the conflict (19:47), the slander that distorts the facts (33:54), the crisis climax (49:16), the clash of values (1:13:00), to the confession that exposes the fabrication (1:27:00).

Table 1. Analysis of the Denotation and Connotation of the Scene at 06:33

Sign Elements	Denotation	Connotation
Independent verdict of judges	The judge read the defendant’s acquittal verdict in the formal courtroom	Legal justice is transactional in nature verdicts can be engineered by the authorities
Timo’s appearance and gestures	Lawyer in a neat suit, speaks calmly and measured at the trial	The power and manipulation hidden behind legal formality and professionalism

¹⁶ Shihab, “Tafsir Al-Misbah.”

¹⁷ Sepiya Triyani et al., “Representasi Ketidakadilan Hukum Dalam Film *Miracle in Cell No. 7* Versi Indonesia Dan Relevansinya di Kehidupan Nyata,” *DEIKTIS: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra* 5, no. 3 (2025): 2811–19.

¹⁸ Hans, “Image-Music-Text by Roland Barthes, Stephen Heath.”

The presence of the perpetrator's father	Powerful old man present in the conference room	Economic capital as a determinant of the course of money justice is stronger than the facts
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Source: Author (2026)

This scene sets the stage for the film's main conflict: a trial that ends with the defendant's acquittal thanks to his father's economic power and the skill of Timo, the lawyer, who is portrayed as intelligent, manipulative, and cunning. On a denotative level, the audience witnesses the proceedings of a formal trial involving a judge, lawyers, and the parties involved. However, on a connotative level, every visual element of this scene constructs a single message: the law is a marketplace that can be bought. This representation directly conflicts with the core value of QS. An-Nisa: 135, which asserts that wealth must not be a determining factor in justice. Scene 06.33 establishes the connotative foundation of the entire film's narrative: the judicial system is not an arena of truth, but an arena of power. Al-Qurthubi asserts that the prohibition against using wealth as a legal argument is an absolute command in An-Nisa: 135, and this scene represents an absolute violation of that value.¹⁹

Table 2. Analysis of the Denotation and Connotation of the Scene at 13:14

Sign Elements	Denotation	Connotation
Verses at Harvard's gate	QS text. An-Nisa: 135 inscribed at the entrance of the world's prestigious legal institutions	The value of Islamic justice is recognized across legal traditions; Justice is a universal value beyond the boundaries of religion and a positive legal system
Nina's Ambition as a Believer	Young women with professional aspirations in the field of law	Idealism of justice that lives in civic consciousness, not exclusively formal religious discourse
Context of intimate conversations	Personal dialogue between husband and wife	The value of justice is not only a public discourse, but a belief that is lived personally and deeply

Source: Author (2026)

This scene serves as the moral foundation of the entire film: Nina reveals to Raka that her primary motivation for becoming a lawyer stems from Quranic verse 4:135, which she found inscribed on the gate of Harvard Law School. On a denotative level, this is an intimate conversation between husband and wife. However, on a connotative level, the placement of a sacred verse in the mouth of an idealistic civilian woman, within the context of the world's most prestigious legal institution, constructs two connotations simultaneously: the value of Islamic justice is universal, and true justice arises from personal conviction, not merely institutional procedures. Alfathah and Maulana emphasize that when a Qur'anic verse is presented as a character's motivation in a film, it always functions as a "moral yardstick" that will be tested by the subsequent narrative. Shihab, in *Tafsir Al-Misbah*, explains that the command "qawwamina bil-qisth" demands a sincere and sustained commitment, and this is what Nina represents: not merely a profession, but a calling of the soul rooted in transcendent values. This scene is the only one in the film where the value of An-Nisa: 135 is truly present in full harmony before the narrative systematically dismantles it.

19 AA al-Qurtubi, "Al-Jāmi 'Li Aḥkām al-Qur'ān (Vol. 18, Pp. 205–233)," *Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah*, 2006.

Table 3. Analysis of the Denotation and Connotation of the Scene at 19:47

Sign Elements	Denotation	Connotation
Nina's Murder by Dika	Idealistic woman who holds the value of justice brutally murdered	The idealism of justice is the first to fall victim when the system fails; transcendent value is destroyed by impunity
Glass vase as a weapon	Household objects are commonly used as tools of murder	Violence comes from the most unexpected places; There is no safe space for the helpless
Dika drunk condition	The perpetrator was in a state of complete unconsciousness when committing violence	The impunity of the trial 06.33 gives courage to the new perpetrators of violence is an unbroken chain
Bathroom location	The most private and enclosed space in the house	There is no safe space; violence cuts across private-public boundaries when legal protections are not available

Source: Author (2026)

On the connotative level, Nina's death carries a far deeper dimension: it is not merely the killing of a woman, but the destruction of the very ideal of justice itself. Ananda et al., in their study of the film *Penyalin Cahaya*, demonstrate that in Indonesian cinema, violence against women is consistently portrayed as the locus of injustice, the place where systemic injustice manifests most clearly.²⁰ Nina's death is the most jarring connotation within this film's system of signs. It is not merely a narrative trigger but an ideological statement: as long as the law can be bought and impunity is allowed to persist (scene 06:33), violence against the weakest and most idealistic will continue to recur. Puri, in her analysis, demonstrates that in Indonesian legal films, the victim's death is always represented as a sign that activates the entire system of connotations of institutional injustice.²¹

Table 4. Analysis of the Denotation and Connotation of the Scene at 33:54

Sign Elements	Denotation	Connotation
False Testimony	The witness under oath stated that Raka was holding a broken glass	Testimony that is supposed to be a pillar of justice turns into an engineering tool; Truth can be produced by the powerful
Raka became a suspect	Murder victim's husband slandered as perpetrator	A total reversal of reality: victims are criminalized, perpetrators are protected by the legal system working in reverse
The formal atmosphere of the trial	Legal procedures run as if normal: judges, prosecutors, lawyers, witnesses	Legal formality as a mask that legitimizes lies; The correct procedure is used to achieve the wrong result

Source: Author (2026)

This scene features Gilang as the first witness in the trial for Nina's murder, giving false testimony by claiming that it was Raka who was holding the shard of glass. Denotatively, this is a courtroom scene with a witness giving testimony. However, on a connotative level, Gilang's

20 Ananda and Wibowo, "Analisis Semiotika: Representasi Ketidakadilan Korban Perpeloncoan Pada Film *Penyalin Cahaya*."

21 Puri and Astuti, "Representasi Keadilan Hukum pada Film 'Miracle In Cell No 7 Versi Indonesia' (Analisis Semiotika)."

testimony constructs three layers of meaning simultaneously: slander as a legal instrument organized by those in power, the victim turned suspect, and a judicial system that inverts reality. Ibn Kathir specifically addresses the prohibition against perverting testimony in An-Nisa: 135 as the gravest betrayal of the justice system, as it not only harms one party but undermines the entire foundation of public trust in the law, and scene 33.54 is a perfect representation of that warning.²²

Table 5. Analysis of the Denotation and Connotation of the Scene at 49:16

Sign Elements	Denotation	Connotation
Raka pistol and bomb	Weapons are used to dominate the courtroom	Violence as the only language that a failed system understands; extreme frustration that leads to extreme actions
Retrial demands	Raka asks for a correct and fair legal process to be repeated	Paradox: breaking the law to demand the justice of the law of an antinomial that reflects a total distrust of the institution
Courtroom as a hostage arena	The most formal legal institutions are used as the location of violent crises	Legal institutions have lost their legitimacy completely; Only the threat can force it to work

Source: Author (2026)

This scene depicts Raka taking the courtroom hostage, armed with a pistol, bombs, and other weapons, demanding a retrial. This is the scene with the most complex connotations: it functions as an ambiguous double signifier. On one hand, Raka is seen as a frustrated folk hero. On the other hand, he is seen as a victim who has crossed the line. This is referred to as “vigilante justice as social fantasy”: acts of taking the law into one’s own hands that are naturalized as heroism when institutions fail.²³

Table 6. Analysis of the Denotation and Connotation of the Scene at 1:13:00

Sign Elements	Denotation	Connotation
Raka in confrontation	Frustrated protagonist faces the lawyer who controls the trial	The small people who hold on to the truth face the power that holds on to their interests
Timo in confrontation	Intelligent, manipulative lawyer who calmly faces Raka’s pressure	Professional intelligence is used as a tool of power, not a tool of truth, intellect as an instrument of injustice

Source: Author (2026)

This scene depicts a direct confrontation between Raka and Timo inside or around the courtroom. Denotatively, this is a clash between two parties with opposing legal positions. On a connotative level, this confrontation is a visual representation of the binary opposition established from the beginning of the film: justice fought for (Raka) versus intelligence used for manipulation (Timo). Barker and Jane, in their critical cultural analysis, assert that character confrontations in popular films always function as representations of larger value conflicts within society.²⁴

22 Salsabilla Azhara Ritonga et al., “Ayat-Ayat Al-Qur’an Tentang Keadilan,” *Edu Society: Jurnal Pendidikan, Ilmu Sosial Dan Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat* 5, no. 1 (2025): 344–53.

23 Laksamana Tatas Prasetya et al., *Representasi Kelas Sosial Dalam Film Gundala (Studi Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes Mengenai Kelas Sosial Pada Film Gundala Karya Joko Anwar)*, 2022.

24 Chris Barker and Emma A. Jane, *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice*, 2016.

Table 7. Analysis of the Denotation and Connotation of the Scene at 1:27:00

Sign Elements	Denotation	Connotation
Gilang’s Confession at the Trial	Witness retracts previous testimony and admits to giving false testimony	The truth exists and can emerge, but only when external pressure (Raka’s hostage-taking) outweighs Timo’s threat
Timo’s illegal actions revealed	It was revealed that Timo threatened and intimidated witnesses	Timo not only manipulated the law, he actively destroyed the system of testimony that was supposed to be the foundation of justice
The context of the confession made under duress	The truth arises not because the system works, but because the system is forced by violence	Justice can only be achieved through crises, not through normal procedures, the system has lost its capacity to find the truth

Source: Author (2026)

This scene is the most dramatic moment in terms of truth: Gilang admits in court that his initial testimony was false, and that he gave that false testimony as a result of threats and intimidation from Timo’s lawyer. On the denotative level, this is a guilty plea before the court. On the connotative level, this scene contains several layers at once: the truth can emerge, but only under extreme pressure, a connotation that, paradoxically, reinforces the system’s failure while simultaneously opening a small crack of hope.

From the seven scenes analyzed above, a coherent and multi-layered system of connotations emerges, illustrating how the value of justice in QS. An-Nisa: 135 is present, tested, and ultimately questioned in the narrative of the film *Keadilan* (The Verdict). If the three key concepts of the verse *qawwamina bil-qisth* (sincere upholders of justice), *syuhada’a lillah* (witnesses for the sake of Allah), and *la tattabi’ul hawa’* (the prohibition against following one’s desires) are used as benchmarks, then the film’s map of connotations can be interpreted as follows:

First, the value of *qawwamina bil-qisth* is upheld only by Nina (scenes 13.14), the sole character who makes this verse the foundation of her life. Yet Nina is the first to become a victim (scene 19.47). The implication is crystal clear: the ideal of justice is the most vulnerable and the first to be sacrificed in a corrupt system. Shihab emphasizes that this command demands sustained commitment, and Nina’s death is a symbolic representation of how there is no protection for those who uphold such a commitment. Second, the value of “*syuhada’a lillah*”—pure testimony for the sake of Allah is systematically violated in three scenes simultaneously: by Gilang (33.54), who gives false testimony, by Dika (1:11:15) who hides the truth, and by Timo (1:13:00 and 1:27:00) who orchestrates the entire fabrication of testimony through threats and intimidation. Ibn Kathir asserts that fabricating testimony is the most serious form of betrayal against the justice system, and this film portrays this betrayal on an organized and systemic scale, not merely as an individual act.²⁵ Third, the prohibition of *la tattabi’ul hawa’* is violated by nearly all characters holding authority: Timo (the manipulative lawyer), Gilang (the intimidated witness), and even Raka himself (scene 16.03), who accepts a voucher from the litigant before transforming into a champion of justice. Az-Zuhaili asserts that this prohibition is specifically directed at professional authorities within the judiciary, and nearly all figures of authority in this film violate it.²⁶

25 Mustafa Khamal, *Kajian Ayat-Ayat tentang Keadilan dalam Al-Qur’an (Tinjauan Tafsir Adabi Ijtima’i)*, 2025.

26 Wahbah al-Zuhaili, *Tafsir Al-Munir Fi al-’Aqidah Wa al-Syari’ah Wa al-Manhaj* (Dar al-Fikr, 1991).

Overall, the system of connotations established by these nine scenes constructs a strong and consistent ideological statement: justice as defined in Quran 4:135 without discrimination between rich and poor, based on pure testimony, and free from personal desires is something that cannot be found in the legal system depicted in this film. The only moment in which the value of the verse moves toward fulfillment is scene 1:27:00, yet this occurs not because the system functions correctly, but because the system is forced by the violence of the hostage situation. This semiotic irony that justice can only be upheld in a manner that contradicts justice itself forms the foundation of the myth to be analyzed in the third subsection. Barker and Jane remind us that unpacking how ideology operates within popular texts is the task of critical cultural studies, a field whose social relevance extends beyond mere textual analysis.²⁷

The Myth of Justice: The Naturalization of Ideology and Social Reality

At the culmination of Barthes's semiotic analysis, the connotations identified in the previous subsection are reexamined to uncover patterns that crystallize into the myth of a second communication system, in which cultural constructs are transformed into something that appears natural, universal, and beyond question.²⁸ Myths do not operate through explicit statements, but rather through the repetition of signs that cause the audience to "accept unquestioningly" a particular worldview; Sobur explains that the power of a myth depends on its resonance with the collective social experience in which the text is produced and consumed.²⁹ In the film *Keadilan (The Verdict)*, an analysis of nine key scenes reveals three mutually reinforcing core myths: The First Myth, "the law belongs to those in power," is constructed through scenes 06.33 (acquittal due to economic power), 33.54 (Gilang's false testimony orchestrated by Timo through threats and intimidation), and 1.11.15 (Dika as a witness, not a defendant) all three cumulatively naturalize institutional injustice as a common condition, not an anomaly. The Second Myth, "vigilantism is true justice," is constructed through scene 49.16 (the courtroom hostage situation orchestrated by Raka, armed with a pistol and a bomb) and narratively reinforced by scene 1.27.00 (Gilang's confession resulting from the hostage situation) naturalizes individual violence as a legitimate and heroic response when institutions fail. The Third Myth, "idealism is always the first casualty," is constructed through Nina's arc from 13:14 (the declaration of the value of An-Nisa: 135) to 19:47 (her brutal death), naturalizing the moral pessimism that noble values are not strong enough to survive in a corrupt reality.³⁰ These three myths do not stand alone: The First Myth is the foundational premise, the Third Myth is the affective impact that conditions acceptance, and the Second Myth is the narrative "solution" offered; together, they form a coherent and mutually reinforcing ideological worldview.

27 Barker and Jane, *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice*.

28 Azalea Danuta Korpas et al., "Representation of Social Inequality in the Film *Shoplifters*: A Semiotic Study of Roland Barthes," *Cultural Narratives* 3, no. 1 (2025): 1–10.

29 Sobur, "Analisis Teks Media: Suatu Pengantar Untuk Analisis Wacana, Analisis Semiotik Dan Analisis Framing," (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2001) Alex Sobur, *Semiotika Komunikasi* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2009) Ali Aziz, *Ilmu Dakwah*, (Jakarta: Kencana Prenada Media Group, 2004) Andi Fikra Pratiwi Afruddin, *Film Sebagai Media Dakwah*.

30 Bebi Arifah Aldis and Husnel Anwar, "The Concept of Just and Civilized Humanity in the 2nd Principle as Viewed from QS An-Nisa Verse 58 According to Tafsir Quraish Shihab," *Academy of Education Journal* 15, no. 2 (2024): 1272–77.

Table 8. Myths of Justice: Constructive Scenes, Naturalized Propositions

Myths	Key Scenes	Hardened Connotations	Naturalized Proportions
Myth 1: “The law belongs to the powerful”	06.33 - Independent verdict; 33.54 – Gilang’s false testimony of Timo’s intimidation; 1.11.15 - Dika as a non-defendant witness	Money + power is stronger than facts and truth in determining the course of justice	“Institutional injustice is commonplace; not legal exceptions always side with those in power”
Myth 2 “Vigilantism is true justice”	49.16 - Raka held an armed trial hostage; 1.27.00 – Gilang’s confession happened BECAUSE of the hostage taking (narrative justification)	Individual violence has proven to be effective in forcing the truth where legal procedures fail	“When institutions fail, violence is a legitimate, heroic, and morally justifiable form of justice”
Myth 3: “Idealism is always the first victim”	13.14 → 19.47: Nina holds the An-Nisa score: 135 killed at the earliest - before all the troubled figures accept the consequences	Idealism is vulnerability, not strength; the principled are the least protected	“Those who hold noble values are not protected by the moral pessimism system is realism, not pessimism”

Source: Author (2026)

A critical reading based on Surah An-Nisa: 135 reveals a profound ideological tension between the myths produced by the film and the values declared in the verse. Az-Zuhaili refers to An-Nisa: 135 as the “verse of comprehensive justice” (ayat al-’adl al-shamil), a value that knows no class or status boundaries and stands in direct opposition to the First Myth.³¹ Regarding the Second Myth, Al-Qurthubi emphasizes that the prohibition “la tattabi’ul hawa” is most relevant precisely when one feels “right” in their anger, because the hidden desires concealed within a sense of wounded justice are the hardest to recognize and the easiest to justify and this precisely describes Raka’s condition at 49:16.³² Shihab, in his Tafsir Al-Misbah, emphasizes that the closing phrase of the verse, “fa inna Allaha kana bima ta’maluna khabira,” serves as both a warning and a consolation: justice that humans cannot uphold remains within Allah’s knowledge, so taking the law into one’s own hands is not justified even when the system fails completely.³³ In his commentary, Ibn Kathir emphasizes that perverting testimony is the most serious betrayal of justice,³⁴ and this film portrays it in three layers simultaneously: testimony under threat (Gilang, 33:54), the perpetrator’s testimony in his own defense (Dika, 1:11:15), and an honest confession that emerges only under coercion, not because the system functions (1:27:00). Alfathah and Maulana point out that the irony between the values declared in the verse and the narrative’s conclusion serves as the film’s most potent source of social critique.³⁵ Puri confirms that in Indonesian legal films, it is precisely the conflict between ideals and reality that resonates most deeply with the audience.³⁶

31 Al-Zuhaili, *Tafsir Al-Munir Fi al-’Aqidah Wa al-Syari’ah Wa al-Manhaj*.

32 Jaisyi Aozora Tawazun et al., “Understanding the Meaning of Liberalism from the Maudhu’i Interpretation Perspective in the Qur’an,” *Bulletin of Islamic Research* 1, no. 4 (2023): 453–66, <https://doi.org/10.69526/bir.v1i4.48>.

33 Andyaulya Fitra and Abdul Matin Bin Salman, “Upholding Justice Surah An-Nisa Verse 135 (According to Sayyid Qutb and Quraish Shihab),” *AL-IKHSAN: Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Studies* 2, no. 1 (2024): 64–75, <https://doi.org/10.61166/ikhsan.v2i1.40>.

34 Ibnu Katsir, *Tafsir Ibnu Katsir, Terj. Abdul Ghoftar*, 2013.

35 Alfathah and Maulana, “Simbol Identitas Penggunaan Ayat Al-Qur’an Dalam Film Indonesia (Kajian Semiotika Film Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijck Dan Makmum).”

36 Puri and Astuti, “Representasi Keadilan Hukum pada Film ‘Miracle In Cell No 7 Versi Indonesia’ (Analisis Semiotika).”

Table 9. Ideological Tensions: Three Key Concepts in An-Nisa: 135 versus Myths Produced by the Film

An Nisa' Concept	Ordered Values	Opposite Myths	Ideological Tension Analysis
Qawwamina bil-qisth (Earnest and continuous enforcer of justice)	Active, sustainable, non-class discrimination commitment is non-reactive and occasional (Shihab; Ibn Kathir: qawwama means to stand firm)	Myth 1: no single institution enforces these values independently; Myth 3: Nina (the holder of this value) is not protected	The film presents a total antithesis: the only successful "enforcement of justice" is through Raka's violence, an irony that simultaneously exposes systemic failures and produces problematic solutions. No judge, prosecutor, or apparatus institutionally enforces qawwamina bil-qisth.
Syuhada'a lillah (Testimony for the sake of Allah, free from pressure and interest)	Pure testimony for the sake of Allah, free from the pressure of kinship, material interests, or threats (Al-Qurthubi; Ibn Kathir: distorting testimony is the greatest betrayal)	Myth 1: Gilang's testimony was threatened by Timo (33.54); Dika testifies in his own interest (1.11.15)	The violation occurred in three layers and was systemically organized by Timo. Gilang's honest confession (1.27.00) is that the only moment of martyrdom in the film occurs not because the system works but because he is forced to take hostage. This is an ironic representation: the value of the martyrs of lillah can only be realized after the system of martyrs of lillah itself is completely destroyed.
La tattabi'ul hawa' (Do not follow lust in justice)	The prohibition follows a subjective tendency for all authority holders: judges, lawyers, witnesses, litigants (Az-Zuhaili); This is the most inclusive prohibition in the verse	Myth 2: Raka's actions (49.16) are naturalized as heroism, even though they are a form of lust that is disguised as a sense of justice	Almost all of the characters violate la tattabi'ul hawa' Timo (material interests), Gilang (fear), Raka (anger wrapped in justice). The most ironic is Raka: he violates this prohibition with the aim of enforcing the same values in the verse that lists the prohibition. The closing verse (fa inna Allaha kana bima ta'maluna khabira) is the only resolution that the film does not provide

Source: Author (2026)

These three myths will not be effective unless they strongly resonate with the real social conditions of Indonesian society; it is this historical dimension of naturalization that makes them so difficult to dismantle. Indonesia's CPI score was 34 out of 100 in 2023, with 2,753 reports of human rights violations throughout the same year, including 771 reports against the police,³⁷ and the pattern of impunity for perpetrators of violence that is allowed to persist are social conditions that serve as fertile ground for the naturalization of the First Myth: viewers do not feel "constructed" by the film, but rather that their experiences are "validated." Agustia et al. assert that myths in media representation function to reproduce dominant ideologies by making these constructions appear natural and beyond question.³⁸ The Second Myth (vigilantism) is accepted not as fantasy but as a "logical necessity." The strength of Barthes's semiotics lies in its ability to unpack the ideology hidden behind the signs that appear most "natural" in popular media, and this is what this analysis does: it unpacks how films transform legitimate social frustrations into a specific ideology of justice.³⁹

37 Transparency International Indonesia, *Corruption Perceptions Index 2023*, January 30, 2024.

38 Km Tri Sutrisna Agustia et al., *Myth and Ideology in Smartphone Advertisement: Semiotic Study*, 2024.

39 Sansan, *Representasi Kelas Sosial Film 48 Jam Untuk Indah Karya Jose Poernomo Dan Implikasinya Pada Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia Di Sma: Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes*.

Table 10. Map of the Relationships Among Myths, Mechanisms of Naturalization and Social Resonance in Indonesia

Myths	Functions within the Film’s Ideological System	Mechanisms of Naturalization	Indonesian Social Resonance	Final Position on An-Nisa:135
Myth 1 “The law belongs to those in power”	PREMISE: the foundation that makes Myths 2 and 3 acceptable as a reasonable response	Repetition of systemic failure (3 consecutive scenes) until the audience is no longer surprised “this is just the norm”	CPI 34/100 (2023); thousands of cases where economic status determines the verdict; 771 reports of official corruption	A complete antithesis, yet the anchorage of An-Nisa: 135 serves as a marker that this is a deviation from what should be the norm, not the norm itself
Myth 2 “Vigilantism is true justice	“SOLUTION”: an emotional-narrative response to Myth 1 that is naturalized as heroism and the only possibility	Narrative justification: the truth emerges BECAUSE the film’s hostage-taking “proves” that violence is effective where the procedure fails	Collective experience of powerlessness towards institutions; Normalization of vigilante in Indonesian public opinion	Most ideologically dangerous: the goal aligns with the values of the verse, this myth-contradictory method closes the possibility of institutional reform as an alternative
Myth 3: “Idealism is always the first victim”	AFFECTIVE IMPACT: conditioning the acceptance of Myth 2 by eliminating alternatives if the good always loses, why not use violence?	Arc Nina: the earliest die-value holder of the audience learns that idealism does not survive in this reality	The experience of criminalized activists, journalists, whistleblowers; impunity of perpetrators of human rights violence	The most dangerous long-term: producing moral pessimism that weakens the spirit of qawwamina bil-qisth in society at large

Source: Author (2026)

Based on an analysis of these three myths and their relationship to the values of QS. An-Nisa: 135, this study finds that the film *Keadilan (The Verdict)* operates along two ideologically conflicting trajectories simultaneously. On one hand, the film functions as a valid social critique by positioning An-Nisa: 135 as a moral anchor and then presenting a reality that is in complete opposition to it; the film exposes the systemic failures of the Indonesian judicial system in a way that strongly resonates with collective experience a function recognized as an important contribution of Indonesian cinema to public discourse.⁴⁰ On the other hand, films simultaneously function as producers of problematic myths: vigilantism is naturalized as heroism, moral pessimism as realism, and institutional failure as the norm. All three, if accepted without critical analysis, have the potential to contribute to the normalization of violence and the erosion of trust in the possibility of peaceful institutional reform. Barker and Jane assert that critical cultural studies have a responsibility to unpack both of these dimensions not by rejecting

40 Aldis and Anwar, “The Concept of Just and Civilized Humanity in the 2nd Principle as Viewed from QS An Nisa Verse 58 According to Tafsir Quraish Shihab.”

the film, but by reading deeper than the surface of its narrative.⁴¹ Ultimately, the myth of justice portrayed in this film is encapsulated in a single statement that contains a contradiction: “Justice is a value we all agree upon, but to uphold it, one may have to be willing to violate it first.” And it is within that contradiction that the entire crisis of justice in Indonesia which is also a crisis of the value of An-Nisa: 135 in social practice is depicted most clearly and most honestly.⁴²

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the representation of justice in *Keadilan (The Verdict)* operates through a complex interplay between Qur’anic ethics and cinematic ideology. Using Roland Barthes’ semiotic framework, the analysis reveals that QS. An-Nisa 4:135 functions as an ethical anchor that guides the interpretation of justice throughout the film. At the denotative level, the film portrays legal proceedings, corruption, and struggles for accountability, while at the connotative level, it exposes tensions between moral ideals and institutional realities. More importantly, the mythological analysis uncovers three dominant ideological constructions: the belief that the law ultimately serves the powerful, the normalization of vigilantism as an alternative path to justice, and the portrayal of idealism as a vulnerable value sacrificed within corrupt systems. These findings indicate that the film simultaneously critiques legal injustice and reproduces ideological assumptions that shape public perceptions of justice, authority, and resistance. The study, therefore, confirms that cinematic texts are not merely reflections of social reality but active producers of meaning that influence collective understandings of legal and moral order.

The research contributes theoretically, methodologically, and substantively to the fields of film studies, Islamic media studies, and cultural criticism. Theoretically, it extends Barthesian semiotics by incorporating a Qur’anic verse as an ethical and interpretive anchorage for analyzing ideological meanings in popular cinema. Methodologically, it demonstrates how denotation, connotation, and myth can be integrated with Qur’anic ethical principles to generate a multidimensional reading of film texts. Substantively, the study enriches scholarly discussions on justice representation in Indonesian cinema by highlighting the tensions between normative Islamic values and contemporary cinematic narratives. The findings suggest that QS. An-Nisa 4:135 provides a critical framework for evaluating representations of justice beyond legal formalism, emphasizing impartiality, moral responsibility, and resistance to personal interests. Through this perspective, the study offers a novel contribution to interdisciplinary scholarship by showing how religious ethics can serve as a productive lens for examining ideological constructions embedded within popular cultural products.

Despite these contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study is limited to a single film and therefore cannot be generalized to all Indonesian legal dramas or cinematic representations of justice. Second, the analysis relies on textual and interpretive methods, meaning that audience reception and actual viewer responses remain unexplored. Third, the use of Barthesian semiotics inevitably reflects the researcher’s interpretive position, allowing for alternative readings of the same cinematic signs. Future studies should expand the scope by comparing multiple films, examining cross-cultural representations of justice, or incorporating audience reception methods to investigate how viewers negotiate the ideological meanings identified in this study. Further research may also explore other Qur’anic concepts, ethical frameworks, or semiotic approaches to deepen understanding of the relationship between religion, ideology, and media representation. Such investigations would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how popular cinema constructs, contests, and transforms contemporary notions of justice in diverse social and cultural contexts.

41 Barker and Jane, *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice*.

42 khamal, *Kajian Ayat-Ayat tentang Keadilan dalam Al-Qur’an (Tinjauan Tafsir Adabi Ijtima’i)*.

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