

SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF THE AGA ROSÉ LABEL FROM HATTEN WINES BASED ON ROLAND BARTHES' THEORY

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the semiotic meanings in the label design of Aga Rosé, a wine product by Hatten Wines, through Roland Barthes' semiotic theory. It focuses on how the label's visual elements communicate cultural and branding messages. The purpose of this study is to explore the denotative and connotative meanings of the Aga Rosé wine label and how these elements contribute to brand image formation and consumer perception. This research employs a qualitative methodology, analyzing visual elements such as color, imagery, and text, which represent local cultural values, based on Roland Barthes' semiotic approach. The Aga Rosé label effectively incorporates cultural symbols and aesthetics, reflecting Indonesian cultural identity. This design strengthens consumers' emotional attachment to the brand and enhances loyalty. The findings underscore the importance of culturally inspired design as a strategy for building strong brand identities in competitive markets.

KEYWORDS

semiotic analysis, Roland Barthes, Hatten Wines, Aga Rosé, brand identity, cultural values



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Introduction

The global wine industry has experienced significant growth in recent decades, with market expansion reaching beyond traditional wine-producing countries like France and Italy to the Asia-Pacific region. Although Indonesia is not traditionally known for wine production, the country has shown advancement in this sector, with local producers like Hatten Wines based in Bali. PT Hatten Bali, Tbk., founded by Ida Bagus Budiarsa in 1994, is a Bali-based wine producer that has pioneered the wine industry in Asia, receiving numerous international accolades such as the 2017 Best Trophy Medal at the Cathay Pacific Hong Kong International Wine & Spirits Competition, 2019 Silver and Bronze Medals at the same competition, second place in The Rising Star Brand at the

2023 Wonderful Indonesia Co-Branding Award, and the Most Promising Local Brand at the 2024 CNN Indonesia Awards. One of PT Hatten Bali, Tbk.'s flagship products is Hatten Wines, produced at its vineyard in Sanggalangit, Singaraja. Despite being an established, authentic Balinese wine, many Balinese people remain unaware that Hatten Wines is a locally produced wine brand. One of its flagship products, Aga Rose, has successfully positioned itself in both domestic and international markets through a branding strategy reflected in its label design.

A wine label not only serves as a product information medium but also acts as a complex visual communication tool. In the context of wine marketing, the label is a critical element influencing consumer perceptions of the product's quality, value, and characteristics. Research conducted by Mueller and Szolnoki (2010) suggests that wine label design can influence consumers' purchasing decisions by up to 71% during first-time purchases [1]. Labels on wine products play an essential role as a visual communication medium capable of conveying the brand image and shaping consumer perceptions. In the competitive wine industry, label designs that emphasize local cultural identity can be an effective strategy for attracting certain market segments [2]. As one of Indonesia's wine producers, Hatten Wines uses visual elements on its Aga Rose label to create a brand image that is not only premium but also rooted in local cultural values.

The Aga Rose Hatten Wines label design incorporates various meaning-laden visual elements, from typography selection and color schemes to layout composition. Each element is strategically considered to communicate the product's positioning and brand values. However, the interpretation of these visual elements has not been systematically examined using a semiotic approach, particularly Roland Barthes' theory, which enables the deconstruction of meaning, cultural myth, and ideology (the values and beliefs conveyed through these signs). Semiotics is concerned with meaning-making and representation, studying not only what signs stand for but also how they convey meaning within cultural and social contexts [3].

Method

This study utilizes a descriptive-qualitative method with a Roland Barthes semiotic approach, which consists of four layers of meaning analysis: denotation, connotation, myth, and ideology. The analysis was conducted by observing the main visual elements on the Aga Rose label, including color, imagery, typography, and text. Each element was examined in depth to identify its meaning on each layer according to Barthes' theory. The data obtained through observation were then linked to literature related to consumer perceptions of products with culturally based designs.

Discussion

Aga Rosé is Hatten Wines' first commercially produced rosé wine in Bali, crafted exclusively from Bali's native grape variety, Alphonse Lavallée. Unlike the Aga Rosé produced between 1994 and 2020, the current 2020-present version of Aga Rosé is a blend of several grape varieties, including Alphonse Lavallée, Muscat St. Vallier, Muscat Bleu, and Malvasia Nera. This wine is produced using the Saignée method, which aims to extract a soft color and flavor from the grapes. This method generally produces a wine with a delicate color and a light yet rich taste. Upon first glance, the prominent illustration on the Aga Rosé label is a lotus flower, with a sun in the background.


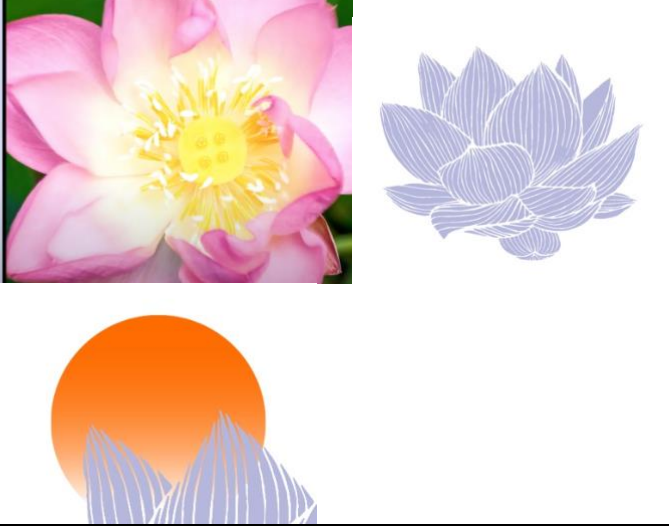






Figure 1. Label on Aga Rosé bottle from 2020 to the present
[Source: Hanindharputri Documentation, 2024]

The following is a semiotic analysis using Roland Barthes' theoretical approach:

1. Denotative and Connotative Meanings of the Aga Rosé Hatten Wines Label

Table 1: Denotative and Connotative Meanings of the Aga Rosé Hatten Wines Label
 [Source: Hanindharputri Documentation, 2024]

Visual Elements	Lotus Flower and Sun Illustration
	
Denotative Meaning	
<p>The label is dominated by an open lotus flower image with a sun illustration behind it, depicting tropical elements and Bali's natural landscape.</p>	
Connotative Meaning	
<p>The image of the open lotus flower symbolizes the natural beauty of Bali and openness to new experiences. The lotus is also frequently associated with purity and spirituality, implying that this wine has deep roots in Bali's culture and natural beauty. In Hindu-Balinese philosophy, the lotus symbolizes purity, enlightenment, and renewal, linking Aga Rosé with the elegance and spiritual depth of Bali. Connotatively, the sun symbolizes life, energy, and warmth. The sun behind the flower evokes Bali's warmth and natural energy. It also conveys tropical freshness, hinting at the wine's light and refreshing taste.</p>	
Visual Elements	Product Information Text
<p>AGA ROSÉ</p> <p>ALPHONSE LAVALLÉE MUSCAT BLEU MUSCAT ST. VALLIER MALVASIA NERA</p> <p>PRODUCED FROM THE EVERGREEN VINEYARDS* OF BULELENG, BALI</p> <p><small>MINUMAN BERALKOHOL. Anggur Merah. Mengandung Alkohol ±12% v/v. Isi Bersih 750 ml. BPOM RI MD 169422040052. Diproduksi Oleh: PT. Arpan Bali Utama, Denpasar, 80226, Indonesia. DI BAWAH UMUR 21 TAHUN ATAU WANITA HAMIL, DILARANG MINUM</small></p>	<p>AGA ROSÉ</p> <p><small>STYLE: DRY PROVENCAL STYLE / HIGHLY AROMATIC / MINERAL ACIDITY</small></p> <p>Aga Rosé was Bali's first commercially produced wine, made exclusively from the island's heritage variety, Alphonse Lavallée. This modern expression—a blend of Alphonse Lavallée, Muscat St. Vallier, Muscat Bleu, and Malvasia Nera—is produced using the saignée method to extract a delicate colour and flavour.</p> <p>Hatten Wines is Bali's original winery, founded by Ida Bagus Rai Budarsa in 1994. Today, our award-winning range showcases both international and heritage grape varieties, all grown in our island vineyards.</p> <p><small>*Our evergreen vines produce fruit year-round, resulting in non-vintage wines that reflect Bali's unique tropical terroir.</small></p>
Denotative Meaning	
<p>The product information displayed on the Aga Rosé label describes the wine's characteristics, stating that it is not too sweet, refreshing, light, fresh, has a soft aroma and flavor, and possesses a minerally refreshing acidity. Aga Rosé is the first wine commercially produced in Bali, made exclusively from the island's heirloom grape variety, Alphonse Lavallée. This modern expression—a blend of Alphonse Lavallée, Muscat St. Vallier, Muscat Bleu, and Malvasia Nera—is produced using the saignée method to extract a gentle color and flavor.</p>	

Connotative Meaning	
<p>The description of the wine's not-too-sweet, refreshing taste, with soft aroma and flavor, connotes that Aga Rosé is a harmonious and easily enjoyable wine. Mentioning the saignée production method and the blend of grape varieties communicates that this wine combines local tradition with a modern approach. It reflects quality and innovation, conveying that, although produced in Bali, this wine is on par with international wines in terms of craftsmanship and quality. Emphasizing that Aga Rosé is Bali's first commercially produced wine made from Alphonse Lavallée grapes underscores the wine's local identity and Bali's cultural heritage. It symbolizes not only a local commodity but also embodies Bali's historical and cultural value in each bottle, creating a sense of local pride and authenticity.</p>	
Visual Elements	Typography
 <p>AGA ROSÉ ALPHONSE LAVALLÉE MUSCAT BLEU MUSCAT ST. VALLIER MALVASIA NERA PRODUCED FROM THE EVERGREEN VINEYARDS* OF BULELENG, BALI</p> <p><small>HUKUMAN BERALKOHOL, Anggur Merah, Mengandung Alkohol 12% v/v, Isi Bersih 750 ml. BICAH BUKAN BERSEKORONG. Dilarang Jual. PT. Hatten Bali Utama, Denpasar, 80224, Indonesia. DI BAWAH UMUR 21 TAHUN ATAU WANITA HAMIL, DILARANG MINUM.</small></p>	 <p>SUPPORTING BALINESE FARMERS SINCE 1994</p>
Denotative Meaning	
<p>The typography uses Euclid Square Regular font for most of the text and Ringside Narrow font for the phrase “SUPPORTING BALINESE FARMERS SINCE 1994.” The sans-serif fonts used are clear and modern, presenting the product distinctly and elegantly.</p>	
Connotative Meaning	
<p>The use of sans-serif fonts gives a clean, contemporary, and easily readable look, creating a modern, professional, and accessible product image. The font's simplicity mirrors the wine's light, versatile character, making it suitable for various occasions.</p>	
Visual Elements	Another Product Information Text
Denotative Meaning	
<p>The information presented includes a description of the wine, production location (Buleleng), grape characteristics, and a statement of commitment to supporting Balinese farmers since 1994.</p>	
Connotative Meaning	
<p>The product description indicates taste characteristics, quality, and local connection. The phrase “Supporting Balinese Farmers Since 1994” suggests sustainability, authenticity, and a strong bond with the local Balinese community. It emphasizes that Hatten Wines has a deep social dimension, adding more value than just taste enjoyment. This narrative of support for local grape farmers conveys a sense of sustainability and authenticity, reinforcing the wine's image as an integral part of Balinese culture and community.</p>	
Visual Elements	Color
 <p>PANTONE® PQ-7444C</p> <p>PANTONE® 1585 C</p> <p>PANTONE® Black 6 C</p>	 <p>FFFFFFF</p> <p>255 255 255</p>
Denotative Meaning	
<p>Colors used:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A blue shade (Pantone 7444 C) for the lotus illustration and some text. Vibrant orange (Pantone 1585 C) for the sun, logo, and certain texts. Black and white for the text and background. 	

Connotative Meaning

The blue shade (Pantone 7444 C) applied to the lotus illustration and some text conveys coolness and tranquility, symbolizing the refreshing nature of the wine and associating it with Bali's water and sky elements. This color also creates a sense of depth and complexity, reflecting the wine's quality while evoking a peaceful feeling that aligns with Bali's image as a relaxation destination.

Vibrant orange is often associated with warmth, enthusiasm, and creativity. It represents energy, joy, and adventure. In some cultures, it is also linked to spirituality and sacred rituals, symbolizing purity, enlightenment, or divinity. Known to evoke strong emotions and stimulate mental activity, this color conveys warmth, enthusiasm, and joy. It is often associated with communication, creativity, and confidence [4]. Additionally, the vibrant orange color reflects Hatten Wines' innovative spirit. It also represents Bali's warm sun, inviting consumers to experience the island's "warmth" through this wine. The orange color suggests the ripeness of the fruit, signifying the wine's richness and maturity, and creating a sense of joy and celebration.

2. The Myth of the Aga Rosé Label

In Mythologies, Roland Barthes defines myth as a system of communication that transforms cultural and historical meanings into naturalized truths. It operates as a second-order semiotic system, where a sign becomes a signifier for deeper ideological messages, presenting constructed ideas as universal and self-evident [5]. The primary myth created by the Aga Rosé label is the Myth of Bali's Spiritual Beauty and Natural Purity. The image of the open lotus flower with the sun in the background on the Aga Rosé label conveys a myth that reflects Bali's beauty, purity, and spirituality. The lotus is a common symbol in Balinese culture, representing purity and enlightenment [6]. In Hindu tradition, the lotus is also considered a symbol of creation and the birth of the universe [7]. Additionally, the lotus flower symbolizes the depth of human spiritual journeys; just as the lotus grows and blossoms in the mud, humans too can grow and achieve enlightenment and purity despite difficult times [8]. By associating the wine with the lotus flower, this label creates a narrative that Aga Rosé embodies a connection to nature's purity and Bali's spiritual depth. The sun illuminating the lotus adds a myth of warmth and vitality from the tropical environment, inviting consumers to experience Bali's beauty and energy through this wine. This myth reinforces the image of the wine as more than just a beverage but as a profound cultural experience.

3. The Ideology of the Aga Rosé Label

Ideologically, the label supports the notion of natural simplicity and spirituality intertwined with modern life. Aga Rosé wine is positioned as a product that brings a balance between modernity and tradition, reflecting values that honor Bali's local culture while promoting a modern, luxurious lifestyle. This creates an image that consuming this wine is not merely for enjoyment but also a spiritual experience connected to Bali's traditions and tropical nature.

The semiotic analysis of Roland Barthes on the 2020-present Aga Rosé label reveals how visual elements like the lotus flower and the sun construct a deeper meaning beyond just design. Denotatively, the lotus flower and the sun represent harmonious and beautiful natural elements. Connotatively, the lotus symbolizes purity, spirituality, and sanctity, while the sun embodies life and energy, reinforcing the impression that this wine is connected to Bali's natural beauty and culture. The myth created is that this wine is not just a product but a medium to experience Bali's spirituality and harmony with the tropical environment. Ideologically, the label promotes ideas of simplicity and luxury intertwined with tradition and spirituality, positioning Aga Rosé as a premium wine that carries Bali's cultural values while offering a modern and luxurious consumption experience.

Conclusion

The semiotic analysis of Roland Barthes on the Aga Rose Hatten Wines label demonstrates that this label not only employs visual elements to create a premium brand image but also conveys local cultural narratives and ideologies. Through the thoughtful use of color, imagery, and design, Hatten Wines successfully communicates Indonesia's rich and diverse cultural values. The findings show that this label effectively creates an emotional connection with consumers, reinforcing loyalty and strengthening the brand image rooted in local cultural pride and identity. The myth and ideology conveyed through this label not only attract local consumers but also enhance Hatten Wines' position in both the national and international wine markets.

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