

The Aesthetics of Conflict in The Creation of The Film *Salisiah Adaik*

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the aesthetics of conflict in the creation of the film *Salisiah Adaik*, which portrays a dispute between two Minangkabau marriage customs: the *Bajapuik* tradition of the Pariaman community and the *Maisi Sasuduik* tradition of the Payakumbuh community. The research aims to explore how conflict is constructed not only as a dramatic element but also as a form of Minangkabau cultural aesthetics. The study employs a qualitative approach using narrative and film aesthetic analysis. The analysis focuses on character development, the use of local dialects, the structure of customary conflict, and cinematic elements such as art direction, lighting, and traditional music. The findings reveal that the aesthetics of conflict in the film are constructed through linguistic differences, customary disputes, and visual and auditory approaches that strengthen the dramatic quality of the narrative. The conflict in the film also reflects the Minangkabau philosophy, “*basilang kayu dalam tungku, mako api ka hiduik*” (crossed firewood in the stove keeps the fire alive), which views disagreement as a process leading to consensus. Therefore, conflict in *Salisiah Adaik* functions not only as a driving force of the narrative but also as a representation of Minangkabau cultural aesthetics.

Keywords: *Aesthetics Of Conflict, Minangkabau Film, Marriage Customs, Cinematics.*

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INTRODUCTION

Conflict in Minangkabau culture is not always understood as a destructive form of opposition. Differences of opinion, contrasting perspectives, and customary debates are instead regarded as part of the process of achieving balance and consensus. The Minangkabau philosophy “*basilang kayu dalam tungku, mako api ka iduik*” (crossed firewood in the stove keeps the fire alive) illustrates that disagreement is considered capable of sustaining social processes and generating collective decisions. Within the context of Minangkabau culture, conflict is not merely a social issue but also a form of aesthetic expression in thinking, speaking, and deliberating.

This perspective serves as the foundation for the creation of *Salisiah Adaik*, a feature-length fiction film that explores a dispute between two marriage customs: the *Bajapuik* tradition of the Pariaman community and the *Maisi Sasuduik* tradition of the Payakumbuh community. The *Bajapuik* tradition is a customary marriage system in

Pariaman that requires the bride's family to provide a bride-price payment to the groom's family. The amount of this payment is influenced by the groom's social status, traditional title, and occupation (Amelia & Rahmania, 2019). In contrast, the *Maisi Sasuduik* tradition in Payakumbuh requires the groom's family to provide money or household goods to the bride's family before the marriage ceremony takes place (Annisa & Siti, 2020). The encounter between these two different customary systems becomes the primary source of conflict in the film.

The conflict in *Salisiah Adaik* is not immediately presented through major customary disputes. Instead, it is gradually developed through differences in character, language, and patterns of communication among the characters. Muslim, a man from Pariaman, and Ros, a woman from Payakumbuh, represent two distinct cultural backgrounds. The extensive use of Pariaman and Payakumbuh dialects throughout the film's dialogue introduces conflict from the very beginning through differences in terminology, intonation, and everyday communication patterns. This linguistic conflict serves as a dramatic introduction to the more complex customary conflict that follows.

Language occupies an important position in Minangkabau culture as both an ethical and aesthetic form of social expression. The saying "*nan baiak budi, nan indah baso*" (good character and beautiful speech) suggests that cultural beauty lies not only in behavior but also in the manner of speaking. Therefore, conflict in *Salisiah Adaik* is constructed not only through opposing actions but also through dialogue, traditional proverbs, and differences in speech styles among the characters. The minor conflicts that emerge in everyday conversations become an essential element in building the film's dramatic aesthetics.

In addition to language and character, the aesthetics of conflict in the film are also constructed through the structure of Minangkabau customary traditions. Disputes over bride-price payments, the obligations of *mais i sasuduik*, and the mortgaging of *harta pusaka tinggi* (ancestral communal inheritance) demonstrate how conflict develops from a personal issue into a family and clan matter. Nevertheless, these conflicts continue to unfold through mechanisms of deliberation, customary debate, and the pursuit of consensus. Consequently, conflict in the film is not positioned as a force that destroys social relationships but rather as a process of cultural dialectics that leads toward balance.

The creation of conflict aesthetics in *Salisiah Adaik* is further strengthened through cinematic elements. Art direction, lighting, costumes, and the use of 1950s-period props establish a Minangkabau social atmosphere that supports the dramatic narrative. Meanwhile, the incorporation of traditional music from Pariaman and Payakumbuh creates emotional tension that serves as an auditory representation of the two cultural identities depicted in the film. The contrasting musical characteristics of the *darek* (highland) and coastal regions become part of the visual and auditory construction of conflict aesthetics.

To date, studies on films dealing with marriage customs have generally focused on cultural representation, social conflict, and traditional values within society. Several Indonesian films, such as *Mursala*, *Tenggelamnya Kapal Van Der Wijck*, and *Uang Panai*, portray marriage customs as a source of dramatic conflict. However, analyses of these films

have primarily concentrated on socio-cultural issues, while conflict as a form of cultural aesthetics and as a strategy for dramatic construction in cinema has received relatively little attention.

Based on these considerations, this study focuses on how conflict in *Salisiah Adaik* is constructed as a dramatic aesthetic through character creation, the use of regional languages, the opposition of customary values, and cinematic approaches that shape the audience's aesthetic experience. This research is important because it demonstrates that conflict in Minangkabau culture functions not only as a narrative issue but also as a cultural aesthetic system expressed through filmic narrative, language, visual imagery, and music.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative method using film aesthetics and narrative analysis approaches. The material object of the study is the film *Salisiah Adaik*, while the formal object focuses on the construction of the aesthetics of conflict through dramatic structure, character development, language use, and the film's cinematic elements. The narrative approach is used to examine how conflict is developed through the progression of the story, relationships among characters, and character transformation within the film's dramatic structure. Meanwhile, the film aesthetics approach is applied to analyze how conflict is constructed through visual and auditory elements such as mise-en-scène, art direction, lighting, music, dialogue, and the use of local dialects in creating the audience's aesthetic experience.

The concept of a character-driven story serves as the primary foundation in the creation of *Salisiah Adaik*. The narrative focuses on the emotional experiences, motivations, and responses of the characters to the customary issues they encounter. Within this approach, conflict develops from differences in character traits, cultural values, and the characters' perspectives on Minangkabau marriage customs. Consequently, conflict is presented not only as a dramatic event but also as a representation of the aesthetic system embedded in Minangkabau culture.

The analysis was conducted through an examination of the film's dramatic structure, including character development, inciting incidents, conflict progression, climax, and narrative resolution. In addition, the study observes the use of Pariaman and Payakumbuh dialects, visual elements, sound design, and traditional music as integral components in the construction of the aesthetics of conflict within the film.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

1. Creating Conflict Through a Character-Driven Story

The aesthetics of conflict in *Salisiah Adaik* are constructed through a character-driven storytelling approach, in which the narrative centers on the emotional experiences, motivations, and development of the characters as the primary driving force of the story. According to Myers (2002), the protagonist serves as the foundation

of a narrative because the character's emotional journey and decisions determine both plot development and the direction of the conflict.

The characters of Muslim, a man from Pariaman, and Ros, a woman from Payakumbuh, represent two distinct cultural backgrounds. Their encounter forms the basis of the conflict within the film. The initial conflict emerges through differences in language and speech patterns between the Pariaman and Payakumbuh communities. These differences generate a series of minor conflicts that function as dramatic preludes to a larger customary dispute.

The conflict intensifies as the relationship between Muslim and Ros develops toward marriage. The contrasting marriage customs of the *Bajapuik* and *Maisi Sasuduik* traditions become the primary source of tension in the story. The conflict extends beyond the two main characters and involves their families, *ninik mamak* (traditional clan elders), and the surrounding community. Consequently, the conflict evolves from a personal issue into a broader social and customary dispute.

Supporting characters such as Mak Tini, Mamak Ros, and Siti further strengthen the dramatic development of the narrative. Their presence highlights the significance of the Minangkabau matrilineal system in decisions concerning marriage customs. Through the relationships among these characters, the conflict gradually develops and ultimately reaches resolution through deliberation and consensus.

2. The Aesthetics of Conflict Through Language and Character

The aesthetics of conflict in *Salisiah Adaik* are constructed through the use of local dialects, dialogue, and characterization. Differences between the Pariaman and Payakumbuh dialects function as markers of cultural identity while simultaneously creating linguistic conflict within the film. This conflict is not presented aggressively but rather through everyday conversations that reveal differences in speech patterns and interpretations of language.

In addition to language, characterization plays an important role in constructing the aesthetics of conflict. Ros is portrayed as gentle, calm, and religious, while Muslim is depicted as more assertive and outspoken. These contrasting character traits strengthen the dramatic dynamics of the story while also representing the cultural distinctions between the two regions.

Table 1. The Aesthetics of Conflict Through Language and Character

Scene	Form of Conflict		Aesthetic Element
Muslim refers to a traditional food as <i>juadah</i> , while the people of Payakumbuh call it <i>gelamai</i>	Difference	in regional dialects	Linguistic conflict as a dramatic introduction
A market vendor addresses Muslim as <i>Ajo</i>	Cultural	adaptation	Harmony within cultural differences

Ros is shown cooking and attending the <i>surau</i> (prayer house)	Character development	Representation of Minangkabau womanhood
Muslim's assertive manner of speaking contrasts with Ros's gentle speech	Character differences	Emotional dynamics between characters

3. The Aesthetics of Conflict Through Customary Structure

The central conflict in the film develops through the opposition between the *Bajapuik* and *Maisi Sasuduik* marriage traditions. This customary conflict is gradually built from family-related issues and expands to involve the wider community and customary institutions. In Minangkabau culture, customary conflict is not merely a form of opposition but also part of the deliberative process through which consensus is achieved.

Issues surrounding bride-price payments, the mortgaging of *harta pusaka tinggi* (ancestral communal inheritance), and the involvement of *ninik mamak* demonstrate how conflict develops within the social structure of Minangkabau society. The resolution of conflict is not presented explicitly but is achieved through deliberation and the restoration of customary balance.

Table 2. The Aesthetics of Conflict Through Customary Structure

Stage of Conflict	Form of Conflict	Cultural Meaning
Conflict between Ros and Mak Tini	Rejection of marriage due to bride-price requirements	The burden of custom and family economics
Meeting among the <i>mamak</i> (maternal uncles)	Determination of the bride-price amount	Customary deliberation
Conflict between Muslim and Ros	Anxiety that the relationship may end	Tension between love and custom
Mortgaging ancestral inheritance	Social conflict within the community	Clan honor in Minangkabau custom
Resolution through consensus	Conflict resolution	Customary dialectics leading to balance

4. The Aesthetics of Conflict Through Cinematic Elements

In addition to narrative construction, the aesthetics of conflict in *Salisiah Adaik* are reinforced through cinematic elements, particularly art direction, lighting, and traditional music. The visual setting of the 1950s is realized through the use of period-specific props, costumes, and spatial design that support the dramatic atmosphere of the story.

Music serves as a significant cinematic element in constructing the film's conflict. The soundtrack combines traditional music from Pariaman and Payakumbuh, representing the two different cultural backgrounds portrayed in the narrative.

Payakumbuh, as part of the *darek* (highland) region, is characterized by slow, lyrical, and melancholic music performed with instruments such as the *salempong* and *kecapi*. In contrast, Pariaman, a coastal region, is represented through more rhythmic, energetic, and powerful musical forms using instruments such as *indang* and *gandang tambua*.

These contrasting musical characteristics are integrated according to the film's narrative structure and character-focused scenes. Since Ros, a woman from Payakumbuh, serves as the central character, the dominant musical atmosphere is sorrowful, poignant, and melancholic. This musical approach intensifies emotional tension and enhances the dramatic impact of the conflicts developed through the narrative and visual storytelling.

Table 3. The Aesthetics of Conflict Through Cinematic Elements

Cinematic Element	Visual/Audio Form	Dramatic Function
1950s art direction	House props, costumes, customary spaces	Revitalizes the atmosphere of cultural conflict
Naturalistic lighting	Dim and warm lighting	Strengthens emotional atmosphere
Payakumbuh music	<i>Salempong</i> and <i>kecapi</i> with slow tempo	Creates a melancholic mood
Pariaman music	<i>Indang</i> and <i>gandang tambua</i> with fast rhythms	Represents coastal cultural identity
Combination of music from both regions	Musical arrangements based on character scenes	Enhances dramatic conflict

5. Semantic and Pragmatic Meanings in the Aesthetics of Conflict

Conflict in *Salisiah Adaik* is constructed not only through customary opposition and narrative drama but also through linguistic meaning conveyed semantically and pragmatically. The extensive use of the Pariaman and Payakumbuh dialects gives the film's dialogue both aesthetic and cultural significance. Language functions not merely as a tool of communication among characters but also as a symbol of cultural identity, social relations, and the worldview of Minangkabau society.

From a semantic perspective, the film's dialogues are built through the use of traditional proverbs, customary expressions, and local terminology that carry deep cultural meanings. According to Sankaravelayuthan (2018), semantics is the study of meaning and the relationships between signs within society. In *Salisiah Adaik*, semantic meaning is expressed through word choice, customary terms, and linguistic symbols that represent the cultural identities of Pariaman and Payakumbuh.

From a pragmatic perspective, the meaning of conflict is shaped by the social and cultural contexts underlying conversations among the characters. Pragmatics examines how meaning is influenced by situations, social relationships, and cultural contexts (Muzayyin Haris, Utsman Daffa'Ulhaq, & Wahyu Tegar Islami, 2023). In the film,

linguistic conflict does not always appear as overt arguments but emerges through differences in terminology, intonation, and speech styles that create subtle tensions among characters.

This linguistic conflict constitutes an essential aspect of the film's aesthetics of conflict because it demonstrates that cultural differences are reflected not only in customary systems but also in everyday language. Nevertheless, linguistic conflict is conveyed through norms and ethics of speech that reflect the Minangkabau philosophy "*nan baik budi, nan indah baso*" (good character and beautiful speech). Thus, language in *Salisiah Adaik* becomes an aesthetic space that embodies both cultural tension and harmony.

Table 4. Semantic and Pragmatic Meanings in the Aesthetics of Conflict

No.	Dialogue/ Language	Form Conflict	of	Semantic Meaning	Pragmatic Meaning	Cultural Meaning
1	The use of <i>juadah</i> and <i>gelamai</i>	Linguistic conflict		Different terms for traditional food	Minor misunderstanding in communication	Language as a marker of regional cultural identity
2	The greeting <i>Ajo</i> addressed to Muslim	Easing conflict	of	A distinctive Pariaman form of address	A form of social acceptance	Language builds social relationships
3	Customary dialogue among <i>ninik mamak</i>	Deliberative conflict		Use of customary proverbs	Social negotiation through language	Deliberation as a Minangkabau cultural value
4	Mak Tini's rejection of Ros's relationship	Emotional conflict		Language expressing prohibition and concern	The mother's role as guardian of custom	The Minangkabau matrilineal system
5	Dialogue concerning the mortgaging of ancestral inheritance	Social conflict		Symbol of clan dignity and honor	Social pressure from the community	Ancestral inheritance as a marker of clan identity
6	The expression " <i>basilang</i> "	Philosophical conflict		Conflict as a source of vitality	Differences of opinion leading to consensus	The dialectical nature of

DISCUSSION

1. Character-Driven Story as a Strategy for Constructing the Aesthetics of Conflict

The findings indicate that the narrative structure of *Salisiah Adaik* is primarily driven by the emotional journey of its two protagonists, Muslim and Ros. Rather than relying on external events as the main source of dramatic progression, the film develops its conflict through the characters' decisions, motivations, and responses to the cultural differences they encounter. The escalation from interpersonal misunderstanding to familial and customary conflict demonstrates that character development functions as the central mechanism of narrative construction.

This finding supports the concept of the *character-driven story*, which emphasizes that plot progression emerges from the psychological transformation and decision-making of the characters rather than from isolated events (Myers, 2002). Similarly, Jericho Writers (n.d.) argue that emotionally driven characters create narratives in which internal conflicts naturally generate external dramatic events. The narrative structure observed in *Salisiah Adaik* therefore illustrates how character agency becomes the catalyst for the escalation of conflict.

Furthermore, the causal relationship between character actions and narrative progression reflects the classical narrative principles proposed by Bordwell and Thompson (2013), who argue that cinematic narratives develop through chains of cause and effect. In *Salisiah Adaik*, every narrative turning point originates from the protagonists' responses to conflicting customary traditions rather than from arbitrary plot devices.

These findings also extend previous discussions of dramatic conflict in Indonesian cinema. While Nugroho (2019) emphasizes conflict as the structural engine of narrative development, *Salisiah Adaik* demonstrates that conflict can simultaneously function as a medium for representing cultural identity. Thus, conflict is not merely a narrative mechanism but also an aesthetic strategy that articulates the encounter between two Minangkabau customary traditions.

2. Conflict as a Representation of Minangkabau Cultural Aesthetics

The findings demonstrate that conflict in *Salisiah Adaik* is constructed not as a destructive confrontation but as a cultural process that ultimately seeks social equilibrium. Throughout the narrative, disagreements surrounding *Bajapuik* and *Maisi Sasuduik* traditions are resolved through deliberation (*musyawarah*), illustrating that conflict serves as an integral part of customary negotiation rather than as a force of social fragmentation.

This interpretation reflects the Minangkabau philosophy "*basilang kayu dalam tungku, mako api ka hiduik*," which suggests that differences of opinion are essential for sustaining collective harmony and achieving consensus (Teguh Gunung Anggun, 2023). Accordingly, conflict is represented as a productive social mechanism rather than a destructive phenomenon.

The findings are consistent with Faruk (1998), who argues that conflict within Minangkabau culture possesses an aesthetic dimension because it creates a space for cultural dialogue and negotiation. Rather than emphasizing victory or defeat, the film portrays conflict as an ongoing process of balancing competing values within customary society.

Compared with previous studies that primarily examine marriage customs as social or anthropological phenomena (Amelia & Rahmania, 2019; Annisa & Siti, 2020), this study demonstrates that customary conflict also functions as an aesthetic principle shaping narrative structure, character interaction, and cinematic expression. Therefore, *Salisiah Adaik* expands existing discussions by positioning customary conflict not only as cultural content but also as a cinematic aesthetic strategy.

3. Language as a Construct of the Aesthetics of Conflict

The findings reveal that language functions as more than a medium of communication; it serves as a marker of cultural identity and a significant source of dramatic conflict. Linguistic differences between the Pariaman and Payakumbuh dialects create subtle tensions that gradually evolve into broader cultural conflicts. Expressions such as *juadah* and *gelamai* illustrate how lexical variation reflects different cultural perspectives despite referring to the same object.

From a semantic perspective, these linguistic choices enrich the cultural meanings embedded within the narrative, supporting the argument that language conveys cultural values beyond its literal meaning (Sankaravelayuthan, 2018). At the pragmatic level, the interpretation of dialogue depends on the social context, interpersonal relationships, and communicative norms that govern interaction in Minangkabau society (Haris et al., 2023).

Unlike many Indonesian films in which dialect primarily functions to establish regional authenticity, language in *Salisiah Adaik* actively shapes narrative conflict. The use of regional dialects not only strengthens cultural representation but also becomes a narrative device that introduces misunderstanding, negotiation, and eventual reconciliation. Consequently, language operates simultaneously as a cultural marker and an aesthetic instrument for constructing dramatic conflict.

4. Cinematic Elements as Reinforcements of the Aesthetics of Conflict

The findings demonstrate that the aesthetics of conflict are reinforced through the integration of visual and auditory cinematic elements. Production design, costumes, properties, and naturalistic lighting collectively reconstruct the atmosphere of

Minangkabau society in the 1950s, allowing the cultural conflict to emerge within a historically convincing setting.

Music also plays a crucial role in shaping the emotional dimension of the narrative. Traditional music from Payakumbuh, characterized by slower and more melancholic melodies, accompanies Ros's emotional journey, whereas the rhythmic musical traditions of Pariaman reinforce the identity of the coastal community. Rather than functioning merely as background accompaniment, these musical contrasts establish an emotional dialogue between the two cultural settings represented in the film.

This finding supports Pratista (2017), who argues that cinematic elements are fundamental in constructing meaning and audience engagement. Furthermore, it complements Bordwell and Thompson (2013), who emphasize that visual style and sound are integral components of narrative meaning rather than decorative additions.

Unlike previous studies that examine cinematic elements primarily from technical or stylistic perspectives, this study demonstrates that visual and auditory components actively participate in constructing cultural conflict. Accordingly, the aesthetics of conflict in *Salisiah Adaik* emerge from the interaction between narrative structure and cinematic form, enabling audiences to experience cultural tension not only through the storyline but also through the film's visual and sonic language.

CONCLUSION

The film *Salisiah Adaik* demonstrates that conflict in Minangkabau culture is not understood as a destructive form of opposition, but rather as an integral part of the processes of deliberation and consensus-building. This study finds that the aesthetics of conflict in the film are constructed through a character-driven storytelling approach, in which conflict develops gradually through differences in language, character traits, and the customary systems of the Pariaman and Payakumbuh communities.

The aesthetics of conflict in the film are developed through both narrative and cinematic elements. From a narrative perspective, conflict emerges through the use of local dialects, the opposition between the *Bajapuik* and *Maisi Sasuduik* marriage traditions, and the social relationships among the characters. From a cinematic perspective, conflict is reinforced through art direction, lighting, costumes, and the use of traditional music, all of which contribute to the film's dramatic atmosphere.

Therefore, conflict in *Salisiah Adaik* functions not only as a driving force of the narrative but also as a representation of Minangkabau cultural aesthetics, expressed through language, visual imagery, music, and the practice of deliberation within the community.

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