The Popular Culture and General Elections in Republic of Indonesia

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Abstract

Political marketing for power often uses popular culture to achieve it. Popular culture, which prioritises packaging over substance, is becoming increasingly thinner and thinner, especially when other passengers are infiltrated into its fragile body. The purpose of this paper is to analyse the practice of popular culture in politics whose ultimate goal is the attainment of power. The fragility opens up wide opportunities for the accommodation of other interests, which are always present in public life. Popular culture itself is already poor in substance, will become even more banal with relations with other fields. So the relationship between popular culture and politics falls into the "ideology" of inevitability. A multifaceted reading of politics and popular culture allows for other findings, but in this study we see that humans instinctively have the desire for power, he is anxious if it is not achieved. Sublimation is done so that anxiety can still be done, so that the desire for power is released. Popular culture provides space for that.

Keywords: *Popular, Culture, General, Elections, Indonesia.*

INTRODUCTION

At some extent, television is like a grand stage, providing ample space for "cultural-popularity" to flourish. space for "cultural popularisation" freely. Television eventually becomes a political politics, in which television has the power to mould reality on top of reality. Television is the result of human creativity, a work of creation that comes from human choice, a cultural decision and social pressure. Television shapes the reality of what is trending. The appearance of reality is multi-layered, not a single layer of reality. As such every sphere of life and every aspect of society is under the great influence of media (Rafique & Khan, 2022). Not to mention that television shows can also be enjoyed via the internet, where the internet is globally interconnected to provide access to services and information resources that allow users to use the internet. The telecommunications services and information resources so as to enable computer users to exchange data, messages and files with each other computers. Mass communication is communication delivered through mass media that produces a product in the form of communication messages(Wiryany & Pratami, 2019).

If one were to make the assumption that the presidential debate on television was one of the manifestations of popular culture, then it has indirectly designed an architecture of political and media communication in Indonesia with the basic ingredients of popular culture. The architecture of popular culture in the form of presidential debates then gets a space of prevalence in the process of democracy/political communication, so that if it is not done, there is something lacking, there is something less affdol in political recruitment. Even if one of the candidates, for example, is reluctant to present himself on the debate stage, then the audience, who are potential voters, will generally give a certain response, and it tends not to be / less than a certain response.

Another illustration, singing contestation which is often regarded as the most prestigious contest, Indonesian Idol, (although this show is actually a reproduction of other countries, such as American Idol), comes in a presentation that raises an interpretation. This happened when the presidential candidate Prabowo Subianto in the 2014 democratic party, attended and gave an award to Nowela Elisabeth Auparay, the winner of the contest. If Prabowo became representation of political territory and Indonesian Idol is a representation of popular culture, then the show showed an intersection of interests.

In Uexkull's view, "self-statements" such as what Prabowo does in his popular performances always include a specific purpose. Prabowo's popular performances always include a specific purpose. A performance is always

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an action with a purpose; action without a purpose does not reveal the action. So, a performance, especially one that is disseminated widely and in real time, always contains a certain agenda, and if a performance comes without a purpose, then it does not reveal a performance at all. The absence of purpose, negates existence, is perhaps another expression. In another picture, the Chairman of the of the Hanura Party, General Wiranto, seems to have the right platform to communicate politically. The main stream media has overlooked the importance of indigenous people and their culture(Sharma, 2021).

He has immersed himself in popular culture formats, on various programmes aired by RCTI. His strategy of partnering with media mogul Hary Tanoesoedibjo allowed him wide access to the media. Wiranto has repeatedly been featured in television programmes on RCTI. Previously, the former TNI Commander appeared in the soap opera Tukang Bubur Naik Haji, along with his deputy HT. A viewer said Wiranto was lucky to get a deputy like Hary Tanoe. Sinetron came in, reality show, quiz show, and advert. When Prabowo handed over the prize to the Indonesia Idol Champion, Wiranto drove a rickshaw or when the presidential candidates "debated" on the screen, in terms of positive thinking, what came to mind was a candidate who cares about culture and the little people.

If we consider what the two Generals did above to be a noble social virtue, perhaps its realisation is unbroken sublime social virtue, perhaps its realisation would not have been cut off in the middle of the road, severed and sporadic. Moreover, the time frame is during the presidential candidacy period in this country. The framework of space and time, contributes to the meaning or becomes a variable that is taken into account to assess a (political) action. The reality of discontinuity. This is contrary to expectations about the prevalence of social virtue that should be. In this discontinuity, history (traces of social virtue of political actors) will be killed and its fundamentals dismantled. Cultural production alongside training in production practice (Moylan, 2022).

In an ideal world, social virtue will still be maintained over time, and free themselves from the political space/time frame. Sporadic social virtue is not real social virtue. It is a pseudo social virtue that is subject to the image project of political figures. If we consider social virtue as a subject, then when considered as a subject, then when the subject is drowned by the image, the subject will be economically valuable. And this is where substance is not talked about, packaging gets extra attention. Mass communication may be created and disseminated by individuals, businesses, governments, or organizations, but it is always received by an individual. Popular culture is both a reflection of who we are and a suggestion of who we might become(Materials & Schedule, 2024).

This paper intends to reflect on what is happening with popular culture in relation to the political sphere. Some may immediately recognise that what is presented on the screen is so crude that it is easy to read, so that reflection is not needed. Reflection in this paper, however, is more about description of one of the findings that may be present in the exploration of the possible relationship between popular culture and politics. This research seeks to present a different perspective on of image politics that uses popular culture as an effective vehicle.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research approach is descriptive qualitative. The descriptive qualitative approach is one of the types of research that conveys a full picture of the social situation or the relationship between the phenomena studied(Cresswell, 2012). Qualitative methods are expected to be able to produce an in-depth description of the speech, writing, and behaviour that can be observed from an individual, group, community, certain organisations in a certain context setting that is studied from a whole, comprehensive and holistic point of view.

Qualitative research is a widely used term for research that does not subject research findings to quantification or quantitative analysis. Qualitative research examines the attitudes, feelings and motivations of product users (Proctor, 2024). This research is reflective in nature, with the main data source being any texts related to the research theme. The data were taken from scientific journals, television broadcasts, reference books and other relevant sources. The texts are analysed from the researcher's perspective and elaboration

skills based on the breadth of experience and a particular frame of reference. Data triangulation will be carried out by comparing with the opinions of experts contained in various scientific publications.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Discourse of Popular Culture

Human cultural life moves so dynamically. Culture too finds its colourful form, and that is a given. From the avant-garde to the popular, each fills a piece of human civilization from time to time. Popular culture, for example, is becoming more and more widespread, and there are many human interests that are "included" in it. According to Dr Burhan Bungin, popular culture popular culture has a lot to do with everyday issues that are enjoyed by everyone, such as the or certain circles such as superstar performances, private vehicles, fashion, home models, body care. Popular culture is about meaning and language(Martinez del Castillo, 2015).

Another perspective on popular culture is expressed by Ben Agger, a professor of sociology from the University of Texas United States by saying that popular culture can be categorised into four streams. Firstly, (popular) culture is built based on pleasure but not substance and relieves people from the boredom of working all day. Second, popular culture destroys traditional cultural values. Third, culture is a big problem in Marx's capitalist economic view. Fourthly popular culture is a culture that trickles down from above. What Ben Agger says seems to attempt to provide an explanation for the existence of popular culture, which in fact fulfils many aspects of human life. Aspects that are intertwined, binding people's lives, from the moment they wake up and then sleep again.

When waking up in the morning, for example, the eyes are treated to infotainment on television, while eating fried chiken, dress up in fashionable clothes, go to work in a city car, use the latest smartphone, hang out in cafes and so on. Avant garde culture and popular culture live together in society. Both experience dynamics, and society chooses its own throne. To some extent, popular culture has become more popular, because its manifestations are so broad and which are so widespread. The popularity of popular culture is a charm for other spheres of life to approach it and utilise it. No doubt politics has approached the stage of entertainment, reality shows, talk shows and even religious lectures. In some cases even politics sponsors the frenetic world of showbiz.

Popular culture, in the sense of media events and in this case in relation to the political world, has the opportunity to experience what Fredric Jameson refers to as reification. Politic has the opportunity to experience what Fredric Jameson refers to as the reification of culture. In fact, this cultural reification becomes inevitable, as a result of liberal capitalistic relationships. In Ben Agger's view, culture (popular culture) becomes a big problem in Marx's view of capitalism. How explanation, when linked to Fredric's cultural reification?

Looking at popular culture in the frame of Fredric Jameson's thinking, we will be brought to a critical realisation of how cultural reification really happens. According to Jameson, there are several symptoms of reification that provide awareness. Firstly, reification as the transformation of social relations into things, or the levelling of social relation. Social relations are seen as commodities, which can be traded. All forms of social relations are controlled by market mechanisms/laws. Second, reification as the erasure of the traces of production from the object itself (the effacement of the traces of production from the object itself). Humans, as consumers forget how the product was made. The idea of the symbolic is attractive because it provides insight for Jameson into the "representational dialectic of the codes and capacities of individual language and media (Cecil, 2024).

Subliminal Power

In Freudian psychology, there are several concepts of individual self-preservation. This self-preservation is an outlet for individuals who have a strong urge to be satisfied, and one of the modes is sublimation. Freud defined sublimation as a self-defence effort to prevent /relieve anxiety by changing and adjusting the anxiety-causing impulses into behaviour that are acceptable / even appreciated by society. In short, sublimation is an unconscious process where the libido is shown or redirected into a more acceptable form of channeling. But

in fact it is rare for individuals to use only one defence. Usually individuals will use several defence mechanisms at same time. There are two important characteristics of defence mechanisms, namely that they are form of denial or interference with reality and takes place unconsciously. In relation to individual anxiety, one of the triggers is the personal desire/ambition to achieve power. Candidates for office often indulge their ambitions, and seek to achieve their political desires through various by means. the subliminal self monitors the external environment,noticing factors that escape our normal attention, interests and cognitive abilities. In those cases where deliberate attempts are made to shift the mental gears of an individual(Tadajewski, 2024).

However, despite their efforts, anxiety will always be present as they continue to hold on to power and will always be present along with the continuing process of political activity. This anxiety is then answered by how to enjoy the political process while adding optimism/hope about victory. Political actors are generally haunted by certain feelings in relation to, for example, electability and popularity. Efforts to 'release' this anxiety vary widely, for example negative campaigning, money politics, repression, mobilisation (including the mobilisation of bureaucrats) and other forms.

The release of anxiety in this way is generally unacceptable to society. As a substitute, (all of these release efforts only have a single agenda, namely the attainment of power), other models are sought that are more acceptable to society. At this point, Freudian sublimation (intentionally or not) fulfils its function in the political sphere. In this regard, popular culture is also blended in such a way that it seems as if the ambition of power is present in the realm of politics. as if the ambition of power is present in its sweet face, and gets the sympathy of the masses. The sympathy of the broad masses of people. Popular culture even creates, then strengthens the political identity of actors in political contestation, which is carried out as a democratic process.

The desire for power, as an "anxiety", is present in the figure of a political actor, in which the political actor is impossible to be free from his social base, namely the mass of the people in and with whom the political actor lives. In and with them, the political actor lives. It is also impossible if that anxiety is present nakedly visiting the masses of people, who present nakedly visiting the mass of the people, who are the potential constituents. So with technology (information) that anxiety is trying to be presented in a different/new form different / new form. According to Herbert Marcuse, for this purpose, human dependence changes from personal dependence to dependence on the individual, also from personal dependence to dependence on the objective world order (law, economy, market, etc.).

Marcuse's way of thinking sees the role of technology as an agent for the achievement of a goal which connects humans with systems and subsystems that exist in society. Because humans must dynamically transform within their entities. Returning to the effort to release the "anxiety" of political actors in the frame of achieving power, it turns out that for Budi Hardiman use, the role of technology is an agent for achieving goals.However, from there, perversion also occurs when people run away from anxiety and allow themselves to be dragged down by it. Anxiety and let themselves be dragged by the naturalness of their instincts. Discourse analysis may be performed in different ways, but all of the procedural variations share some philosophical underpinnings (Arrozy et al., 2018).

At this point, we should not wonder why the political actors also take shortcuts to fulfil their lust for power by riding on popular culture, visiting the public through the glass screen. This is (forced) to do so, given that they are limited by the framework of time and space, so choosing popular culture makes sense. Using popular culture that television, by presenting narratives of humanity, care, empathy, sublimation that is (still) acceptable to the public. Meanwhile, in today's Indonesia, popular culture is showing more and more its extraordinary variations. It experiences strong amplification and dissemination by the mass media (television). In relation to power, popular culture has a "strategic" position because it is always glimpsed to "participate". But it can also be in a subordinate position, because it is always utilised by political actors for the release of their anxieties.

Starting from an inclination of how popular culture is more recreational/entertainment and impressively consumptive, then enter the political arena. But before that, according to Richard Dyer, the world of entertainment is a personal needs of a society that has been influenced by capitalist structures. So in its grand

appearance, elegance, beautiful gradations of light, melancholy, tragic, pitiable, proud and other miscellaneous appearances, we, the viewers of culture, are only treated to it all as a sensed/visible thing. The effect of anaesthesia effect of popular culture to some extent rests our consciousness to critically look at other possibilities than just the splendour or the splendour or extravagance of the sensationalised thing. However, not only these characteristics define our gender, they only define our physical structure (Baligar, 2018).

Another example of sublimal practices in the realm of power and popular culture is the presidential debate. The debate becomes a stage for entertainment. While the substance of the debate takes centre stage, It is an attractions of the political actors who easily attract the attention of the audience's senses are the attractions of the political actors who are acting out their own anxieties.

Style, expression, word choice, dress, body language, knowledge and hairdo, for example, body language, breadth of knowledge and hairstyling, for example, often turn out to be something that laughter, nervousness or just a small smile in the audience. In the presidential debate in 2019, for example, there was a session in which from the clothing of presidential candidate Jokowi appeared the end of a piece of paper. It was later discovered that the paper contained prayers, given by his mother. This is what Ben Agger later revealed that culture (read: presidential debates) is built on fun but not substance and that it alliviate people from the boredom of working all day . In entertainment culture, meanings can be separated and even separated from the value of an object, and value is not important when dealing with an object, and value is not very important when dealing with the meaning of the object.

Politics is a noble profession, but the greed for power and fame has tarnished it. So we really need the best and brightest among the youth to join politics and serve the nation. Politics is not a business but a with the aim of providing service to the nation. So noble is politics, since thousands of years ago Aristotle called it the highest art to realise the common good of a country. His thoughts that are summarised in Nicomachean Ethics explains how all other branches of science are under the control of / and will serve the implementation of political science to create a comfortable and good social life . This means that, in the presidential candidate debate, the meaning of the the meaning of the debate, the substances revealed by the candidates, is ultimately independent of who reveals the substance.

And who are the figures/personalities who delivering the substances becomes completely unimportant, when what is delivered is not of high quality. The way of reasoning, the quality of thought, leadership and problem-solving skills may not come from a general, a businessman, an academic, or a politician. a general, businessman, academic, activist or whatever. Rather, it is open to from any person, although it is generally expected to come from individuals, for example, as mentioned above. Most texts are hybrids, which draw on more than one discourse (Janks, 2020).

Developing an architecture of sublimation of power in popular culture, it can also blur the line between entertainment and political persuasion. Thus the impression after watching reality shows, music performances and candidate debates as described above, also creates a sense of doubt due to the blurred boundaries. Politics is a noble profession, but the greed for power and fame has tarnished it. So we really need the best and brightest among the youth to join politics and serve the nation. Politics is not a business but a with the aim of providing service to the nation. So noble is politics, since thousands of years ago Aristotle called it the highest art to realise the common good of a country. His thoughts that are summarised in Nicomachean Ethics explains how all other branches of science are under the control of / and will serve implementation of political science to create a comfortable and good social . Now print media is weakening and stores are closing down.

Cultural Reification

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The distinction arises when events are evaluated for advertising slots, because they are considered commodities that can be exchanged. The second-by-second value of television advertisements is very large, especially in prime-time. Media events that still include advertisements with a high frequency are considered to have a high interest rate, which at that time will attract the attention of a large number of audiences. The massive and massive television coverage reinforces this.

The activity of forgetting (for a moment) as a form of cultural reification can be witnessed during the Indonesian Idol singing contest. In the contest, the songs sung are mostly western songs that are not in English. The contestants (for a moment) forget that they are Indonesian. Contestants distance themselves from those who cannot enjoy the product (the song they are singing), so that their intimacy with the song can be achieved. More than that, contestants also forget that the song is in English, so that it is "imagined" as their language, hoping to "enjoy" the product well and sincerely. Then, subalternity can be seen when, for example, the existence of the event itself becomes inferior to that of General Prabowo or Jokowi, businessman Hatta Rajasa or Jusuf Kalla.The grand stage of the debate is inferior to those figures.Moreover, if these figures are in their maximum performance, then they will dominate the media event strongly.

However, simultaneously, political actors are also "subalternity", when their political communication has to be cut into pieces by advertisements. They are subalternity due to the interests of capitalism that "feeds" corporate television. In another angle, an attempt to publiced power through popular culture is not always "acceptable" to the public. In general, helping people (by playing their jobs) is acceptable, rather than paying them to submit to it. In general, it can be observed that when political actors come to congratulate and hand out gifts, rather than intimidating the performers to bow to them, or creating songs and singing them are acceptable efforts, rather than launching negative campaigns against other groups. However, there is also another type of belief, that all of this is meaningless, because it has no lasting or sustainable effect on society. In addition, it is the selection of the "popular culture model" to be "politicized", as well as the "way of politicization", that has elicited diverse responses.

CONCLUSSION

Various forms of popular culture transmitted by television, media events seem to inevitably mix with various interests. The stage of presidential candidate debates, music concerts, singing contestations, soap operas, to reality shows, cannot be separated from these interests. One of them is political interest. Political interests, personal or group, are actually desires that are worried if they do not get a way out. Popular culture / media events on television are chosen as a place to release anxiety, because of their simultaneous and massive power. The mechanism for releasing anxiety about power is sublimation. A term in Freudian psychology, as a form of ego defence mechanism. Actually, political actors feel anxious about themselves, in relation to popularity and (especially) electability. Anxiety is sublimated by various media events on television, as an action that is acceptable to the public. This logical effort is taken because conducting negative campaigns, money politics, and other sarcastic forms violate rules that are also unacceptable to society. Popular culture, in this regard, is one of the cornerstones of political activity and has an important place in the process of achieving power.

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