



EXPRESSING FEELINGS THROUGH VISUAL WORKS: HUMILIATION, PRIDE AND CELEBRATION OF FOOTBALL FANS

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Abstract

Football fans play an integral role in the sport, their presence and expressions of emotions shaping the dynamics of matches, both on and off the field. Even in the absence of fans in stadiums, their influence resonates through various media, particularly social media. Emotional expressions, ranging from pride and celebration to insults, are frequently channeled through visual memes on these platforms. This study aims to delve into the realm of visual meme clashes among fans of European football clubs in Indonesia, employing semiotic analysis as a lens to decipher the meanings embedded in these digital artifacts. The objectives of this research is understanding Fan Behavior: To dissect and comprehend the emotional landscape of football fans and the methods they employ to express their sentiments, whether positive or negative, through visual memes. Then promoting Positive Engagement: To explore the potential of visual memes as tools for promoting camaraderie and mutual respect among diverse fan groups, thus mitigating confrontations and anarchy often associated with highly passionate fan communities. The research methods involve a comprehensive analysis of visual memes shared on social media platforms by fans of European football clubs in Indonesia. This analysis will encompass the following step Gathering a diverse dataset of visual memes shared by fans on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and fan forums. And then categorizing the visual memes into various emotional expressions, such as pride, celebration, and insults, and assessing the intent and impact of these expressions. The study aims to provide insights into how visual memes can either unite or divide football fan communities in Indonesia. By understanding the semiotic underpinnings of these memes and their emotional connotations, it aspires to contribute to more harmonious fan interactions and lessened incidents of anarchy, fostering a sense of camaraderie and respect among fans of European football clubs in Indonesia. This research seeks to uncover the potential for visual memes to be a force for positive change within the passionate world of football fandom.

**Keywords: Football Fans, Visual Works, Semiotics, Emotional.**

INTRODUCTION

Fans and enthusiasm are inseparable, especially in the world of football. Football fans are known to have a high enough enthusiasm that is based on strong loyalty. The classic fans who have investments such as buying club shares or buying collections (goods) from expensive clubs, where this is done on the basis

of strong personal solidarity and offers financial support. Various fan rituals around match days such as calling for club chants. Some of the fans also communicated forms of solidarity by wearing club attributes in their day-to-day lives, while others communicated it in an extreme way by getting tattoos on their bodies.



One problem is that the interpretation of visual art is highly subjective. What one person may see as a portrayal of humiliation, another might perceive as a celebration. The meaning of the artwork can be lost or misinterpreted by viewers, which can lead to misunderstandings or misrepresentations.

Another reason is the commercialization of art can also be problematic. When art is used to express football fans' emotions, there is a risk of exploiting these emotions for profit. This can lead to a sense of insincerity and detachment from the true feelings of the fans.

In Indonesia itself, there are many fans of football clubs, ranging from local to European clubs. Especially for the European club fandom, it attracts attention due to the long distance from where they live and even some of them still haven't experienced the atmosphere directly in the stadiums of their European clubs they support. However, they still show their enthusiasm through events such as watching together which they hold in cafes to stadiums using big screens. Fans of European football clubs in Indonesia themselves are known to hold many events outside of watching together when the supported teams compete, they also hold events such as playing futsal to making charity events.

In this digital era, fandoms don't miss out on campaigning on social media. According to (Maderer, Parganas, & Anagnostopoulos., 2018) social media is currently a means of interaction between teams and countries. They always provide information regarding their support team, as for information related to events that will be held by the fandom, and also upload photos of them together, as for information in the form of creative memes. Memes are indeed very popular among fandoms because of their humorous nature, where fans of this European football club compete to make creative memes to get the attention of football fans. In addition, social media can be both friends and foes, not all

positive things are well received, and vice versa. (Ismawani, Y, L., La Mani., & Aras, M., 2021).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Humiliation

In the depths of humiliation, one finds the crucible of self-doubt and vulnerability. It's a bitter cocktail of shame and inadequacy, served with a side of public scrutiny. Humiliation leaves scars that linger, a testament to moments when we wish we could vanish into the shadows. Yet, it's within these raw, exposed moments that resilience is forged. For it's through humility, in the face of humiliation, that we learn the art of strength. In the end, it's the scars that remind us of our journey from defeat to triumph.

### Pride

Pride is the celestial fire that ignites the human spirit. It is a gentle roar, a radiant glow, a force that propels us to transcend. It's the warm embrace of accomplishment, the quiet smile in the mirror, and the unspoken assurance that we matter. It's the fluttering flag of self-worth that waves proudly in the winds of life's challenges. Pride is not arrogance; it's a celebration of one's essence and a testament to the power of self-belief.

### Celebration

In the tapestry of life, celebration is the golden thread that weaves moments into memories. It's the laughter that dances in the air, the clinking of glasses, the joyous shouts, and the twinkling lights. Celebration is the jubilant tribute to the beauty of existence, a recognition of shared victories and collective aspirations. It's the heart's exuberant melody, a timeless reminder that life, with all its trials and tribulations, is worth celebrating. In these moments, we find unity, happiness, and a profound appreciation for the simple act of being alive.

### Fans, Fandom, and Fan Studies



According to (Hyatt et al., 2018) the terms Fans and Fandom were originally fans of sports clubs. The word fan has been in constant use since the 19th century. In all cases, the fan implies some of the following, such as: attraction, interest, and emotional investment in a particular subject, involvement with certain recreational activities, and emphasis on amateur endeavors. Meanwhile, psychology and sociology study the behavior of groups of fans who are passionate about objects that appear unattractive or ridiculous to others. Some fan groups can be distinguished by their intensity towards the hobby, or by their fanaticism (Cohen et al., 2017).

According to (Haridakis, Paul M., 2013) in his book entitled Sports Fans, Identity, and Socialization. Sports fans also include fans, where fans of this sport usually come directly to the stadium, while gathering in sports cafes, some are watching on television. Sports fans also keep up with the news through newspapers, websites and social media. The mentality of sports fans also varies depending on the place. In the stadium, sports fans usually cheer or sing (chant), clapping and so on that are positive for the object being supported. In addition, displeasure with certain incidents and objects is responded to with ridicule and throwing objects of spaciousness. In sports fans, this type of violent reaction is often referred to as hooliganism.

### Visual Memes

Meme should be considered as a unit of information residing in the brain and it distinguishes the entity from what is stated and observed i.e. the product of the meme. The term meme currently understood is a modified set of images or videos, either given an expression or combined with other content to produce a new image or video that is similar but with a different story and is distributed on the internet through social media, for example. Memes are works of humor or parody. According to (Nooney, L., & Portwood-Stacer, L., 2014) memes themselves are commonly found on

social media. Any specific meme might carry profound meaning within a specific community at a specific moment. These memes also sometimes cause problems, where there are some people who think anything can be turned into a meme. As for some other problems, such as meme creators who deliberately produce memes to corner certain parties. Memes are very easy to imitate or remake, so creators need to include their own unique elements to make them easily recognizable.

Flow takes precedence over the origins of memetic culture, as the creator of objects, and even the conditions under which those objects occur, are often unknown to many users who remix and share them. According to (Shifman, L., 2014) a meme is defined as a group of digital items that: (a) share the same content, form, and/or stance characteristics; (b) created with awareness of each other; and (c) circulated, imitated, and modified over the internet by multiple users. Meme functionality comes from a combination of digital technology and participatory culture. Digitization has created a technological foundation for manipulating images almost easily and spreading them quickly, but it has also created a participatory environment in which such personal contributions are highly valued as a pillar of culture. I did. Therefore, operational signs such as meme genres serve as a valuable compass to guide participants when they are having a hard time navigating a regime in the sense that they are increasingly challenged to create new content. Sometimes memes don't know who the original creator was, due to digitization and ease of creation, making memes difficult to track down main creators or early thinkers.

### Semiotics

Semiotics or commonly called "semiotics" is the study of sign processes. Any activity, behavior, or process, for which there is a sign. In this case the sign is something that communicates meaning with a certain meaning.



The basic ideas of semiotics are messages and codes. The only way to send messages from person to person is by using a code. According to the expert (Riauan, 2019) messages have three elements, namely: (1) signs and symbols; (2) language; and (3) discourse. According to him, signs are the basis for all communication. Semiotics according to Peirce is a triad model that describes the relationship between signs/expressions (representing something), objects (expressions), and interpreters (meanings that may or may be derived from expressions). (Afisi, 2020)

In this journal, we will use the semiotics proposed by Peirce which has a philosophical background. Peirce said that human reasoning is always done through signs. According to Peirce, logic is the same as semiotics and semiotics can be applied to all kinds of signs. Icon type which is defined as something that performs a function as a marker similar to the shape of the object, this can be seen in pictures and paintings. An index is a type of something that performs the function of a marker indicating its sign. The symbol is something that performs a function as a marker which by convention has been commonly used in society.

**RESEARCH METHODS**

Research method used qualitative research to understand the cultural and societal significance of these visual works, including their role in fan identity, relationships, and the propagation of fan culture.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**  
**The Depiction Of Humiliation In The Form Of Meme**



Figure 1. Instagram @bolanet  
Source: Instagram Social Media @bolanet

**Tabel 1. Clasification and Clarification**

Clasification	Clarification
Ground	<i>Qualisign</i> , there is a firm sentence addressed to FC Barcelona regarding the offer to recruit Lewandowski. In the picture there is a photo of Lewandowski and in the background there is the FC Barcelona logo.
Object	<i>Indeks</i> , there is the FC Barcelona logo behind Lewandowski, which FC Barcelona is a club that is trying to sign Lewandowski from Bayern Munich.
Interpretant	<i>Argument</i> , FC Barcelona's offer was deemed insufficient by Bayern Munich to recruit Lewandowski.

FC Barcelona's desire to bring in Lewandowski has become a hot topic of discussion. Knowing Lewandowski's reputation is very good and is expected to be a solution to sharpen FC Barcelona's front line,



the fans can't wait for Lewandowski's arrival at Camp Nou.

This visual work shows Bayern Munich's Lewandowski. The FC Barcelona logo ornament behind it is because the player is reportedly in negotiations to move the club to FC Barcelona in the following season. There is a sentence delivered by the creator explaining that FC Barcelona's offer to Bayern Munich to bring Lewandowski to Camp Nou has not been accepted.

The expression of feeling in this visual work is to give a message to FC Barcelona fans that their hopes for Lewandowski's arrival should be postponed because the offer from FC Barcelona was deemed insufficient by Bayern Munich. This opened a discussion for FC Barcelona fans regarding the prediction of the compatibility of Lewandowski's playing style with FC Barcelona's game.



Figure 2. Instagram @chelsfact  
Source: Instagram Social Media @chelsfact

**Tabel 2. Clasification and Clarification**

Clasification	Clarification
Ground	<i>Qualisign</i> , there is a strong sentence addressed to the Internazionale Milano player, namely Lukaku. This article contains insults to Lukaku who are not totally against the club despite getting a large fee.

Object	<i>Indeks</i> , there is a photo of Lukaku flying the Italian flag. In addition, the Internazionale Milano logo is in the background. Lukaku is rumored to be leaving Internazionale Milano even though Lukaku has earned a large fee while playing for the Italian club.
Interpretant	<i>Argument</i> , Lukaku who was insulted for his disloyal attitude towards Internazionale Milano even though he had received a sizeable fee.

This meme shows a Chelsea player, Romelu Lukaku, who reportedly wants to return to his old club, Internazionale Milano. This player was mentioned by fans because he has an extraordinarily large fee but does not have a sense of loyalty to the club he defends.

The expression of feelings displayed by the creator of this meme is that fans do not like the behavior of Lukaku who often changes clubs for reasons of salary. Football itself is not only about fantastic pay but loyalty. A player who is loyal to the club will be appreciated by the fans, even if he has not been able to bring the club to its highest level.

Memes like this will certainly open a discussion in the comments because of Lukaku's controversial decision to return to Inter Milan. As of this writing there has been no official decision from Inter Milan but Chelsea fans are very disappointed with the rumors circulating that Inter Milan has made a fantastic offer to bring Lukaku back to the Giuseppe Meazza.



Figure 3. Instagram @unitedattack  
Source: Instagram Social Media @unitedattack

expensive compared to the performance that did not meet the expectations of Manchester United fans.

This meme shows a Manchester United player who is reluctant to extend his contract because the salary is not enough. In this meme there is a message from a fan that reads "Please be self-aware." This message was addressed quite strongly to Pogba who did not make a satisfactory contribution to Manchester United. In addition to the perceived lack of contribution, Pogba's behavior outside the field has also been in the spotlight because it often does not reflect professional players.

The expression of feelings displayed by the creator of this meme is that fans are annoyed with their players who ask for new contracts with higher salaries, even though these players do not show a positive contribution to the team. The player himself often makes unpleasant comments about the management of the Manchester United club to the media. Instead of getting attention, Pogba was insulted by Manchester United fans who were already restless about his existence at the Manchester United club.

Memes like this will certainly open a discussion in the comments column due to Pogba's controversial behavior who gives statements to the media as if he is a player who has won everything. Even though Pogba's performance was not enough when he was with Manchester United.

**Pride Expression Meme**



Figure 4. Instagram @culesbarcaid  
Source: Instagram Social Media @culesbarcaid

**Tabel 3. Classification and Clarification**

Classification	Clarification
Ground	<i>Legisign</i> , there was a firm statement addressed to Paul Pogba as a player whose contract expired with Manchester United. This sentence comes from a Manchester United fan who criticized Paul Pogba for being "self-conscious".
Object	<i>Indeks</i> , there is a picture of Paul Pogba wearing a Manchester United jersey who is smiling. Paul Pogba is a star player who is highly paid but did not perform well at Manchester United.
Interpretant	<i>Argument</i> , begins with Paul Pogba's response to the media about the Manchester United club. Pogba mentioned that he should get a better contract extension offer from Manchester United because of his status as a star player. This made Manchester United fans annoyed and thought Paul Pogba was ignorant. Fans concluded that Paul Pogba's fee was quite large, even too

**Tabel 4. Clasification and Clarification**

Clasification	Clarification
Ground	<i>Qualisign</i> , there is the phrase "hello from the finished player." Accompanied by a photo of FC Barcelona players celebrating after scoring a goal against Real Madrid. This sentence is addressed to football fans who think that Aubameyang's golden age is over because the player's age is not young anymore.
Object	<i>Indeks</i> , a clear sentence, containing a clear meaning and complemented by a photo of the player's celebration when he scored a goal in a prestigious match against Real Madrid. Aubameyang emphasized that his golden age was not over, this validation was proven by Aubameyang by attaching a photo of his celebration when he scored a goal against Real Madrid.
Interpretant	<i>Dicisign</i> , FC Barcelona player Aubameyang proved to football fans around the world that his golden age was not over with a goal he scored during FC Barcelona's match against their eternal rivals, Real Madrid.

This meme is taken from Aubameyang's celebration after scoring a goal against Real Madrid, which is the main rival of FC Barcelona. This celebration imitates the style of the cartoon dragon ball. This picture also includes a message from Aubameyang to FC Barcelona fans who call himself a player who has finished his golden age. Aubameyang proved that he is still capable of competing for

the level of the match against Real Madrid by scoring one goal and one assist. In this match FC Barcelona managed to get a 0-4 victory over their all-time rivals.

The expression of feeling displayed is the pride of FC Barcelona fans who are satisfied that their club won a landslide victory over their main rival. This victory was also marked by a unique celebration from Aubameyang, in which Aubameyang himself is a doubtful player to be able to fully contribute to the prestigious match against Real Madrid.

Memes like this open up discussions, especially regarding FC Barcelona's performance that season, which was relatively unstable. With unstable performances and poor players, FC Barcelona was able to prove it by beating Real Madrid, which had a much more stable performance. There was a discussion about Aubameyang's performance in the hands of Xavi's coach who showed a better performance than Arteta's hands at Arsenal.

**Celebration**



Figure 5. Instagram @fansbarcaid\_  
Source: Instagram Social Media @fansbarcaid\_

**Tabel 5. Clasification and Clarification**

Clasification	Clarification
Ground	<i>Sinsign</i> , there is a thank you from an FC Barcelona fan to his player, Luuk De Jong, whose loan period has expired.



Object	<i>Ikon</i> , there is a snippet of Luuk De Jong's moment while playing for FC Barcelona, accompanied by an image of the stadium stands and the FC Barcelona logo. Shows that this expression of gratitude is expressed by the fans of the FC Barcelona club for Luuk De Jong.
Interpretant	<i>Dicisign</i> , Luuk De Jong will no longer be in FC Barcelona's uniform because his previous contract with the status of a loan player from Sevilla was not extended by FC Barcelona. FC Barcelona fans created a farewell visual that has great meaning as a sign of gratitude to Luuk De Jong for his services during this time helping FC Barcelona to compete at the top of the Spanish League.

This visual work is a form of farewell for fans to a player. Luuk De Jong is a striker who was loaned from Sevilla by FC Barcelona. Luuk has contributed quite satisfactorily during his loan spell at FC Barcelona, especially scoring the winning goal for FC Barcelona. In this visual work, you can see a snippet of Luuk's moment in FC Barcelona's uniform along with the words "gracies" which means "thank you".

The expression of feeling described is the sincerity of a fan for a player who has finished his job with his club. Luuk himself was actually borrowed by FC Barcelona only as a second option when the main striker of FC Barcelona was unable to participate in the match, but as far as Luuk was introduced he always gave a performance that made both coaches and FC Barcelona fans satisfied.

This meme opens a discussion for FC Barcelona fans who are against Luuk. Some

fans are satisfied with Luuk's performance, while some fans are not satisfied with Luuk, who is comfortable being used as a second option by the coach.



Figure 6. Instagram @dailymadrid.id  
Source: Instagram Social Media @dailymadrid.id

**Tabel 6. Classification and Clarification**

Classification	Explanatory
Ground	<i>Qualisign</i> , there is a statement from Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti after his club won the UEFA Champions League. This sentence contains that winning the UEFA Champions League with Real Madrid feels easier because the club's mentality has been built for a long time to win this championship. In addition, Carlo Ancelotti would also like to thank Real Madrid fans who have continued to be committed and loyal to the Real Madrid club so far.
Object	<i>Indeks</i> , there is a photo of Carlo Ancelotti smiling with satisfaction and with the background of the Real Madrid players celebrating their UEFA Champions League title. The mentality





	of the players, the commitment and loyalty of the fans helped Real Madrid to claim the UEFA Champions League title for the umpteenth time.
Interpretant	<i>Argument</i> , Real Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti is satisfied with his team's UEFA Champions League title. This championship title is considered easy to achieve because the players and fans both have the synergy to win the title.

This visual work is a form of celebration by Real Madrid fans when they won the Champions League. Seen a Real Madrid coach who was happy after his team was confirmed to come out as champions. He revealed that winning the Champions League with Real Madrid was easier than any other club he had played for. He also did not forget to thank Real Madrid fans who have a commitment to continue to support Real Madrid.

The expression of feeling described is the joy of Real Madrid fans when their team won the Champions League title. The fans also want to show that the coach is very happy with Real Madrid's performance and don't forget to thank the fans for their commitment to supporting Real Madrid so far. In addition, this title makes Real Madrid even more superior to being the club with the most Champions League titles.

This meme opens a discussion for Real Madrid fans and fans of other clubs about Real Madrid's performance that season, which tends to be average but is able to win the Champions League. The Champions League is the most prestigious tournament for elite clubs in Europe

## CONCLUSION

Various types of memes are found in this study, various reflections of the condition

of a thing that is used as a meme is a sign that creativity in memes has no limits. Almost anything in football can be turned into a meme by creators. The visual work of this meme is to open a discussion between fans of the football team. In this discussion it is usually not about ridicule, there is also hope, pride and celebration. In addition, from the first published visual meme, other visual meme works from one of the teams that are dedicated to reply to the first published visual meme will be invited. The creation of this visual meme for fans of the European football team in Indonesia has become a place for creativity between fans of European football clubs in Indonesia. Besides entertainment, memes have also become a tool for fans to criticize their proud team. Many of the fans criticize the players or even the management of the team. Criticism through a meme does not necessarily become a two-way discussion between critics and those who are criticized, but opens a new forum for anyone to have an opinion. Especially for meme creators, it will be challenged to create new content, especially if the memes they make get a response from many people (regardless of the negative or positive).

By using Pierce's theory of semiotics, visual memes can be interpreted by the signs that exist in the visual meme itself. The sign in question is like an icon, index, or symbol. Through this theory, visual meme works become easier to interpret as an expression of the creator's feelings for something or a group of people. If interpreted correctly, the visual meme will have a positive impact. The visual meme works can also have a negative impact if they are responded to negatively which will cause divisions among fans of European football clubs in Indonesia if they are not interpreted properly. However, in this era, visual meme works are rarely received negatively by some European football club fans in Indonesia. This is because many fans of European football clubs in Indonesia are aware that visual meme works are an expression of



one's feelings that are poured into a visual work with a high level of creativity. In this study, any image and from anywhere can be used as a meme through the creativity of the maker. Social media uploads from players, player conversations to the media, coaches' opinions, and even football actors' gestures.

With this visual meme creation among fans of European football clubs in Indonesia, it is hoped that there will be no more commotion between fans of European football clubs in Indonesia, who were previously known to be vocal, and even some unscrupulous fans who have anarchic nature. This is also supported by social media platforms which are places where memes can be uploaded and spread. This visual meme can be enjoyed by all European football fans in Indonesia only, but can be spread all over the world. Literacy for football fans is considered important enough so that there is no more anarchy in football, while literacy is defined as the human capacity to apply knowledge and skills to certain issues and conduct analysis. (Siswantini, Lestari, A., Willyanto, M. N., & Puspita, V., 2020).

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