

**TRUE LOVE IN GARY WINIKC'S *LETTER TO JULIET* MOVIE (2010): AN  
EXISTENTIALIST APPROACH**



**PUBLICATION ARTICLES**

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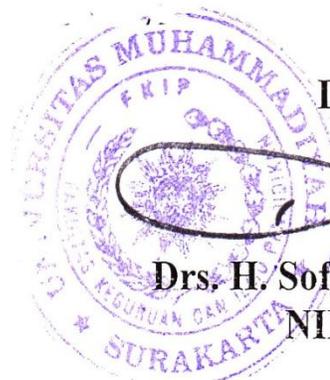
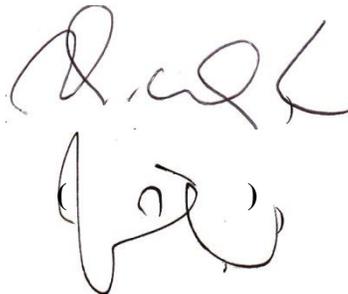
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EXISTENTIALIST APPROACH**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study is about secret of the truth in Letter to Juliet movie (2010). This objective of the study is to apply the Existentialist approach to analyze true love in Letter to Juliet movie (2010). The writer uses Sartre's major point of Existentialism to answer the problem of the study. The study is descriptive qualitative research whose data are taken from script in Letter to Juliet. The technique of analyzing data is descriptive. The study comes to the following conclusions. First, based on the structural analysis of each elements, it shows that the character and characterization, plot, setting, point of view, theme, casting, mise-en-scene, cinematography, sound, and editing are related to each other and form the unity. Second, based on the existentialist analysis, human have different existence, their existence are based on different being, choice, and act. Human has a freedom to choose and then responsible for his existence. The responsibility will appear an anxiety. Gary Winick shows the struggle and the meaning of true love. He believe that true love never look the age, ad social background. Love has big power and something which important in human life.*

*Keywords: Secret of the truth, Letter to Juliet Existentialist Approach.*

**1. Introduction**

**Background of the study:** According to Sartre (2002: 40) there are two kinds of existentialists, namely "Theistic existentialist or Christian existentialist" and "atheistic existentialism". Christian existentialists are Jasper and Gabriel Marcel. Heidegger,

Albert Camus and Sartre are included in atheistic existentialist. Both of them believe that existentialism before essence but they have different opinion about existentialism.

Love has big relation with existentialist approach, The main point of existentialism are individual freedom, life choice, subjectivity, and searching for something. Everyone has story in his life. It is about how to be or search for something and the important something is about love. Human's being is born to potential to love and be loved. Love generally includes an emotion of intense attraction to other person, a place, or thing, and may also include the aspect of caring for of finding identification with those objects, including self love. Love can be described an intense feeling of interaction an emotional or an emotional state. In ordinary use, it is usually refers to interpersonal love usually felt by a person. For another person, love is commonly considered impossible to describe. Love is essentially an abstract concept, easier to experience than to explain. Love is not only in the real life but in the literary work.

Literary work is an expression of human life. Literary work always describe about human in society system. There are so many literary works such as novel, movie, poem, or play which illustrate feeling of love. A literary work creates its own world. A literary work which constitutes an author can reveal the truth, sadness, and happiness. The most interesting topic is discuss is a human life because experiences always develop as fast as the time goes on. Literature is a reflection of conditions around the writer about feeling the life or showing he ideal condition wanted by the author. Literature has a tight relationship to existentialist. It is because literature and existentialist have the same object of research that is human being. Literature is a permanent expresses and communicative thoughts, feeling, and attitudes toward for life and the world (Georgre ,1965 :16).

*Letters to Juliet* is a 2010 American romantic drama film starring Amanda Seyfried, Chris Egan, Vanessa Redgrave, Gael García Bernal, and Franco Nero. This was the final film of director Gary Winick before he died of brain cancer. The film was released theatrically in North America and other countries on May 14, 2010. The idea for the film was inspired by the 2006 non-fiction book, *Letters to Juliet* by Lise Friedman and Ceil Friedman, which chronicles the phenomenon of letter writing to

Shakespeare's most famous romantic heroine. The song *Love Story* by Taylor Swift was used for the movie *Letters to Juliet*. *Letters to Juliet* received mixed to positive reviews from critics. Review aggregate Rotten Tomatoes reports that 41% of critics have given the film a positive review based on 138 reviews, with an average score of 5.2/10. Metacritic gave it an average score of 50 out of 100 from the 34 reviews it collected. *Letters to Juliet* opened at #3 to \$13,540,486 behind *Iron Man 2*'s second weekend and *Robin Hood*. In its second weekend, the film dropped 33.5% with \$9,006,266 into #4.

After the research watched *the Letter to Juliet* movie, the researcher is interested to analyzing it. There are four reasons the researcher analyzes the *Letter to Juliet* movie by Gary Winick. Based on the description the writer uses the movie in conducting his research related to the fact. The first is the movie has an inspirational story. It can be analyzed based on the experience of the character movie. Sophie becomes a person who gives the lesson about how to faithful waiting for love. After watching the movie, the viewers are able to get moral message. This movie shows the way how to search for true love.

The second, *Letter to Juliet* movie is a simple movie. It means everyone can learn about the message in the movie. *Letter to Juliet* becomes the new story that gives inspiration to people how to searching for true love. This movie serves a simple story that will give the people new paradigm about true love.

The third reason is about the character and characterization. Director of this movie who finds the actor and the actress that is suitable with character so that characters in *Letter to Juliet* movie are characterized well.

The fourth reason is the cinematography. *Letter to Juliet* movie has good cinematography from the setting picture, sound mixing, sound editing, special effects, visual effects, music illustration, and another aspect that support in the making of this movie. *Letter to Juliet* movie has the best sound mixing, best sound editing, and best film editing, so that it gets awards and nomination.

Problem **statement** of this research is” How is the true love in *Letter to Juliet* movie and what the moral of love in *Letter to Juliet* movie?” **Limitation of the study** In

order to focus the study, the research limits her study on the study on the human's being existence which is describe in the movie Letter to Juliet, and focus on the Sartre's Theory of existentialism.

**Objective of the study** Based on the problem statement above, the writer proposes the objectives of the study as follows: 1. To analyze the structural element of the Letter to Juliet movie that helps the writer to identify how the movie represents true love of Juliet's. 2. To analyze the film based on Existentialist approach that helps the writer to describe true love of Juliet's.

**Literature Review** There are two researchers who have conducted the study of *Letter to Juliet* movie as an object of the researcher. The first is Arumi Martyastuti (2007) entitled "Quest for meaning of existence of Jamal in Dany Boyle's *Slumdog Millionaire* movie: An Existentialist Approach". The second is Yuni Eko Sulistyowarni (2006) entitled "Hester's effort attaining love in Roland Joffe's *The Scarlet Letter* movie: An Existentialist Approach".

## 2. Research Method

In this research In this research, the writer analyzes Winick's *Letter to Juliet* movie. There are five elements that should be taken into account in this research, they are: (1) Type of the Study This research is called by a qualitative research because it is a library research while data sources are using literary data and the writer analyzes the data coming from the script of *Letter to Juliet* (2010) movie by using methodology of literature as the reference. It the aims at analyzing the movie using Existentialism approach. (2) Object of the Study The object of the study is Letter to Juliet (2010) directed by Gary Winick. (3) Type of the Data and the Data Source A main data source is the movie Letter to Juliet (2010) directed by Gray Winick's. Secondary data include material about the author and the material about existentialist. (4) Technique of the Data collections. In conducting this study, the writer uses the technique as follows: Watching the movie, taking the note, reading the script, classifying the data, reading relevant book, browsing on the internet to look for information that relates with movie, such as movie's script, identity, public response, etc. (5) Technique of the Data Analysis is the technique

of analysis data in this study is descriptive, to give an interpretation of the text. The writer analyzes true love of Juliet found in Gary Winick's Letter to Juliet (2010).

### **3. Sartre Major Point of Existentialist**

#### **a. Being**

Being is one of ontology concept that is used by existentialist for explaining the existence of human being. Human being exist in contrast to inanimate things, to exist, man has to act, "for describing human consciousness, and placing it in its metaphysical context in the world, he is necessarily concerned with human action. According Sartre (1987 : 9) being is a measure of human existence, a dimensions base on subjectivity. Sartre divides being into two parts, Being-for-itself and Being-in-itself. Being for it-itself (etre-pour-soi) is consciousness of human which knows that it exist and is being in the real world.

#### **b. Existence Before Essence**

Sartre (2002: 44) states that existence before essence is human being face with their self, exist in the world and define their self. Human existence is different with the thing existence, trough the term of " Existence before essence". Human has a relation to the existence, man is being his conscious as his own self an as like that cannot from the decision of choices.

#### **c. Consciousness (Cogito)**

The third major principle of existentialism is the term of consciousness that is proposed by Sartre. He explained that cogito or consciousness is self consciousness, cogito is not self experience but human existence in no thematic way. Sartre (1990: 99) divides consciousness into two groups, namely consciousness and non-thematic consciousness. Thematic consciousness is consciousness as if something, and non-thematic consciousness is consciousness as if himself exist. Consciousness is closely related to action, since man must have his consciousness, when human acts," there is no such things as bore consciousness unconnected with action.

#### **d. Freedom to Choose**

The fourth major element of existentialism is freedom to choose. Man is free and responsible. Human responsible on himself because human has freedom and opportunity to do, to choose good life and bad life and to become everything he

wants. Making decision is a form of human's freedom. "Man is nothing else but his plan; he exist only to the extent that he fulfills himself; he is therefore nothing else than his life"(Sartre, 1985 :103).

**e. Anxiety**

The next major character of existentialism is anxiety. Sartre expressed that anxiety happens when human decides himself as what he want to be, but what he decide to choose as choice will be hard responsible by him (Sartre, 1985: 105). All choices will have a risk and also responsible, because of that the anxiety will be felt by him because of the hard responsibility and the risk. Human will always choose in the life problem. He wills always presence the kind of optional choice in his life.

**f. Transcendence of Ego**

Human cannot life in society individually, human needs the other people to help him in the universe. Human lives together with human else as the part of the society. This is important for human to show himself as the part of society.

Human has a big power of Ego to help each other in society. As the part of society, human has transcendence of Ego. Transcendence of ego is suck kind of tendencies for human to more helpful for their society as an useful person or a hero, for the example the man has tendencies to help the woman who gets an accident at the street. The Ego of him to help is more important than the ego in himself because it is good for himself to choose as a good man.

**g. Nothingness**

Every existence must be ended by death, it means that the death is one of prevention of human freedom. Human life, absolutely they exist, they can do anything and other human else can receive their existence. But when the people die, they will be nothingness. Sartre proposed that death is absurd, it is because the death cannot be waited in reality. (Sartre, 1985: 108).

**4. Theory of Love**

According to Christy Rakoczy (1996) love is most basic emotion that human awareness can feel. For some people love means the closet to the source of life. There are some other ways to express love. Since we have covered so many ways to say "I love

you” or to express love, here are two sets of ideas for ways to show love. The first steps are other things to say and ways to act: a) Keep our promises. b) Be honest. c) Forgive and forget. d) Apologize. e) Really care. There the ways to express love in human life.

## 5. Research Finding

### a. Being

Being is divided into two: Being-for-itself is concerning thing’s existence and Being-in-itself, which discusses human’s existence. Being-in-itself in *Letter to Juliet* movie shown in the presence of the ring based on the meaning character. Based on Claire’s view, which give meaning to the ring. According to Claire, the ring is very important. This ring is very important it the symbol of their love. This ring is vestige from Lorenzo when fifteen years ago they want to engage their relation. This ring gives Claire something special in her life. Shopie uses this ring to find the located of Lorenzo in Verona. Shopie borrows that ring to draw a circle on the map that destination to find Lorenzo. It can be seen in the following conversation when Shopie and Claire talked about Lorenzo:

Claire :”I was taking an art course in Tuscany, staying with a family outside Siena, and they had a son Lorenzo, and it was love at first sight. He had such gentle blue eyes. And he told me I was very beautiful. We wanted to get married, and he gave me this special ring.”

Scene (LTJ, I, 00:30:35,800 --> 00:31:08,856)

From that conversation, Claire tries to tell her love story with Lorenzo. She tells about the appearance of Lorenzo. Lorenzo has a gentle blue eyes and he is good man. Lorenzo loves at the first sight for her. He also wants to marry with her and gives the special ring for the symbol of his love.

### b. Existence before Essence

A person has her being and continues to be existence. The process of becoming can be seen in the existence before essence, essence has meaning that human to define themselves that whom after human has existence first of all than that exist. Every

humanity has existence, the existence is as the sigh of her goal. The goal is what he wants to become. In *Letter to Juliet* movie there is a major character which is focused in analyzing of existence before essence on the process of their becoming.

Shopie : “Hi, Mr. Beal. Thank you for calling me back.  
yes I'm a writer. I'm a fact checker of love,  
actually. It is a bit like being a detective, yes.”

Scene(LTJ,I, 00:02:17,303 --> 00:02:28,075)

The first process of becoming Shopie as a fact checker of love is showed in her strong willing to get information of love from the other humanity. At the first time she has been called by Robert Bill in the New York. Shopie said that she wants to meet Robert to get more information about his love story.

### c. Consciousness (Cogito)

From this existence, someone may do consciously. There is strong relationship between existence before essence and consciousness. Consciousness is the aspect of existentialist that is as a point to analyze the existence of major character. As the aspect of existentialist in *Letter to Juliet* movie, it will be analyzed the character of Shopie as the major character with the goal to differentiate the consciousness of Shopie.

Shopie : “Wait! Wait!”  
Charlie : “Oh, for... Here she comes.”  
Shopie : “Sorry. May I come with you to find Lorenzo?”  
Claire : “Come with us?”  
Charlie : “What about this fiancØ of yours? You're in the  
city of love and you want to come with us?”  
Shopie : “Yes, I do. Because he's busy and I'm free. And  
I mean...”

(LTJ, I, 00:32:59,177 --> 00:33:16,219)

From this moment, Shopie aware and decides to join with Claire to search her true love. At the first, Shopie is very amazing meet with Claire. She thinks that Claire comes to search the meaning of true love. She agrees with Claire that true love is never dying. When they have dinner, Claire share to Shopie about her love. Claire told that she wants to find Lorenzo and he was regret because she left Lorenzo fifty years ago.

From that conversation, Shopie willing to spend her time with Claire. She asks to Claire in order to join with them to find Lotenzo.

**d. Freedom to choose**

Freedom to choose is the condition of man in making choice. Human have unlimited freedom and also determine his choice without any influence from other. Humanity has to seek their own way and take responsibility for what they choose. Because not only for their self that choice but also for whole humanity.

All characters in *Letter to Juliet* movie have the freedom to choose each. The researcher will analyze freedom to choose from major characters Shopie and Claire.

Shopie : “Let me get this out. Please I really don't know what this is anymore. I don't know what we're doing. mean, we went on vacation and we didn't spend any time together.

Victor : “Yeah, because you were busy writing.

Shopie : “I didn't mind. Yeah, but...

(LTJ, II, 01:26:08,563 --> 01:26:29,441)

From that conversation, Shopie told to Victor that she wants to finish their relation. Actually Shopie still love Victor but she thinks that Victor never has a little time to her. She said that their relation is impossible to be continued. Shopie takes any risk to tell the truth. She thinks that Victor only care to his business. But Victor blames shopie that she also busy with her book.

**e. Anxiety**

When human need to choose and should make a decision, then her choice will appear a responsibility and the consequences of his choice. Human would be feel worried about the big responsibility because he had to choose not only for himself but also to the whole human. It can be seen in the *Letter to Juliet* movie and shown by Shopie and Claire.

The first character is Claire, her anxiety came when she choose to leave Lorenzo alone and back to her parents. Claire was supposed to meet her lover but decided to

return to England. She wrote her thoughts and feelings in the letter to Juliet. Claire made Lorenzo for her came but she run away and disavow her promise.

Claire : “Nana, Nana, Nana, Lorenzo is here. He's out riding, but he's going to be back any minute.”

Claire : “Well, then, let's go before he comes back. Nana, we've come all this way. Come on.”

Claire : “I've been ridiculous. I've been completely ridiculous. He knew me when I girl. That girl's gone.

(LJT, II, 01:11:01,290 --> 01:11:27,006)

She confused that Lorenzo did not know who is her. She afraid that Lorenzo would never accepted her. She thought that Lorenzo only knew her when she was 15 years old but her afraid did not happen. Whereas, Lorenzo still loves her until know. Because of that, Claire believes the true love has no limits.

#### **f. Transcendence of Ego**

Human cannot live in society individually, human needs the other people to help him in the universe. Human lives together with human else as the part of the society. This is important for human to show himself as the part of society. Human has a big power of Ego to help each other in society. As the part of society, human has transcendence of Ego. Transcendence of ego is suck kind of tendencies for human to more helpful for their society as an useful person or a hero.

Shopie :”I imagine that you'd rather be spending your holiday elsewhere, so did you volunteer your services, or did your parents? I mean, where do they fit in?”

Charlie :”I'd like to think they're someplace nice. They were killed in a car accident when I was 10.

Shopie :“I'm sorry.”

(LTJ, I, 00:53:43,620 --> 00:54:08,908)

It differ to Claire, her ego comes when she want to search her true love. She said that she back to Verona because she believes Lorenzo still loves her. Claire has motivation when she receives a letter from secretary of Juliet. The secretary of Juliet is Shopie. Shopie is a woman who writes the letter to Claire. In the letter she said that true love never dies and did not have expiration date.

**g. Nothingness**

Human in nothingness is he does not begin to existence, he has no aware to choose, and to define himself. In the case human is in the nothingness condition, because she or he cannot define himself. At this case nothingness is such kind condition which people can make his existence, can make his being.

Shopie :”I imagine that you'd rather be spending your holiday elsewhere, so did you volunteer your services, or did your parents? I mean, where do they fit in?”

Charlie :”I'd like to think they're someplace nice. They were killed in a car accident when I was 10.

Shopie :”I'm sorry.”

(LTJ, I, 00:53:43,620 --> 00:54:08,908)

Charlie said that he love with his grandma so much. Charlie wants to gives the best for his grandma because his grandma always cares with him. Charlie said that it was a difficult time for his grandma. His grandma lost her son and Charlie lost his parents.

**h. Points of True Love**

**1) Promises**

Promises is something which very important in the relation. Promises will make couple feel appreciate each other. This way help a relation more comfortable and make one of them become faithful.

Shopie : "I can't believe you're really here.  
Claire : "I was taking an art course in Tuscany, staying with a family outside Siena, and they had a son Lorenzo, and it was love at first sight. He had such gentle blue eyes. And he told me I was very beautiful.  
Claire : And he gave me this ring. We wanted to get married, but I'd got exams back in England and my parents would never have agreed, and I got scared, and I ran away.

(LTJ, I, 00:30:32,630 --> 00:31:17,630)

Promises in Letter to Juliet movie is when Claire and Lorenzo making a promise to keep their love fifty years ago, but that promises was lost.

## 2) Honesty

Honesty is telling "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." Society's definition of the truth telling is to tell the truth only if it does not make anyone uncomfortable, does not make a conflict, and it makes you look good. Honesty in love is very important.

Shopie : "Victor, we went on, like, a honeymoon and we didn't mind being apart from each other. It's not supposed to be that way. We're supposed to want to be with each other all the time. Well, I wish I could tell you that things are gonna be different and that I'm gonna be different, but I... This is who I am.  
I know, but I love... I love who you are. But I've changed. It's not working. I have to go, Victor."

(LTJ, II, 01:26:37,659 --> 01:27:39,249)

Conversation above shows us that Shopie tells the truth about her feeling to Victor. Shopie must honest that she still love Victor but she does not want together with Victor again. Shopie does not like with Victor's behavior because he only care with his supplier than together with Shopie.

### 3) Jealousy

Jealousy is an emotional and typically refers to negative though, fear, anxiety, and feel of insecurity. Jealously often consist of a combination of presenting emotions such as anger, resentment, disgust, and helplessness.

Charlie : "Sophie? Sophie? Sophie? Of course! A balcony. Well. What are you doing up there?"

Shopie : "I'm gonna go."

Charlie : "Why?"

Shopie : "Because this is really painful. I should have realized sooner, but I didn't, or I guess maybe I couldn't, but Victor and I aren't together anymore. And I guess I came back hoping that..."

Charlie : "Wait, wait. You're not engaged?"

Shopie : "No. But it's too late. It's clearly too late. And it really doesn't matter anymore because, honestly, I love you. I can't believe I just said that. But I do, I love you. It doesn't...I mean, it shouldn't matter to you, because you're here with Patricia."

(LTJ,II,01:35:06,734 --> 01:36:25,443)

From that conversation, Shopie said about her feeling to Charlie. Shopie does not believes that she just said "I love you" for Charlie. But Shopie feels confuse and jealous when she know that Patricia was coming back in Charlie's life.

## 6. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the previous chapters, the study comes to the following conclusion.

First, based on the structural analysis Gary Winick wants to show the struggle of true love that presents a problem of individual human life in dealing with the meaning of true love. Sophie is an American girl who works for the *New Yorker* magazine and is a fact checker. She always tries to help Claire searching of true love. She always gives motivation to Claire that true love is never die. Shopie also suggests Claire that true love does not have expiration date. In this movie Gary winick organizes suitable setting in order to make the situation romantic. Winick takes setting in Verona because it's suitable for a romantic getaway. The plot has been done in sequential way, it will make the audience easy to understand about the story of the movie. The characterization in this movie is very good because the actors and the actress are suitable for the each characters of this movie. The major and the minor characters in *Letter to Juliet* movie have their own characters and characterizations which make plot become real. The movie begins with the introduction followed by conflict, climax and the end with the resolution. The visualization from *mise – en – scene* , consists of set dressing and props, costume and make up, lighting, cinematography, editing, and the other technical elements have a unity from one to another, and finally became a quality movie.

Second, based on the existentialist analysis Gary winick wants to say that Love has a big relation to existentialist approach. The main points of existentialism are individual freedom, life choice, subjectivity, and searching for something. Everyone has story in his life. It is about how to be or search for something and the important something is about love. Human beings are born to potential to love and be loved. Love generally includes an emotion of intense attraction to other person, a place, or thing, and may also include the aspect of caring for of finding identification with those objects, including self love.

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