



## **Representation of Islamic Communication in Multicultural Spaces: A Semiotic Analysis of the Film 99 Cahaya di Langit Eropa**

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**Abstract:** *This study aims to analyze the representation of Islamic communication within multicultural spaces through the film 99 Cahaya di Langit Eropa. The focus is directed toward visual symbols such as mosques and the hijab, verbal signs in the form of dialogues about Qur'anic recitation and greetings of peace, as well as the narrative of the main character's religious experiences that portray interactions between Muslims and European society. The method employed is qualitative with Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, which interprets signs through three layers: denotation, connotation, and myth. Data were obtained through documentation by repeatedly viewing the film and supported by academic literature related to Islamic communication, the mediatization of religion, and semiotics. The findings reveal that the film represents Islamic communication in a persuasive, inclusive, and adaptive manner, functioning as a medium of intercultural and interreligious interaction. At the denotative level, Islamic symbols appear as religious identity, while at the connotative level, they affirm values of tolerance, harmony, and solidarity. At the mythic level, the film constructs an ideological narrative that Islam is a universal religion capable of engaging in dialogue with diversity. This study highlights the significant role of popular media in constructing discourses of Islamic communication within multicultural spaces.*

**Keywords:** *Islamic Communication, Mediatization of Religion, Representation, Semiotics, Film*

**Abstract:** *Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis representasi komunikasi Islam dalam ruang multikultural melalui film 99 Cahaya di Langit Eropa. Fokus kajian diarahkan pada simbol-simbol visual seperti masjid dan hijab, tanda verbal berupa dialog tentang bacaan Al-Quran dan ucapan salam, serta naratif pengalaman keagamaan tokoh utama yang menggambarkan interaksi antara Muslim dengan masyarakat Eropa. Metode yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan pendekatan semiotika Roland Barthes, yang memaknai tanda melalui tiga lapisan, yaitu denotasi, konotasi, dan mitos. Data diperoleh melalui studi dokumentasi dengan menonton film secara berulang dan didukung literatur akademik terkait komunikasi Islam, mediatisasi agama dan semiotika. Hasil*



penelitian menunjukkan bahwa film ini merepresentasikan komunikasi Islam secara persuasif, inklusif, dan adaptif, sehingga berfungsi sebagai sarana interaksi lintas budaya dan agama. Pada level denotasi, simbol-simbol Islam tampil sebagai identitas religius, sementara pada level konotasi ia menegaskan nilai toleransi, harmoni, dan solidaritas. Pada tahap mitos, film membangun konstruksi ideologis bahwa Islam merupakan agama universal yang mampu berdialog dengan keberagaman. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa media populer berperan penting dalam mengonstruksi wacana komunikasi Islam di ruang multikultural.

**Kata Kunci:** *Komunikasi Islam, Mediatisasi Agama, Representasi, Semiotika, Film*

## Introduction

The film *99 Cahaya di Langit Eropa* in Part 1 narrates the life of Hanum and Rangga, who pursue their studies abroad and learn to adapt to people from diverse countries. In Part 2, the story continues with their spiritual journey to Cordoba, Spain, recognized as a center of Islamic civilization in Europe. This film represents Islamic communication in multicultural spaces through symbols and narratives that affirm Muslim identity while simultaneously encouraging intercultural dialogue. The representation of Islamic communication in this film emphasizes that Muslim identity can be preserved even within multicultural contexts that embody different values and cultures. The film demonstrates how Islamic symbols and practices function as a medium of communication that fosters dialogue and strengthens interreligious tolerance. The interactions between Muslims and multicultural societies illustrate a complex process of identity negotiation within a predominantly non-Muslim social space. Muslim identity is negotiated not only through political discourse but also through everyday practices such as lifestyle, clothing, and religious symbols, which serve as means of attaining social acceptance.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the analysis of fatwa discourses in Europe reveals how religious authorities assist Muslim communities in articulating loyalty and

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<sup>1</sup>Amena Amer, “Between Recognition and Mis/Nonrecognition: Strategies of Negotiating and Performing Identities Among White Muslims in the United Kingdom,” *Political Psychology* Volume 41, Nomor 3 (2020): 533–48.



identity in ways that align with life in multicultural societies.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the negotiation of Muslim identity in Europe takes place not only in private spaces but also in the public sphere, as a strategy of Islamic communication to gain recognition and tolerance.

Several studies highlight that film media plays an important role in representing Muslim identity within multicultural spaces. Media can challenge negative stereotypes through more balanced representations, where films may serve as a dialogic space to showcase the moderate face of Islam.<sup>3</sup> In addition, the presence of the Indonesian Muslim diaspora in the Netherlands negotiates identity through cultural and social practices, demonstrating the capacity for adaptation without losing their religious identity.<sup>4</sup> The representation of Islam in the media cannot be separated from the theoretical framework of the mediatization of religion, which explains how religion undergoes transformation when it is mediated through media platforms. In the digital era, film and television play a significant role in reshaping religious experiences and interfaith relations, demonstrating the relevance of the mediatization of religion theory in the context of Islamic representation.<sup>5</sup> Thus, film can be understood not merely as entertainment, but also as an instrument of Islamic communication that negotiates identity, reduces stereotypes, and strengthens tolerance in multicultural spaces. The purpose of this study is to reveal the Islamic values that are accepted and negotiated within the context of diversity or multiculturalism.

<sup>2</sup> Abdessamad Belhaj, “MUSLIM LOYALTY AND IDENTITY IN EUROPE: Discourse Analysis of ECFR Fatwas,” *Miqot: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* Volume 49, Nomor 1 (2025): 74–91, <https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v49i1.1388>.

<sup>3</sup> Muhammad Nuril Fauzan, “Bridging Realities: Navigating Pop-Culture Media for Equitable Muslim Portrayals through the Prism of Moderation in Post-9/11,” *Esensia. Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* Volume 25, Nomor 1 (2024): 84–98, <http://ejournal.uin-suka.ac.id/ushuluddin/esensia/index>.

<sup>4</sup> Musahadi & Ahmad Arif Junaidi, “Becoming Europeanized Muslims: Religious Identity Formation among Millennials in the Indonesian Muslim Diaspora in the Netherlands.”, *Journal of Muslims in Europe* Volume 13, Nomor 2 (2024): 193–214., [https://brill.com/view/journals/jome/13/2/article-p193\\_4.xml](https://brill.com/view/journals/jome/13/2/article-p193_4.xml).

<sup>5</sup> Yidan Ding et al., “The Mediatization of Religion : How Digital-Age Film and Television Reshape Interfaith Experiences,” *Religions* Volume 16, Nomor 9 (2025): 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel16091172>.



Understanding Islamic communication in multicultural spaces is essential, as it can serve as a medium for intercultural and interreligious interaction. Islamic communication plays an important role in promoting religious moderation, fostering interfaith interaction, and preventing conflict within plural societies.<sup>6</sup> Likewise, interfaith communication serves as an essential foundation for fostering mutual respect and strengthening social cohesion in plural societies. Social interactions within the practice of interreligious communication can cultivate tolerance and solidarity amid differences in belief.<sup>7</sup> This representation demonstrates an adaptive da‘wah strategy while simultaneously reinforcing Muslim identity amid the dominance of Western culture. Thus, the findings of this study are expected to develop a new perspective that the representation of Islamic communication in film should not be understood merely as the transmission of religious values, but also as a cultural practice that shapes multicultural dialogue.

This study argues that the representation of Islamic communication in multicultural spaces through the film *99 Cahaya di Langit Eropa* reflects an adaptive da‘wah strategy that also strengthens Muslim identity within the diversity of Western culture. The film portrays Muslim interactions with European society through religious symbols such as the hijab, mosques, and worship practices, which serve as points of identity negotiation as well as spaces for intercultural dialogue. The form of Islamic communication depicted is not confrontational but persuasive and inclusive, creating mutual understanding and reducing the potential for conflict. This indicates that Islamic communication can function as an effective medium for bridging differences, fostering tolerance, and strengthening social harmony. Accordingly, this study contends that film as a popular medium plays a crucial role in representing Islamic communication that is relevant, universal, and capable of affirming Islam’s position as a religion aligned with human values within multicultural societies.

<sup>6</sup> Yofiendi Indah Indainanto et al., “Islamic Communication in Voicing Religious Moderation as an Effort to Prevent Conflicts of Differences in Beliefs,” *Pharos Journal of Theology* Volume 104, Nomor 4 (2023): 1–13, <https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.104.415>.

<sup>7</sup> Nur Sakinah et al., “Muslim Community Communication through Cross-Religious Social Interaction in the Mardika Market Ambon, Moluccas,” *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah* Volume 44, Nomor 1 (2024): 53–68, <https://doi.org/10.21580/jid.v44.1.20473>.



## Methods

The units of analysis in this study include mosques, the hijab, dialogues about Qur'anic recitation, greetings of peace, and religious experiences. The academic rationale for selecting these units of analysis is based on the framework of Islamic communication representation, which appears in three main dimensions: visual, verbal, and narrative. The visual dimension, represented by mosques and the hijab, was chosen because both serve as powerful symbols of religious identity and as points of negotiation for Muslim identity within multicultural spaces. The verbal dimension, manifested through Qur'anic recitations and greetings of peace, was analyzed because it functions as both a sacred and social medium of communication that reflects intercultural and interreligious interaction. Meanwhile, the narrative dimension, represented by religious experiences, is important to examine as it conveys spiritual meaning while simultaneously constructing identity within the context of plurality. Thus, these units of analysis are academically relevant for uncovering how Islamic communication is comprehensively represented in the film *99 Cahaya di Langit Eropa*.

This research design employs a qualitative method with Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis approach to examine the representation of Islamic communication in the film *99 Cahaya di Langit Eropa*. Through Barthes' semiotic framework, this study analyzes the denotative, connotative, and mythic meanings embedded within the film's symbols and narratives.<sup>8</sup> This approach was chosen because it is capable of revealing how the signs in the film do not merely convey literal messages but also construct social and ideological meanings regarding Islamic communication in multicultural spaces. Thus, this design allows the study to generate an in-depth understanding of the function of film as a medium for the construction of identity and tolerance.

<sup>8</sup> Sara, Hatam & Iman Muwafaq Muslim Muwafaq Al-Ghabra, "Barthes' Semiotic Theory and Interpretation of Signs," *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences and Humanities* Volume 11, Nomor 3 (2021): 470–82, <https://doi.org/10.37648/ijrssh.v11i03.027>.



The sources of information and data in this study were obtained from the film *99 Cahaya di Langit Eropa* as the main object of analysis, examined through its scenes, dialogues, visual symbols, and narrative structure. Data were collected by repeatedly watching the film to identify visual signs such as mosques and the hijab, verbal signs in the form of Qur'anic recitations and greetings of peace, as well as the narrative of the characters' religious experiences. In addition, the study is supported by academic literature, including journals, books, and articles related to Islamic communication, multiculturalism, and semiotic analysis. These sources were used to strengthen data interpretation and ensure the validity of the analysis.

Data collection in this study was carried out through documentation by using the film *99 Cahaya di Langit Eropa* as the primary source. The process began with repeatedly watching the film in order to record scenes, dialogues, visual symbols, and narrative structures related to the representation of Islamic communication. Each sign that appeared—such as mosques, the hijab, Qur'anic recitation, greetings of peace, and the characters' religious experiences—was systematically documented. In addition, the researcher also collected secondary data in the form of academic literature, journals, and books relevant to Islamic communication, the mediatization of religion, and semiotic theory. These supplementary sources served to strengthen interpretation, provide a theoretical framework, and ensure that the analysis was grounded in valid academic foundations.

Data analysis and interpretation were conducted using Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, which emphasizes three levels of meaning: denotation, connotation, and myth. In the first stage, the researcher identified the signs in the film *99 Cahaya di Langit Eropa*, including visual symbols (mosques, hijab), verbal expressions (Qur'anic recitation, greetings of peace), and narratives (religious experiences), in order to uncover their denotative or literal meanings. Next, these signs were analyzed at the connotative level to reveal the social, cultural, and ideological meanings embedded within multicultural interactions. The final stage was myth interpretation, in which the researcher examined the ideological



constructions of Islamic communication presented in the film, particularly how it builds narratives of tolerance, dialogue, and intercultural harmony.

## Results and Discussion

The symbols of Islamic communication in the film *99 Cahaya di Langit Eropa* are expressed through visual, verbal, and narrative forms. The use of these symbols is intended to ensure that the da‘wah message can be fully conveyed: the visual dimension creates impressions directly perceived by the senses, the verbal dimension clarifies meaning through dialogue, and the narrative dimension affirms lived experiences. These symbols not only provide information but also invite the audience to feel and reflect on the meaning of Islamic communication within multicultural spaces.

### Visual Symbols: Representation of Islamic Identity in Multicultural Spaces

The visual symbols in *99 Cahaya di Langit Eropa* highlight the presence of Islam as both a reflection of identity and a reinforcement of Muslim existence within multicultural spaces. Symbols such as calligraphy, Islamic attire, and mosque architecture serve as markers that construct a collective image of Islam amid cultural diversity. In social interactions, these visual symbols function not only as expressions of religiosity but also as a medium of intercultural communication. Thus, Islamic visual symbols play a crucial role in maintaining identity while weaving harmony within multicultural contexts.

Table 1 Visual Symbols of Islamic Communication

| Form | Denotative Meaning | Connotative Meaning | Mythic Meaning |
|------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------|
|------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------|



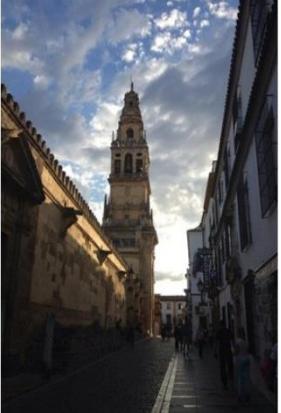
|   |                                      |  |   |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| Mosque of Cordoba / Cathedral in Spain<br> | A historic Islamic building in Spain | A symbol of the glory of Islamic civilization and the legacy of da'wah in Europe | Islam once reached a golden age marked by advances in knowledge, art, and tolerance, and this identity remains alive even though the physical space is now dominated by another culture |
| Hijab<br>                                 | A Muslim woman's head covering       | A marker of Islamic identity, piety, and a Muslim woman's commitment             | Islam can exist harmoniously in multicultural spaces; the hijab symbolizes the struggle for Muslim women's existence, steadfast faith, and da'wah through exemplary practice            |

Table 1 shows that the visual symbols of the Cordoba Mosque and the hijab convey messages of Islamic communication through denotative, connotative, and mythological meanings. Denotatively, the Cordoba Mosque appears as a historical Islamic building in Spain; however, connotatively, it represents the identity and civilization of Islam. Similarly, the hijab is denotatively understood as a head covering for Muslim women, yet on the connotative level, it signifies piety, commitment, and the public identity of Muslim women. This indicates that both symbols carry meanings beyond their physical functions. Ultimately, these symbols construct myths about the existence of Islamic glory, as well as symbols of struggle



and da'wah in multicultural life. Together, they affirm that Islam is present through symbols that remain alive in both historical and social spaces.

The symbols of the Cordoba Mosque and the hijab, as presented in Table 1, demonstrate the representation of Islamic identity within a multicultural sphere. Three main points can be highlighted from the data in Table 1. First, Islam is not a foreign entity separated from world civilization but an essential part that has shaped history, science, and art across different regions. In the context of global culture, Islam emerges as a dialogue partner offering values of tolerance, peace, and harmony amid plurality. The Qur'an, in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 114, emphasizes the importance of preserving mosques as centers of worship and goodness, which also implies maintaining unity and order among the community. Second, the intellectual and spiritual legacy of Muslims has been a vital foundation for the development of Western knowledge and culture, as symbolized by the Cordoba Mosque. Third, Islam continues to exist within modern European society, represented through the hijab. In the Qur'an, Surah An-Nur verse 31 stresses that the hijab is not merely a means of covering the body but reflects obedience and the commitment of a Muslim woman.

From these findings, it can be concluded that Islamic communication is expressed through symbols that affirm Islam's presence as peaceful, inclusive, adaptive, and relevant within the plurality of global culture.

### **Verbal Symbols: Representation of Ukhuhwah Islamiyah**

The verbal symbols in the film *99 Cahaya di Langit Eropa* emphasize the importance of *ukhuwah Islamiyah* as a bridge of brotherhood among Muslims in a multicultural setting. Through the values of *ukhuwah Islamiyah*, the community is united in a spiritual bond that highlights compassion, mutual respect, and solidarity. The presence of Islam in a multicultural space is not intended to create separation, but rather to embrace differences as a collective strength. In this way, Islam appears as a force that affirms identity while fostering harmony in global life. This context is visually illustrated in Table 2.



Table 2 Verbal Symbols of Islamic Communication

| Form   | Denotative Meaning   | Connotative Meaning  | Mythic Meaning  |
|--|--|--|---|
| Dialogue about the Qur'an<br>   | The Qur'an is mentioned as the holy book containing teachings for Muslims.                     | The Qur'an is understood as a source of faith, moral guidance, and inner peace within a multicultural space. | The Qur'an is positioned as a universal light that transcends space and time, ensuring that Islamic identity remains alive wherever Muslims reside. |
| Fatma: "The Qur'an is not only to be recited, but also to be understood and practiced."<br>Hanum: "So, it is not merely a text, but a guide for life?"<br>Fatma: "Exactly. The Qur'an provides direction, even when we are far from our homeland." |  |  |   |
| Greeting (Salam)<br>  | The greeting is a distinct form of salutation in Islam, meaning a prayer for peace and safety. | The greeting reflects brotherhood, respect, and spiritual closeness among Muslims living abroad.             | Islam is portrayed as a religion that brings mercy and peace.   |
| Hanum:<br>"Assalamu'alaikum,"  |  |  |   |



|                                |  |  |  |
|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Fatma:<br>“Wa’alaikumussalam.” |  |  |  |
|--------------------------------|--|--|--|

In Table 2, the representation of *ukhuwah Islamiyah* is revealed through verbal symbols in the form of dialogue about the Qur'an and the greeting of peace (*salam*). Denotatively, the dialogue refers directly to the Qur'an as the holy book and source of Islamic teachings, while the greeting is expressed as a prayer for peace. Connotatively, however, these verbal symbols transcend their literal meaning, signifying religious identity, spirituality, brotherhood, peace, and social awareness within intercultural interactions. At the level of myth, these symbols construct the cultural narrative of Islam in Europe and reinforce the idea that Islam is not merely ritual practice, but also a social and spiritual ethos relevant in multicultural societies, affirming the universal presence and values of Islam.

The representation of *ukhuwah Islamiyah*, as illustrated in Table 2, indicates that verbal symbols serve as a medium for expressing both religious and social values. From the data (Table 2), three key insights can be drawn. First, the Qur'an functions as a guide for life, shaping the actions and decisions of Muslims by instilling universal moral and ethical values. It also serves as a source of Islamic identity, reinforcing religious awareness and a sense of belonging to Muslim tradition and community across diverse social contexts. Second, the greeting (*salam*) expresses peace and tolerance, thereby strengthening brotherhood and social relationships among believers, as reflected in the Qur'an, Surah An-Nur (24:61). Third, religious language affirms the relevance and existence of Islam in intercultural contexts. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that verbal dialogue in the film is not merely a form of communication but a medium for transmitting values, strengthening community solidarity, and affirming deep spiritual meaning within social interaction.

### **Narrative Symbols: Representation of Religious Experience in a Secular Culture**

Religious experience is practiced as part of personal identity as well as social interaction. This means that religious experience does not stop at the practice



of worship, but also on how Islamic values encounter modernity, rationality, and the cultural pluralism of the West. Every symbol and religious ritual is not only a form of spiritual devotion but also a means of understanding and appreciating the cultural diversity around. Religious experience in Western culture represents both tension and harmony between Islamic spirituality and European secularism, which ultimately opens space to understand religion as a source of identity, morality, and solidarity in the midst of differences. Several forms of religious experience that appear in multicultural society are shown in the findings of Table 3.

Table 3 Narrative Symbols of Islamic Communication

| Form   | Denotative Meaning  | Connotative Meaning   | Mythic Meaning   |
|--|---|---|--|
| <p>The character's journey of maintaining faith in Europe</p>  | <p>Performing prayer in European mosques or reading the Qur'an in the city library.</p> | <p>Symbolizes resilience of faith, courage, and the integrity of Muslims.</p> | <p>Worship activities indicate that faith is a light guiding human beings in facing challenges and temptations of the world.</p> |



|   |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| The conflict of Muslim identity in Western public spaces  |  | The visible symbol appears when the character wears the hijab on European streets. This is a literal representation of identity conflict: religious practice that looks different from the majority of society. | A symbol of courage, integrity, and the search for self-identity, representing the struggle to balance Muslim identity with social pressure in Western public spaces. | A symbol of the light of faith in the midst of Western cultural diversity and challenges, emphasizing the value of spiritual steadfastness that transcends place and time. |
| "Fatma's daughter, Ayse, was often bullied at school for wearing the hijab, and her teacher persuaded her to remove it, but Ayse firmly refused." |   |   |   |  |

Table 3 illustrates that at the denotative level, the narrative symbols of religious experience within a secular culture are shown through the commitment to maintaining faith by performing prayer and reading the Qur'an, despite many challenges. At the connotative level, these practices signify the strength of faith, a moral guide, and an enduring identity even within Western cultural contexts. At the level of myth, the narrative reveals how faith becomes the primary source of strength in facing secular pressures, while also serving as a means of preserving religious identity in the midst of Western pluralism. Faith not only survives but also adapts to a new environment without losing its spiritual essence. Such adaptation even opens opportunities for intercultural dialogue, enriching mutual understanding across different traditions.

The narrative symbols of religious experience in secular culture, as presented in Table 3, reflect a spiritual journey marked by both challenges and opportunities. Faith is able to persist even in public spaces where religious symbols are often marginalized. Beyond survival, faith also adapts through worship practices, moral values, and the expression of identity that remains preserved. This



adaptation creates a space for intercultural dialogue, where Islam and Western traditions can enrich one another and foster tolerance. From this narrative, three key findings emerge: first, faith functions as a stronghold of Muslim identity; second, religious symbols serve as a medium of communicating spiritual values; and third, intercultural dialogue provides opportunities for harmony amid differences. Thus, faith becomes a firm foundation that sustains Muslim identity while reinforcing religious existence within pluralistic contexts.

This study, which aimed to analyze the symbols representing the meaning of Islamic communication in multicultural spaces in the film *99 Cahaya di Langit Eropa*, identified three key findings. First, visual symbols in Islamic communication serve to emphasize spiritual values, foster religious awareness, and function as a medium for dialogue as well as a reminder of the presence of Islam in multicultural contexts. The mosque and the hijab depicted in the film reinforce Islamic commitment and identity within a diverse society. Second, verbal expressions such as greetings (*salam*) and Qur'anic recitations convey faith-based values and strengthen *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood). These religious utterances create emotional and spiritual bonds among Muslims in a multicultural environment. Third, religious experiences amid the challenges of Western culture reflect the resilience of faith, where religiosity is not only practiced individually but also manifested as a social adaptation process that shapes Muslim identity.

The Islamic communication symbols in the film *99 Cahaya di Langit Eropa* illustrate that Islamic values are able to endure, adapt, and serve as a medium for cross-cultural dialogue without losing their religious essence. The film represents Islamic values through symbols, dialogues, and narratives, making it an effective medium for conveying *dakwah* messages in a contextually relevant manner within modern life.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, the dissemination of Islam through film plays a significant role in presenting a deeper understanding of Islam, counterbalancing public

<sup>9</sup> Ninis Fitria and Rio Febrinnur Rachman, "Islamic Values In The Media (Critical Discourse Analysis Of The Film Hati Suhita)," *Jurnal Spektrum Komunikasi* Volume 12, Nomor 1 (2024): 66-75, <https://doi.org/10.37826/spektrum.v12i1.674>.



perceptions shaped by films that often portray negative stigma and misrepresentation.<sup>10</sup> In the Indonesian context, this phenomenon is highly relevant to a society characterized by religious and cultural diversity, where Islamic communication must be carried out peacefully, politely, and with an emphasis on dialogue to foster cross-cultural understanding. Inclusive Islamic communication can strengthen the positive image of Muslims and contribute to the creation of harmony in multicultural societies.

The findings of this study support Hjarvard's theory of the mediatization of religion, which argues that Islamic communication cannot be separated from the phenomenon of mediation, where media not only act as channels but also shape religious practices and symbols while being negotiated within the sphere of popular culture.<sup>11</sup> According to Knauss, film serves as an effective medium for representing religious values and providing spiritual experiences, in which such interactions can shape the audience's religious understanding.<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, Mowlana's theory of Islamic communication highlights that film, as a medium of *dakwah*, reflects the values of *tauhid*, ethics, and social harmony, thereby giving moral and spiritual purposes to the messages conveyed.<sup>13</sup> Film is not merely a form of entertainment but also an effective *dakwah* medium through visual and narrative approaches that deliver Islamic teachings related to *aqidah*, *akhlaq*, *shari'ah*, and mutual

<sup>10</sup> Iqbal Hussain Alamyar, Mustain, and Ziaulrahman Mushkalamza, "From Hollywood to the Ummah: The Role of Islamic Broadcasting in Reshaping Perceptions of Islam in Response to Film Stereotypes," *Mediakita* Volume 8, Nomor 2 (2024): 135–53, <https://doi.org/10.30762/mediakita.v8i2.2232>.

<sup>11</sup> Stig. Hjarvard, "Mediatization and the Changing Authority of Religion," *Media, Culture & Society* Volume 38, no. 1 (2016): 8–17, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0163443715615412>.

<sup>12</sup> Stefanie Knauss, "Religion and Film: Representation, Experience, Meaning," *Brill Research Perspectives in Theology* Volume 4, Nomor 1 (2020): 1–103, [https://brill.com/view/journals/rpth/4/1/article-p1\\_1.xml](https://brill.com/view/journals/rpth/4/1/article-p1_1.xml).

<sup>13</sup> Hamid Mowlana, "Theoretical Perspectives on Islam and Communication," *China Media Research* Volume 3, Nomor 4 (2007): 23–33, [https://d1wqxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/32514562/theoretical\\_perspectives\\_on\\_islamic\\_communication-libre.pdf?1391613135=&response-content-disposition=inline%3B+filename%3DTheoretical\\_Perspectives\\_on\\_Islam\\_and\\_Co.pdf&Expires=1756908492&Signature=RXDQ8oxpssRc](https://d1wqxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/32514562/theoretical_perspectives_on_islamic_communication-libre.pdf?1391613135=&response-content-disposition=inline%3B+filename%3DTheoretical_Perspectives_on_Islam_and_Co.pdf&Expires=1756908492&Signature=RXDQ8oxpssRc).



assistance.<sup>14</sup> This phenomenon demonstrates that film is considered effective as a *dakwah* medium because it conveys religious messages visually and narratively, reaching wider audiences and facilitating the understanding and internalization of religious values.

The study on the representation of Islamic communication through film demonstrates how *dakwah* messages can be effectively conveyed through characters, storylines, and symbolism, shaping both religious experiences and reflections for the audience. This emphasizes that mediatization not only changes the way religious messages are delivered but also influences religious understanding and experiences. Religious messages are packaged audiovisually through films, videos, and social media, enabling audiences not only to receive information but also to engage emotionally and spiritually with narratives that deepen their religious comprehension. The implication is that *dakwah* becomes more interactive and personal, allowing audiences to gain more profound and contextual religious experiences and understanding. This development encourages innovation in methods of delivering *dakwah*, making religious messages more accessible, relevant to daily life, and capable of reaching broader audiences. Academically, this study contributes to expanding analyses of the role of media, particularly film in Islamic communication and provides new insights into the interaction between representation, experience, and religious understanding.

This study addresses a gap in previous research, which has primarily focused on the representation of *dakwah* messages in everyday life. Choirizah and Rozi (2025) examined *dakwah* messages using Roland Barthes' semiotic approach, focusing on themes of sacrifice, patience, sincerity, and the importance of communication within the household.<sup>15</sup> Other studies analyzed three categories of

<sup>14</sup> Arni Ernawati, "The Struggle Between Romance and Faith: Study of the Da'Wah Message in the Movie 'Ajari Aku Islam,'" *Profetik: Jurnal Komunikasi* Volume 15, Nomor 1 (2022): 121-35, <https://journal.faibillfath.ac.id/index.php/cendekia/article/view/919/753>.

<sup>15</sup> Choirizah, Adinda & Fakhrur Rozi, "Analisis ANALYSIS OF THE MESSAGE OF DA'WAH IN THE HATI SUHITA FILM WITH A ROLAND BARTHES SEMIOTIC APPROACH: PERSPECTIVES OF MORALITY, SHARIA, AND FAITH Adinda," *Jurnal*



*dakwah* messages through Barthes' semiotics: faith messages, which include belief, sincerity, and peace; worship messages, encompassing Islamic law, gratitude, and devotion; and moral messages, such as filial piety, ethics, and the legal aspects of leasing practices.<sup>16</sup> In contrast, this study adopts an interdisciplinary approach by combining Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis with Hjarvard's theory of the mediatization of religion. Semiotic analysis is applied to reveal the symbolic meanings and myths within the film, while mediatization theory is used to interpret how media represent and shape the understanding of Islamic communication in multicultural spaces. This integrative approach distinguishes the present study from earlier works and offers a new perspective for understanding the dynamics of Islamic communication in the media era.

Film, as an effective medium that integrates visual, verbal, and narrative elements, is highly significant for delivering *dakwah* messages in ways that are contextual to global realities. This strength provides a reference for filmmakers to present Islamic narratives that are inclusive, tolerant, contextual, and easily understood by multicultural audiences. Scholars of Islamic communication may employ a combination of Roland Barthes' semiotic approach and Hjarvard's theory of the mediatization of religion to enrich media text analysis while also understanding the social function of media in shaping religious experiences. Furthermore, future research should extend its scope to cross-national films or digital series to examine how Islamic communication is represented across diverse media platforms. Thus, this study is expected to contribute to the development of contemporary Islamic communication studies that remain relevant to the cultural, religious, and media dynamics of the global era.

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<sup>16</sup> Muhammad Choirin, Sulton Fajarulloh, and Marlon Pontino Guleng, "The Da'wah Message in the Film 'Tarung Sarung': Faith, Worship, and Moral Behavior," MUHARRIK: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Sosial Volume 6, Nomor 1 (2023): 189–207, <https://doi.org/10.37680/muharrik.v6i1.1742>.



## Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the representation of Islamic communication in the film *99 Cahaya di Langit Eropa* serves as an effort to build dialogue between Islamic identity and the multicultural context of Europe. Through Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis, the film presents visual, verbal, and symbolic signs that portray Islam as a religion of peace and tolerance amidst cultural differences. Such representations affirm that Islamic communication functions not only as a medium for delivering religious messages but also as a bridge that connects spiritual values with multicultural social realities. Hence, the film can be understood as a medium of cultural *dakwah*, presenting diversity as an opportunity to foster harmony rather than as a threat to religious identity.

This research contributes by offering new insights into the representation of Islamic communication in multicultural spaces through film. The semiotic analysis of *99 Cahaya di Langit Eropa* enriches communication studies by showing how visual, symbolic, and narrative signs can reflect inclusive, tolerant, and dialogical Islamic values. Theoretically, it expands the application of Roland Barthes' semiotics in Islamic communication studies. Practically, the findings may serve as a reference for developing more adaptive cultural *dakwah* strategies in multicultural settings. Furthermore, this study strengthens media literacy by encouraging more critical and contextual readings of how Islam is represented on screen.



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