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## Representation of Multiculturalism and the Wu Lun Teaching In the Indonesian Movie “Cek Toko Sebelah”

Monica Hartanti<sup>1</sup>

### ABSTRACT

The conflict between ethnic and moral decadence are two negative effects of Globalization era that currently occur in Indonesian society. Two things cause it; first, "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika" has been forgotten as the local Wisdom of the Indonesian nation that can manage the life of this multiethnic society wisely. Secondly, moral coaching in the scope of the family as the most important social institution in society is not successful. From time to time it will paralyze the strength of a country. The Story in the "Cek Toko Sebelah" (meaning: Please check it in next store) movie implies one of China's teachings to build ideal relationships in family and community life. This is in stark contrast to the ethnic Chinese stereotype in Indonesia, which is always associated with the issue of economic inequality that often leads to discriminatory treatment and leads to conflict between ethnic groups. The representation of the moral values is interesting to study by using semiotic of Roland Barthes. The results of this discussion revealed that the movie "Cek Toko Sebelah" is able to represent accommodative multicultural life with a humorous style. One of the thousands of years old Chinese ideologies is still relevant applied in the story line of today's movies, but its application is adapted to today life, especially about the equality of women and men in the modern era. The happy ending of the story in this film can be an inspiration that tolerance in ethnic diversity is actually easy to do and will result in harmonious social relationships. It can be an inspiration that "single Bhinneka" must be applied in social life so that the Indonesian state remains united.

**Keywords:** Indonesian movie, Multiculturalism, Representation, Semiotica, Wu lun teaching.

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### 1. Introduction

Lately, a moral crisis has occurred in Indonesian society. Acts of harassment, disrespect for one another, violence, injustice, and corruption are the subjects of daily news. One of the negative effects of the current era of Globalization in Indonesia is moral decadence. One of the causes is moral coaching in the family scope that does not work. Moral cannot be formed instantly, but it is an understanding that must be familiarized when someone is still living or living with his family since a young age. (Iskarim, 2016).

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Achieve an ideal social life, starting with the establishment of good relationships in every community member. As a country with diverse ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds; plurality in Indonesian society cannot be denied anymore. The diversity has been united with the state's motto of the "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika", which means Unity in Diversity. Ideal relationships in ethnic and cultural diversity in community life must be maintained. Moral formation in every member of society needs to be done as early as possible, one way through film media. In this research, choose one of Indonesian film entitled "Check Next Store". The film that managed to get nine nominations for the Indonesia Film Festival (FFI) 2017 is a comedy film that tells about family life.

Here are the summarized criticisms from some external reviewers revealing the advantages and disadvantages of the "Cek Toko Sebelah" Movie. Can be described, this film has side A and B. Side A focuses on the drama of Afuk family life that makes the audience touched while the B Side contains comedy. The facts and reality that are being warm in Indonesia become the ingredients of comedy. Community stereotypes about ethnic Chinese with grocery stores coupled with fresh jokes, lighthearted and contemporary presented with so smart. These elements can be presented very well without any impression of coercion or harassing a particular race.

Although this comedy-drama is very entertaining, the plot is plain. The solution to each conflict is less bite, probably because there are too many conflicts until the message is less impressive to the audience. There are some scenes that seem futile. Some of the plot sides of the film are also a lot that seemed to appear just as a mere patch.

Family life in this film is depicted naturally as if adapted directly from real events. The invisible family ties are told in the relationship between Father and his two children. Koh Afuk-the father-believes more of Erwin-the youngest, the reason Erwin succeeds in his career is expected he can take care of the shop that has been pioneered and able to support the shop's employees. Meanwhile, Yohan-the eldest-feels he's the one who deserves to run the store because of his memories with his late mother who runs the shop since he was a kid. Erwin-the youngest-also has a reason why he is reluctant to run the shop because he feels his older sister is more worthy to run the store. Through this storyline depicted a strong Chinese tradition and binding each other between family members. In the Movie "Shop Next Check" repeatedly stressed that the family is the most valuable treasure that cannot be bought with money.

Mindset Chinese Ethnic in Indonesia as a trader or open a store into a common thread in this film. But if examined more deeply, there are moral values of Chinese teachings about human relations implicit in this film. This is in stark contrast to the ethnic Chinese stereotype in Indonesia, which is always associated with the issue of economic inequality, so it often leads to discriminatory treatment and ends ethnic conflicts. This is the motivation of researchers to expose the representation of moral values by using the theory of semiotics - Roland Barthes.

The findings of this study reveal that the moral value of the ancient Chinese teachings that have been thousands of years old can also be delivered through the film. Using a simple comedy storyline, the representation of accommodative multiculturalism and ideal relationships in social life are easily conveyed to the audience. The happy ending of the story in this film can be an inspiration that tolerance in ethnic diversity is actually easy to do and will result in harmonious social relationships. It is an inspiration that Bhinneka alone must be applied in social life, thus strengthening the State.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Semiotics film

The film is a merging medium created by a verbal and non-verbal sign. The film is a cinematic text by combining dialogue, music, scenes and roles in a cohesive way. (Danesi, 2002) in (Faizal, 2009:12). Film as a complex audiovisual media has a function as a tool of propaganda, means of education and also as a means of dissemination of cultural values as well as to entertain the audience. Movies with an interesting storyline will be very easy to influence the audience to absorb the moral message in it. The film is a representation of the lives of a group of people who are documented and convey a moral message. A movie is designed not just for entertaining and not operating in a vacuum. A

film is loaded with a certain ideology, even can repeat from the previous ideology delivered in various ways according to the plot of the story. (Juliana and Ahmad, 2009).

An ideology also has an important role to play in signifying signs. Rose, based his view on the opinions of Williamson (1978) and Barthes (1973), that the structural separation of the metaphorical sign that leads to metonymic, ie, the sign associated with something and then represents something Rose (2007: 87, Kress, et al, 2006) in (Faizal, 2009: 12). This research uses Roland Barthes Semiotics approach. Known as "two order of signification," includes denotation and connotation (the dual meaning born of cultural and personal experience). (Fadillah, 2016).

## 2.2 Representation

In short, representation is the production of meaning through language, which works through the construction of sign. The Oxford English Dictionary suggests two relevant meanings for the representation:

(1) Representing something can mean describing it, calling it in the mind through imagination or description, to then put that similarity in our minds.

(2) Representation also means to symbolize, as in the phrase, "In Christianity, the cross represents the suffering and crucifixion of Christ", but for the layman of the cross are only two wooden planks nailed together. This is a concept that we can put into words and images.

The process of representation is formed from two different systems but interdependent. The first is a system of mental representation, in the form of a concept formed in the mind (conceptual map) that is able to classify and organize the world into meaningful categories. When we have a concept of something, it can be said we know its meaning. But we cannot communicate it without a second representation of language. Language consists of signs arranged in various relationships. (Hall, 1997).

The language contains symbols or signs in the form of voice, text words, and visual images. Language is able to construct meaning and exchange meaning from one agent to another in society. Therefore, language is important in the process of representation. (Ida, 2014)

The relation between 'something', conceptual map ', and 'language/symbol 'is the heart of the production of meaning through language. So meaning cannot be communicated without language. Representation is a process that connects something ', conceptual map', language/symbol at the same time. The important thing in the process of representation is the background of the same knowledge in a particular group so that the group can produce and exchange meaning well and create a similar understanding. (Damayanti, 2014).

## 2.3 The concept of multiculturalism in "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika"

The slogan of "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika" symbolizes the reality of Indonesian nation and state composed of various tribes, customs, religions, classes, cultures, and territories consisting of thousands of islands. Bhineka Tunggal Ika is one of Indonesian local wisdom. Local wisdom is the value of local culture that can regulate the life of society wisely and wisely. Local wisdom is cultural products of the past that should be constantly used as a guide to life, inherent in the life of the community that will make his life become dynamic and peaceful (Suaib, 2017).

The motto of Bhineka Tunggal Ika is derived from the Old Javanese term (Sanskrit) derived from one of the kingdoms in Indonesia, Majapahit. The slogan of "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika" is inspired by the society's condition that respects each other, the tolerance between different religions so that the Majapahit kingdom experienced the heyday under the leadership of King Hayam Wuruk. (Suwanda, 2017). People living in big cities must learn the old local wisdom and adapt it to their situation, so that harmonious life can still be done in this era of globalization. (Na Thalang, 2001) in (Mungmachon, 2012).

Multiculturalism comes from a multi-cultural word that implies recognition of the reality of cultural diversity. According to Pasurdi Suparlan, the concept of Multiculturalism cannot be equated with the concept of cultural diverseness as from the characteristics of plural society, but more emphasized on cultural diversity in equality. Indonesian state motto "Bhinneka Tunggal Ika"--Unity in Diversity-- has different but still one has signaled a strong willingness to admit differences and preserve unity in diversity. Diversity is valued as a reality of life. This is what underlies the understanding of

multiculturalism in Indonesia. In the principle of multiculturalism there is appreciation, respect for other ethnic cultures and there is an attempt to defend the plurality of ethnic and cultural diversity.

As a country with diverse ethnicity, culture and religion, plurality in Indonesian society cannot be denied anymore. Therefore multicultural accommodating (Parekh 1997) in various fields of human life Indonesia is very suitable to be applied. Accommodating in the concept of multiculturalism, society has a dominant culture makes certain adjustments and accommodations for minorities by giving freedom to the minorities to maintain and develop their culture. Instead minorities are not opposed to the dominant culture, so that Indonesia still able to maintain and preserve pluralism and diversity in this globalization era. (Irhandyaningsih, 2012).

## 2.4 Five relationships of humanity in confucian teaching

According to H. G. Creel, professor at the University of Chicago, every human being has the potential to become an ideal human being, in Confucianism, it is realized through the role of individual ethics and social ethics. The discussion in this paper is associated with one of the teachings of Confucius in the social ethic of the Five Relationships of Humanity Wu Lun (五伦). In the Wu Lun teachings (五伦), Harmony in every human person is created, so that strong and harmonious relations in social life will be formed and neatly arranged. The word "Lun" comes from the character of the person and the sound "Lun", meaning generation and can be interpreted also as "Dao" (holy path). So Lun's character implies a "Holy path" (Dao) from generation to generation. Wu Lun has meaning "to be the way to be applied in public relations"

"Duke of ch'i (490 B.C) ask master K'ung about Government, Master K'ung replied saying: Let the prince be a prince, the minister a minister, the father a father, and the son a son."

Quote above reveals, the Doctrine of Wu Lun (五伦) stressed that human people have a role and must carry out their respective functions. Two of the five most important relationships are the relationship between the Leader and the employees, Father and son. When the relationship is going well personally expected are able to build relationships in community of the state. (Dau Lin, 2016).

Wu Lun (五伦) teaching covers True Husband, Good Wife (夫义妇德, fu yi fu de); Father Loves His Sons, Respectful Children to Dad (父慈子孝, fu ci zi xiao); Siblings are Friendly; The Younger Must Respect the Older (兄友弟敬, xiong you di jing), A Loving Leader, Loyal Employees (君仁臣忠, jun ren chen zhong); Trust each other between friends (朋友有信, peng you you xin). (Slote, De Vos, Prabowo 2014).

Although the Confucian Doctrine "Wu Lun" teaches the perfect human interaction, it still places women at a disadvantage. Women and Men have no equal rights, but this is a gender role for women in Confucianism. The morality of the Confucian family is a spiritual shackle of surrender and goodness done to Chinese women called "three obedience and four virtues". ("San Cong Shi De"). Three Obediences are three following precepts, i.e. women should be obedient to father before marriage, to husband after marriage and to son after the death of a husband. At that time the criterion whether a woman is good or not is obedience. Four Virtues are morality, proper speech, modest manner and diligent needlework. Formerly, in old China as many as 90% of women were illiterate. According to Confucianism, "Ignorance is a woman's virtue. (女子无才便是德)" (Jirong, 2006).

Women are only taken into account in her role as a mother. Under the notion of filial morality, they gave maternal status equal to father in relation to children. But their attitude toward women, in general, is very different. Confucius has an oppressive attitude towards women. Under the idea of filial morality, they give the mother equal status with the father in relation to children. But their attitude toward women, in general, is mixed at best; Confucius had an oppressive attitude toward women. (Li, 2000).

## 3. Methods

Film is a relevant field of study for semiotic analysis, because the film is built with various signs. This research uses descriptive qualitative method using Semiotics theory from Roland Barthes. The focus of his research is to interpret the verbal and non-verbal signs with indicators of Wu Lun's teachings of Confucius and the application of adaptive multiculturalism in the film.

Step analysis conducted in this research is as follows; first, determine the scene footage in the film, which is a representation of the values that exist in the teachings of Wu Lun and adaptive multiculturalism. Second, analyze the sign with denotation meanings and then express the meaning of the connotation.

#### 4. Film storyline

“Erwin” (Ernest Prakarsa) is an overseas university graduate content on his path to climbing the corporate ladder. He receives an offer to get promoted to work in the Singapore office, although his father “A Fuk” (Chew Kinwah) suddenly falls ill and requests him to take over their little family shop. Erwin is forced to spend a month working at the little shop, pressured by his father. Erwin's older brother “Yohan” (Diyon Wiyoko) laments about his father's favoritism and tries to make his own ends meet as he struggles with his own perceived failures, ending in a tantrum calmed by his wife “Ayu” (Adinia Wirasti). Yohan has a strained relationship with his father, arising from his misbehaviour during his younger days and his wife, Ayu, who his father disagreed on, because it comes from a different tribe.

Erwin learns to take care of the shop, bonding over the shop's employees and regular customers. He finds ways to improve the shop's current system, and assists them in winning a decorating competition to the happiness of his father. Throughout his stay the local property developer visits the shop in an attempt to buy off the land. Erwin's father refuses, having sentimental value with his passed wife over the store.

Meanwhile, Yohan tries to start himself out as a photographer with dreams of owning a studio. His wife Ayu, working in a cafe with dreams to open her own bakery, gets offered a piece of land for her shop by her ex-boyfriend. During one of their regular funeral visits of Yohan's mother, Ayu confesses this to Yohan and Yohan convince his wife, he would realize his dream to open a private bakery someday.

One month passed quickly. “Natalie” (Gisela) Erwin's girl friend pressures Erwin as he receives the promotion offer to work in Singapore. He rejects his father's wish, to continue his father's grocery business. Dejected, Erwin's father is forced to sell of the land, and close down his shop. He disbands the employees and reminisces over his wife, before stroke hits and he collapses.

Hearing of this, both Erwin and Yohan agree to get back their shop and make amends. Unfortunately their father had already signed the papers and the developer refused to disband the contract. However Erwin noticed the developer's womanizing habits and together they requested the help of his secretary, a single mum with no choice but to submit to the developer's harassment. They manage to get some scandalous photos to force the developer's hand in cancelling out the contracts and also accept his secretary's resignation, which later works at Erwin's work place as his boss' secretary.

Later in the hospital, Erwin and Yohan reminisce about their younger days. Yohan explains his sentiments toward the shop, as that was also where his fond memories of his mother lay, and they both agreed that Yohan should take Erwin's place in managing the shop. On a walk, Erwin and his father discuss the matters at hand. Erwin apologizes profusely but he explains that he cannot reject this offer of a lifetime. His father understands, having overheard the conversation between the two brothers, and apologizes for having neglected Yohan's wishes.

Natalie gets enraged after hearing the contract's cancellation, which in turn angers Erwin. She seeks counselling from Ayu, who points out that it was for the best that Erwin lived with no regrets unlike his brother, who constantly berates himself for not being able to make their passed mother happy. Natalie understands and apologizes to Erwin.

Ayu and Yohan visit his mother's grave with flowers. Yohan tears and again apologizes profusely for his failures as a son. Unbeknownst to him his father and Erwin and Natalie stood behind them, apologizing profusely for his own failures as a father. His father laments that he himself failed without his dead wife, and also apologizes to Ayu for not accepting her earlier. The family embraces a warm hug as they mended their broken relationships.

End of story has a happy ending, fast-forward to a few years later, Erwin and Natalie comes to visit the newly setup photography studio and bakery, with the same employees from the old shop.

Erwin's boss comes and visits with her secretary, who is still grateful for all his help. Meanwhile, their retired father spends his days happily fishing and gambling with Yohan's friends.

## 5. Analyses and finding

### 5.1 Multiculturalism accomodatives representation in the movie “Cek Toko Sebelah”

Accommodative multiculturalism's representation in this film is shown through cultural diversity in ethnicity and religious forms. It shows the harmonious relationship of four ethnicities, namely Indonesian-Tionghoa (Chinese ethnic in Indonesia), Sundanese, Javanese, Batak and two religions namely, Moslem and Christian. The use of names and calls that show the identity of each ethnicity reinforces accommodative multiculturalism in the film, for example, “Koh” Afuk (Indonesian-Tionghoa), “Mbak” Ayu (Javanese), “Kang” Nandar (Sundanese).

In some of the dialogues, using the dialect of each tribe's language so that the traditional diversity of the Indonesian people is increasingly visible. A humorous dialogue in conversations that use regional languages is also tucked into the film. In this film also shown that the most precious treasure is a harmonious relationship in the sphere of family, friends, work, and society. Although different tribes, cultures, and religions, the differences are considered as diversity.

### 5.2 Representation of Wu Lun (五伦) teachings in the film “Cek Toko Sebelah”

#### 5.2.1 True husband, good wife (夫义妇德, fu yi fu de)

In this doctrine, Confucius taught that the Husband must guide the wife, and the wife must give her devotion and loyalty. Husband as family leader and wife will follow him, he will be a right husband and a good wife.

In this film is shown the role of “Koh Afuk” wife who is always faithful, devoting his life to the family. She helped her husband pioneer of small shops, as well as taking care of her children.

Also shown Yohan wife's role, the eldest child of “Koh AFuk”. Although his existence is less accepted by his father-in-law, because of ethnic differences “Mbak Ayu” always faithful to accompany her husband in grief.

In contrast to the role of Natalie as Erwin's future wife who is selfish. Causing him to feel confused and sad must obey the will of his father or his lover. Although at the end of the story, Natalie can accept the decision of her future husband because she loves him.

Through this scene is show that Husband and wife must perform their respective functions. Husband as the leader and wife support the husband to succeed in his life. In contrast to Confucian teachings about the role of women in modern life, the role of women is more equal with men.

In this film is shown a wife who helps her husband in economic terms. Koh Afuk's wife helped her to pioneer their own shop, Yohan's wife who has a business of making cookies, and Erwin's future wife is a career woman. But even so the wife must keep in mind her role as a wife who supports her husband.

#### 5.2.2 Father loves his sons, respectful children to dad (父慈子孝, fu ci zi xiao)



Figure 1: The scene of “Koh” Afuk's loyal wife, dedicating his life to the family.



Figure 2: The scene of “Mbak” Ayu always faithful to accompany her husband in grief.



Figure 3: The scene of Natalie is Erwin's future wife that is selfish.



Figure 4: The scene of Yohan the eldest, always took the time to accompany his father.

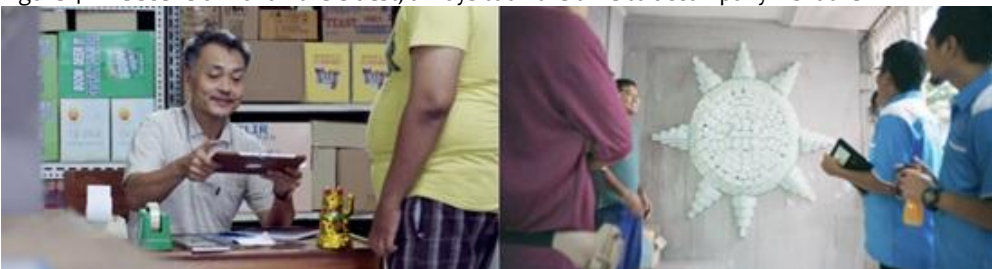


Figure 5: The scene of Erwin Works in his father's shop, and manages to improve the store system.



Figure 6: The scene of Father taught Erwin to serve customers. Figure 7: The scene of Father was not ashamed to apologize to his son.

Confucius taught that a father should guide their children and children should show respect as well as the results of his father's tutelage. In serving the parents, children should be warned but gently. If the parents do not obey, be more respect and do not violate. Although it should be *bercapai tired*, do not grumble. Parents should be prioritized as devotion in the family. A loving father in educating his sons and daughters will produce a devoted child to his parents.

In this film the child's devotion to his father is represented. Erwin the youngest son showed respect by obeying his father's would by working in his father's shop for a month even though it was not his will. He found a way to improve the current store system. He also contributed in winning the decorations competition that made his father happy. Yohan the eldest always took the time to accompany his father, although his love is greater to his brother Erwin. Yohan and Erwin managed to get back the store sales letter from the developer who had signed his father. Dad loves his two

children, giving support to his son. He provides venture capital on Yohan and teaches Erwin to serve customers. Father was not ashamed to apologize to Yohan and finally accepted Ayu as his daughter-in-law.

Moral formation is primarily when a child still lives with his parents. Through this scene is show that Father and son must perform their respective functions. Fathers guide their children and children should respect to their parents, to realize happiness and family unity. Slightly different from Confucianism, in the modern world the ego of the parents needs to be slightly lowered. If a parent is wrong, he or she apologizes to the child, so family ties remain intact.

### 5.2.3 Siblings are friendly, the younger must respect the older (兄弟敬, xiong you di jing).



Figure 8: The scene of the younger brother apologized to his brother, after they quarrel.

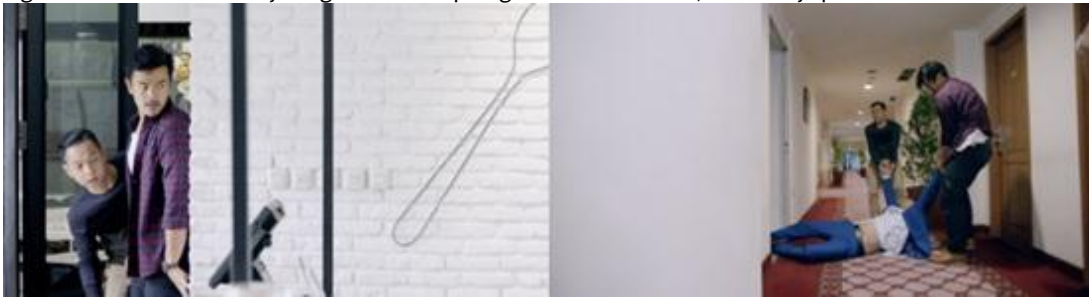


Figure 9: The scene of cooperation of siblings.

Confucius taught that as young or old brothers, should be good friends. The younger brother should be respectful to his older brother. In this film, the sibling relationship is shown. After the quarrel, the younger apologizes to his brother. Teamwork of siblings managed to retrieve the land letter from the developer who had already signed by their father. The younger brother who was respectful and amazed at his brother, even though the economic condition of his younger brother was more successful than his older brother. Siblings are must love one another. The Younger Must Respect the Older to realize happiness and family unity. Respect is a word that means not just respect, but respect that is accompanied by a sense of awe or sympathy. Scenes in this film to be an inspiration, in order to maintain the integrity of the State, in social life must respect each other's differences based on the awe of “Bhinneka Tunggal Ika” as Indonesia's local wisdom.

### 5.2.4 A Loving Leader, Loyal Employees (君仁臣忠, jun ren chen zhong)



Figure 10: The scene of wise treatment of employees by boss and the loyal employees.



Figure 11: The scene of Koh Afuk admonishes inappropriate treatment of employees by her boss.

In this doctrine, Confucius teaches that a leader must be wise to his employees not allowed to be authoritarian, and employees should provide useful ideas to his boss for the common good. This can be seen from Confucian words "A king treats his ministers with *Li* (courtesy or full of good manners). A minister serves the king with *Zhong* (loyalty)"

In this film shows a leader who behaves wisely to his employees, so they become loyal to help work his business. Leaders, who appreciate their employees, give appropriate rights to them as severance pay. Good leaders, dare to reprimand other leaders who treat their employees irresponsibly and abused. Slightly different from the Confucian doctrine of women, the main character, koh Afuk, dares to rebuke the act of harassing of a leader against his female secretary. It shows that women are respected. Through this scene, it is said that leaders and employees must perform their respective functions. A leader must run the organization wisely and an employee must be loyal to his boss. Employees will be loyal to the company when the leader treats him politely and wisely.

#### 5.2.5 Trust each other between friends (朋友有信, peng you you xin)



Figure 12: Yohan was comforted by his friend when he was sad.

Confucius taught that, as friends must be trusting and trustworthy. In this scene is shown also the existence of friendship between different ethnic, but still fun. In this film shows friendship of mutual trust, support, and spirit when one of a friend is sad. This is also applied in a relationship between community members and social relations that require social cooperation to maintain harmony.

## 6. Conclusion

This film illustrates the intuition of the Chinese Indonesian family applying the teachings of Wu Lun although the implementation is not entirely applicable in the current life, especially about women equivalent to men in modern life. The role of women in this film, placed in a position more profitable than that taught by Confucius. Although the position of the man in the storyline of this film is more dominant, the existence of women in relation to three main characters (Ko Afuk, Yohan, and Erwin) is more appreciated. For example, Ko Afuk still appreciates his late wife who has helped pioneer their store. Because of his love for Erwin, Nathasa surrendered to fulfill Erwin's wishes. So also with Ayu, who will release attractive offers to open a cake shop that became his dream and willingly wait for him to realize his dream.

It is true that the film as one of the entertainment media does not operate in a vacuum. Movies can convey a special moral message to the audience. Ancient ideologies that have been thousands of



years old can also be delivered through the film. Using simple comedic storylines, accommodative multiculturalism representations and ideal relationships in social life can be easily conveyed to the audience. The life in diversity that is displayed harmoniously in the film inspires that people are actually able to adapt to cultural diversity and create a cultural diversity equation. This confirms that “Bhinneka Tunggal Ika” is still relevant to be a compliment in behaving in social life so that diversity in Indonesian society can be preserved in this era of globalization.

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