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## THE FILM 'PESANTREN' AND RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN INDONESIA: REALITY, REPRESENTATION, AND IDEOLOGY

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### **Abstrak**

#### **Kata Kunci:**

Toleransi  
Beragama, Film  
Pesantren,  
Semiotika

*Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan bentuk nilai toleransi beragama di dalam film 'Pesantren' yang rilis pada tahun 2022. Film ini menarik karena mengungkap sisi pendidikan toleransi beragama di Indonesia yang menampilkan sisi lain pesantren yang oleh beberapa kalangan dianggap sebagai sarang indoktrinasi paham radikal dan fundamental dalam beragama. Melalui metode kualitatif deskriptif, artikel ini fokus pada nilai toleransi beragama dalam film yang dibicarakan melalui tanda verbal dan non-verbal. Data-data yang ada dianalisa dengan teori semiotika John Fiske yang menjelaskan tentang kode-kode sosial (the codes of television) yakni berupa level realitas, level representasi dan level ideologi. Teori ini berguna untuk mengungkap makna dibalik setiap scene. penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dalam film dokumenter Pesantren nilai toleransi lebih dominan muncul setelah pembacaan tahap ideologi. Nilai toleransi dalam film hadir dalam bingkai toleransi antar dan intra agama. Nilai tersebut ditanamkan dalam tiga narasi besar, yaitu: menghargai perbedaan pendapat, menghindari sikap fanatisme karena kasih sayang Tuhan juga tidak terbatas, berdakwah dengan perkataan yang baik dan menjaubi sikap diskriminasi kepada orang yang berbeda keyakinan.*

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## Abstract

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**Keywords:**

Religious  
Tolerance,  
Film,  
Pesantren,  
Semiotika

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This article aims to elucidate the manifestations of religious tolerance in the film 'Pesantren', released in 2022. The film is intriguing as it unveils the educational aspect of religious tolerance in Indonesia, portraying a different dimension of pesantren, which is sometimes perceived by certain circles as a breeding ground for indoctrination of radical and fundamentalist religious ideologies. Employing a qualitative descriptive method, this article focuses on the portrayal of religious tolerance in the film through verbal and non-verbal signs. The data are analyzed using John Fiske's semiotic theory, which elucidates the social codes (the codes of television), comprising levels of reality, representation, and ideology. This theory serves to uncover the underlying meanings behind each scene. The research indicates that in the documentary film 'Pesantren', the value of tolerance predominantly emerges after the ideological reading stage. Tolerance values in the film are framed within the context of inter- and intra-religious tolerance. These values are instilled through three overarching narratives: respecting differences of opinion, avoiding fanaticism as God's compassion knows no bounds, preaching with good words, and abstaining from discrimination against individuals of differing beliefs.

## Introduction

A film is a mirror that reflects and captures various social, political, and religious facts and phenomena within a society. Films also present a set of symbols that have specific meanings and purposes. Lyden, in his book titled *Film as Religion: Myths, Morals, Rituals*, as quoted by Branco, explains that films offer an almost perfect world that is not the same as the reality we experience, but the world in films is often believed to be a model of the desired reality.<sup>1</sup> In its development, film plays an increasingly important role in responding to, reflecting, and shaping worldviews. Moreover, films can mobilize society to take action and trigger social, political, and religious movements.

According to Ostwalt in his book titled *Religion and Popular Movies*, as quoted by Rilloma, the relationship between film and religion is indeed not a new phenomenon. Various studies have explained that religious

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<sup>1</sup> Sergio Dias Branco, "Religion and Film: Representation, Experience, Meaning," *Journal of Religion & Film* 26, no. 2 (2022): 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.32873/uno.dc.jrf.26.01.56>.  
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themes in films are always attractive to producers and the film industry because they are so closely tied to society and reflect their experiences. Furthermore, he also explains that films are an excellent medium and tool for initiating exploration into how religious attitudes can influence and be influenced by social and political issues.<sup>2</sup> In other words, films have the potential to influence religious perspectives, ideological assumptions, and other fundamental values, including religious tolerance.

In the context of Indonesia, the theme of religious tolerance in films is often presented through a set of symbols or signifiers to convey messages that celebrate diversity. Several studies have indicated that the values of religious tolerance are portrayed through film. These values of tolerance are manifested by teaching the principles of respecting others' beliefs, providing freedom in choosing a religion, fostering mutual understanding among religions, and not viewing physical and psychological differences in social interactions.<sup>3</sup> One of the films that addresses the theme of religious tolerance is the documentary film "Pesantren," released in 2022. Unlike existing studies, this film is of the documentary genre, depicting scenes that are activities occurring within the world of Islamic boarding schools (pesantren). The setting of this film is the Kebon Jambu Al-Islamy boarding school located in Cirebon Regency, West Java, led by Nyai Masriyah Amva, who is one of the council of experts/A'wan of the Central Board of Nahdlatul Ulama (PBNU). This

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<sup>2</sup> Conrad Eugene Ostwalt, "Religion and Popular Movies," *Journal of Religion & Film* 2, no. 3 (1998): 7. <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/jrf/vol2/iss3/7>; Nestor Rilloma, "The Relationship of Film and Theology in the Context of Theological Education in Asia: An Adventist Perspective," *Journal of International Scholars Conference - Philosophy/Theology* 1, no. 1 (2016): 1-7. <https://jurnal.unai.edu/index.php/jischphil/article/view/246>.

<sup>3</sup> Masdiana, Mhd. Syahminan, & Abdul Rasyid, "Semiotic Analysis of The Message of Tolerance in The Film "Ajari Aku Islam" Charles Sanders Pierce Method," *IJCCS: International Journal of Cultural and Social Science* 3, no. 2 (2022): 42-50. <https://pcijournal.org/index.php/ijcss/article/view/409>; also see Rifqatul Husna, Ach Zayyadi, & Dwiki Oktafiana Wirendri, "The Relationship of Faith and Tolerance in The Film One Amen Two Faith: Living Qur'an Perspective," *Jurnalnu: Jurnal Islam Nusantara* 6, no. 1 (2022): 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.33852/jurnalnu.v6i1.343>.

boarding school accommodates 2000 students aged between 12-22 years old and comes from diverse backgrounds.<sup>4</sup>In addition to being led by a woman, this boarding school holds progressive and moderate ideas. The selection of the film's location aims to present a true portrayal of life in boarding schools, which are often stigmatized as breeding grounds for terrorists and radicals.

The National Counterterrorism Agency (BNPT) revealed in 2022 that there were allegedly 198 Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) affiliated with terrorism networks based on four indicators. Firstly, pesantren that are ideologically affiliated with terrorism networks. Secondly, such affiliation serves as a camouflage strategy or tactic to conceal oneself and one's agenda (taqiyya) and tamkin strategy, which involves territorial control by developing networks or infiltrating other organizations. Thirdly, individuals in charge or students from these institutions are connected to terrorism networks, and fourthly, they are connected in terms of funding and logistics distribution.<sup>5</sup> In a wider definition, pesantren are often depicted as unwelcoming places towards gender equality, restricting women's rights, being synonymous with traditional or outdated characteristics, failing to accommodate the modern world, and even serving as a breeding ground for hatred towards the Western world.<sup>6</sup>

The film "Pesantren" is not the first film depicting the world of Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) and is among the best documentary films in Indonesia in 2022. Long before that, films portraying the narrative of pesantren have significantly influenced the Indonesian film industry.

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<sup>4</sup> NU Online, "Film Pesantren Akan Tayang, Saksikan di Bioskop Mulai 4 Agustus 2022" (NU Online, 31 Juli 2022). <https://www.nu.or.id/nasional/film-pesantren-akan-tayang-saksikan-di-bioskop-mulai-4-agustus-2022-AkuM8>.

<sup>5</sup> Syamsul Ma'arif, "Kala Pesantren Terpapar Terorisme" (Kompas, 7 Februari 2022). <https://www.kompas.id/baca/artikel-opini/2022/02/06/kala-pesantren-terpapar-terorisme>.

<sup>6</sup> Farish Ahmad Noor, Yoginder Sikand, & Martin van Bruinessen, *The Madrasa in Asia* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008). <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt46n10w>.

According to Huda, the selection of pesantren as the subject of the film is due to its fundamental role in Islam. Furthermore, he asserts that the resurgence of students (*santri*) and pesantren in the film industry reflects the contestation and fragmentation of religious authority in Indonesia.<sup>7</sup> "Cahaya Cinta Pesantren",<sup>8</sup> "The Santri",<sup>9</sup> "Sang Kyai" and "3 Cinta 3 Doa"<sup>10</sup> are some of the films representing the life of pesantren by capturing the figures of the *kiai* (Islamic scholars) and *santri*, as well as depicting the unique conditions of pesantren.<sup>11</sup> Unlike previous films that incorporated dramatic elements into the story, the film "Pesantren" presents itself as a documentary film providing a real portrayal of the lives of *santri* in the Islamic boarding school for 24 hours. Moreover, the film also captures various activities in the pesantren such as the Congress of Indonesian Women Ulama (KUPI), the series of end-of-year activities, and the annual festive stage events. Furthermore, this film not only presents the life of pesantren but also records various perspectives of all pesantren elements, ranging from the female leaders (*ibu nyai*), the *asatidz* (Islamic teachers), *santri*, and the surrounding community. The perspective

<sup>7</sup> Ahmad Nuril Huda. *Santri, Cinema and the Exploratory Form of Authority in Traditionalist Muslim Indonesia* dalam Norshahril Saat & Ahmad Najib Burhani (editor), *The New Santri Challenges to Traditional Religious Authority in Indonesia*, (Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2020), 278-296.

<sup>8</sup> Tabloid Bintang, "RESENSI FILM Cahaya Cinta Pesantren: Tentang Cinta Lagi. Tentang Cita-Cita Lagi" (Tabloid Bintang, 13 Januari 2017). URL: <https://www.tabloidbintang.com/film-tv-musik/ulasan/read/57937/resensi-film-cahaya-cinta-pesantren-tentang-cinta-lagi-tentang-citacita-lagi>.

<sup>9</sup> Anita Sartika, "Representasi Santri dalam Trailer Film The Santri," *Khabar: Jurnal Komunikasi Penyiaran Islam* 2, no. 2 (2020): 129-149. <https://doi.org/10.37092/khabar.v2i2.253>; Didiek Tranggono & Dwi Wahyuningtyas, "Perceptions of Islamic Boarding School Students in Surabaya on the Movie Trailer "The Santri", *Prosiding 3rd International Media Conference 2021 (IMC 2021)* (Amsterdam: Atlantis Press SARI, 2022). <https://www.atlantispress.com/proceedings/imc-21/125976097>.

<sup>10</sup> Wiman Rizkidarajat, Arizal Mutahir, & Muhammad Taufiqqurohman, "Kontestasi Identitas Santri dalam Film Indonesia: Studi Kasus Film '3 Cinta 3 Doa' dan 'Sang Kyai'," *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pengembangan Sumber Daya Perdesaan dan Kearifan Lokal Berkelanjutan X* (Purwokerto: Universitas Jendral Soedirman: Purwokerto, 2020).

<sup>11</sup> Agus Iswanto, "Kiai Sebagai Patron dan Sponsor Praktik Multiliterasi di Pesantren pada Era Media Digital," *Edukasi: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Agama dan Keagamaan* 18, no. 2 (2020): 287-301. <https://dx.doi.org/10.32729/edukasi.v18i3.657>.

of ibu nyai and *asatidz* represents the role and leadership of a pesantren leader in instilling moderate values and principles of life for the *santri*. Meanwhile, the perspectives of two *santri* represent the feelings experienced by most *santri*, both sweet and bitter. These two perspectives also show that the *santri* of Islamic boarding schools continue to adapt to the changing times. Each character highlighted in the film successfully brings forth a new perception of pesantren, one of which is the perception that pesantren exist to humanize society.

This article aims to elucidate the values of religious tolerance by examining dialogues, actions (in the form of acts), settings, and illustrations in a documentary film about Islamic boarding schools (pesantren). This research is conducted using a qualitative method with the approach of John Fiske's semiotic communication analysis. The primary data of this research is the documentary film "Pesantren" the data of which are collected through observation and documentation. However, this article is also supported by sources from books, notes, and existing evidence, which serve as secondary data in this research. Meanwhile, observation and documentation serve as the data collection techniques for this research. In the process of data collection, I have watched this film repeatedly and have also contacted Negeri Films as the official institution that produced this film. I scrutinized the narrative of tolerance symbolized through scenes and dialogues and conducted data selection that aligns with the research focus. I recorded, sifted, and sorted out unnecessary data to obtain facts and data from this film, thus enabling analysis and conclusions to be drawn.

This research employs John Fiske's semiotic theory to analyze several scenes related to the narrative of tolerance in the documentary film "Pesantren" In his book "Reading Television", Fiske explains that semiotics is a sign science that derives meaning based on how we interpret it.<sup>12</sup> This implies that semiotic objects are always related to signs and

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<sup>12</sup> Richard Jeferson, Hermawan Pancasiwi, & Abraham Wahyu Nugroho, "Representasi Profesionalitas Wartawan pada Film Kill The Messenger (Analisis Semiotika  
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meanings. Moreover, there are codes used to examine the meaning of television content. To understand the codes presented in television, one must first assume that television is a cultural agent that provokes and serves as a vessel for disseminating meaning. Codes are considered as symbol systems governed by rules and conventions shared to create meaning within a culture. Codes can also be understood as the relationships between producers, texts, audiences, and as intertextual agents where texts mutually depend on each other in connecting our world's meanings. According to Fiske, television events broadcasted in its programs must be presented within the codes of social norms and constructed in three stages: reality, representation, and ideology. These three stages can be utilized as analytical materials for elements present in a film. Semiotics is a coding process that analyzes signs and codes containing specific meanings and principles. Language, script, images, texts, and excerpts are signs that can be interpreted as materials for film analysis.<sup>13</sup>

In addition, there are three stages to be noted in this theory, namely the stage of reality used to depict events in the form of conversation, sound, behavior, body movement, facial expressions, clothing, environment, and so on. All television programs present something real and relevant to social facts, such as news broadcasts covering an event. For example, in the case of a tsunami event, news coverage will feature clips of the moment the tsunami occurred, its impact, affected houses, and so on. Secondly, the stage of representation is used to present something in the form of another person through signs or symbols.<sup>14</sup> Representation in television programs relates to technical codes such as lighting, music, sound, cameras, and so on, which are then transmitted in the form of

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John Fiske),” *Jurnal Komunikasi dan Media* 1, no. 2 (2022): 131-146. <https://doi.org/10.24167/jkm.v1i2.3180>.

<sup>13</sup> John Fiske, *Cultural and Communication Studies: Sebuah Pengantar paling Komprehensif* (Yogyakarta: Jala Sutra, 2010).

<sup>14</sup> Yasraf Amir Piliang, *Hipersemiotika: Tafsir Cultural Studies atas Matinya Makna* (Yogyakarta: Jalasutra, 2016).

performative codes to represent reality in television programs. And thirdly, the stage of ideology is used to display patterns of belief and values in various media and social actions. This aspect can be categorized into patriarchal, capitalist, and other pattern systems. The narrative of tolerance will be demonstrated by analyzing each stage of coding, in the form of reality, representation, and ideology, such as a gesture being a non-verbal communication method in the reality stage but becoming verbal communication dialogue in the representation stage to convey an effective message.

### **The Narrative of Tolerance in the Documentary Film "Pesantren"**

The documentary film "Pesantren" is directed by Shalahuddin Siregar and produced by Negeri Films with Lola Amaria Production as the film distributor. The production of documentary films poses its challenges, namely aligning the initial film-making ideas with the factual occurrences at the filming location.<sup>15</sup> "Pesantren" is a documentary film that directly presents its message in the form of the activities of all the film's actors. This film was produced in 2019 and premiered at the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA). IDFA is the most prestigious and largest documentary festival in the world, which has produced several reality-based films such as "Apenas el Sol" (Nothing but the Sun), depicting Mateo's conversations with others since the 1970s, recorded using a tape recorder.<sup>16</sup> In addition to IDFA, the film has also been screened at the Madani International Film Festival and The University of British Columbia in March 2022. At the IDFA event, "Pesantren" was selected from around 3,000 films for the Luminous program, which, according to IDFA, are films capable of immersing viewers in a cinematic experience driven by characters and filmmakers'

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<sup>15</sup> Tonny Trimarsanto, *Renita, Renita: Catatan Proses Membuat Film Dokumenter* (Yogyakarta: Rumah Dokumenter, 2019).

<sup>16</sup> Aylin Kuryel, "Colonial Exposure" dalam Cymene Howe, Jeff Diamanti, & Amelia Moore, *Solarities: Elemental Encounters and Refractions* (California: Punctum Books, 2023). <https://doi.org/10.7591/9781501724046-004>.



stories. Luminous is designed to restore the beauty of human relationships, expressions, and empathy, and to realize universal truths through individuals in selected films. Meanwhile, in local cinemas, the film premiered on November 17, 2022. This film is considered important in terms of quality as it provides insights into the other side of religion, especially Islam.

In the film "Pesantren," KH Husein Muhammad, Nyai Hj Masriyah Amva, Dul Yani, Diding, Dika, Bibah, and the students of Pesantren Pondok Kebon Jambu Al-Islamy are featured in this 102-minute film. The film "Pesantren" is set at a traditional Islamic boarding school named Pondok Kebon Jambu Al-Islamy, which accommodates 1,800 students and is operated by women. The Jambu Al-Islamy boarding school is developed using an observational approach, focusing on the stories of two students and two young teachers. This film addresses the context of stereotypes and stigmatization of Islamic boarding schools due to terrorism, radicalism, fundamentalism, and religious conservatism at both global and local levels.

To obtain a more detailed understanding of the narrative of tolerance presented in the film "Pesantren," I collected and analyzed the tolerance narrative through five selected scenes based on audiovisual elements from the narrative aspects (storytelling) and cinematic aspects (technical).<sup>17</sup> These selected scenes will then be examined using three stages of analysis: Reality, Representation, and Ideology. First, the level of reality adheres to social norms related to aspects such as clothing, environment, speech, movement, sound, makeup, and expression. Second, the level of representation refers to reality expressed through tools such as cameras, music, and sound. Third, the ideological level pertains to the rules of representation connected and organized within social cohesion

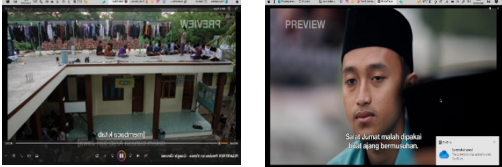
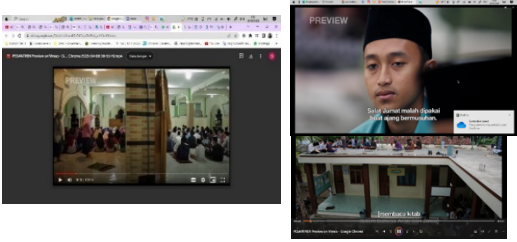
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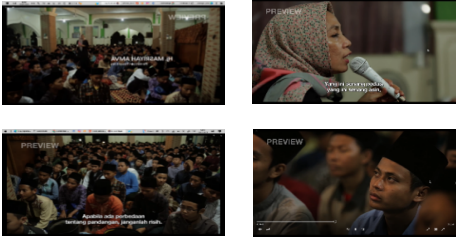
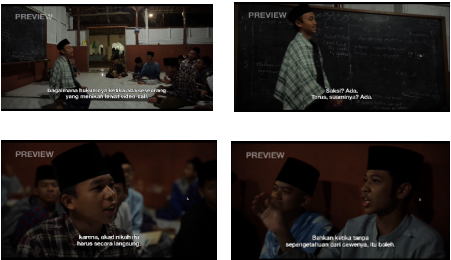
<sup>17</sup> Nezar Ariffananda, & Dimas Satrio Wijaksono, "Representasi Peran Ayah dalam Film Negeri-Negeri Sedap (Analisis Semiotika John Fiske)," *Andharupa: Jurnal Desain Komunikasi Visual & Multimedia* 9, no. 2 (2023): 223-243. <https://doi.org/10.33633/andharupa.v9i02.7887>.

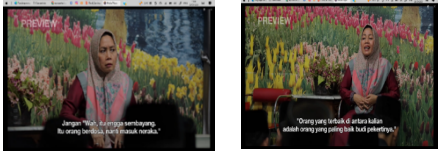
in society, such as patriarchy, humanism, spirituality, religion, and others. In this article, I also utilize supporting data obtained from books, articles, journals, and the internet. The narrative of tolerance found in the five scenes of the film "Pesantren" will be discussed in the following sections:

Table 1. Scenes depicting the narrative of tolerance

[Source: Data processing by author]

Scene	Audio Visual Element (Ariffannada & Wijaksono, 2023)	Description
<p>Scene 3 [00:03:21 - 00:04:25] The pesantren's clothesline, <i>mutbolaab</i> (<i>study session</i>), in the afternoon (after Asr).</p>	Visual	
	Cinematic	Close; Extreme Long Shot
	Narrative	Level 6 students are studying the <i>fiqh</i> book related to Friday prayer along with Ust. Didin. Ust. Didin explains the purpose of Friday prayer and its connection to cases of intrareligious intolerance that occur due to differences in political choices.
<p>scene 11 [00:11:00 - 00:11:17] Pesantren's hall; afternoon (after Asr)</p>	Visual	
	Cinematic	Extreme Long Shot; Close Up
	Narrative	The afternoon study session for level 5 students takes place in the pesantren hall. An <i>ustadz</i> explains to the students the concept of Rahman and Rahim Allah regarding the phenomenon of blind fanaticism that has recently affected the Muslim community.

<p>Scene 23 [00:34:34 – 00:35:38] Pesantren's hall; evening (after Isha)</p>	Visual	
	Cinematic	Extreme Long Shot; Close Up
	Narrative	<p>During the meeting in the pesantren's hall, Mrs. Nyai conveyed to the students of Kebon Jambu Al-Islamy that they should have confidence so that they will become beneficial individuals for the community, nation, and country in the future. Mrs. Nyai also emphasized the importance of the Indonesian people valuing differences because differences are an inevitability, especially in the motto of <i>Bhinneka Tunggal Ika</i> (Unity in Diversity) country.</p>
<p>Scene 39 [60:04:17-60:05:18] <i>Babtsul Masail</i> activity for level 6 students</p>	Visual	
	Cinematic	Close up; Medium Shot; Extreme Long shot
	Narrative	<p>Difference of opinions during the <i>Babtsul Masail</i> activity. <i>Babtsul Masail</i> addresses the theme of marriage using video calls. <i>Ust. Dika</i>, as a member of the education department, leads the <i>Babtsul Masail</i> activity. Differences of opinion occur among the students. "Is a marriage valid if it is done forcibly against the bride?" Well, the answer is "invalid" because there is no willingness from the woman's side.</p> <p>Wait a second, that's a different issue. What I got from Kang Amin is a response to Kang Rida's answer. So even if there's no woman, even if she doesn't know about the marriage, it's still allowed.</p>

<p><i>Scene 41</i> [60:02:03 - 60:03:01] at bu nyai's residence, evening time, instructions for going to the field.</p>	Visual	
	Cinematic	Medium Shot
	Narrative	<p>Bu nyai conveyed that the activity is part of the practical or field assignments of the boarding school. Bu nyai delivered a message that students should demonstrate good manners in society. “Wah, they don't pray. They perform sin, they will end up in hell” Bu nyai gave the example. She advised to not to look down on someone and consider them worthless. Bu nyai also said “The best version of a human is who has the best manner”</p>

The table above presents the descriptive results of the study from five scenes in the film “Pesantren”. After the presentation, the next step is to identify the narratives of tolerance found in the film, analyzed through three stages: the level of reality, representation, and ideology.

### **The Message of Tolerance at the Level of Reality**

At the level of reality, the analysis will focus on several codes: appearance, gesture, expression, conversation, and environment. Through these five codes, the value of tolerance in the film Pesantren is presented as one of the key messages intended for the audience. First, the code of appearance. As a documentary, Pesantren strives to depict the everyday lives of the students over 24 hours. At this level, the film showcases the simplicity and innocence of the students. Their simplicity and innocence are portrayed through their modest and colorful attire, which is far from aesthetic. This appearance signifies that the students are accustomed to diversity and do not easily judge others based on daily appearances. Embracing a simple life can lead to practical enjoyment and mechanical

solidarity, fostering tolerance based on tradition, religion, and customs.<sup>18</sup>

The simplicity is also depicted through the portrayal of the caretaker of the pesantren, Nyai Masriyah Amva. This appearance code is manifested through the selection of colors and clothing styles and the absence of excessive makeup worn by nyai. Such appearance signifies simplicity in both nyai and the *santri* from an outward perspective. On the other hand, it illustrates gender equality between men and women (kiai and nyai) in leading educational institutions like pesantren, and even in other social and political organizations.<sup>19</sup> In the film, a character named Husein Muhammad emerges, advocating for gender equality in interpreting religious foundational texts (the Qur'an and hadiths),<sup>20</sup> which serve as pivotal guidelines in the lives of Muslims.<sup>21</sup>

In the realm of education, pesantren plays a pivotal role in nurturing religious figures endowed with profound knowledge. However, achieving this objective transcends mere instruction in religious knowledge and Islamic law; it necessitates instilling virtuous habits within the students. Pesantren is tasked with fostering the holistic development of individuals, cultivating behavior and attitudes towards fellow humans, and even the environment.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Lili Halimah, Yayuk Hidayah, Heni Heryani, Meiwatizal Trihastuti, & Iqbal Arpanudin, "The meaning of maintaining a life philosophy of simplicity for life pleasure: A study in Kampung Naga, Tasikmalaya," *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment* 33, no. 8 (2023): 1149-1159. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10911359.2022.2128489>.

<sup>19</sup> Mokhammad Zainal Anwar Khairul Imam, Abdulloh Hadziq, Wahyudi Akmaliah, & Yuyun Sunesti, "Women Politicians Based on Pesantren in Nationalist Based Voters in Indonesia," *Al-A'raf: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam dan Filsafat* 19, no. 1 (2022): 64-100. <https://doi.org/10.22515/ajpif.v19i1.5264>.

<sup>20</sup> Marhumah, "Hadith, Justice, and Gender Equality: Indonesian Progressive Muslims' Thought," *Pertanika Journal of Social Science and Humanities* 27, no. 1 (2019), 415. <http://www.pertanika.upm.edu.my/pjssh/browse/regular-issue?article=JSSH-3766-2018>.

<sup>21</sup> Fatihunnada, F., "The Propethic Sunnah is a Contractual, Legislative, and Life-Based Approach to Moderation | الوسطية والإعتدال ومنهج حياتي وتشريعي ومنهج حياتي والنسبة النبوية أساس عقدي وتشريعي ومنهج حياتي للوسطية والإعتدال," *Al-Zabra' Journal for Islamic and Arabic Studies* 14, no. 1 (2017): 1-3. <https://journal.uinjkt.ac.id/index.php/zahra/article/view/10659/5401>.

<sup>22</sup> Irfan Setia Permana Wiantamiharja, "Implementasi Toleransi Beragama di Pondok Pesantren (Studi Kasus di Pondok Pesantren Universal Bandung)," *Hanafiyya: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama* 2, no. 1 (2019): 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.15575/hanifiyya.v2i1.4267>.

Secondly, the code of gestures and expressions (body movements). In the documentary film "Pesantren", Five scenes are deemed to contain the essence of religious tolerance conveyed at the level of reality through gestural codes. As cited by Arifannada and Wijaksono in Nathania and Kadiasti, Côté et al., assert that gestures can facilitate communication between individuals of different languages. However, gestures can also lead to misunderstandings in interpreting the intended message when cultural backgrounds differ.<sup>23</sup> Delivering a message verbally without considering non-verbal delivery methods will result in a reduction in the effectiveness of message conveyance in the learning process.<sup>24</sup>

In general terms, the body movements and expressions depicted in the five scenes correspond to the activities being performed, often involving inner contact or feelings, thus demonstrating gestures and expressions that engage the emotional aspect. Based on the five scenes analyzed, it was found that the figures of the religious teacher (ustadz) and the female teacher (bu nyai) frequently employ gestures such as maintaining eye contact and hand movements in communicating with the students. Eye contact gestures are utilized by both the female teacher and the religious teacher when imparting lessons and advice to the students. In the educational process, non-verbal communication is crucial for fostering empathy, thereby building closeness between the teacher and the students. The simplest form of verbal communication that a teacher can employ is maintaining eye contact during communication. The effort to maintain eye contact by the teacher demonstrates alignment during communication, thereby making the students feel engaged in the learning process and become more focused. Moreover, maintaining eye contact can also bring about positive energy for the students.<sup>25</sup> Cultivating empathy

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<sup>23</sup> Nezar Ariffananda, & Dimas Satrio Wijaksono, "Representasi Peran Ayah dalam Film Ngeri-Ngeri Sedap (Analisis Semiotika John Fiske)".

<sup>24</sup> Lina Nikitinaitė, "Transcultural Aspects of Non-Verbal Communication: Importance of Non-Verbal Communication in a Learning Process," *Socialiniu Mokslu Studijos* 9, no. 1 (2017), 114. [10.13165/sms-17-9-1-06](https://doi.org/10.13165/sms-17-9-1-06).

<sup>25</sup> Sugiarno S. & Rahmanita. Ginting, "Komunikasi Nonverbal Guru dalam Meningkatkan Prestasi Belajar Siswa di SMP Muhammadiyah 7 Medan,"

constitutes one of the three psychological dimensions of religious tolerance. The aspect of empathy towards others is a crucial factor involved in fostering religious tolerance.<sup>26</sup> Empathy also serves as a positive predictor for fostering tolerance in individuals.<sup>27</sup>

The active hand gestures performed by *bu nyai* and *ustadz* serve as efforts to express the intended meaning of their message, enabling their conversational partners to comprehend it fully. One of the hand gestures frequently employed by both *bu nyai* and *ustadz* occurs in scenes 11 and 41, during the explanation of the concept of Allah's mercy (Rahman and Rahim) and the importance of avoiding fanaticism, i.e., the belief that one's views are the only correct ones. The pointing hand gesture in these scenes signifies the aggressive stance of an individual seeking to assert dominance in a particular situation. In this context, such gestures serve as a reaffirmation by the teacher of the message conveyed to the students.

Meanwhile, across all scenes, the expressions depicted by the students in scenes 3 and 11 during the *Bahsul Masail* activity portray expressions of joy and acceptance. These expressions indicate the students' ability to position themselves in responding to differences. The students realize that in discussions, differences of opinion are inevitable, as there is no absolute truth since all arguments are constructed based on clear references. This expression code elucidates that tolerance is an effort to place oneself amidst diversity and differing beliefs as a conscious attitude.<sup>28</sup> The *Bahsul Masail* activity represents an endeavor to cultivate

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*Persepsi: Communication Journal* 2, no. 1 (2019): 1-19.  
<https://doi.org/10.30596/persepsi.v2i1.3914>.

<sup>26</sup> Arif Budiman Alfariz & Gazi Saloom, "Religious Tolerance Measurement: Validity Test in Indonesia," *JP3I: Jurnal Pengukuran Psikologi dan Pendidikan Indonesia* 10, no. 1 (2021), 75. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15408/jp3i.v10i1.16482>.

<sup>27</sup> Gautam Shrirangrao Gawali & Trinjhna Khattar, "The influence of multicultural personality on attitude towards religious diversity among youth," *Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology* 42, no. 1 (2016): 114-123.  
[http://www.jiaap.org.in/Listing\\_Detail/Logo/bc09badc-78b4-4fb8-949f-4f97deb3fb26.pdf](http://www.jiaap.org.in/Listing_Detail/Logo/bc09badc-78b4-4fb8-949f-4f97deb3fb26.pdf).

<sup>28</sup> Irfan Setia Permana Wiantamiharja, "Implementasi Toleransi Beragama di Pondok Pesantren (Studi Kasus di Pondok Pesantren Universal Bandung)".

tolerance by optimizing a learning approach that fosters critical thinking, respects differences, values others' opinions, demonstrates tolerance and democracy, dares to articulate ideas, exhibits sportsmanship, and assumes responsibility.<sup>29</sup> *Babtsul Masail* also serves as a snapshot of collective *ijtihad* in addressing societal issues, thus minimizing the emergence of laws that marginalize any party. Because in the *Babtsul Masail* forum, all participants are in the same position as contributors to the formation of legal decisions.<sup>30</sup> *Babtsul Masail* is also considered a representative forum of Muslim figures in Indonesia.<sup>31</sup>

Thirdly, conversational codes. The film "Pesantren" falls within the educational genre, addressing issues of tolerance. This narrative is constructed through the level of reality portrayed via conversational codes. From the five scenes analyzed, each scene contains conversational codes conveying different messages yet within the same framework of tolerance. The conversational codes found in the film are outlined as follows:

Table 2. Level of reality in conversational codes  
[Source: Data processing by the author]

No	Scene	Conversation Codes
1	Scene 3	<i>Jum'ab</i> prayer is worship or human-to-human relations? Even if we conflict with our neighbors, we still pray <i>Jum'ab</i> at the same mosque. Indonesians are strange, they even use the <i>Jum'ab</i> prayer as a venue for conflicts. Losing in a village chief election, they even make their own <i>Jum'ab</i> . Later, if you go home and support a candidate, and then lose, don't make a new <i>Jum'ab</i> . That's prohibited by Imam Syafi'i.

<sup>29</sup> Nur Khasanah, Achmad Irwan Hamzani, & Havis Aravik, "Religious Moderation in the Islamic Education System in Indonesia," *Qalamuna: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial, dan Budaya* 15, no. 1 (2023), 639. <https://doi.org/10.37680/qalamuna.v15i1.4115>.

<sup>30</sup> Faried Fachruddin Saenong, "Nahdlatul Ulama (NU): A Grassroots Movement Advocating Moderate Islam," dalam Muhammad Afzal Upal & Carole M. Cusack, *Handbook of Islamic Sects and Movements* (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 141.

<sup>31</sup> Nurjanah N., Rahmatsyah R., & Ali Mutakin, "Fatwa Lajnah Babtsul Masail NU Concerning Istibdāl Wakaf and Their Relevance with Renewal of Islamic Law," *Al-Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum Islam* 7, no. 2 (2023), 512. <http://dx.doi.org/10.29240/jhi.v7i2.3707>.



2	<i>Scene</i> 11	The attribute of Allah, <i>Ar-Rahman</i> , meaning Most Compassionate, applies to both believers and non-believers. <i>Ar-Rahim</i> , meaning Most Merciful, applies only to believers, and where does it apply? In the afterlife. Right now, we are living in this world, so why bring up hell? "That's heresy, you'll go to hell!" We are currently in the phase of <i>Ar-Rahman</i> , which crosses belief systems and religions. Why then is it diminished? The afterlife of others is a very personal matter; no one knows. But when it comes to human affairs, Allah does not discriminate. "When we are hungry, is it because we are Muslim? When they (non-believers) are not hungry, is it because they are non-Muslim?"
3	<i>Scene</i> 23	Now, in this school, I introduce the idea that we must be confident. Even if people talk about us, just remain confident, because what matters is being beneficial to the community, the nation, and the country. If there are differences in opinions, don't be uneasy because humans are naturally different. Some like salty, and some like spicy. This also applies to religious preferences. However, in Islam, it must align with the feeling and preference that one enjoys.
4	<i>Scene</i> 39	"Is a marriage conducted by force against the bride valid? The answer is 'not valid' because there is no willingness from the woman. But wait, that's a different issue. What I understand from Kang Amin is that he was responding to Kang Rida's answer. So, even if the woman is not present, even if she is unaware of the marriage, it is still permissible"
5	<i>Scene</i> 41	You will be assigned to several villages that need an <i>ustadz</i> . Therefore, you must exhibit good conduct in the community. Don't say, "Oh, they don't pray, they are sinners, they will go to hell" and then distance yourself from them. This is wrong. Do not belittle their behavior. "When you enter villages, you will see many women only wearing bras outside their houses. Now, do not look down upon them, what matters is you continue to do good. As the Prophet said, "The best among you are those with the best manners".

In table (2) regarding the level of reality, conversational codes are presented through two distinct portrayals. Scenes 3 and 39 depict interactive and two-way communication among the students during the *Bahtsul Masail* activity. Tracing its historical roots, *Bahtsul Masail* is a tradition of consultation and religious discourse long practiced by Islamic educational institutions, particularly traditional pesantren. Within this context, Islamic scholars (kyai) or students can express their ideas to address various socio-religious issues emerging in society, particularly those related to Islamic law. This tradition is undertaken as an effort to internalize the teachings of the Qur'an or apply various legal perspectives derived from the Qur'an, a pursuit continually pursued by both individuals and organizations.<sup>32</sup> Meanwhile, scenes 11, 23, and 41 depict one-way interaction and communication between students and teachers.

Overall, the conversational codes in each scene above represent universal values of religious tolerance, applicable to both interfaith and intra-faith relations. However, upon closer examination, the values conveyed through the conversational codes emphasize intra-faith relations, which have recently experienced a crisis of intolerance. Of the five conversational codes mentioned, only scenes 23 and 41 exhibit closed or one-way communication, while the other scenes provide an open space for discussion. These conversational codes imply that the narrative of tolerance conveyed in the film is expected to cultivate awareness among the students to understand the meaning of tolerance.

Fourthly, environmental codes. Environmental codes in most of the scenes primarily focus on the pesantren environment. According to the researcher, this is done because the film *Pesantren* seeks to present a perspective on pesantren life, thus emphasizing life within the pesantren environment over that outside of it. Within the pesantren world, socio-empirical-based learning is presented in the form of daily interaction

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<sup>32</sup> Hilmy Pratomo, "Transformasi Metode Bahtsul Masail NU dalam Berinteraksi dengan Al-Qur'an," *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 18, no. 1 (2020): 109-134. <http://doi.org/10.31291/jlk.v18i1.620>.

traditions within the pesantren environment, which significantly shapes the sense of tolerance and religious tolerance practices among the students.<sup>33</sup> Interaction is one of the five main factors in the formation of radical ideologies, thus students who interact within the pesantren environment will be protected from radical networks.<sup>34</sup> The importance of pesantren environmental codes at the level of reality implies that the film *Pesantren* seeks to respond to the demands of the times. Nowadays, pesantrens are required to implement an educational model that contextualizes typical pesantren literature with current issues. Islamic material, which often only focuses on the study of classical literature (*turats*), needs to be translated more realistically by incorporating humanitarian issues.<sup>35</sup>

### **The Message of Tolerance in the Level of Representation**

Within the film industry, the documentary genre emphasizes informative and educational values rather than mere entertainment. Documentaries serve as documents that prioritize factual content containing various layers of structure. While this type of film is often utilized as a medium to cultivate social awareness among viewers, its educational and informative functions do not overlook cinematographic aspects. Visual language can effectively convey the intended message. Therefore, the success of a production is inseparable from the quality of visuals capable of communicating messages to society.

Based on the analysis of five scenes above, the narrative of tolerance at the level of representation is presented through camera shot techniques.

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<sup>33</sup> Mahfud Junaedi, Nasikhin, Silviatul Hasanah, & Zainudin Hasan, "Learning Patterns in Influencing Attitudes of Religious Tolerance in Indonesian Universities," *Education Sciences* 13, no. 3 (2023), 285. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13030285>.

<sup>34</sup> Nur'aini Azizah, Hamdi Muluk, & Mirra Noor Milla, "Pursuing ideological passion in Islamic radical group's insurgency: a case study of Negara Islam Indonesia," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 13, no. 1 (2023): 1-27. <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v13i1.1-27>.

<sup>35</sup> Irfan Setia Permana Wiantamiharja, "Implementasi Toleransi Beragama di Pondok Pesantren (Studi Kasus di Pondok Pesantren Universal Bandung)".

Therefore, the analysis at the representation level will focus on camera shot techniques. The camera codes found in the five selected scenes utilize three-camera shot techniques: extreme long shot, medium shot, and close-up. The extreme long shot technique is used in all scenes except scene 41. This technique is employed to immerse the audience into the story and establish their focus. The use of this technique supports the environmental code present at the level of reality, thereby sharpening the perspective of the pesantren. The aim is to create intimacy between the audience and the visual imagery, allowing the audience to grasp the authentic atmosphere of the pesantren and comprehend the intended message more easily.

As a documentary that presents facts, the pesantren documentary film also utilizes close-up and medium shot camera techniques. The medium shot technique is commonly used to capture images from a closer perspective, enabling the depiction of the object's reactions or emotions. For viewers, this shot technique creates the effect as if they are observing the entire object. The presentation of factual content in this film is reinforced by the close-up camera technique. This technique is almost always present alongside the extreme long shot to illustrate the emotional state of the object and provide a deeper insight into the emotions or reactions of individuals, allowing the audience to also feel the conveyed emotions. This shot excels in capturing facial expressions of anger, frustration, happiness, sadness, surprise, and others.<sup>36</sup>

At the level of representation, the utilization of the three techniques mentioned above consistently appears together in every scene depicting narratives of tolerance. The three techniques used can be interpreted as forms of tolerance because intolerance, is not just black and white, right and wrong, but rather a middle ground or moderation. According to Hasyim Muzadi, developing a tolerant attitude requires a moderate approach, and to foster a moderate attitude, diverse ways of life are

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<sup>36</sup> Muhammad Nuzula Ramadhan, *Teknik Sinematografi dalam Menyampaikan Pesan Nasionalisme pada Program Tayangan Indonesia Bagus Edisi Maumere di NET TV* (Skripsi, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2017).

needed, including diversity in beliefs, thought patterns, and religious understandings. Meanwhile, in the context of cinematography, the use of the three filming techniques mentioned above further emphasizes the position of the film "Pesantren" as an informative and educational documentary film.<sup>37</sup>

### **The Message of Tolerance at the Ideological Level**

The surge in intolerance cases over the past few years indicates a decline in Indonesian society's awareness of the nation's diversity. According to research conducted by the SETARA Institute in 2023, there has been a 2.4% increase in intolerance cases among high school students. Meanwhile, exposure to extremism has also risen from 0.3% in the 2016 survey to 0.6% in the 2023 survey.<sup>38</sup> These data illustrate that intolerance continues to be a concern in Indonesia. The recent increase in intolerance cases not only affects interfaith communities but also intra-faith communities. The escalation of internal religious conflicts, particularly within Islam, is no longer solely attributed to the emergence of textualist-puritan groups but also socio-political influences. This condition has prompted various parties to engage in preventing the spread of intolerance in Indonesia through various means, including documentary films such as "Pesantren."

At the ideological level, this film serves its function as an informative and educational medium. This function is evident through the selection of five scenes that portray the narrative of tolerance in the film. The narrative of tolerance is constructed within two broad frameworks: interfaith tolerance and intra-faith tolerance. The narrative of interfaith tolerance is depicted in four out of the five selected scenes (3, 11, 23, 39, and 41), while the narrative of intra-faith tolerance is present in all selected scenes. This

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<sup>37</sup> Irfan Setia Permana Wiantamiharja, "Implementasi Toleransi Beragama di Pondok Pesantren (Studi Kasus di Pondok Pesantren Universal Bandung)".

<sup>38</sup> SETARA Institute, *Refleksi Hari Pancasila: dalam Berbagai Kasus Intoleransi, Pancasila sering Dikalahkan* (SETARA Institut, 1 Juni 2023). <https://setara-institute.org/refleksi-hari-pancasila-dalam-berbagai-kasus-intoleransi-pancasila-sering-dikalahkan/>.

data suggests that the film "Pesantren" serves as an effort to counter the issue of intra-faith intolerance, which has recently increased due to the intertwining of religion in political contests supported by the rapid advancement of technology.

From the analysis at the ideological level, the concept of tolerance emerges within three overarching ideas. First, the attitude of respecting differences in beliefs, thoughts, perspectives, or opinions. Second, the attitude of granting others the freedom to behave and express opinions is a fundamental human right. Third, respecting and preserving the existence of individuals or communities with different beliefs and opinions. These three aspects fall within a practical-empirical learning pattern that can influence the ability to tolerate.<sup>39</sup> These three concepts are elaborated in each scene as follows: In scenes 3 and 23, the character of *Ustadz* Didin, as the head of the education department, is depicted as wise, possessing extensive religious insight, and being open-minded. This is demonstrated by the ideas conveyed by *Ustadz* Didin that religion should not be mixed with politics. Similarly, *Ustadz* Dika, portrayed in the *Bahsul Masail* activity, is also depicted as a wise individual. This is shown when differences of opinion arise and are then resolved wisely. The ideological codes through these two characters convey the concept of tolerance for mutual respect towards differences.

The reality of Indonesian society, which often intertwines religious affairs with politics, poses a significant potential for national disintegration. Therefore, in scenes depicting the crisis of intra-faith intolerance caused by identity politics, as emphasized by *Ustadz* Didin and *Ustadz* Dika, serves as a critique of this reality. In a democratic society, tolerance plays a crucial role in addressing differences.<sup>40</sup> Tolerance is also

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<sup>39</sup> Mahfud Junaedi, Nasikhin, Silviatul Hasanah, & Zainudin Hasan, "Learning Patterns in Influencing Attitudes of Religious Tolerance in Indonesian Universities".

<sup>40</sup> Asti Meiza, "The Ordinal Regression to Analyze Radical Intention of Muslim Indonesian Students through Personality Type and Tolerance Approach," *Pakistan Journal of Statistics and Operation Research* 19, no. 2 (2023), 367. <http://dx.doi.org/10.18187/pjsor.v19i2.3932>.

a key factor in fostering happiness that impacts harmonious, violence-free living.<sup>41</sup> Happiness does not only stem from one's religious level but is also influenced by one's level of moderation, as intolerance can result in increased levels of stress, anxiety, and uncertainty in one's emotions.<sup>42</sup> Societal sensitivity to differences is essential in creating democracy and peace.<sup>43</sup> Tolerance must also be adopted in facing cultural, ethnic, racial, gender, and other differences. Islam, as a religion that guides all humanity, provides a pathway for mutual respect for human rights. Islam does not exist to overpower other religious groups but to protect all humans within its teachings. Tolerance must be nurtured within the social-political context, which is highly susceptible to conflicts arising from differences in social class and political views.

Furthermore, the narrative of tolerance conveyed in scene 11 emphasizes interfaith and intrafaith tolerance. The ideological code is evident from the ideas expressed by the *ustadz* regarding the concept of Allah's *Rahman* and *Rahim*. Quoting the opinion of Quraish Shihab, *rahmatan lil' alamin* concerns four aspects: firstly, the sender, which is Allah SWT. Allah SWT describes Himself as *Ar-Rahman* and *Ar-Rahim*. Both words are derived from the root word *Rahima*, meaning to love, to bless. *Ar-Rahman* bestows blessings upon every living creature without exception<sup>44</sup> *Ar-Rahim* is the love that will be given to those who believe

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<sup>41</sup> Zuhdiyah Z., Kusumasari Kartika Hima Darmayanti, & Nyayu Khodijah, "The Significance of Religious Tolerance for University Students: Its Influence on Religious Beliefs and Happiness," *Islamic Guidance and Counseling Journal* 6, no. (2023), 175. <https://doi.org/10.25217/igcj.v6i1.3551>.

<sup>42</sup> Jonathan Schlinger, *Escape from prefrontal chaos: Mindfulness and the intolerance of uncertainty-anxiety relationship* (Disertasi, Alliant International University, 2020); dan Ayse Sibel Demirtas & Banu Yildiz, "Hopelessness and perceived stress: The mediating role of cognitive flexibility and intolerance of uncertainty," *Dusunen Adam - The Journal of Psychiatry and Neurological Sciences* 32, no. 3 (2019): 259-267. <https://doi.org/10.14744/DAJPNs.2019.00035>.

<sup>43</sup> Maykel Verkuyten & Melanie Killen, "Tolerance, Dissenting Beliefs, and Cultural Diversity," *Child Development Perspectives* 15, no. 1(2021), 51-56. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdep.12399>.

<sup>44</sup> Bustanul Arifin, "Implikasi Prinsip Tasamuh (Toleransi) dalam Interaksi Antar Umat Beragama", *Fikri* 1, no. 2 (2016): 391-402. <https://doi.org/10.25217/jf.v1i2.20>.

and perform righteous deeds. In other words, Allah's limitless mercy in paradise will only be bestowed upon the believers, while His mercy extends to all creatures without exception. Based on this explanation, the concept of *Rahman* and *Rahim* conveyed by the *ustadz* to the students is relevant to Indonesia's diversity and pluralism.<sup>45</sup> This constitutes a significant material in the curriculum of Islamic boarding schools that are based on the ideology of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). The concept of *al-nabdliyyah*, encompassing the principles of *tawassuth* (moderation), *tawazun* (balance), *tasamuh* (tolerance), and *i'tidal* (justice), plays a crucial role in the development of NU ideology, which prioritizes a moderate, tolerant, and inclusive approach to interpreting Islam.<sup>46</sup> Cognitive learning such as this influences the understanding of religious tolerance, albeit having minimal impact on attitudes towards religious tolerance.<sup>47</sup> Participants undergoing cognitive learning methods dominated by cognitive aspects tend to overlook the emotional and practical aspects of religious tolerance, as they solely receive messages theoretically about religious tolerance.<sup>48</sup> This is based on findings that affirm cognitive learning patterns encourage students to enhance their cognitive thinking abilities.<sup>49</sup>

*Santri* is the subject of education within the pesantren world. They are taught to have broad-minded thinking through the knowledge

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<sup>45</sup> Solikhun S., "Relevansi Konsepsi Rahmatan Lil Alamin dengan Keragaman Umat Beragama," *Hanafiyya: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama* 4, no. 1 (2021): 42-67. <https://doi.org/10.15575/hanifiya.v4i1.11487>.

<sup>46</sup> Abdul Aziz, Imam Yahya, Fatah Syukur, & Mohamad Fathurohman, "The Counter Radicalism and Intolerance Strategy of Nahdlatul Ulama Higher Education in Indonesia," *AL-A'raf: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam dan Filsafat* 20, no. 1 (2023): 1-33. <https://doi.org/10.22515/ajpif.v20i1.6535>.

<sup>47</sup> Mahfud Junaedi, Nasikhin, Silviatul Hasanah, & Zainudin Hasan, "Learning Patterns in Influencing Attitudes of Religious Tolerance in Indonesian Universities".

<sup>48</sup> Erika A. Waters, "Feeling good, feeling bad, and feeling at-risk: A review of incidental affect's influence on likelihood estimates of health hazards and life events," *Journal of Risk Research* 11, no. 5 (2023): 569-595. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1080/13669870701715576>.

<sup>49</sup> Azizul Ghofar Candra Wicaksono, "Hubungan Keterampilan Metakognitif dan Berpikir Kritis terhadap Hasil Belajar Kognitif Siswa SMA pada Pembelajaran Biologi dengan Strategi Reciprocal Teaching," *Jurnal Pendidikan Sains* 2, no. 2 (2014): 85-92. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17977/jps.v2i2.4501>.



imparted by the kiai (Islamic scholars) in pesantren. The film explains that *santri* are individuals who depart from the dominant culture, engaging more in daily activities that revolve around the afterlife.<sup>50</sup> Obedience to the kiai and the pesantren's rules is also an ideology unique to pesantren institutions and not found in other educational institutions.<sup>51</sup> The figure of the kiai serves as an exemplary role model for the surrounding community, as the community's obedience to the kiai is highly esteemed. The kiai is placed in a position of leadership to be respected and followed.<sup>52</sup> With the cultivation of the character of God's love, *santri* will possess social interaction characteristics that know no bounds. For instance, in economic transactions, they will not only choose Muslim sellers and refuse to interact with non-Muslim sellers.<sup>53</sup>

The ideological code depicted in scenes 39 and 41 portrays the character of Nyai Masriyah Amva as a moderate and open-minded leader of the pesantren. In these scenes, the film presents the figure of nyai or the head of the pesantren, delivering various materials as part of the effort to shape the character of the *santri* (Islamic boarding school students). The values of tolerance and moderation, which serve as ideological codes in both scenes, refer to the idea that tolerance is the behavior of individuals who do not restrict others from adhering to the truth they believe in. This concept is evident from the narrative code conveyed by Nyai Masriyah

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<sup>50</sup> Hagi Julio Salas & Tina Kartika, "Representasi Identitas Santri: Analisis Semiotika Model John Fiske dalam Film Cahaya Cinta Pesantren," *Al-Mishbah* 16, no. 6 (2020): 57-74. <http://dx.doi.org/10.24239/al-mishbah.Vol16.Iss1.179>.

<sup>51</sup> M.R. Yuliadi, "Referensi Ideologi Pesantren dalam Cerpen Kang Maksun Karya A. Mustofa Bisri," *Sirok Bastra* 7, no. 2 (2019): 119-128. <https://doi.org/10.37671/sb.v7i2.165>.

<sup>52</sup> Ihsan I. & Ahmad Umar, "Kyai as Al-Qudwah Al-Khasanah: The Role of Kyai in Shaping Religious Culture in Islamic Education Institution," *Al-A'raf: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam dan Filsafat* 18, no. 2 (2020): 298-312. <https://doi.org/10.22515/ajpif.v17i2.2995>; A. Zaenurrosyid & Muhammad Subhan, "Pengaruh Pondok Pesantren terhadap Kehidupan Sosial Masyarakat Desa Kajen Kec. Margoyoso Kab. Pati," *Islamic Review: Jurnal Riset dan Kajian Keislaman* 7, no. 1 (2018): 55-71. <https://doi.org/10.35878/islamicreview.v7i1.133>.

<sup>53</sup> Irfan Mas'ud Abdullah, Bambang Ruswandi, Fatihunnada, F., & Abdul Hakim Wahid, "Toleransi di Kalangan Mahasantri dalam Menjalankan Moderasi Beragama di Lingkungan Ma'had Aly," *Jurnal Refleksi* 20, no. 2 (2021): 137-168. <https://doi.org/10.20414/ijhi.v19i1.205>.

Amva, stating that diversity is inevitable, and therefore, the *santri* are provided with an understanding not to be opposed to differences. Additionally, the *santri* are also encouraged to avoid blind fanaticism in judging others, especially regarding human relations with Allah or with others. The portrayal of bu nyai as having an open-minded character in the scene is significant due to the environmental code set against the backdrop of pesantren education. In pesantren education, the role of religious figures such as kiai and bu nyai is crucial in fostering mutual respect and reverence among students towards people of different religions who live in diversity. Kiai, as a religious figure, promotes exemplary tolerance towards others, which can serve as a model for society from one generation to the next.<sup>54</sup> This can be considered as a method of instilling tolerant character traits in students carried out by bu nyai or the leaders of the pesantren.

## Conclusion

After observing, analyzing, and describing the film “Pesantren”, it is found that the narrative of tolerance in the film is present in 5 scenes and 10 shots, which can be explained at the levels of reality, representation, and ideology. The principle of tolerance drawn from this film is the attitude towards differences to mutually respect and provide opportunities in beliefs, opinions, and practices of faith. Moreover, tolerance also signifies the appreciation of equality and readiness to collaborate. Tolerance can be implemented through dialogue to gain insights, respecting differing opinions, and not belittling others who are different. Based on the reading of the principles of tolerance in the film Pesantren, there are four main narratives that the film seeks to represent. Firstly, respecting differences of opinion. Secondly, viewing discussion partners or dialogue as partners in sharing insights. Thirdly, avoiding fanaticism as

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<sup>54</sup> Afina Izzati, “Kiai sebagai Figur Toleransi Kearifan Lokal di Lasem,” *Fikra: Jurnal Ilmu Aqidah dan Studi Keagamaan* 8, no. 2 (2020): 243-254. <http://dx.doi.org/10.21043/fikrah.v8i2.8005>.

God's love is boundless. And fourthly, eschewing discrimination against people of different religions.

In addition to presenting comprehensive and integral values of tolerance, the uniqueness of this film also lies in the choice of the expository documentary film genre. Consequently, the messages in the film are directly conveyed by the characters and speakers through events that are proportionally more strongly embedded in issue-based messages. Intellectual lectures between teachers and students as well as between scholars and audiences constitute an intriguing blend, making film critiques more engaging in drawing the audience's attention to the core issues addressed in the film. The strengthening role of pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) in Indonesia has now become a highly appealing commodity. Several production houses and authors have portrayed the life of pesantren in films and novels. The public response to watching and reading has also increased, in line with the pace of economic stability and technological advancement. Therefore, a broader study of the portrayal of pesantren life in films, novels, and other media forms is needed to reaffirm the values of tolerance and religious moderation as the main characteristics of pesantren.

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