



Bias of Aesthetic Symbolic Space in Caci Clothing Puteri Indonesia East Nusa Tenggara in 2022

Yermia Djefri Manafe, Felisianus Efrem Jelahut

Department Of Communication Studies, Faculty of Social and Political Science, University of Nusa Cendana

INFORMASI ARTIKEL

Diterima: September 25, 2022
Direvisi: Oktober 25, 2022
Tersedia: online: Desember 15, 2022

KATA KUNCI

Dekonstruksi Mitos; Manggarai; Puteri Indonesia; Ruang Simbolik; Semiotika; Tarian Caci

KORESPONDENSI

E-mail:

felisianus.efrem.jelahut@staf.undana.ac.id

A B S T R A K

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan bias ruang simbolik estetis pada busana Caci Puteri Indonesia Nusa Tenggara Timur tahun 2022. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan menggunakan pendekatan paradigma kritis yang melihat realitas secara kritis sebagai objek penelitian. Jenis penelitian ini menggunakan Analisis semiotika Roland Barthes untuk menemukan ruang bias dan makna simbolik estetis dalam desain busana Caci Puteri Indonesia Nusa Tenggara Timur 2022. Subjek penelitian ini adalah desain busana Puteri Indonesia dalam desain busana Caci, dan objek penelitian adalah Makna simbolik dalam desain busana Puteri Indonesia Caci, Nusa Tenggara Timur tahun 2022. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa bias ruang simbolik estetis menurut hasil Analisis semiotika Barthes terhadap busana caci Puteri Indonesia Nusa Tenggara Timur Tahun 2022 menghasilkan apa yang disebut dekonstruksi mitos. Dekonstruksi mitos yang dimaksud adalah bahwa busana Caci Puteri Indonesia Nusa Tenggara Timur 2022 secara simbolis telah mendekonstruksi makna dari caci yang sebenarnya, sebagaimana telah dimaknai oleh masyarakat Manggarai Nusa Tenggara Timur.

INTRODUCTION

Fashion semiotics is the study of clothing design works in the form of signs and meanings to show the social and cultural position of an individual. One can interpret signs and construct meaning when paying attention to fashion works. Fashion is a nonverbal language that is a sign to give meaning to a user and a group of users. Fashion guides symbolically and communicatively to explain an individual's uniqueness about identity, profession, social status, gender or social affinity.

The fashion system is a way of transmitting the message of wisdom through clothing. The fashion system is produced by social necessity and ideals. Adicita in clothing is

often used by public figures and other domain classes. Public figures in Indonesia, their clothes become a symbol of power, wealth, elegance, and status. The fashion system is always changing according to changes in society and desires that are escalated through social desires, as well as styles and tendencies in dress. For example, pants worn by men as a masculine identity, but have been accepted as clothing for both men and women. Individuals in society always adapt as well as the rules of clothing and the choice of one's clothing style. That is, clothing is a sign system whose meanings and meanings often change and change with respect to time, place, space, and culture.

It is true that to introduce a new identity, to succeed, it is necessary to focus on image, style, and clothing (Ibrahim & Komunikasi, 2007). Clothing can reveal the user's identity because at its core, clothing is a sign and communication. Icons in personality reading play an important role in trendy society where there is a mechanism for self-change via clothes and faces in trendy culture, which can achieve glory as an icon.

Clothing as communication has a function to determine the place of use of clothing as an effort to maintain roles, rules, rituals, and cultural responsibilities. Clothing is a symbol that is closely related to identity. The clothes used show who the wearer is. Clothing also acts as a cultural decoration that communicates certain cultural connections, meaning that when worn, clothes can show national and cultural identity. Desmond Moris (Ibrahim & Komunikasi, 2007) said that clothing is a cultural display that communicates the cultural origins of the wearer. Therefore, the use of clothing as a cultural display must understand the philosophy behind the clothes used.

Referring to clothing as a cultural display must be based on the cultural philosophy in which the clothing is produced, so that there is no bias that causes polemics in the cultural community of the clothing owner. This polemic occurred in the Caci fashion design worn by Puteri Indonesia from East Nusa Tenggara at the 2022 Puteri Indonesia Election. The fashion stylist for Puteri Indonesia, East Nusa Tenggara, at the event created creations without thinking about the original and legitimate aesthetic values of the ethnic roots of the Manggarai ethnic group in Flores, East Nusa Tenggara.

The Caci dress worn by the Indonesian Princess from East Nusa Tenggara really needs to be appreciated as an artistic creation. The fashion design is the result of imagination that can attract the attention of those who see it. There's nothing wrong with Caci's fashion design from a creative point of view. However, the problem is who uses it. If the person wearing Caci's clothing is a man, then it is philosophically acceptable because it fulfills original and legitimate aesthetic values. Why? Because Caci is a performing art played by men. Aesthetically Caci can only be done by men with special demands. The special conditions that must be

met in the Caci show are that adult men have hitting skills and agility to fend off the opponent's blow (Jelahun et al., 2021)

Men in Caci shows are required to use clothing and accessories that are in accordance with aesthetics, namely using a head covering (*panggal*), using back body armor (*ndeki*), using an adult male symbol (*nggorong*), using *asarong* and white trousers to cover the body. the body from the waist down, the performer of the Caci show does not wear clothes. Thus, Caci is intended and played by adult men, performed to honor women, Caci is an area of purification for men and sacred. Based on the provisions that refer to the original and legitimate aesthetic values of the ethnic roots of the Manggarai ethnic group in Flores, East Nusa Tenggara, the Caci dress used by Puteri Indonesia East Nusa Tenggara in 2022 is philosophically wrong.

Based on the description of the background above, the problem to be studied is how the bias of the aesthetic symbolic space in the Caci Puteri Indonesia dress of East Nusa Tenggara in 2022. The purpose of this study is to find the bias of the aesthetic symbolic space in the Caci Puteri Indonesian dress of East Nusa Tenggara in 2022.

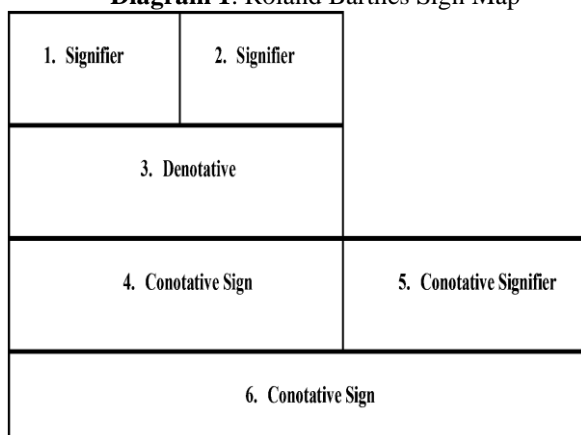
LITERATURE AND METHODOLOGY

This study uses a critical paradigm approach that sees reality critically as the object of research. The critical paradigm believes that the media is a means of influential groups in controlling the media to control sub-Puterive groups (Eriyanto, 2001). This critical approach becomes the basis for researchers to interpret and bhyexplore the image to reveal the meaning in it. This type of research uses Roland Barthes' semiotics to find the bias of aesthetic symbolic space and meaning in Caci's fashion design. The subject of this research is Puteri Indonesia in Caci's fashion design, and the object of research is the communication of clothing in Caci Puteri Indonesia's fashion design, East Nusa Tenggara in 2022.

The researcher uses documentation as a data collection technique in the form of writing and pictures about Indonesian Caci Puteri clothes. Here, the researcher looks for data and references about the bias of aesthetic symbolic space in Caci Puteri Indonesia's clothing, East Nusa Tenggara in 2022. The data were analyzed

using Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis. The steps of data analysis in this research are as follows: mapping markers and signifiers, looking for denotative signs from the map of markers and markers, mapping connotative markers and connotative markers, looking for connotative signs from maps of markers and markers, and interpreting the meaning of the researcher's analysis (Iskandar & Lestari, 2015), then The researcher examines holistically the biases of aesthetic symbolic space and meaning in the design of Caci Puteri Indonesia, East Nusa Tenggara in 2022.

Diagram 1. Roland Barthes Sign Map



Source: (Sobur, 2006)

Roland Barthes' map of signs shows that connotative signs do not only have additional meanings, but also contain the underlying denotative signs. A denotative sign consists of a signifier and a signified and at the same time a denotative sign is a connotative sign that is substantive in nature

Literature

The concept of deconstruction cannot be separated from the name of the postmodernist figure Jacques Derrida, although at first this term was used by Heidegger to describe the return of the concept of thought in philosophy. Derrida used the term deconstruction in a seminar at the John Hopkins University in the United States in 1966 through a paper entitled *Structure, Sign and Play in the Human Science* (Cahya et al., 2022). According to Derrida, deconstructing means taking, "changing" (undo), in order to find and show the assumptions behind a text (McCance, 2012)

Furthermore, it is written: deconstructing involves removing hierarchical binary opposition concepts, such as male/female, black/white, appearance/reality, nature/culture, reason/madness, and so on, which further strengthens the status and power of various truth claims by how to get rid of and reduce the value of the "lower" part of the binary pair (Gnanasekaran, 2015). In simpler language, deconstruction (in French, *déconstruire*) means disassembling the machine, but disassembling it to be reassembled (Cahya et al., 2022). Therefore, deconstruction means positive because it dismantles and overturns the meaning of the text but not with the aim of dismantling it, but building a new text or discourse with a new meaning that is different from the deconstructed one (Cahya et al., 2022).

The author will not describe in more detail the issue of deconstruction as a method, because what I want to emphasize in this section is the meaning of the term "deconstruction" alone. Most importantly, the author can get a definite definition of the meaning of the term "deconstruction". That the most important keyword of the explanation above is "change". In more detail, change to build a new discourse. This is the essence of deconstruction.

Regarding the term "myth", according to Barker, in common parlance myth is a story or fairy tale that acts as a symbolic guide or meaning and significance in the universe (Turner, 2016). Of course, the author will not refer to this limitation, but rather focuses on the limitations of myth in the concept of cultural studies, namely the naturalization of connotative meaning, something that is more or less similar to the term ideology. such that it becomes hegemonic, meaning that it is accepted as 'normal' and 'natural'," explained Barker.

According to the author, the explanation refers to the post-structuralist semiotic method of Roland Barthes, which places myth as the third meaning after denotative and connotative. With the concept of cultural studies, then myth can be interpreted as a connotative meaning that is accepted normally and naturally so that it is hegemonic. Thus, myth deconstruction is changing to build a connotative meaning that is accepted normally and naturally so that it is hegemonic. In simpler language, myth

deconstruction is constructing hegemonic meaning.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Manggarai ethnic group is an ethnic group located in the western region of the island of Flores, East Nusa Tenggara Province, which consists of several sub-ethnics that have various cultures. Although it consists of several subcultures, this ethnic group is tied into one identity as a bond that unites the differences in the ritual of Caci performances. Caci is the culmination of an overflow of happiness and describes the world of inspiration for the art of the Manggaraian ethnic group. Caci has a unique worldview towards art and its art form.

This concept is in accordance with the view (Danesi, 2012), that art implies portraiture in the form of obedience and skill in a specific way of looking at the world. The art includes not only distinctive craftsmanship, but also creative imaginative and worldviews etched into enchanting scripts. Furthermore (Rahayu & Sugihartono, 2018), says imagination finds cognition and emotion that are integrated in expression. Human imagination is a phase of mondial reasoning, as well as a divine factor in the line of human life.

Caci is not just an interpretation of ideas in performing arts but is applied as a noble art form and should be lived by all beings. As stated (Jama et al., n.d.), art is actually a symbol of the expression of human feelings. Art represents the inner atmosphere that is felt and gives value to life. (Iarni Inat & Hermawan, n.d.), said that art is essentially a sensitivity to mystical and creative trends to build a more human life by producing a sense of civility to build the deepest beauty.

Every overflow of Caci's art gives a feel of peace, sincerity, and humility like a representation of values in the pattern of action of the Manggarai ethnic community in Flores. Caci is the embodiment of the worldview of the Manggarai ethnic group that emphasizes aesthetic taste and value. Caci Aesthetics is a corner for reflection on social, moral, and spiritual values. That is, Caci describes the sukma booth, a stopover room to purify oneself from various daily routine activities. Caci is a destination for purification between routine and sacred spaces.

Questioning the Caci fashion design used by Puteri Indonesia East Nusa Tenggara in the 2022 Puteri Indonesia Election, when referring to the concept of aesthetic space (Sutrisno, 2006), there are three meanings of Caci. First, Caci is a form of aesthetic space, namely a demonstration space framed by reason. Each of Caci's frames, be it music, dance, costume art, and poetry, is produced by philosophical considerations. Second, Caci's imaginative space pours out his dreams to reach the highest culmination, namely perfection entering the infinite spiritual chamber where the world of ideas reigns. Third, the epistemological space. the space where the principal truth value is found. Caci's epistemological space is imaged through ritual practices as the main truth values that are inherited to the Manggarai community. This thinking is in line with (Danesi, 2012) which says that throughout the world artistic traditions are passed from generation to generation as valuable treasures because these traditions are not controlled by time, this illustrates the purity that permeates the human condition.

Based on the design of Caci's clothing worn by Puteri Indonesia East Nusa Tenggara in the 2022 Puteri Indonesia Election, it was found that Caci's philosophy was distorted or biased by aesthetic symbolic space.

Semiotic Analysis of Indonesian Women's Caci Clothing Design East Nusa Tenggara 2022

The fashion design of Caci Puteri Indonesia, East Nusa Tenggara 2022, based on Caci's philosophy does not match Caci's real reality. Caci's fashion design has departed from the values inherited through Caci's aesthetic. It is understandable that these changes come with cultural dynamics that are influenced by the pressures of globalization and modernization. Modernization is a symptom related to the level of culture, especially aesthetics or beauty (Frans, 2019).

Modernization according to Bell (West & Turner, 2019) is associated as a cultural character that pervades all arts: gloomy, very disturbing, experimental in form and imitation. Modernization is a social reaction in the understanding of meaning and self-awareness

arising from the disorientation of space and time related to transformation, communication and transportation, a crisis of self-confidence due to erosion of beliefs and values. The presence of globalization (Ibrahim & Akhmad, 2014) is considered to disturb the formation of identity or to cause the emergence of multiple cultural identities, which when attempted to be adjusted, different values actually lead to conflict.

The modernization and globalization that surrounds the Caci Puteri Indonesia fashion design in East Nusa Tenggara 2022 for the benefit of tourism, state events, certain events, there has been a very basic change, namely the location and purpose of the Caci event. In this case, the concept of selecting Puteri Indonesia is contrary to the principle of the true Caci administration. Ideally the Caci show is performed in front of the traditional house (Natas Beo) which is closely related to the traditional ritual process and Caci stages as well as the technical implementation of Caci.

The shift in the place and purpose of Caci's performances has implications for the shaky value of rituals and Caci's aesthetic identity. The Caci Puteri Indonesia Clothing East Nusa Tenggara 2022, which was held at the 2022 Puteri Indonesia election event, caused a blur of the original meaning, and gave rise to new meanings, giving rise to a double representation and perception of Caci,



Figure 1. Clothing Puteri Indonesia NTT 2022: attractive, heroic, sexy, sensual, great, tough

The Caci Puteri Indonesia Clothing, East Nusa Tenggara 2022, shows the death of Caci's aesthetic which means the loss of Caci's authentic aesthetic aura. The creations displayed do not think about their authentic aesthetic value.

As an artistic creation, this costume design contains an aspect of imagination. The imagination power that is built is a woman who is great, tough, attractive, heroic, sexy, and sensual. Bringing up the perception of heroism in action films produced by Hollywood, such as Wonder Women and Justice League.

Clothing as a cultural phenomenon is a meaning practice that takes place in everyday life which helps shape culture as a system of meaning. The meaning of denotation and connotation plays a very important role. The meaning of denotation is direct, meaning the special meaning contained in a sign or description of a signified. Meanwhile, the connotative meaning will be associated with the culture implied in the wrapper, namely the meaning contained therein.

Women's clothing for Indonesia NTT 2022, should show the aesthetic characteristics of Caci's performing arts. First, covering the waist down as a representation of repentance and maintaining purity so that it is kept away from exploitation. The waist down must be covered. The sarong used by Caci players is supposed to cover the lower part of the body, but what has happened is the exploitation of the body of Puteri Indonesia NTT 2022. Caci's fashion design has been distorted by the aesthetic interests of lipstick, fashion and make-up (Danesi, 2012)



Figure 2. The scabbard used by the caci players covers the lower part of the body

Secondly, the shield (*milling*) is a symbol of mother earth. Caci players who understand the role of grinding and the value of its philosophy must treat it well. At the time of receiving the shield, Caci players kneel as a sign of respect to mother earth. The goal is to survive a deadly attack. In the fashion show scene, Puteri Indonesia NTT 2022 played a grinder in the

lower area. It should be in the Caci show, grinding in an equal position and on the upper



body to protect yourself.

Figure 3. Puteri Indonesia NTT 2022 *nggiling* position in the fashion show scene

Figure 4. Player Caci received the *nggiling* while kneeling



Figure 5. Equivalent *nggiling* position and on the upper body

MEANING OF CACI'S COSTUME

Costumes determine the visual aesthetic in Caci's show. Caci in this case can be recognized from the costumes worn. The hallmark of the Caci costume is the accessories used. A Caci player must wear a complete costume. Costumes are not just body armor. Caci's costume has a functional value, and a symbolic meaning. Wearing the Caci costume starting from the bottom, namely white trousers, traditional sarong (*songke* or *towe todo*), a scarf on the waist, *ndeki* (resembling a tail made of rattan and horsehair). At the top of the head wear two pieces of headband which are used to cover the face and head mat. Caci players use *panggal* (buffalo masks to protect the heads and faces of Caci players) made of buffalo skin and *tubi rapa* (special decoration on the chin of Caci players). (Erot, 2005).

Panggal as a head protector resembles a buffalo's head. Buffalo is an animal that has a use value (economic value, traditional value and ritual). Buffalo is used as a dowry in traditional Manggarai marriages. The *panggal* symbol as a mask is a combination of men and women. There is a symbol of the *linga yoni* (rounded horns resembling a uterus, and *ambung* (decoration on the *panggal* horns made of goat hair) resembling women's hair. *Ambung* which falls when Caci means loss of honor and dignity.

Destar, is a symbol of maturity. A Caci player must be mature in physical and mental preparation. The headdress used in Caci's show changed its name to *tangge* or *jonggo* which has the function of protecting the face. The face is a symbol of honor and self-respect. A Caci player who is hit in the face will lose self-respect, honor, and shame. Caci players who are hit in the face in Caci performances are called *rowa* or *beke* which means dead or dead

Tubi rapa (beads of beads/special decoration on the chin of Caci players) is a symbol of majesty, maturity, authority, and greatness. *Tubi rapa* is made of colored seeds that are dangled in the form of a chain. The beads of beads add to the beauty of the Caci player's facial appearance, especially when the Caci player moves his head. That's the reason *tubi rapa* is used by great Caci players, not by novice Caci players (*wae gula*).

Lalong ndeki, used by Caci players on the back of the waist, serves to protect the back. *Lalong ndeki* imitates the tail of an animal. *Lalong ndeki* is a symbol of masculinity. A Caci player, if the short fly is pulled out of the Caci game automatically. Usually, the Caci players who are removed fly by for reasons of disorder or cheating.

Songke (towe songke) and sarong (*towe todo*) are products of aesthetic creativity and civilization of the Manggaraian ethnic women. *Songke* has a black base color with ornaments in the form of spiders, flowers, and rhombuses. *Songke todo* has a red base color with variations of straight lines or yellow and black squares. This shows the ability to combine colors, create ornamentation based on the socio-cultural environment and the natural surroundings. The unification of color and ornamentation considers the harmonization of diversity towards equality. This signifies intelligence not only aesthetically,

but also philosophically. The process of creativity occurs from sensitivity to the social and natural environment. (I Nyoman, 2013).

The shawl and *slepe* used by Caci players are the ability to combine ornamentation. The front of the *songke* is dominated by black, the back of the *songke* is full of ornaments and color patterns. In order for the front view to look beautiful, the scarf is used vertically and horizontally around the waist. The vertical and horizontal position of the scarf is based on the reality of the naked body of the caci player. Nudity is purity and innocence; the vertical and horizontal scarf is a symbol of the relationship between the world above and the world below. This relationship must be built on the basis of purity and innocence in order to obtain a great aesthetic value. (Frans, 2019).

CONCLUSION

The result of this research is that Caci Puteri Indonesia's fashion design in East Nusa Tenggara 2022, based on Caci's philosophy, is not in accordance with Caci's real reality, because Caci's fashion design has come out of the values inherited through Caci's aesthetics. The Caci Puteri Indonesia Clothing, East Nusa Tenggara 2022, shows the death of Caci's aesthetic which means the loss of Caci's authentic aesthetic aura. Thus, the bias of aesthetic symbolic space in accordance with Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis of the Indonesian Women's Caci Clothing in East Nusa Tenggara in 2022 resulted in what is known as myth deconstruction.

The deconstruction of the myth in question is that the Caci Puteri dress for Indonesia in East Nusa Tenggara 2022 has symbolically deconstructed the symbolic meaning of the actual caci, as has been interpreted by the Manggarai people of East Nusa Tenggara.

The scientific advice that can be given by researchers is that further researchers need to further examine the relationship between other cultures in Manggarai, East Nusa Tenggara with related issues that are popular both in the media and in contemporary society.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With the completion of this research, the researchers would like to express their

gratitude to the Department of Communication Studies at UNDANA, the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences at UNDANA and the University of Nusa Cendana for providing a conducive academic environment for the success of this research.

REFERENCES

- Cahya, B. T., Andriyanto, I., Lubis, I. S., & Aqim, D. P. (2022). Deconstructive Semiotic Discourse Of Profit Sharing: Derridean Postmodern Critical Study. *Share: Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Keuangan Islam*.
- Danesi, M. (2012). *Messages, Signs And Meanings. Terjemahan Evi. S. Dan Lusi. Lp Dengan Judul Pesan, Tanda Dan Makna*. Yogyakarta: Jalasutra.
- Eriyanto (2001). *Analisis Wacana: Pengantar Analisis Teks Media*. Lkis Yogyakarta.
- Erot, A. (2005). Pencerahan Adat Istiadat Tradisional Ala Manggarai. *Departemen Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan Kecamatan Ruteng*.
- Frans, A. (2019). *Tarian Tradisional "Caci" Pada Masyarakat Flores Di Desa Bangka Kuleng Kecamatan Pocoranaka Kabupaten Manggarai Timur Propinsi Nusa Tenggara Timur*. Universitas Negeri Makassar.
- Gnanasekaran, R. (2015). An Introduction To Derrida, Deconstruction And Post-Structuralism. *International Journal Of English Literature And Culture*.
- I Nyoman, S. (2013). Ethology Intuitive Representation Of Honey Bee Craft Creation Of Works Of Art By Multy-Canal Method. *Mudra (Jurnal Seni Budaya)*, 28(2), 185–195.
- Ibrahim, I. S., & Akhmad, B. A. (2014). *Komunikasi Dan Komodifikasi: Mengkaji Media Dan Budaya Dalam Dinamika Globalisasi*. Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia.
- Ibrahim, I. S., & Komunikasi, B. P. S. (2007). *Dinamika Popscape Dan Mediascape Di Indonesia Kontemporer*. Yogyakarta: Jalasutra.
- Iskandar, D. S., & Lestari, R. (2015). Analisis Semiotika Roland Barthes Pada Jurnalisme Online. *Jurnal Interact*, 4(2), 61–87.
- Jama, K. B., Ardika, I. W., Ardhana, I. K., &

- Setiawan, I. K. (N.D.). *The Dynamic Of Caci Multifunction In Manggarai Ethnic Nowadays*.
- Jelahut, F. E., Karlinah, S., & Novianti, E. (2021). Low Context Communication Foreign Students From Lospalos-Timor Leste In Organizaasun Lospalos Uan Ukani Bandung. *International Journal Of Communication And Society*, 3(2), 77–84.
- Larni Inat, S., & Hermawan, E. S. (N.D.). *Perkembangan Tarian Caci Di Desa Barang Kecamatan Cibai Kabupaten Manggarai Tahun 1998-2018*.
- Mccance, D. (2012). Derrida On Religion: Thinker Of Differance. In *Derrida On Religion: Thinker Of Differance*.
- Rahayu, S., & Sugihartono, R. A. (2018). Strategi Program Hard News Kompas Tv. *Capture : Jurnal Seni Media Rekam*, 9(2), 56.
<https://doi.org/10.33153/Capture.V9i2.2105>
- Sobur, A. (2006). *Semiotika Komunikasi*, Cet. Ke-3, Bandung: Pt. Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Turner, C. (2016). *Jacques Derrida: Deconstruction*. Critical Legal Thinking.
- West, R., & Turner, L. H. (2019). Introducing Communication Theory. In *Making Sense Of Messages*.