

The Commodification of Disaster in Telkomsel TVC “Menjadi Relawan Yang Terbaik” Version

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Abstract—each part of mass media nowadays has become a field to take a profit. It is also included a human tragedy, disaster. Disaster is a high profit drama. The heroic drama to release from the death, it is a tribute for the capitalist as a dominant class. In order to give information about huge disaster and the impact, the disaster in television commercials actually it is just a commodity as a tribute for the capitalist. The victim's tears, the bloods and the tears are signs that have a value profit. By the Barthes Semiotics as the analysis elements, and the Commodification Theory from Vincent Mosco, this research shows that disaster is not viewed as a terrified moment. The ideology brings the terrified moment is the way to tribute a profit to the capitalist.

Keywords-commodification, disaster, semiotics, tv

I. INTRODUCTION

Spaces in the mass media are now like a place to sow seeds of profit seekers. A number of things then began to become normal and reasonable to be used as a spectacle that has a selling value. No exception to disaster problems.

Disasters can now be viewed in a variety of different perspectives. No exception, in the perspective of having a 'selling point'. Disaster is still a serious problem for the Indonesian people. Indonesia is an area that is very vulnerable to natural disasters, especially earthquakes and floods. Disasters are events that occur, due to natural or human factors that disrupt the order of life, such as floods, volcanoes, earthquakes, and bomb terror.

Disaster is a serious social function disorder or disorder that causes widespread loss of life, material and environment that exceeds the ability of people who experience disaster to cope with available resources. Disasters occur when the available resources or capacities are very inadequate in overcoming threats that cause loss and loss of life, material and the environment [1]. So, disaster is actually one of the moments in human life that is not only sad, but also scary/traumatic. No human being wants to become a disaster victim. But in the hands of advertising creators, disasters can actually be a package that attracts consumers to 'buy' a product. Advertising is a 'work of art', an art of processing the perception of audiences, the art of managing messages, and of course an art for packing messages.

The heroic story of rescuing disaster victims has become an attractive package for Telkomsel to market its products. In these advertisements Telkomsel rummaged through the

consumers' emotions in about a minute. The terrible volcanoes, floods that claimed casualties, and the efforts to evacuate victims who drained tears, is became a drama that was presented nicely to persuade the advertised product. Disaster becomes a drama that is beneficial for creators of advertisements.

As Supriyadi said in his book, *“Advertising: A Political Economy Perspective”*, for him the purpose of advertising is only one, which is to encourage people to buy the advertised product. In order for this purpose to run smoothly and not to appear forceful, the advertisement displays various strategies by playing one's psychology, persuading, using culture, also presenting itself as often as possible in public [2].

Through the Telkomsel ad version of *‘Menjadi Relawan Yang Terbaik’*, ad creators do 'seduction' to buy their products smoothly. The display of the swift and swift heroic story of disaster volunteers, as if becoming a signal manifestation of Telkomsel. In the Telksomsel advertisement, the rescue effort that was covered in tears and blood became the main 'treat'. Disasters have undergone symbolic metamorphosis, from the blue-tingling story to being a means of persuading advertisers.

The value of the function that has changed to the selling value, by Mosco is called commodification [3]. Commodification is the initial entry point for theorizing the political economy of communication. Mosco defines commodification as "the process of transforming goods and services, including communication, which is valued for their usefulness, being a commodity that is valued because of what they will provide on the market [3], [4]. Telkomsel's version of *“Menjadi Relawan Yang Terbaik”* is arranged in two elements, namely audio and visual. There is no message conveyed without meaning. Both audio and visual elements will be seen as a sign.

The reality of disaster has become text. This is ad text. Text never presents reality in its entirety. But the text is full of various interests. The text brings a variety of ideologies. The main goal is only to seek profit, and legalize all means. Even to shift humanitarian ideals.

According to Sobur the sign is a representation of symptoms that have a number of criteria [5]. Signs are related to denotations, connotations, and myths. Barthes mentions denotation, which is the most obvious meaning of the sign. The connotation is subjective or at least

intersubjective. This illustrates the interaction of signs meeting with emotions and cultural values. Myth is how culture carries out some aspects of reality.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Semiotics

In the communication semiotics, communication is the process of using signs and symbols which elicit meanings in another person or persons [6]. So this research would be disassembling the sign which is constructed the audio-visual advertising product.

Meanwhile, Charles Sanders Peirce elaborated semiotics as “a relationship among a sign, an object, and a meaning [5]. Preminger said that semiotics is the science about signs. This science thought that social phenomenon or society and culture are signs. Semiotics is trying to study about the convention which is has a meaning. Sign is everything-color, cue, eye’s blink, object, mathematics formula, etc-that representing the others [7].

One of the pioneered of semiotics is Roland Barthes. Barthes said language is a sign system that reflection the assumption from society [5]. Barthes known with his systematic model in analyze the meaning of signs. His focus is about two order of signification.

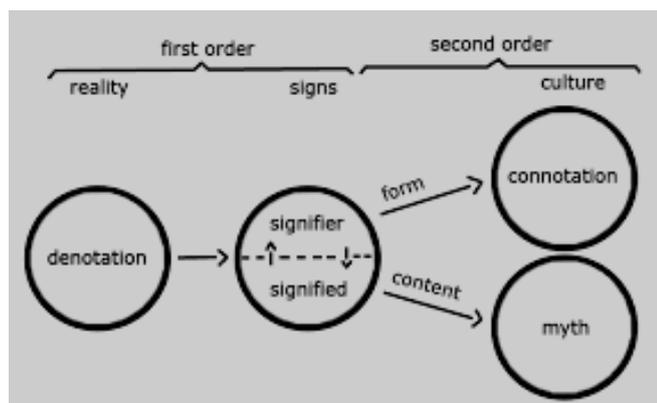


Fig. 1. Two Order of Signification [5]

The first order of signification is the relation between signifier and signified in a sign with externally reality. Barthes said that as denotation, that is the most real meaning of sign. Connotation is a term that Barthes’s use to call the second order. It describes interaction when sign meet the reader’s emotion, and the cultural values. Connotation has the subjective meaning or at least intersubjective.

On the other hand, denotation is what the signs described; meanwhile connotation is how describes the sign. Connotation is a sign which is has a relation with the content through one or more the others function. Connotation is working in the subjective steps, so it is unrealized. In the second order of signification that has a correlation with the content, sign is operating through myth. Myth is how the culture describes several aspects about reality or nature phenomenon. Myth is the social class product that has been dominated [5].

Myth is the popular culture forms, but according to Barthes is more than that. “Myth is a communication system (it is what we called message). Barthes point out that: “the signs way, a form”, one of parole... which has been written in a text. Myth it is not described as the object of message, but it is the way to how to describe the message [8].

Economy Political Media

Economy political perspective sees mass media is transferring the dominant values and assumption that is come from and to service any interest from dominant class, and to reproduction the equal class structure interest [8]. The focus is in the production, consumption of popular culture and it is the same economical factor as the way to seek a profit.

Mass media has a role to form the culture diversity that is the result of the effect of mass media as the value system, thought and act of human. The culture in the context of mass community is in order to provide by the mass media in entity perspective and to hegemony the community. Mass media can construct the people wants or the people paradigm from reality. Mass media as a reality is determined people awareness, and the result of the people awareness is a false consciousness. This false consciousness has been used by mass media to become a commodification. Mosco describes commodification is the process of transforming things valued for their use into marketable products that are valued for what they can bring in exchange [3].

Mosco said the form of commodity is: The Commodification of content when political economists think about the commodity form in communication, they have tended to start with media content. Specifically, from this point of view, the process of commodification in communication involves transforming messages, ranging from bits of data to systems of meaningful thought, into marketable products [3].

The Audience Commodity

Nicholas Garnham has examined two principal dimensions of media advertising to perfect the process of commodification in the entire economy. Dallas Smythe took these ideas in a different directing by advancing the claim that the audience is the primary commodity of the mass media [3]. According to him, the mass media are constituted out of process which sees media companies producing audience and delivering them to advertisers. Media programming is used to attract audiences; for Smythe, it was little more than the “free lunch” that bars once used to entice customers to drink. From this vantage point, audience labor or its labor power is the chief product of the mass media [3].

New media amplify the elements of Smythe’s argument. In addition to expanding the commodification of communication content, the recursive nature of digital systems expands the commodification of the entire communication process [3].

The Commodification of Labor

In the interest of examining the commodification of content and audiences, there has been a tendency to neglect the labor commodity and the process that takes place at the point of production. Baverman's work gave rise to an intellectual drive to end this marginal status by directly confronting the transformation of the labor process in capitalism [3]. According to him, labor is constituted out of the unity of conception, or the power to envision, imagine and design work, and execution, or the power to carry it out. In the process of commodification, capital acts to separate conception from execution, skill from the raw ability carry out a task. It also concentrates conceptual power in a managerial class that is either a part of capital or represents its interests [3].

Everything can be co-modified. In this research the commodity is disaster. Disaster it has to be terrified moment. But, in the advertisers view, anything could be a commodity, include the terrified moments. For them as long as anything has a useful value to sell, anything is a commodity.

III. METHODOLOGY

This research is using content analysis-semiotic as the methodology research. Ibnu Hamad said that content analysis method is the method that can describes as an in-depth from the meaning of symbol [9]. Hamad also said that the method and the analysis is qualitative research [9]. Meanwhile Mulyana describes that qualitative research it is not based on the evidence depending on mathematics logic, statistic principal, or numerical method [10].

Mulyana said although qualitative research in the form often using the mathematical result, this research it is not using the mathematical and data analysis like in experiment or survey ([10]. Meanwhile Hamad said that the type of this research has a big opportunity to a big alternative interpretation. But, the interpretation of the data results, is trying to as close as possible with the meaning that the text (message) producer means [9].

It means that, researcher can be as subjective interpreting the text research. Erick said that the process of signifying it is very depending by the subjective of the researcher. But we don't have to worried, because this type of theory it is allowed somebody to interpreting the text as subjective depending of his (researcher) life experience [9].

According to Mulyana "Subjective approach assumed that this research it is not trying to generalize the result of the research [10]. Mulyana is also said that people act by the meaning or definition that he is labeling to the environment. They do that, through the language of symbol, verbal or non-verbal act on their life [10].

In this research, text is the audio visual Telkomsel version of "*Menjadi Relawan Yang Terbaik*" commercial break. So, this research is trying to disassemble the commodification of disaster in that commercial break. The analysis is paradigmatic, it means trying to find the hidden meaning from the text [9].

In the semiotic world, text is trying to illustrate the event; case; the specific object; or any reality that has been using a sign. To analysis the sign, the researcher is based on Roland Barthes view. Roland Barthes describes the relation between a sign trough two steps signifying. The first step of signifying is the relation between signifier and signified in a sign of external reality. Barthes called that as denotation, the most reality meaning of a sign. Connotation is the terminology that Barthes used to show the second step of signifying. This thing illustrates the interaction which happens when the emotion of the readers meet his cultural values [5].

On the other side, when the communicator (advertisers) use a sign he assumed that the sign is the most representing the reality that he is trying to illustrates. Unfortunately, a creator is never be neutral. The creator it is always have their own interest [9].

In this research the interest of the advertisers actually is to sell the Telkomsel communication provider as a product. But people nowadays, do not trust the message that has been shown from the commercial break. So the creator (advertiser) is trying so many strategy to send their message to the audience. One of them is using the disaster as their commodity values.

Data Collecting Techniques

In this step, to analyze the text, the researcher is using the holistic observation from the whole content of the text. Hamad said that in the application, this method (content analysis semiotic) is willed holistic observation from the whole of text content; it includes the framing of terminologies that has been used. Researcher has to pay attention on the coherence between meanings of each part of the text context [9].

The Telkomsel's commercial break is the audiovisual mass communication product. The duration of that commercial break is 01: 02. In the visual aspect Telkomsel's commercial break is consist of footage and text animation. Meanwhile, in the audio aspect, this commercial break consists of sound effect, musical background, voice over and dialogue.

TABLE 1 MATERIALS OF RESEARCH

Audio	Visual
sound effect	footage
music background	text animation
voice over	
dialogue	

In order to analyze the text, researcher is also collecting the secondary data. The secondary data of this research is books, article from newspaper, magazines, websites that has been relation with the problem of this research. This data is using to adding the information about the focus research and as the support data.

Data Analysis Techniques

To find the answer about the commodification of disaster in Telkomsel's commercial break, researcher is using the analysis from Roland Barthes. Barthes said there are three elements of analysis: denotation, connotation and myth.

In this research, denotation is the most truly meaning of sign. That is the disaster itself. In the denotation meaning disaster illustrate as a terrified moment. That is children's crying, blood and suffering has been showed.

Meanwhile connotation is the most subjective meaning of the text. In this research connotation form of disaster when an interaction with the reader (researcher) has and their own cultures valued, will be discussed. The second step of signifying is related with the content. Barthes called it with the terminology of Myth. Myth is how the culture describes about the reality or the nature symptoms. In this research, the reality is the word of disaster that has been showed in the Telkomsel's commercial break.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Telkomsel was founded in 1995 as a form of the spirit of innovation to develop Indonesia's leading telecommunications. In its efforts to achieve this vision, Telkomsel continues to accelerate the growth of telecommunications networks throughout Indonesia rapidly while empowering the community.

Telkomsel is a pioneer for various cellular telecommunications technologies in Indonesia, including the first to launch international roaming services and 3G services in Indonesia. Telkomsel is the operator that first tested the Long-Term Evolution (LTE) broadband network technology.

Meanwhile in the Asian region, Telkomsel is a pioneer in the use of renewable energy for Base Transceiver Station (BTS) towers. Entering the era of ICT (Information and Communication Technology), Telkomsel continues to optimize service development in Indonesia by utilizing the potential synergy of its parent companies, namely PT Telkom (65%) and SingTel Mobile (35%).

In 2015 Telkomsel launched the advertising version called "*Menjadi Yang Terbaik*" or "Being the Best". This Telkomsel version of 'Being the Best', actually consists of several versions. Besides disaster volunteers, this ad also shows several professions (or maybe it could also be called a hobby). The profession displayed the ad, not only disaster volunteers, but also wedding planners and Gamers, as well as fishermen. There is even a version of 'Being the Best for Mother'.

This research is using semiotic analysis from Roland Barthes. Barthes said that is 3 element analyses: denotation, connotation, and myth.



Fig.2 Rescue effort

Denotation: This picture shows a middle-aged man using a red helmet complete with a device that emits light on the helmet. The man uses an orange double collared jacket over the white shirt on the inside of the jacket.

The man was carrying a child with both hands. The child in the arms is closed eyes and wet body. Meanwhile right next to the man a man appeared wearing the same helmet. But the man is wearing a short-sleeved shirt with a black pregnant sleeveless jacket.

The man lifts a fluid filled bag. The bag is connected to the body of the child that the previous man carried using a transparent hose.

In the background of the two men, there were a number of people who were away from the disaster location in a hurry. While behind the number of people, there are still some houses that have sunk to the ground, but some are still standing but in a state of hometown.

The picture is then stopped for a moment then a voice over appears: Here I am the first person at the disaster site. When the picture appears, it is also accompanied by a frenzied sound effect of people passing and scattering.

Connotation: The first image was taken with medium shoot shooting techniques. This technique, for Berger is interpreted as a description of personal relationships. The first picture shows the personalization of a rescue figure in disaster conditions. The figure of the divers appeared as if a hero had managed to penetrate the field of disaster.

The dramatic element of the rescue effort was drawn by the creative team using the rain that fell on this scene. So it seems dramatic efforts to save disaster victims. If viewed as an audio visual product, of course this work is seen as an element that is rich in a number of meanings. This audio-visual product indeed managed to deliver viewers into an atmosphere of rescue efforts filled with drama and tension in it. But the neglect of the creative team, that this scene actually offers another meaning system. The depiction of this rescue effort actually exploits the suffering of disaster victims.

In the first picture in this text, the rescue team tried to save the victim with great difficulty. However, survivors and victims of victims, namely children, actually become content that has both an attractive and high selling value.

Victims' suffering is even more illustrated by other relief teams carrying infusions to sustain life from the child-aged victims. On the one hand, this is a common thing in an audiovisual product. The depiction of the dramatization was once again able to bring the emotion of the viewers into the realm of disaster, but other meanings actually emerged. Suffering because of a disaster seems to be a normal thing to be exploited and shown to the public. Compassion for child victims becomes an easy field of meaning to erode the values of profit.

Viewers become restrained, pay attention, feel the pain experienced by the victim. But at the same time also become a victim that suffering is a common thing to be shown to the public as well as a natural and natural thing to be a merchandise. So humanity needs to be questioned now. Do they still have a heart?

The condition of the victim is weak, helpless as well as being an interesting treat in the second picture. The condition of the victim depended helplessly as if it was an interesting condition to witness. Victims, attempted diversion, critical conditions are the commodification behind the disaster. The offer of tempting coffers behind the composition of the image no longer has the consequences of mercy. The appearance of victims and their suffering is now only a show full of commercial value.

Myth in the "*Menjadi Relawan Yang Terbaik*" version of Telkomsel ad, there was a shift, as well as stabilization. In the myths that have settled in the community a number of literatures show several different nuances of disaster. The public myth seeing the disaster is still seen as a humanitarian tragedy that claimed many lives. The disadvantages that are faced are not only the soul, but also other losses in form.

However, if you see a number of perspectives that appear in the community and in the Telkomsel version of the '*Menjadi Relawan Yang Terbaik*' ad, researchers also find that there has been a stabilization of myth. In advertisements, disasters have undergone a symbolic transformation; disasters have in fact become a field of meaning to show heroic nuances. Disasters is also become serious commodities that package rescue efforts. Even rescue efforts that should be full of security risks are precisely aligned with the ability of a provider.

In the Indonesian community, disasters are actually more spiritually breathing. Javanese people always consider disaster as a form of test from God. This test is presented as an effort to increase the degree of piety to someone. Besides, disasters are also considered as a punishment for people who often leave God's decree.

V. CONCLUSION

Commodification is the process of transforming things valued for their use into marketable products that are valued for what they can bring in exchange. This research is a text research. So that the commodification that emerges is a mere commodification of content. Disaster is the content that appears in the ad text. So that disaster emerges as a commodity.

Through this research, researchers have found that disaster can no longer be seen in perspective as a perspective of fearful humanitarian events that has a lot of consequences. Starting from the loss of life, psychological, economic experience experienced by humans. But the ideology that was 'brought' by Telkomsel actually shifted that disaster was a frightening event. However, disaster arises as a field of meaning that shows a heroic nuance, a drama that produces profit. Until it can be said that the shift in ideology that proclaimed a terrible humanitarian event became an arena to seek profit for the capitalists.

The coffers collected by the capitalists are even more evident with the income they get. Symbolic transformation of meaning is increasingly complemented by the transformation of the value of the function that is now worth selling. Disasters become a commodity in the 'Being the Best' version of Telkomsel ads. Advertisers forget the main tasks of advertising, that advertising also functions as communication, namely the function of information, persuasion, reminders, speeding up decisions, affirming decisions, and building images [11]. It turned out that Telkomsel's version of 'Being the Best', is actually not only strengthening Telkomsel's image as a brand. However, this advertisement seems to lead the public to the thought that a disaster filled with tears and blood is a natural and natural thing to sell.

The coffers of the capitalists make him forget about other ideologies that actually infiltrate, sneak in every audio-visual work. So that it will be permissive for the exploitation of tears and blood that appear in the field of disaster. Blood, tears and the impact of disasters are only seen as commodities to offer benefits.

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