

Commodification of Religious Symbols In Advertising “Luwak Kopi Hitam Feat Ustadz Taufiqurrahman” (Semiotic Analysis of Roland Barthes)

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Abstract: The media use various strategies to attract public attention, one of which is Islamic religious symbols. That is not surprising. Given that Indonesia is a country with the largest Muslim population in the world. Using these symbols is nothing but used as an exchange value to attract consumers' attention. The medium contents that uses Islamic religious symbols is the Luwak Kopi Hitam ad. For this reason, this research will examine the use of religious symbols and figures in these advertisements. With the aim of knowing religious symbols and figures in the Black Coffee Luwak advertising product. This research will use qualitative research, with the semiotic approach of Roland Barthes. The results that religious symbols as chaplain Taufiqurrahman, halal symbols, and other attributes have undergone commodification as commodities to be traded. The development of using mass media has caused religious figures and symbols to be enjoyed by the public. Where a chaplain who is regarded and influential for the Muslim community, can convince the public's trust to consume drinks that are labeled halal. This commodification appears as an effort to influence society by creating an Islamic image and impression so that it can bring people into a consumptive culture.

Keywords: Media, advertising, Da'wah, Commodification

1. Introduction

Along with the times, technology has become one element that make the biggest contribution in the process of changing human communication. The presence of technology with all its sophistication makes it easier for people to achieve their goals in life. Thus, the development of technology and information has made the world today seem “without barriers,” or in other words, the world can be said to be a “small village.” The term is used every level of society around the world can accept because the

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flow of information so quickly. This development makes humans spoiled and controlled by today's technological sophistication.

The development of information technology has created various media tools for mass communication. Starting from newspapers, radio, and television and the last is the internet. The emergence of mass media through the internet, not only encourages the creation of a global world community but can develop and control the space for life for the community so that people have lived in two worlds of life, including real-life and virtual life (cyber-community). Mass media is a medium of communication and information that aims to mass give information that the public can visit on a large scale. Thus, the information produced by the mass media is called mass information, meaning that information is provided to the public en masse, not information that is used [1].

Television is one of the mass communication media, which has a function to give information. The very rapid development of television in Indonesia impacts people's lives, both positive and negative effects. One of the television shows that can attract audiences is the one that is packaged in an advertisement. It can present advertising on television in a more attractive manner by presenting audio and visuals that can attract people's attention. Thus, the information conveyed influences people's minds about certain products. The process of interaction and communication that occurs between advertising on television and the public has an enormous influence because packaged advertisements have a high enough appeal to the public, especially the Muslim community. It equipped media technology with a special ability to create and use religious symbols. Apart from that, the media also has extraordinary distribution power, so that media content is more easily distributed to attract the attention of the Muslim community. The appearance of the body, clothes, words, etc can illustrate this symbol. They can interpret Religious values or symbols as life habits, comfort values, and overall image goals.

Using religious symbols has become a culture in the business world because symbols are believed to convey social and cultural messages among the Muslim community. A statement from Hudeiri, in line with the statement of Jurgen Habermas, that the public space is free, open, transparent, and is used to convey opinions, interests, and needs discursively. Meanwhile, in the public space, there are television media which is used as a medium for the dissemination of information and communication which is free, including the spread of business through advertising programs.

Advertising according to the term can be interpreted as a structure in conveying information and a non-personal communication structure which is usually persuasive, discussing products by sponsors who are known through various media, one of which is mass media, in the form of television. Ads have elements that contain the advertised object, conveyed through the context of the environment, or people and other creatures that can give meaning to objects by using texts that are used as reinforcement of certain meanings. Advertising is also one determinant of an event program rating, so an event that has a lot of enthusiasts is certain to have a lot of advertisements as its sponsors.

Advertising on television has its own power to influence society, including having a wide coverage so that it can be enjoyed by all groups of society and throughout the territory of a country. In advertising a product with a da'wah background, a company must have considered the pros and cons of using religious symbols as advertising objects, because it refers to the views of the public, where most of the people are Muslim, especially Indonesian people [2].

Religion also has an adaptive nature to a social and cultural group, because religion also responds to the environment of modern culture. But, Islamic religious belief, it cannot be shown in any way, unless religious events are made into forms of religious symbols or codes that are acceptable in social and cultural circles.

The use of religious symbols in advertisements is also different from preaching. The difference lies in the purpose of using religious symbols and the purpose of proselytizing itself. The essence of da'wah in Islam is to straighten something that is wrong to the right path so that the preachers use all methods in delivering material according to the suitability of the times, while da'wah with various public problems cannot be avoided in the mass media. This is following one of the essences of da'wah itself,

namely inviting people to always do good, stay away from evil, and form an Islamic community life order.

At present, religion is not only dominated by the needs of religion and Islamic law in public beliefs but also supplies symbolic religious satisfaction to the public by businesspeople. So that the use of symbols and religious figures take part in advertising. Where the advertising market has no relation to the use or not of the religious symbol. However, the symbols used seem to increase the number of followers. In the sense that the symbol is used as a means of transforming use value into exchange value.

Based on the explanation above, this research will examine more deeply the facts that often occur now in the State of Indonesia, namely the strategy of the commodification of religion that is packaged or linked in advertisements, especially through television commercials “Luwak Kopi Hitam” starring chaplain Taufiqurrahman, S.Q.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The research method is a way to achieve a specific goal. In the research process, there must be a goal to be achieved. This type of research method is a qualitative method.

Qualitative research methods are research that emphasizes the values, behavior, actions, or words of an object under study, has a natural background, and produces data along with a description of the object of research. Something related to the background problem of a phenomenon that occurs can be consulted with the parties involved in the research. On the other hand, quality can be denoted in terms of nature as opposed to the quantum or quantity. Based on these considerations, qualitative research seems to be interpreted as research that does not make calculations [3].

This research uses the semiotic method. Where the semiotic method can be interpreted as the study of objects, events, and culture as symbols or signs. Semiotics method, as a form of all social and communication science, recognizes the world as a system related to communication. People use ‘signs’ as a means of communication. So, semiotics studies and understands the essence of the existence and position of a sign. Semiotic expert Umberto Eco calls the sign a ‘lie’ and in the sign, it has a hidden meaning, but the meaning that is in a sign, not the meaning that comes from the sign itself [4].

The primary sign is denotative while a secondary sign is one of connotative semiotics. This connotative concept will be an important key to Roland Barthes’ semiotic model. Fiske calls the model two-order significance. Through this model, Barthes explains that the first stage of significance is the relationship between Signifier (expression) and Signified (content) in a sign to external reality. That is what Barthes calls denotation, which is the most obvious meaning of the sign. The connotation is the term Barthes uses to denote the second stage of significance. This can describe the interactions that have occurred when the sign meets the feelings and emotions of the reader as well as some of the values of the culture [5].

3. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

3.1 Television as a Communication Bridge

For about a century, broadcast television has become the prima donna of the mass communication media arena. Since the discovery of the media in the 1900s. Television popularity skyrocketed even when it was predicted, the TV would turn off radio broadcasts as a mass communication medium because of the audio-visual nature of television [6].

Television is the medium in disseminating information. The development of television in Indonesia is very rapid, it cannot be avoided, but it can have both positive and negative effects. The content that is often presented on television is an advertisement. Islam, as the majority religion in Indonesia, will play a role in the choice of advertising content to be broadcast on television media. The advertisement

will try to attract the attention of consumers who are Muslim. One of them is by presenting one of the preacher figures and religious attributes in the ad's delivery [7].

3.2 Commodification “Gateway” Advertisements

Advertising in English is called advertising. The word comes from the medieval Latin *advertentia*, “to turn to.” This term can describe any type or form of public announcement intended to promote the sale of a specific commodity or service or to convey a social or political message. Advertising must be distinguished from other materials and activities aimed at changing and influencing opinions, attitudes, and behavior, such as propaganda, which is a term used to refer to the dissemination of doctrines, views, beliefs that show specific interests and ideologies (political, social, philosophical, and others) [8].

Advertising is a part of communication media that aims to convey messages about products, especially to the public and society. According to Morissan, advertising can be defined as “any paid form of non-personal communication about an organization, product, service, or idea by an identified sponsor” (any form of non-personal communication about an organization, product, service, or idea paid for by a known sponsor). As for the meaning of “paid” in this definition shows the fact that space and time for an advertising message, in general, must be bought [9].

Commodification is the starting point for theorizing the political economy of communication. Vincent Mosco can define commodification as “the process of changing goods and services, including communications that can be valued for their usefulness into commodities that can be valued because of what they will provide in the market”.

Commodification is transforming goods and services that can be valued because of their use value (for example, the use-value of drinks that quench thirst, stories to communicate or share experiences), into a more valuable commodity because it can bring profits in the market after being packed into bottled drinks and novel books, or, like, the commercialization of agriculture to sell food and drama productions for commercial broadcasting.

Adam Smith and the advocates of classical political economy can distinguish between a product whose value arises from the satisfaction of specific human wants and needs “use value”, and a product whose value is based on what it can offer in exchange, “value. exchange” (exchange value). Commodities are a form of a product when their production is organized using an exchange process. Commodification is changing use-values into exchange rates [10].

3.3 Religious Commodification

Commodification is related to capitalism. Capitalism is a money-oriented or “money-oriented” system. The system supplies great opportunities for owners of capital to exploit wealth. Entrepreneurs will compete to raise capital by justifying any means. Capitalism sparks commercial activities for material gain. Meanwhile, religion is a belief, belief, and form of behavior, which is believed by humans to solve various complex and complex problems that an organization cannot solve and cannot be solved by reliable technology [11].

The commodification of religion is the channeling of spiritual values that have belief in God and become a guide for life to become an exchange value. The process of commodification of religion runs through several freedoms for everyone to determine rights and obligations in religion. It made religion into a product that can be used as a medium of exchange and enjoyed by the public. They interpreted the commodification of religion as a strategy conducted by industry players by using religious symbols as selling points to get the attention of consumers [12].

a. The Use of Religious Symbols in the Luwak Kopi Hitam Feat Ustadz Taufiqurrahman.

The identification and classification of signs in this study were carried out by adapting the types of signs based on the relationship between the object and the sign or symbol proposed by Roland Barthes,

namely having two kinds of terms, term denotations which explain the relationship between the signifier (expression) and the signified (content). And connotations that can describe the interactions that can occur when the sign meets the feelings or emotions of the reader and the values of the culture.

Furthermore, this section will explain the form of using religious symbols in the form of audio messages and visual messages taken from the Luwak Kopi Hitam feat advertisement Chaplain Taufiqurrahman.



Picture 1: scene 1 of the opening display of the Luwak Kopi Hitam advertisement

Taufiqurrahman is a well-known preacher who has thousands of followers at every recitation that is conducted. Besides, he is the caretaker of the Darut Taufiq Ar-Rahman Islamic boarding school which has an Al-Quran memorization program. It is not surprising that the choice of the central figure in this advertisement is the right choice.

At the opening of the advertisement, a cleric figure is at once displayed. Taufikurrahman was accompanied by two people who sat at the back. This confirms that the cleric, Taufikurrahman is the main figure in the advertisement. As for each individual wearing Muslim clothing which is a symbol of Muslim clothing for Indonesian society. Ustadz Taufiqurrahman as the main character also gave a familiar greeting to the audience in the form of "joining hands" while greeting with the phrase "Assalamu'alaikum wa Rahmatullah wa Barokatuh" which in the Indonesian Muslim tradition is often used as a symbol of intimacy and humility.

The label "halal" is also mentioned in the narrative of this advertisement, the sentence is pronounced by the cleric, Taufikurrahman at 0.07 seconds in the advertisement which lasted 0.27 seconds. The sentence halal is used as a trait that is mentioned first among the other characteristics (not too sweet, healthy, and steady). This is done so that the characteristics of the products offered are truly attached to the audience and meet the food and beverage standards of the Indonesian Muslim community, namely halal food and beverages.

In the lower-left corner of the scene, 1 image above also shows "Ustadz Pantun" which is the ustad's identity. Taufikurrahman is a preacher who often uses rhymes in every activity of his preaching. The word "chaplain" itself is a word taken from Arabic which in Indonesian is better known as the term teacher. The term "chaplain" is showed as the identity of Islamic religious teachers/educators both in the school environment and in the community in general. In the tradition of Muslim society (especially in Indonesia) the person who gets the title/nickname "chaplain" is a person who has a good attitude and personality. This title is in the socio-religious hierarchy of the Indonesian Muslim community one level below the Kiai.



Picture 2: scene 2 Ustadz Taufiqurrahman drinking Luwak Kopi Hitam

Islam has good and good rules for all the ummah to do, drinking with the right hand is one of the Sunnah for Muslims, it is a very firm thing that if you eat and drink in a good way, the food and drink that comes in will be good too.

Figure 2 above shows the cleric. Taufiqurrahman who is drinking coffee with his right hand and with a happy face coupled with the use of shooting techniques that focus on the main character seems to emphasize that drinking coffee is a good thing that can bring goodness and health to everyone.



Picture 3: scene 3 Ustadz Taufiqurrahman with a husband and wife drinking coffee

Silaturrehman is something that is highly recommended in Islam. In Indonesia itself, the culture of silaturrehman is deeply rooted and as if it cannot be removed and separated from Indonesian society (especially Muslims). This tradition is often found throughout the year during the celebration of Islamic religious holidays, especially Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha.

The gathering of chaplain and spouses while drinking coffee is a sign of connecting as a sign of a strong brotherly bond. Figure 3 above also seems to emphasize that the atmosphere of intimacy will be more perfect with the presence of a cup of coffee with the Luwak brand.



Picture 3: scene 3 Ustadz Taufiqurrahman with a husband and wife drinking coffee

At the end of this part of the ad, chaplain. Taufikurrahman appeared to give closing greetings to the entire audience. The image shown is only half of the body but still displays the position of the hands together as a sign of respect and intimacy. This is done to show the identity of the fellow Muslims who are used to starting with greetings and ending with greetings.

At the end of this. The name Ustadz Taufiqurrahman along with the title "Ustadz Pantun" was again displayed. This is to reinforce his identity as a Muslim figure in order to get more attention from the audience.

4. CONCLUSION

In the content of the Black Coffee Luwak advertisement, there are religious figures and symbols who participate in the success of the industrial product, but on the other hand, the symbol has a negative meaning. The commodification of religious symbols channeled through mass media television, using Ustad Taufiq commodities as religious figures, clothing, and halal symbols, as well as several other attributes. This commodification appears as an effort to influence society by creating an Islamic image and impression, to bring people into a consumptive culture. It can see it from the times that are accompanied by sophisticated technological developments, making the public dissolve and neglectful in interpreting the true symbols. Symbols that had a very great and valuable meaning became commonplace because industrial products which only aimed to attract Muslim consumers often used them, especially in the State of Indonesia where almost all the population was Muslim.

Learn from the reality of the commodification of religious symbols, especially for religious figures. There is no need for anxiety about the world of Islam. Therefore, this commodification process only emphasizes the identity of religious symbols, so that they are visible and prominent in various circles of Muslim society. The commodification that needs attention is the commodification in the policy context because of the tendency towards homogenization in the advertisement so that we can see the controversy that arises because of the policy.

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