

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. Theoretical Framework

The study focused on the differences between Debus and Limbad's debus and its correlation with the influence of cultural globalization. In order to analyze this phenomenon, the writer used Baudrillard's Commodity-Sign theory related to the commodified culture and the cultural globalization. And theoretical models of cultural globalization from Diana Crane were used as the supporting theory.

##### 2.1.1. Commodity-Sign Theory

Postmodern era began shortly after World War II, and occurred in postindustrial societies. This era was noted with the development of human knowledge and technology, what we call as globalization. In addition, as quoted in Allan, Baudrillard stated that these societies are marked by continual advances and an increasing presence of communication technologies and mass media, mediated images and information then coupled with unbridled commodification and advertising are the key influences in this era (in Allan 2011, p.307). In reality, we can easily find easy accessed means of communication around us, such as television, electronic newspaper, and newspaper. This makes us easy to get in touch with any information we need and we want to get.

Jean Baudrillard was a France philosopher; he was born on July 29 in 1929. In his writing *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, he proposed the idea of

commodity based on Marx's thought about his critical process of commodification. Commodification as a process refers to the way more and more objects and experiences in the human world are turned into products for profit (Allan 2011, p.304). Many industries invent or create many new products to maintain and expand their market and sales.

In explaining about commodification, Marx used two terms, use value and exchange value. These values are asserted on the commodity so that consumers can be attracted. Use value refers to the actual function of the product; exchange value refers to the exchange of one commodity compared to other commodities (Allan 2011, p.303). The interesting thing for Marx, however, is that when reduced to monetary value, exchange value is much higher than use value (Allan 2011, p.303). In other words, you get paid more when goods are produced and have been packaged in interesting way, and then sell it to the market than the actual function of those goods. Exchange value can be said, then, as the value which influences mostly on the people's consumption.

For Baudrillard, however, like species being, use value is completely bound up with the idea of product; it has no value or meaning other than the material (Allan 2011, p.303). Use value is used in consumption. In capitalism, use value contains no meaning anymore but material. Exchange value is materialist as well, because exchange value is based on human economic production (Allan 2011, p.303). Because exchange value goes after the production of use value of goods, it contains no meaning as well but material. To substitute the place of use value and exchange value, Baudrillard proposed the idea of sign value.

Commodities are no longer purchased for their use value, and exchange value is no longer simply a reflection of human labor (Allan 2011, p.303). Sign value refers to the reflection toward the result of the changes of use value to exchange value.

Then, through his writing titled *The Consumer Society*, he developed a theory of the commodity-sign, in which the commodity has become a sign. Consumption defines precisely the stage where the commodity is immediately produced as a sign (Baudrillard quoted in Pawlett 2001, p.19). According to Baudrillard “meaning” shifts to signs in relation to other signs (Allan 2011, p.304). In other word, everything is not marked based on its utility but its prestige and symbolic sign (Lechte quoted in Mujianto, Elmubarok and Sunahrowi 2010, p.76). Each object contains its use value, but in commodity concept, everything is marked based on its exchange value (Mujianto, Elmubarok and Sunahrowi 2010, p.76). In the end, for Baudrillard, signs dominate the aspect of human life. In society, media creates the explosion of meaning until it beats the reality. Through this way, object is not seen from its use value but from its symbolic value (Baudrillard quoted in Mujianto, Elmubarok and Sunahrowi 2010, p.77). Moreover, Marx stated that:

First in commodity fetish, people misrecognize what is truly present within a commodity itself. By this Marx meant that commodities and commodification are based on the exploitation of human labor, but most of us fail to see it. Second, in commodity fetish there is a substitution. For Marx, the basic relationship

between humans is that of production. But in commodity fetish, the market relations of commodity exchange are substituted for the productive or material relations of persons. The result is that rather than being linked in a community of producers, human relationships are seen through commodities, either as buyers and sellers or as a group of consumers (Allan 2011, p.305).

The statements above note that through commodity, people misunderstand what is truly present inside commodity. People cannot distinguish between what is the actual function of the product rather than their own pleasure. In commodity, human relationships are seen either as buyers, sellers or consumers.

One of Baudrillard's thoughts is about the effects of mass media on culture and the problem of representation. For Baudrillard, culture refers to the expression of social meaning. In traditional social groups, culture was created and used in social life. In postmodern era, even a culture is turned to be a commodity, and it is modified by capitalist industries, such as mass media. This culture is called as "commodified culture" (Allan 2011, p.305). As Allan argued based on Baudrillard's thought:

Members in traditional social groups were surrounded by grounded culture; members in postmodern social groups are surrounded by commodified culture. There are vast differences in the reasons why grounded versus commodified culture is created. Grounded culture emerges out of face-to-face interaction and is intended to create meaning, moral boundaries, norms, values, beliefs, and so forth.

Commodified culture is produced according to capitalist and mass media considerations and is intended to seduce the viewer to buy products. With grounded culture, people are moral actors; with commodified culture, people are consumers (Allan 2011, p.306).

The explanation above obviously notes that grounded culture carries social reality through meaning, norms, and values that has been practiced and believed by the people in a particular place based on their belief with their tradition. In addition, in grounded culture, people are clearly involved in face-to-face interaction with the others to create and learn it, while commodified culture occurs when there is a production of a culture through media and packaged in different way in order to seduce people to buy that product. The producer may add something new on its packaging in order to make something new and to get the attention from the consumers. In commodified culture, there is no face-to-face interaction; people are merely as consumers and they interact only with the commodity.

#### **2.1.1.1. Four phases of the Sign**

Quoted in Allan, Baudrillard's thought of the signs develop with his idea of grounded culture, then he proposed the four phases or stages of the sign (Allan 2011, p.306). In the first phase, sign represents the strength of social reality. There is a strong correlation or relationship between the sign and the reality it signifies, and the context wherein specific signs can be used are clear. In this stage, all communicative arts including speech, gift giving, rituals, exchanges, and so on are directly related to and expressive of social reality (Allan 2011, p.306). The second

phase, sign marks a movement away from the relation between the sign and social reality. The third phase, sign turns into commodity or sign produced goods. The fourth phase, sign has been shifted away from manufacturing toward information based on technologies and mass media. As Allan stated based on Baudrillard's thought:

In the first stage of the sign, signs had very clear and specific meanings. But as societies and economic systems changed, different kinds of media and ideas were added...In postmodernity, meaning and reality are not necessarily what they appear, because signs have been tossed about by a media without constraint, driven by the need to squeeze every drop of profit out of a populace through the proliferation of new markets with ever-shifting directions, cues, signs, and meanings in order to present something "new" (Allan 2011, p.312).

The above statements obviously note that commodification causes the shifting meaning of particular sign and creates something new because of the media. "Rather than representing, as signs did in the first phase, and rather than creating meaningful and social relations, as symbolic exchange did, commodified signs do nothing and mean nothing. They have no referent, and their sign-context, the only thing that could possibly impart meaning, is constantly shifting because of mass media and advertising" (Allan 2011, p.310). The meaning of commodity, then, is always in change. There is no stable meaning owned by commodity since

meaning can be attached and shifted easily. Media and ads are the most important actors in meaning production.

### **2.1.2. Culture in Globalization**

Globalization marks the postmodern era with the development of knowledge and technology. To many people, the term “globalization” means above all this: a global homogenization in which particular ideas and practices spread throughout the world (Hannerz 1996, p.24). In this study however, the writer tried to explore cultural globalization and its relation to economic and political issues spread by media.

Quoted in Couldry, Hannerz noted that culture is the meanings which people create, and which create people, as members of societies (quoted in Couldry 2000, p.99). However, according to Cloudry, stresses are not the unity of culture, but its duality. Culture is not just a set of meanings, which can be analyzed for their structural unity, but two things: a set of meaningful forms and human interpretations of them (Couldry 2000, p.99). In addition, culture is not only about the practices but it also involves the people’s perspective toward its meaning.

As the previous explanation about the commodified culture, it simply means that the culture is commodified and it is given a particular meaning. In the market, a growing proportion of commodities are in themselves nothing but meanings, and forms carrying meanings, “what are increasingly produced in contemporary economies are not material objects but signs” (Hannerz 1996, p.24).

At the same time, the media industry is also working hard to attach more meaning, as commodities, meanings and meaningful forms often have to be made into “news” (Hannerz 1996, p.24). It is clearly stated above that commodities are actually signs which are seen not from the form but the meaning attached in it. Meaning is then the most influential factor for commodities and production of commodities.

If now there is more culture, however, it does not depend only on the production of new culture (Hannerz 1996, p.24). There may also be less of the old-style, natural, haphazard forgetting of old culture (ibid.). The old style of debus seems to loss after the appearance of Limbad that serves debus in his different way, and people may not remember about the old one, because Limbad influences people much as his intense appearance on Indonesian television. As a result, it may reconstruct people about debus itself; what people know about debus is no longer the old debus but Limbad’s debus. As public consumption, culture has to be packaged as entertaining as possible. However, if there is less of old-style of particular culture, then there will be the sense of cultural loss and there is probably question of cultural identity in this era of globalization.

Diana Crane, on her writing stated that cultural globalization is recognized as a complex and diverse phenomenon consisting of global cultures originating from many different nations and regions (Crane, p.1). Debus gets the influence of globalization indirectly. No wonder that in order to compete in global era, debus has to be packaged based on people’s taste in this globalization era. Assuming that all forms of culture construct and deconstruct social identities and social relations,



cultural globalization raises important and controversial issues concerning its effects on national and local cultures and their responses to it (Crane, p.1). Besides co-production of old culture has good effects, the other problem appears. Some people may accept this cultural globalization and some may have negative responses toward it.

Cultural globalization is sufficiently complex that no single theory can be expected to explain it adequately (Crane, p.2). However, Crane makes her own models to discuss the cultural globalization in depth based on cultural imperialism theory as a part of a Marxist critique of advanced capitalist cultures, including their emphasis on consumerism and mass communications (Crane, p.2). Because of the complexity of culture in this era of globalization, there are many theories formulated by some theorists to explain it. The writer of this study chose cultural globalization theory formulated by Diana Crane to analyze cultural phenomenon and its problem toward capitalism and consumerism, which in this context is debus, in order to get in depth analysis.

Crane divided the models into four, they are: From Cultural Imperialism to Global Capitalism and Media Imperialism, Cultural Globalization as Network Flows, Cultural Globalization and Reception Theory, and National, Organizational, and Urban Strategies toward Cultural Globalization. However, the writer did not explore those four models of cultural globalization, because some may be not appropriate models to be applied to this phenomenon. However, the writer tried to figure out the last model which is the strategies to protect local culture toward cultural globalization that seems to occur in debus. The strategies

are: reframing culture, negotiated modification, and glocalization to gain in depth analysis based on this cultural globalization models also to strengthen the argument.

The last approach of cultural globalization, cultural policy strategies focuses on the strategies used by nations, global cities, and cultural organizations to cope with, counter, or promote cultural globalization (Crane, p.4). From this approach, the strategies that countries or cultural organizations use to preserve, protect and enhance the cultural resources include: preserving and protecting national and local cultures, for example government support is a form of patronage in which performing artists are commissioned to perform because of their contribution to the maintenance of national identity (Crane, p.13). The government's way to protect local culture is the main aim of this approach.

The other is globalizing national or local cultures which take several forms, they are: transforming cultural sites within a particular country in order to project new images of the country's culture to the outside world, and creating or re-creating national cultural items for global export (Crane, p.16). The transformation of local culture is reframing, while creating or re-creating cultural items include negotiated modification (co-productions) is carefully selected national cultural products are globalized by editing or revising them to suit the tastes of consumers (Crane, p.16). The transformation of old culture is something important in order to be produced to global market.

Global localization or glocalization is the next approach. Glocalization is global culture which blends with local culture, or in simple way it is global culture

that is adapted but with local sense (ibid.). In this situation, cultural forms being marketed outside the country assimilate aspects of the local cultures in the receiving country in a process that challenges the binary opposition between global and local (ibid.). Glocalization is the last approach to promote culture; it may adopt global culture but does not leave the values of local culture.

## **2.2. Review of Related Studies**

The writer of this study found two studies that discussed about reality show on television. The first study is taken from Canadian Journal of Communication. The study entitled *The Paradox of National Identity: Region, Nation, and Canadian Idol* by Boulou Ebanda de B'beri and Ruth Middlebrook (2009). This study mainly discussed about the reality television show Canadian Idol on the 2006 and manufacturing of Canadian identity. Like all other Idol show, for de B'beri and Middlebrook, Canadian Idol articulates an essentially urban youth identity manufactured to represent all Canadians, locally and globally (B'beri and Middlebrook 2009, p.27). In other words, what both writers tried to figure out is the representation of Canadian culture within global phenomenon which is famous all around the world, that is Idol but in a sense of Canadian culture. Thus the problem of "glocalization" occurred because it is global culture with a sense of local culture. Both of this study and the writer's study talked about *The Paradox of National Identity: Region, Nation, and Canadian Idol* and *The Superiority of Commodified Culture Represented by Limbad's Debus toward Grounded Culture* represented by Debus discuss about reality television show.

Nevertheless, the significance similarity is that there is glocalization process of the reality television that is adapted locally. Study of B'beri and Middlebrook discussed reality show of "American Idol" that is adapted into Canadian and become "Canadian Idol" and it causes the risen issue of culture in this era of globalization in the study while the writer's study discussed the reality show of "Phenomenon" that is adapted into Indonesian and become "The Master", in which from this show, Limbad's debus as commodified culture is born and it causes the risen issue of culture in this era of globalization.

However, there is also dissimilarity between those two studies. The study of Canadian Idol by B'beri and Middlebrook only discussed about cultural identity of Canadian within global phenomenon while the writer's study discussed how traditional culture such debus can turn into commodity and becomes commodified culture in this globalization era.

The second study was still taken from Canadian Journal of Communication. The study is entitled That's Me: Nationalism and Identity on Balkan Reality TV by Zala Volcic and Mark Andrejevic (2009). This study focuses on war-torn region, the Balkans, and in particular the former Yugoslav republics, whose conflicts have become raw material for another successful reality format (Volcic and Andrejevic 2009, p.8). That's Me (To Sam Ja) is a reality show similar to Big Brother reality show that has become success in Eastern Europe started in 2004 and ended in 2004. That's Me showed six nations of the former Yugoslavia to live together in a camera-equipped house promoted by producers as a model of post-conflict harmony (Volcic and Andrejevic 2009, p.9).

Proposed by the first pan-Balkan reality show producer, Zoran Ristoski, *That's Me* took shape against the background of the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s, when Yugoslavia fractured violently into the constituent republics that have since resumed an uncomfortable, contentious, and violence-prone co-existence as separate nation states (Volcic and Andrejevic, 2009 p.9). As quoted in Volcic and Andrejevic, Zoran Ristoski stated that the show's goal was to use commercial entertainment as a means for promoting communication and understanding among young people in the region (Ristoski quoted in Volcic and Andrejevic, 2009 p.9). This study used *That's Me* as a means of exploring the role played by Yugonostalgia in negotiating current and past political tensions in the region through interviews with producers and cast members of the show, as well as a consideration of the show's public reception in the popular press and online in the former republics of Yugoslavia (Volcic and Andrejevic 2009, p.9).

The similarity then between the writer study and this study is that both of the writers discussed the television show. Volcic and Andrejevic discussed about how *That's Me* reality show that can be accepted by public through popular press and online of Yugoslavia, also they analyze political tensions through interviews with producers and cast members of the show. Thus, their study is mainly about public reception and the process of cultural production. While in this study, the writer took one reality television show that causes the birth of commodified culture and how commodified culture is more popular than grounded culture.

In relation with the cultural globalization as what the writer explored, there are many articles discuss about cultural globalization phenomena. However, the

writer took one article only that discusses culture in relation with globalization that is considered as the suitable one. The study is an article from International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society. The study is entitled Globalization, Culture, and Identities in Crisis by Robert J. Lieber and Ruth E. Weisberg (2002). This article mainly discusses about culture as an arena of contestation and culture as a problem of identity in an era of globalization.

Culture as an arena of contestation in which based on its position become bound up with the most fundamental questions of human identity in its many dimensions: personal, ethnic, religious, social, and national (Lieber and Weisberg 2002, p.275). More deeply, Lieber and Weisberg discussed about culture as an arena of contestation encompass popular culture, folk or indigenous culture, and high culture. Popular culture for them, influenced from America, starts from fashion, music, food, movies, and etc. Folk or indigenous culture is the arena of cultural production is the effect of globalization, and as a result, it causes the damaging of that indigenous culture itself. "Folk art, rather than demonstrating purity, provides an excellent case study of the dynamics of assimilation and differentiation as it is usually a mixture of local production and aesthetics with outside influences (Lieber and Weisberg 2002, p.282). Meanwhile, high culture is an arena that is not often discussed in this context, because it only focuses on its connection to the governing elites in any country.

Another discussion in this article is culture as a problem of identity in an era of globalization, in which globalization affects toward basic values and beliefs. It is noted by two phenomena. The first according to Lieber and Weisberg

is because there are materials and economic effects of globalization and modernity, among these are urbanization, the appearance of modern consumer goods, and the impact of the mass media, including satellite television, movie cassettes, and the internet (Lieber and Weisberg 2002, p.285). The second is western values are more intangible but often more profound in its impact, these values include, among others, scientific reasoning, secularism, religious toleration, individualism, freedom of expression, political pluralism, the rule of law, equal rights for women and minorities, and openness to change (Lieber and Weisberg 2002, p.285).

However, there is similarity between this article and the writer's study, in which both writers talk about the issue of cultural globalization. Globalization of culture, especially popular culture mostly gets the influence from America, starting from fashion, music, food, movies, and etc. Even television programs are also influenced from America, like what the writer takes as the example, "Phenomenon", American reality show is adapted to Indonesian, and it becomes "The Master". From the show of "The Master", commodified culture of debus can be seen clearly. It is no longer the same from its original. It is one example of cultural globalization phenomenon and it becomes the interesting issue in this study; how culture is commodified based on capitalist industry and its connection with the negotiation of cultural globalization. However, the study entitled *Globalization, Culture, and Identities in Crisis* by Robert J. Lieber and Ruth E. Weisberg, only discussed cultural identity issue in this era of cultural globalization.