

**SYMBOLIC MEANING OF OSAGE CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE  
FILM *KILLERS OF THE FLOWER MOON***

**TERM PAPER**



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PERSADA UNIVERSITY  
JAKARTA  
2025**

# **SYMBOLIC MEANING OF OSAGE CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE FILM *KILLERS OF THE FLOWER MOON***

Submitted in part-fulfillment of requirements for obtaining Sarjana Linguistik  
(S.Li) degree



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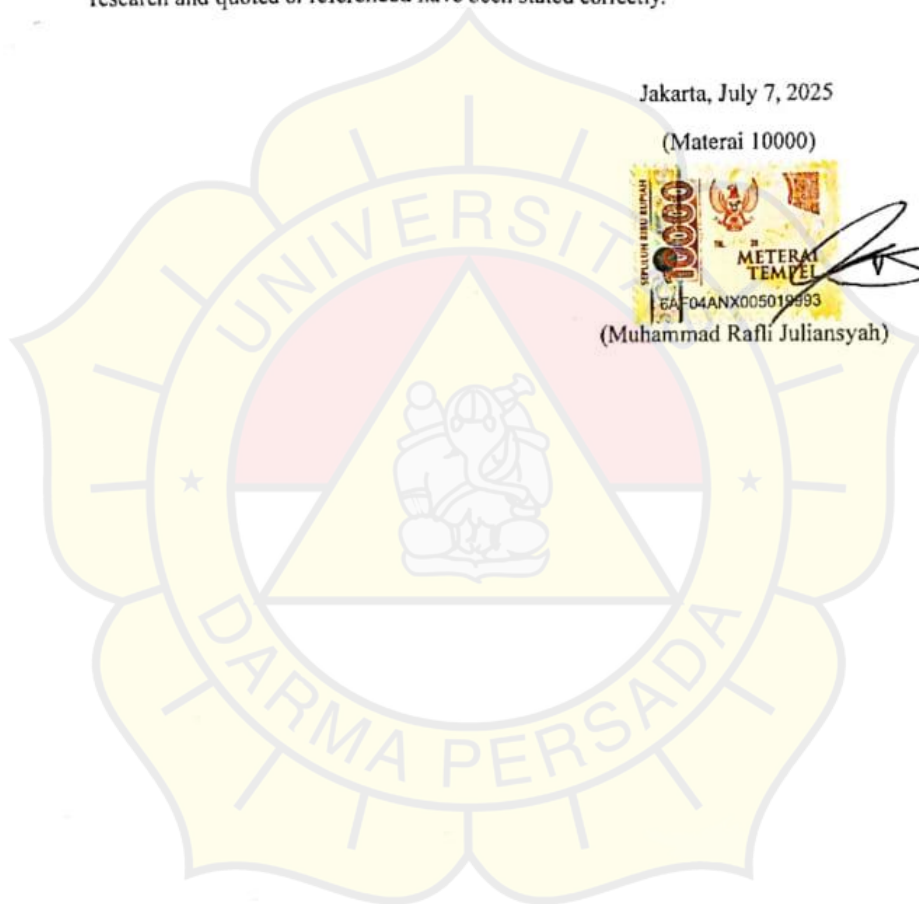
I hereby declare that the term-paper is the result of my own work and not plagiarism of another work, the contents has become my responsibility. All the sources of my research and quoted or referenced have been stated correctly.

Jakarta, July 7, 2025

(Materai 10000)



(Muhammad Rafli Juliansyah)



## LETTER OF APPROVAL

On recommendation of respective Supervisor, Academic Advisor, and Head of the Department, the term-paper submitted by Muhammad Rafli Juliansyah entitled “Symbolic Meaning of Osage Culture Identity in the Film *Killers of The Flower Moon*” has been approved and forwarded to the English Language and Culture Department, Darma Persada University, for final evaluation before the thesis defense for obtaining Sarjana Linguistik (S.Li) degree to the respective candidate.

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## TERM PAPER VALIDATION

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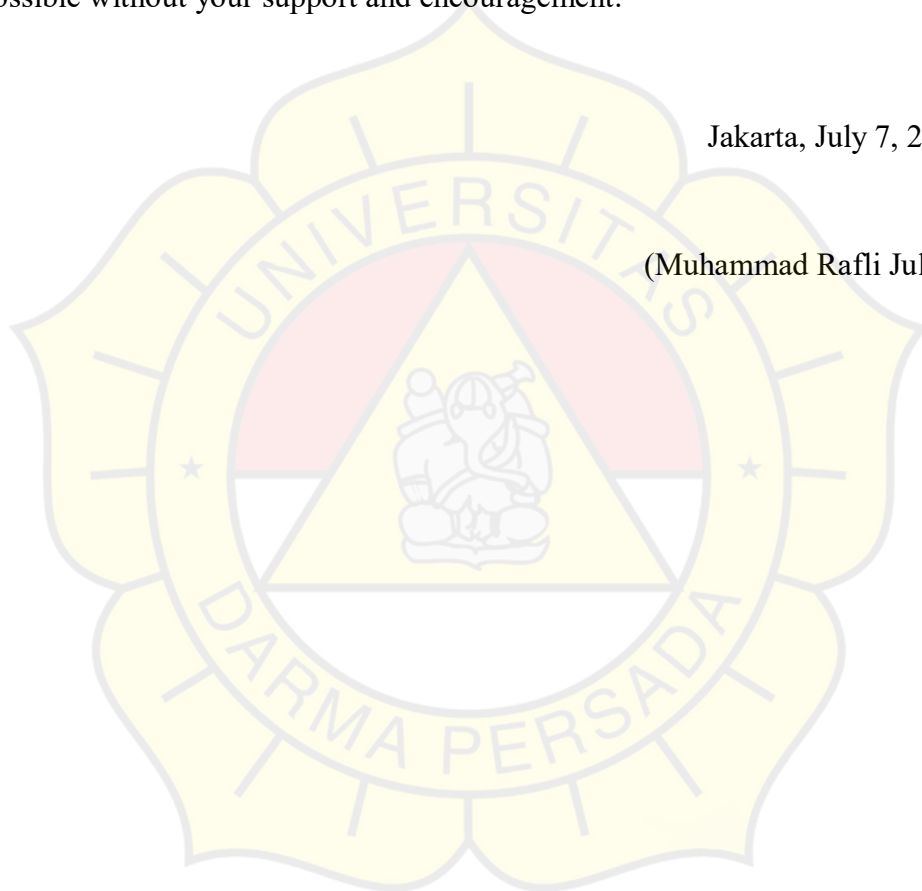
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(Muhammad Rafli Juliansyah)



# SYMBOLIC MEANING OF OSAGE CULTURAL IDENTITY IN THE FILM *KILLERS OF THE FLOWER MOON*

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## ABSTRACT

This study employs Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic framework to analyze the representation of Osage cultural identity in *Killers of the Flower Moon* (2023). Focusing on Peirce's triad of icons (signs of resemblance), indices (signs of causation), and symbols (signs of convention), the research examines how the film's visual and narrative elements construct meaning. Key findings reveal that while the film meticulously recreates Osage material culture as icons (e.g., regalia, earth lodges), these signs often lack contextual depth, reducing them to aesthetic elements. Trauma indices (e.g., poison, owl omens) effectively convey historical violence but overshadow narratives of resilience. The study concludes that the film's most culturally authentic representations emerge in Osage-led moments (e.g., the untranslated *Wahzhazhe* finale), demonstrating how Indigenous narrative control activates symbolic meaning. These findings highlight the importance of pairing visual authenticity with Indigenous semiotic authority in cultural representation.

**Keywords:** *Semiotics, Osage culture, Film analysis, Cultural representation, Indigenous sovereignty*

# MAKNA SIMBOLIK DAN REPRESENTASI IDENTITAS BUDAYA OSAGE DALAM FILM “KILLERS OF THE FLOWER MOON”

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## ABSTRAK

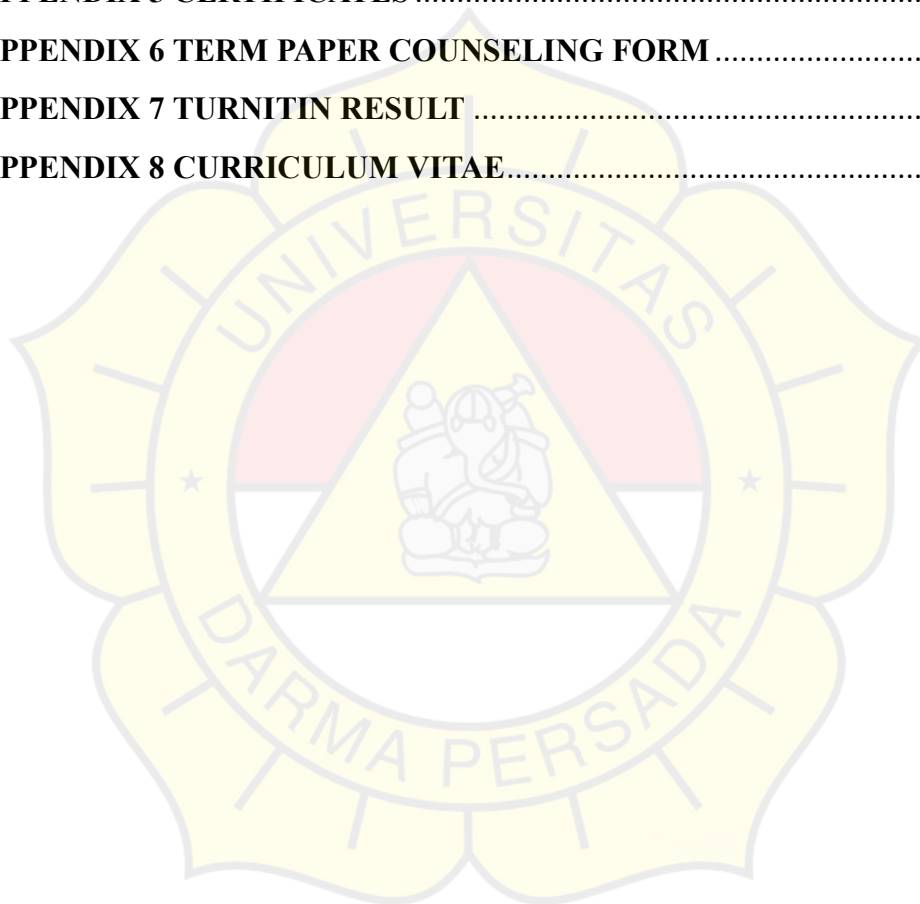
Penelitian ini menggunakan kerangka semiotik Charles Sanders Peirce untuk menganalisis representasi identitas budaya Osage dalam film *Killers of the Flower Moon* (2023). Dengan fokus pada tritunggal Peirce berupa ikon (tanda kesamaan), indeks (tanda kausalitas), dan simbol (tanda konvensi), penelitian ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana elemen visual dan naratif film tersebut membangun makna. Temuan utama menunjukkan bahwa meskipun film ini secara teliti merekonstruksi budaya material Osage sebagai ikon (misalnya, regalia, rumah tanah), tanda-tanda ini seringkali kekurangan kedalaman kontekstual, sehingga hanya menjadi elemen estetika. Indeks trauma (misalnya, racun, pertanda burung hantu) secara efektif menyampaikan kekerasan sejarah tetapi mengaburkan narasi ketahanan. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa representasi budaya yang paling autentik dalam film muncul pada momen yang dipimpin oleh Osage (misalnya, akhir Wahzhazhe yang tidak diterjemahkan), menunjukkan bagaimana kontrol naratif Indigenous mengaktifkan makna simbolis. Temuan ini menyoroti pentingnya menggabungkan keaslian visual dengan otoritas semiotik Indigenous dalam representasi budaya.

**Kata kunci:** Semiotika, Budaya Osage, Analisis film, Representasi budaya, Kedaulatan Indigenous

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