

## Cultural Commodification in Indian and Turkish Films on ANTV

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### Abstract

Competition in the television industry allows a company to take long steps forward in a society saturated with the current situation. Various studies show that ANTV's strategy to buy many programs in Indian drama series in Indonesia has been exceeded; the India program screening strategy at ANTV itself is a form of adaptation of ANTV's strategy in dealing with the convergence and growth of the industry, especially the internet. This study uses qualitative methods with media political-economic theory specific to commodifying content. The primary data was obtained through observation, and secondary data were obtained through interviews. As a result, the commodification of the content carried out by ANTV TV stations was by displaying Indian program content that was very much in percentage so that it indoctrinated the audience to overindulge India & Türkiye culture from films, actresses, arts and culture finally eroded local culture due to the many hours of India & Türkiye import program broadcast on ANTV.

### Keywords

keyword Commodification; Content; Program; India dan Turkey; ANTV

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Competition for television as a mass media to obtain impressions from viewers must pay attention to content, program uniqueness and audience segmentation. Wright (D & P, 2006) states that the mass media has several functions, such as surveillance, correlation, socialization, and entertainment. Developments have not followed the development of local TV quantity in Indonesia regarding quality. Quite a few local television stations nowadays still need to catch up to expectations. Even though the growth of local television continues to increase from time to time (History, 2021), the enthusiasm for building local broadcasting is different from the power to survive. Along the way, several local television stations could not compete and maintain their existence due to the heavy competition in the broadcasting industry. Broadcast television nationally is the most formidable challenge for local TV to attract regional viewers and obtain advertising (Syafri & Pannindriya, 2019).



Normatively, these four functions should be carried out simultaneously by the mass media in a balanced portion. Each media emphasizes the characteristics of each in order to become the main goal for the community. Each media emphasizes the characteristics of becoming the community's primary goal. One of the media that has a striking strategy is ANTV. After many programs, they got protests from KPI (Pesbukers, Jejak Paranormal). ANTV chose to use India & Türkiye programs as the mainstay of entertainment programs since 2014, beginning with the 'Mahabharata' and 'Ellif' series (Amarasthi, 2018).

The Mahabharata series was the starting point for ANTV's success in reaching audiences, which also helped popularize Shaheer Sheikh in Indonesia—followed by the airing of other Indian serials on the clock family, such as Mahadewa, The Adventure of Hatim, and Jodha Akbar. ANTV became the number-one television station and was successful in becoming a trendsetter in broadcasting Indian series. ANTV's position is getting stronger as time passes, presenting the Uttaran series and various titles such as Thapki, Anandhi, Gopi, and others. (kompasiana.com) (Rubiyanto, 2018).

This strategy proved successful in attracting public attention, especially among homemakers. Because homemakers are a significant segment due to being more at home and making contact with television (Rahmani & Suryani, 2021), ANTV achieved high ratings at various times when playing Indian entertainment programs. However, it received a reprimand from KPI because certain cultures dominated television programs, as many as 40% of it should be a maximum of 30%, contrary to the purpose of broadcasting, namely to promote national culture (Muvila, April 19 2015). In 2016, ANTV had an India content of 35% (Kontan, December 7 2016), still 5% higher than the maximum limit allowed by KPI. Some other stations try to imitate it. From March to May 2014, there was only one Indian show on national TV, Mahabharata, with a rating of 4.2. In June 2014, ANTV added the Mahadewa series and the ratings from both series totalled 8.5. A month later, MNC TV also aired the Naagin series. Even so, the rating obtained is only 1.4, while after adding two new series, the rating shot up to 13.8. In August 2014, Trans7 participated in the Aladdin series, and even then, it only reached 0.8, the same as Naagin that month, while ANTV achieved a 12.8 rating. Indosiar only participated in December 2014 with the Quubol Hai series, which won a rating of 1.1, far below ANTV with several series that reached 29.9 (Merdeka.com, 2014).

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**Tabel 1 Rating India Series March 2016-June 2020**

Month	ANTV	MNCTV	Trans7	Indosiar	Total
Mar-14	4,2	-	-	-	4,2
Apr-14	4,2	-	-	-	4,2
Mei-14	4,2	-	-	-	4,2
Jun-14	8,5	-	-	-	8,5
Jul-14	13,8	1,4	-	-	15,2
Agu-14	12,8	0,8	0,8	-	14,4
Sep-14	17,7	1	1	-	19,7
Okt-14	23,8	0,4	0,9	-	25,1
Nov-14	28,3	3,5	0,5	-	32,3
Des-14	29,9	2,9	1,1	1,1	35,0
Jan-15	27,8	3,0	1,0	2,0	33,8
Feb-15	22,3	0,9	0,8	1,3	25,3
Mar-15	23,6	0,9	0,6	1,2	26,3
Apr-15	18,2	1,4	0,4	1,9	21,9
Mei-15	21,5	2,7	0,7	0,8	25,7
Jun-15	18,8	1,2		0,7	20,7

Source: Melisa, 2015

In 2016, ANTV returned to success by lifting *Veera* as a drama series during the day to switch to the female and children's segments. This series is based on the characteristics of the audience, who are housewives because it tells about the lives of children. As a result, the audience is directly polarized in this series in only the first two episodes. From the female segment, everyone, homemakers, upper class, and children, ANTV audiences are always bigger during the *Veera* show. The housewife segment reaches 6.0, far from the highest competitor, MNCTV, which is only 2.4 (Wow et al. 19, 2016).

Screening Indian programs on ANTV is a form of adaptation of ANTV's strategy in dealing with the convergence and growth of industries, especially the internet (Küng, 2008). The success of the India program phenomenon in ANTV is reminiscent of the success of Apple, which, although not a new player, became successful again in competition with the internet through answers to the problem of downloading music for free on the internet (Küng, 2008). One explanation offered by socio-cultural theory is that India has cultural proxies closer to Indonesian culture than Turkish, Western, or Korean cultures (Lau & Atkin, 2011). This is also why the *Boi Boy* and *Upin Ipin* series succeed in Indonesia. Based on the explanation in the background, the problem formulation is How to Commodify Content on Indian programs on ANTV TV Stations.

Moreover, besides the India Program, ANTV is also a home for the *Turkiye Program*. There are

many reasons Turkish dramas are popular in Indonesia, one of which is the charming visuals of the actors. How could it not be that actors and actresses from Turkey seem to have faces that combine European, Asian and Middle Eastern faces? Apart from that, Turkey also has several traditions that are similar to Indonesia. Maybe one of the reasons is that Indonesia and Turkey also have Muslim majority populations, so the element of closeness in Turkish dramas can be a unique attraction for Indonesian people (Septiyani, 2019). Foreign shows at prime time, namely ANTV with its Indian dramas, Global TV with its Big Movies and MNC TV with its Filipino dramas. Apart from that, Trans TV, which has fewer foreign broadcasts compared to the three stations, actually also provides ample space for foreign broadcasts, especially the US, through the Trans TV Cinema, which is screened during prime time until early in the morning (Rahmani & Suryani, 2021).

Even though they have hundreds to thousands of episodes, Turkish dramas are still not dull to watch. It always creates curiosity about the continuation of the episode. There are many conflicts which can make the audience excited. Apart from that, many Turkish dramas have storylines that are difficult to predict. Because of their various attractions, it is not surprising that Indonesian television stations broadcast Turkish dramas from various genres. (Caropeboka et al., 2022; Wahyudi, 1994).

Commodification refers to changing the use-value into an exchange rate and changing the product whose value is determined by its ability to meet individual and social needs into a product whose value is determined by its market price (Mosco, 2009). Commodification is usually interpreted as an activity in managing media, treating messages as commodities that can please the audience, invite advertisers, and extend the media business (Halim, 2013).

In the Political Economy Theory expressed by Vincent Mosco, there are three things related to political economy: commodification, spatialization and structuration. Commodification is divided into three, namely content commodification, audience commodification, and worker commodification. Content commodification is a change in the value of a piece of media content suitable for sale on the market and capable of making a profit. Audience commodification is a change in the use value of audiences or content consumers in the media, which becomes the exchange value for economic benefits for the media. Apart from that, the commodification of workers occurs when there is a change in the value of the worker; for example, a worker is forced to sell and use all his abilities to get wages. This ability has become a commodity to generate company profits (Evanalia et al., 2023).

One of the keys to the Marxian analysis is deconstructing commodities to determine the meaning of appearance and to open social relations that have already been bonded in the form of commodities so that they can reveal the production system. First, communication and technology contribute to the general process of commodification in the overall economy (Ulya, 2019). For example, the development of communication channels in the clothing business, primarily through the advancement of

telecommunications information technology, has expanded information on production, distribution, and sales. This improves inventory monitoring to save storage space and increase store capabilities to store only clothes that consumers demand. Second, the commodification process that applies in society as a whole penetrates the process of communication and institutions so that improvements and contradictions in social commodification influence communication as a social practice.

When political-economic scientists think about the form of commodities in communication, they start with the media's content. In particular, in this view, the commodification process in communication includes the delivery of messages, from data to the system of meaningful thinking to products that can be marketed (Mosco, 2009). Every step towards television digitalization has perfected the commodification of content. The success in obtaining an event's rating will be copied and modified by other media. The expansion of the realization of surplus value depends on many factors in the labour market, consumer markets, and capital markets. Capital aims to control the consumer market through various tactics to reach product providers, both naturally and that must be taken for granted. These include building a market monopoly or controlling oligopoly arrangements, using advertising to create company brand identification, and diversifying product lines to achieve flexibility in overcoming changes in market demand.

Mosco believes creating exchange value in communication content will attract complex social relations in a commodified orbit, including workers, consumers, and capital. The general tendency in communication research has concentrated on the content as a commodity and, more broadly, identifying the relationship between the status of the commodity and its content and meaning. As a result, communication has become a unique and consequential commodity because, in addition to its ability to create surplus value (like other commodities), communication also contains symbols and images whose meaning is constructive in forming awareness (Mosco, 2009).

Although the previous is a general view or conclusion of political economy scientists (Ngo & Hung, 2018), several other political economy scientists, especially Garnham and Smythe, suggest formulating alternatives. They pay attention to the tendency to emphasize the dimensions of meaning and ideological dimensions in media production. Mass media play an essential role - indirectly, through advertising in the media - in commodifying the economy as a whole. This is not to argue that ideology is unimportant (Rosita Dewi, 2020).

Mosco believes that in the communication industry (Kitapci et al., 2014), the political economy still devotes little attention to the commodification of workers because most of the attention is only devoted to the content of the media and the media audience. Communication has become a particular and powerful commodity because, in addition to its ability to create surplus value (like other commodities), communication also contains symbols and images whose meaning is constructive in

forming awareness.

## 2. METHODS

This research uses a critical paradigm with a qualitative descriptive approach. Research methods are the way individuals use specific methods to prove a theory (Poespowardojo et al., 2016). In this research, the method used is a case study. The focus of a case study is the specifics of the case, whether it includes an individual, cultural group, or portrait of life (Creswell, 2016). Data was collected from the results of document analysis, observation and interviews. Data processing activities consist of data analysis and data interpretation. Researchers interpret the findings found. This interpretation examines the case context, relevant theories, and critical points of view. In the case of research, data analysis uses several stages, namely, examination, categorization, tabulation, and testing. Checking: Initial data is checked to ensure accuracy and completeness. Categorization: Data is then categorized based on certain themes or dimensions relevant to the research. Tabulation: After the data is categorized, the researcher creates a table or summary to present the main findings. Testing: The findings are compared with theory, related literature, and case context to ensure truth and validity.

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The collaboration between India and Indonesia has been established since time immemorial, for almost two thousand years. In 1950, Indonesia's first President - Soekarno, called on the people of Indonesia and India to "improve the good relations" that had existed between the two countries "for more than 1,000 years" before being temporarily "cut off" by European colonial rule. In the spring of 1966, foreign ministers from both countries began speaking again from the era of friendly relations. India had an embassy in Jakarta, and Indonesia had one in New Delhi. (Foreign Policy of India: Text of Documents, 1947)

Only a few people know that India also influenced the name of Indonesia. According to Tomascik (1996), the Indonesian name comes from the Latin *Indus*, which means "India," and Greek *nesos*, which means "island." (due to cultural similarities in these two regions). This name began to be known in the 18th century, far ahead of forming an independent Indonesia. According to the official (Inde, 2023), India regards Indonesia as the most important member of ASEAN.

Both countries have agreed to form a strategic partnership. From the above explanation, it has been proven that the relationship between India and Indonesia has been explored for a long time; acculturation of Indian culture in Indonesia and vice versa can also be seen from various sectors such as art, culture, food, fashion, sports, education and others. From the arts sector, music and film are the most significant; why is that? Because Dangdut music is a unifying music society from various circles and strata in Indonesia, Dangdut gets a significant influence from the entry of Indian music in

Indonesia.

Bollywood films entered Indonesia shortly after the beginning of electronic media, such as television, aired in Indonesia with the initial aim of promoting Indian culture in Indonesia. Furthermore, the Indian Cultural Centre Jawaharlal Nehru was founded in Jakarta in 1989, providing library services and lessons on Indian culture and promoting sports arts such as Yoga. Regarding fashion, India and Indonesia also have some similarities, such as lungi fabrics that resemble Indonesian sarongs commonly worn by men (Christian, 2021).

According to Gazi (Eka et al., 2023), Turkey is a bridge between Asia and Europe in terms of geographical location and cultural, social and political aspects. Turkey's strategic and unique position in the country's territory spread across Anatolia (Asia) and Thrace (Europe). So many great civilizations have arisen throughout history, and these civilizations have been home to cultural and ethnic richness and diversity. This ethnic and cultural diversity can build emotional attachment and establish cooperation between Indonesia and Türkiye. This is based on the historical experience and culture between Ottoman Turks and Nusantara (Indonesia's old name at that time) (Reid, 1969, pp. 395-414; Gallop, 2004: 176; Goksoy, 2011: 65-92; Burhanuddin, 2016: 373-388). Diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Türkiye are generally crucial because both are Muslim-majority countries with democratic principles (Muhammad Sultan Zakaria, 2017).

### **3.1 India & Turkey Film industry in Indonesia**

After looking further at the relationship between these two countries, it is more natural to show the influence of culture, religion, and many other things. One of the exciting things to see is the influence of Indian culture on the film industry in Indonesia. In addition to the dangdut music that is thick with Indian style swaying, dancing - like video clips of Indian songs and colourful clothes, films are also a medium influenced by Indian culture, which is very thick. The entry of Indian films in Indonesia began in the early 1990s when all television stations broadcast Indian shows such as freelance films, continuous films, and Indian video clips. In the 1990s, films with Indian historical nuances, such as Ramayana and Mahabharata, became a mandatory spectacle for the Indonesian people.

Not only grounded art and entertainment but the above shows are also considered close to the culture of Hinduism on the island of Java. Indian and Indonesian cultures seem to be very close and similar. Some Indian films currently airing in Indonesia are spread across almost all Indonesian television stations. Along with the entry of Indian shows in Indonesia, impressions from Japanese countries also colour the program of impressions in Indonesia. The legendary film Oshin also became the idol of the audience at that time. In early 2005, films from abroad, such as Mexico and Italy, entered the realm of television in Indonesia. Films like Marimar and Maria's Lost Love dominated the spectacle

and raised the ratings of the TV stations that beat it.

Besides India, Turkey also plays a role in the ANTV program; the Turkey series also takes part in primary hours. Even though they have hundreds to thousands of episodes, Turkish dramas are still not dull to watch. It always creates curiosity about the continuation of the episode. There are many conflicts which can make the audience excited. Apart from that, many Turkish dramas have storylines that are difficult to predict. Because of their various attractions, it is not surprising that Indonesian television stations broadcast Turkish dramas from various genres.

The main reason Turkish dramas are in great demand is the storyline that is not boring. Often, some shows are rarely of interest to audiences in Indonesia because they cannot provide a storyline that is not boring. The storyline of Turkish dramas is very unpredictable, as is the example of the Turkish drama entitled *The Glorious Century*, where there is a scene that the audience likes with the storyline created. Many viewers in Indonesia like drama film actor *Türkiye* because he has a unique face, for example, Burak Ozcivit. This man, who is now 35 years old, is very famous in the drama *Kara Sevda* because he has an attractive face and excellent acting, which makes the audience like the character he plays. The majority of Turkish people are Muslim, so it is not surprising that many Turkish series have Islamic religious characters. Turkish series often show series about work, and there are several scenes where people say greetings, as is often done by Indonesian people who are predominantly Muslim (Muhammad Sultan Zakaria, 2017).

Turkish Drama TV series often involve technical matters such as cinematography of Turkey's natural beauty so that it has an awe-inspiring effect on the audience. Not only does it have an entertainment impact, but watching Turkish dramas also impacts human psychological problems. Watching can solve problems like anxiety disorders and panic attacks, but you have to pay attention to what Turkish dramas you watch; choose Turkish dramas that contain elements of romance and comedy so that they can entertain the audience.

#### **4.2 Content Commodification of ANTV**

ANTV's action to take India and Turkey programs in its broadcasts is a form of ongoing restructuring and replacing old products and businesses. Previously, ANTV was more oriented towards local products such as *Pesbukers* and *Paranormal Traces*—less educating impressions. The same thing happened with *Paranormal Traces*. Therefore, ANTV took the step of replacing it with reformatting *Pesbukers*. Meanwhile, *Paranormal Traces* were erased. According to Mr Yohanes Eko Ardiyanto, who became this paper's key source, ANTV has changed corporate identity and segmentation several times following the statement. Yohanes Eko Ardiyanto, a former Senior Manager of News and Current Affairs Antv (2013-2016): *"When Antv was first established on January 1, 1993, in Lampung, Antv was targeting a*

young audience (13-25 years) and had broadcast MTV programs until the early 2000s. However, in 2002, this station developed into a station for all ages, like other television stations. (Yohanes Eko Ardiyanto (May 22, 2017)).

According to the statement above, the market change from teenage audiences and ultimately to women (more specifically) to women's gender was also caused by women's market share being very large. The dominance of entertainment programs in television shows is likely one of the strategies many television stations adopt to generate maximum profit for accumulating media owners' capital. Television entertainment programs are packaged in capitalistic logic as a commodity with a sale value. (Lase, 2014). Content from ANTV can be shown in the message displayed in the form of content; it also shows the whole program display and represents ANTV in public opinion.

In this case, the ANTV surplus value realization expansion depends on many factors in the labour market, consumer markets, and capital markets. Content must also follow the results of TV research. As AC Nielsen, KPI Research (Indonesian Broadcasting Commission) Monitoring Content, ANTV has conducted evaluations and research to determine the right market for ANTV. INV also continues to gather capital to control the consumer market through various tactics aimed at achieving product providers; for that, ANTV transformed from television to children segmented into sports segmentation and finally currently survives and even dominates the woman/woman market.

Programming Department Dept. ANTV conducted an evaluation and research on television maps in Indonesia with a total market share of female and kid audiences (56-58 per cent) and decided to return to ANTV's position to target female and kid audiences. Finally, Programming through the Dept. *"Acquisition ANTV decides to shop for film programs in India and Turkey on the consideration that the two countries have cultural, traditional and religious closeness with the Indonesian people (Interview with Yohanes Eko Ardiyanto (May 22, 2017))."*

These include building a market monopoly or controlling oligopoly arrangements, using advertising to create company brand identification, and diversifying product lines to achieve flexibility in overcoming changes in market demand. Mosco (2009) believes that creating exchange value in communication content will attract complex social relations in a commodified orbit, including workers, consumers, and capital. The general tendency in communication research has concentrated on the content as a commodity and, more broadly, identifying the relationship between the status of the commodity and its content and meaning. As a result, communication has become a unique and consequential commodity because, in addition to its ability to create surplus value (like other commodities), communication also contains symbols and images whose meaning is constructive in forming awareness (Effendi, 2019; Li et al., 2020).

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other political-economic scientists, especially Garnham and Smythe, suggest formulating alternatives. They pay attention to the tendency to emphasize the dimensions of meaning and ideological dimensions in media production (Yuliani, 2018). Mass media plays an important role - indirectly, through advertising in the media - in modifying the economy as a whole. This is not to argue that ideology is not essential. Mosco believes that in the communication industry, the political economy still devotes little attention to the commodification of workers because most of the attention is only devoted to the content of the media and the media audience(Zulfikar, 2015). Communication has become a particular commodity and has power because of its ability to create value.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Amid media convergence and the growth of the internet industry, ANTV has adopted an adaptation strategy by purchasing and broadcasting soap opera programs from India and Turkey. This shows ANTV's efforts to remain relevant and competitive in the ever-changing television industry. ANTV has commodified content, according to the use of political-economic media theory in this research. This shows that programs in India and Turkey are being used to attract audiences and generate profits while indicating changes in content selection to meet market needs. Studies show that the high percentage of Indian and Turkish programs on ANTV can indoctrinate viewers. This means that audiences may be more indulgent in Indian and Turkish culture, which can indirectly reduce appreciation of local Indonesian culture. There are concerns that the dominance of foreign content could reduce space for local arts and culture. This can cause Indonesians to lack knowledge and respect for local culture and values.

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