

How Media Remembered the Past: Framing Analysis of the May 1998 Tragedy in Indonesian Print Newspapers (1999-2008)

DODDY SALMAN
ANDRIK PURWASITO
WAKIT ABDULLAH RAIS
Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the news framing of a national tragedy in three Indonesian newspapers i.e., Kompas, Suara Karya and Republika from 1999 to 2008. The news was selected based on a purposive sampling of these newspapers published every May from 1999 to 2008 during the anniversary of the May 1998 tragedy. By using Robert N. Entman's framing theory, the findings found that Kompas, Republika, and Suara Karya dominantly framed their news coverage of the tragedy on the following four elements, i.e., the tragedy of humanity, intellectual actors, victims' suffering, and post-tragedy events. The legal issues as the main point of resolving the May 1998 tragedy were ignored in the news. The recommendations to interrogate the actors summoned by the Joint Fact Finding Team (*Tim Gabungan Pencari Fakta/TGPF*) for the May 1998 tragedy were never mentioned in the news. These news reports put the victims and their families as victims of individual action, not as victims of structural crimes. In addition, the recommendation produced by these newspapers after the tragedy is predominantly to strengthen solidarity with the victims and their families, not to prosecute the cases legally. In conclusion, these news media are believed to be conscious of not getting to the May 1998 tragedy as there is no political interest of the Indonesian government to resolve the tragedy.

Keywords: *Framing, newspaper, the May 1998 tragedy, victims, commemoration.*

INTRODUCTION

Newspapers are social documents and historical records (Maloney, 2012). One of the major historical records for the Indonesian people is the May 1998 tragedy, where three important events occurred within a month, namely the shooting of Trisakti University students; the mass riots; and the discharge of President Suharto, who was then succeeded by B.J. Habibie. As a significant historical record, the May 1998 tragedy should get a special place in the mass media every year. However, previous studies may not show special attention to this.

Strassler (2005, 2010) and Winarnita (2011) examined how people commemorate the May 1998 tragedy differently in their studies. Strassler analysed a photo exhibition on the theme of youth struggle in the reform era and concluded that this exhibition showed more of youth heroism in the national struggle. There were no photos of victims of the riots and the rapes, as well as those of Chinese ethnicity. This signifies that these victims were not important narratives in the reform action, thus being unnecessary to be displayed or even included in May 1998 tragedy.

Meanwhile, Winarnita (2011) investigated how the political memory of the May 1998 tragedy was constructed by the National Commission on Violence against Women (*Komnas Perempuan*) through the commemorative book for the May 1998 tragedy and activities to commemorate the May 1998 tragedy organized by the ethnic Chinese diaspora in various parts of the world through cyberspace. This study found that the commemoration of the May

1998 tragedy in books and online media is a limited representation that is more likely to imply trauma than a symbol of the political struggle of certain groups.

With regards to framing analysis, Schwalbe (2006) and Golcevski (2013) examined different historical backgrounds and media. Schwalbe concluded that the appearance of news sites during the first five weeks of the Iraq War had framings of the following five elements: conflict, conquest, rescue, victory, and control. This is a far cry from what happened one year, two years, and three years after the Iraq War ended. The visualization of hostility has decreased drastically. This indicates that mainstream news media websites tend to amplify war narratives as the function of mainstream media in general.

Golcevski (2013), on the other hand, found that the Serbian media used five frames in their news coverage of war crime tribunals, i.e., the injustice frame, the denial frame, the solid frame, the benefits frame, and the rejection frame. With these five frames, the Serbian media used a perpetrator-centric and ethnically-biased discourse in their news reporting.

Ahmadi (2021) used to research the novel to find out about the tragedy of May 1998, while Igenesius (2022) used ethnographic research using interviews. Both do not use the news media as a source of research.

This present study attempts to elaborate the framing analysis in newspapers by conducting a memory study, meaning that the news coverage is presented in terms of framing what is remembered and what is forgotten. Robert N. Entman's (1991) framing analysis contains four elements as follows: define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, and produce treatment recommendations. This can be extended to defining what is remembered or forgotten, finding the source of the remembered or forgotten problem, making moral decisions as to what to remember or forget, and offering recommendations for remembered or forgotten events.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study applied the qualitative method with a text analysis approach. Saukko (2003, p. 99) stated that the characteristics of cultural studies include text analysis or discourse analysis. According to Saukko, text analysis or discourse analysis is used to uncover social contradictions and contestations in historical, political, and social contexts.

The text analysis conducted in this study used Robert N. Entman's framing analysis. Entman views framing as the selection of issues and highlighting aspects in news coverage. The selection of issues refers to the selection of confirmed facts or data by the media for their journalistic products, meaning that some facts are taken and some are not. Meanwhile, the selection of highlighting aspects relates to the writing process, where the media choose certain sentences and words to be highlighted in their news coverage (Eriyanto, 2002). In the context of memory studies, the selection is made for the perspective of issues to be remembered and forgotten, meaning that the selected issues are the facts chosen by the media to be remembered.

The data examined in this study are news articles published in *Kompas*, *Republika*, and *Suara Karya* every May from 1999 to 2008 in commemoration of the May 1998 tragedy, particularly around the middle of the month. The collected data were then combined with clips to facilitate the analysis process.

Kompas is considered as a nationalist and trusted media with complete news coverage (Ali, 2001). Although history shows that this newspaper has close ties with the Catholics, the composition of its editorial team which also consists of Protestants and Muslim graduates of

the State Islamic Institutes (*Institut Agama Islam Negeri/IAIN*) strongly suggests its seriousness in covering news for all classes of readers (Dhakidae, 1991). *Republika*, on the other hand, is a national newspaper created by the Muslim community in Indonesia whose establishment was influenced by the birth of the Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals (*Ikatan Cendekiawan Muslim Indonesia/ICMI*). The vision of *Republika* is to become a modern, moderate, Muslim, national, and populist newspaper. However, its closeness to the Indonesian government at that time was undeniable; the issuance of the Press Publication Business License (*Surat Izin Usaha Penerbitan Pers/SIUPP*) Number 283/SK/MENPEN/SIUPP/A7/1992 dated December 19, 1992, allegedly indicated the closeness between Suharto and Habibie (Rusadi, 2002). Meanwhile, *Suara Karya* is referred to as a pro-government and pro-army newspaper (Hill, 2007). This is indicated by the names of Ali Moertopo, Soejono Hoemardani, and Sapardjo listed as the pioneers of *Suara Karya*, and Sudharmono, SH as its advisor, all of whom were important figures in the government.

Entman's (1991) framing analysis describes framing to define the problems, diagnose the causes, make moral judgments, and suggest solutions. The definition of a problem is how a certain event or issue is presented in the news, whether it is understood as a problem or not. This is the main frame of an event conveyed through the news; different frames lead to different understandings. Furthermore, the source of the problem includes what or who was considered to be the cause of the problem; different framing in this element also leads to differences as to what or who caused the event to occur. According to Entman (1991), the third element of framing is to make a moral judgment. As the problem and its cause have been framed, basic arguments or reasons must be suggested to support these framings. Finally, treatment recommendation as the fourth element of framing highlights steps or solutions offered by the media to solve the problem.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

For 10 consecutive years (1999-2008), three national newspapers, namely *Kompas*, *Republika*, and *Suara Karya*, presented the news of the May 1998 tragedy every May. During that period, *Kompas* published 42 news stories, *Republika* produced 9 news stories, and *Suara Karya* had 14 news stories. Most of these news stories did not make headlines and were not placed on the front page.

From a constructivist perspective, the mass media can carry out social construction in the form of framing in published news. *Kompas* has always published news about the May 1998 tragedy every year for 10 years, not only covering the news of the May 1998 tragedy commemoration events but also making news about what happened in this tragedy, particularly putting forward the perspectives of the victims and their families. This differs from *Republika* and *Suara Karya* which tended to only cover news and did not make news. Furthermore, the stories about the May 1998 tragedy in *Kompas* had a more significant placement than those in *Republika* and *Suara Karya*. *Kompas* constructed the news commemorating the May 1998 tragedy into a dominant meaning (Entman, 1993), so that people can record, process, and accept them.

These three newspapers also tended to frame the May 1998 tragedy with the Special Capital Region of Jakarta (DKI Jakarta) as the locus of events, although there were some reports about the city of Solo being destroyed by the looting of shops and the burning of vehicles and buildings during the riots of May 13-15, 1998, as well as about the city of Medan experiencing riots and looting of shops earlier in May that year (Setiawan et al., 1999). The

location of the headquarters of the three newspapers in DKI Jakarta explains why this region became the center of their news coverage.

The first framing of the news coverage in the three newspapers is the framing of the tragedy of humanity, which is related to how *Kompas*, *Republika*, and *Suara Karya* viewed this event (defining problems). Of the 63 stories in the three national newspapers, 26 of them considered this tragedy as a political issue, not a legal one. This can be seen from the placement of these articles in the Politics section of the three newspapers, as well as from the sources, headlines, and news lead of each article.

The placement of news articles about the May 1988 tragedy in the Politics section proved that these newspapers regarded this incident as a problem between the government (government institutions, prosecutors, and the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia) as political policymakers and the people, in this case, the victims and their families. Therefore, the pressure to resolve the May 1998 tragedy was mostly narrated in demonstrations in front of the State Palace, the parliament building, and the Attorney General's Office building. The news sources concluded that the political will of the Indonesian government was most needed to resolve the May 1998 tragedy, but this has not been seen in the ten years since this tragedy occurred; instead of showing good intention to resolve the incident, the House of Representatives viewed the May 1998 tragedy as a mere human rights violation. The legal technicalities that will facilitate the investigation have become an excuse for the Attorney General's Office. Classification of the May 1998 tragedy as a human rights violation does not solve this case. Those responsible for the incident have never been identified and punished.

Framing has a political purpose; it aims to influence public perception and guide public discourse (Lawrence, 2009). By writing the news headlines "The May 1998 Riots Almost to Occur Again" ("*Kerusuhan Mei*", 14 Mei, 2000) and "Trauma of the Riots Still Clinging" ("*Trauma Kerusuhan*", 14 Mei, 2000) the two newspapers influenced public perception and refreshed public memory that the incident of 5000 VCD traders' rampages in Glodok, West Jakarta, was similar to the riots that occurred two years earlier. Entman (1989, p. 50) calls it symbolization; the newspapers reported an incident using terms already popular in the community. In this case, the newspapers used the term "the May 1998 riots" as a symbol, with the term "riot" itself a problematic.

Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia (lit. The Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language) defines a riot as an 'unsafe condition, commotion, chaos, and turmoil' (2008). Meanwhile, the Indonesian-English Dictionary translates the word '*kerusuhan*' into disturbance, riot, turbulence, and turmoil (Echols & Shadily, 2000). The word 'riot' itself has been debated in society around the world to represent its meaning properly. For example, the Los Angeles riots in 1992 had a different meaning in the eyes of American society. For most Americans, whites and blacks, the riots were relationship problems between whites and blacks. However, some media viewed the riots as a result of the conflict between Korean Americans and Black Americans. The fact that has gone unnoticed is that most of the looters were Latinos (Chang, 1996).

In defining the term "the May 1998 tragedy", each newspaper had its own view. *Republika* tended to define the Trisakti shootings as the May 1998 tragedy, although the media used the term 'Trisakti tragedy'. This means that *Republika* also recognized the incident in Trisakti University as a tragedy and this is different from the term 'the May 1998 tragedy' which emphasizes the massive looting of shops accompanied by the burning of buildings and

vehicles as well as the rape of several ethnic Chinese women. On the other hand, *Suara Karya* used the terms 'the Trisakti tragedy' and 'the May 1998 tragedy' following the actors of the events covered. When the students of Trisakti University went on the demonstration, the media used the term 'the Trisakti tragedy'. Meanwhile, when the victims and their families, as well as volunteers, organized demonstrations after the shooting, the term used in the news coverage in *Suara Karya*, was 'the May 1998 tragedy'. This was also done by *Kompas*. Despite the intensity, *Kompas* prioritized the term 'the May 1998 tragedy' compared to the term 'the Trisakti tragedy'.

There are significant differences in the way the three national newspapers define the problem. *Republika* and *Suara Karya* mostly framed the May 1998 tragedy as a political issue, whereas *Kompas* substantially framed it (in a total of 16 stories) as a tragedy of humanity. The framing of the tragedy of humanity by *Kompas* can mainly be seen from the headlines, news leads, and news sources. In its framing of the tragedy of humanity, the sources of the stories about the May 1998 tragedy in *Kompas* were mostly interviews with the victims or their families. Initially, *Kompas* also framed the May 1998 tragedy as a political issue. However, since 2001, this has experienced a shift in the framing of the tragedy of humanity has begun to dominate the published stories. In addition, the intensity of making news from the journalists' initiatives is getting higher.

The framing of the tragedy of humanity used as the master frame for *Kompas* can be interpreted as its use of the victim's perspective. Victims are those who struggle to find the truth behind an incident after experiencing loss of life and property in the event. Purdey (2002) stated that the search for the truth about the May 1998 tragedy is a struggle between two parties, namely the victims and the perpetrators. It was difficult to separate the struggle of the two parties at that time; while the victims wanted the incident to be remembered, the perpetrators wanted it to be forgotten. *Kompas* explored more deeply about the victims and their families who, despite their difficulties in dealing with the trauma (they tried not to remember the incident anymore), still demand that the incident is not forgotten. This can be seen in stories entitled "As Seizing Space, We Refuse to Forget" ("*Merebut ruang*", May 11, 2007) and "10 Years of the May Riots Fighting to Seize the Memory Space" ("*10 tahun kerusuhan*", May 14, 2008).

The second dominant framing of these three print media is the framing of intellectual actors. These three national newspapers used this framing to consider who or what was the cause of the reported incident. Overall, for the 'diagnose causes' element of framing, most news coverage in these three national newspapers pointed to the government as the actors who did not resolve the May 1998 tragedy as it was deemed to have failed to find the responsible party. The newspapers referred to the government by directly mentioning names of important figures in the government, such as President Megawati or President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY). *Suara Karya* even mentioned President SBY in its news headline. SBY was explicitly stated as the cause of the unfinished resolution of the May 1998 tragedy, which contradicted the statement he made when he was running for president in 2004.

President Megawati Soekarnoputri was the only president of the Republic of Indonesia ever recorded by the media as the one who can be associated with events commemorating the May 1998 tragedy; she was reported to attend the sixth commemoration of this incident ("*Pada peringatan*", May 14, 2004). However, some humanitarian activists criticized this commemoration event as being misleading due to the testimonies of victims of the May 1998 tragedy who had received an apology ("*Peringatan tragedi*", May 15, 2004). When the media

considered the government as the main actor in the incomplete resolution of this human rights violation (the party to be blamed), the police seemed liberated from failing to protect the citizens of DKI Jakarta. The police were not mentioned in the media discourse when discussing the May 1998 tragedy.

The government framed by the media as the cause of this incident also tended to refer to the central government. This is proved by the demonstrations in favor of the May 1998 tragedy, which were frequently held in front of the State Palace, the Hotel Indonesia Roundabout, the Attorney General's Office building, and the Indonesian Parliament building in Senayan. No demonstrations took place in front of the City Hall, the Governor's office, or the office of the Regional People's Representative Council of the Special Capital Region of Jakarta (DPRD DKI Jakarta).

Article 12 Section 1 of Law Number 23 of 2014 on Regional Government clearly states that those relating to basic services for regional government include peace, public order, and community and social protection. This means that the local government, in this case, the Governor of DKI Jakarta, is responsible for peace and public order in DKI Jakarta and is obliged to protect its citizens. However, history records that on May 13, 14, and 15, 1998, riots, looting, arson, and rape happened in DKI Jakarta, damaging and burning 4,939 buildings, 1,119 private cars, 66 public vehicles, and 821 motorcycles. The incident, which lasted for three days, was estimated to have caused a total loss of IDR2.5 trillion. More than 500 people were killed in this incident (Habibie, 2006). The Governor of DKI Jakarta as the head of the regional government, at that time held by Sutiyoso, could be said to have failed to carry out his responsibilities to maintain peace and public order and to provide protection for his citizens, as regulated by law. Nevertheless, the three media never published stories demanding the DKI Jakarta Provincial Government to be held accountable for the May 1998 tragedy.

Besides the government, the Attorney General's Office was also framed by the three national newspapers as the intellectual actor that caused the unfinished resolution of the May 1998 tragedy. The Attorney General's Office is a justice enforcement agency to oversee the Public Prosecutor's Office and occupies the highest position of the State Prosecutor's Office in Indonesia. The main task of a Public Prosecutor is to carry out prosecution services, acting as the controller of the case process (*Dominus Liris*) concerning whether or not a case can be brought to court based on valid evidence.

With its authority to control cases, the "fate" of the May 1998 tragedy is in the hands of the Public Prosecutors, whether it will be brought to court or not. During ten years of efforts, eight Attorney Generals failed to resolve the May 1998 tragedy, namely: A. Soejono C. Atmonegoro (served from March 1998 to June 1998), Andi Muhammad Ghalib (from July 1998 to 1999), Marzuki Darusman (1999-2001), Baharuddin Lopa (June 2001-July 2001), Marsilam Simanjuntak (July 2001-August 2001), M. A. Rachman (August 2001-October 2004), Abdurahman Saleh (October 2004-September 2007), and Hendarman Supandji (May 2007-September 2010).

Among the eight Attorney Generals mentioned above, the most awaited figure in resolving the May 1998 tragedy was Marzuki Darusman since he was the Head of the Joint Fact Finding Team (TGPF) for the May 1998 riots. Before taking up the position of Attorney General, Marzuki Darusman once stated that if TGPF recommendations were not followed up, it would be tantamount to harassing the public. In addition, Marzuki claimed that the meeting at the headquarter of the Army Strategic Reserves Command (*Komando Cadangan*

Strategis Angkatan Darat/Kostrad) on May 14, 1998 was a window to find out the problems behind the May 1998 riots ("*Rekomendasi TGPF*", May 14, 1999). Ironically, during his tenure as Attorney General, Marzuki Darusman was also unable to bring the May 1998 riot case to court and reveal who was responsible for the tragedy. He was more preoccupied with student demonstrations and the victims of the May 1998 tragedy. On the other hand, the three national newspapers also seem to have forgotten to remind the public that Attorney General Marzuki Darusman was the former head of the Joint Fact Finding Team (TGPF).

The third framing done by the three national newspapers is the framing of the victims' suffering, which is related to the third element of Robert M. Entman's framing analysis, i.e., 'make moral judgments', used to justify arguments on the definition of problems having been made. Each media has its moral judgment on its published stories. *Kompas* dominantly emphasized the problem of forgetting and being forgotten in its news coverage of the May 1998 tragedy. *Kompas* attempted to provide clues about the major problem to be faced by the victims, their families, and the community in the future, namely the act of forgetting.

Forgetting and remembering are two different sides of a coin. *Kompas* not only had concerns about these two matters but also tried to get into the politics of memory regarding the May 1998 tragedy. In the politics of memory, the main problem is not what happened, but how the past is remembered, whose past experiences, and which experiences (Budiawan, 2013). *Kompas* realized that the victims and their families were in a dilemma. While remembering the May 1998 tragedy opened their inner wounds ("*Bergandeng tangan*", May 14, 2001) forgetting this tragic incident was like killing them for the second time ("*Tragedi Mei*", May 11, 2007). *Kompas* presented the dilemma between forgetting and remembering through reporting on the victims and their families by interviewing the same resource person multiple times.

Ibu Ruminah and Ibu Ruyati were two resource persons most often interviewed on the topic of the May 1998 tragedy. Ibu Ruyati is the mother of Eten Karyana (31 years old) and an English teacher at Al Falah High School Bekasi. Eten was seen entering the Yogya Department Store complex which was engulfed in flames. As his ID card was found intact, Eten was able to be declared burnt to death. Meanwhile, Ibu Ruminah was the mother of Igun (12 years old) who was also burnt to death in the Yogya Department Store with 400 other victims consisting of adults and children. Igun was found at the National Referral Hospital Dr. Cipto Mangunkusumo (RSCM) among a pile of burnt bodies.

Kompas highlighted the personal experiences of Ibu Ruminah and Ibu Ruyati. This is known by the term 'personalization', which are the three production biases along with simplification and symbolization (Entman, 1989). Production bias stems from a market economy. As a business entity, newspaper agencies must attract the attention of readers/viewers; the more readers/viewers they have, the more advertisers pay. Production bias grows out of the need to create compelling news stories and maintain a large audience, which is no easy feat. News media compete for the attention of readers/viewers, making them perform the three production biases: simplification, personalization, and symbolization (Entman, 1989).

Simplification means the media produces more stories that are easy to follow. From the production side, these stories are easy, cheap, and safe, compared to those that are difficult, expensive, and risky (such as investigative news). In this case, journalists convey simple and accurate news rather than complicated and wordy messages. However, while simple stories seem to be more attractive to readers/viewers, simplification of news often

tends to lose context. The second production bias is personalization, where journalists tend to describe events by referring to individual actions rather than those of institutional, historical, or other abstract forces to make readers/viewers more interested in following the stories. Newspapers even construct drama in their news narratives if needed. An appealing drama presents conflicts between protagonists and antagonists. Symbolization is the third production bias. In this case, journalists' welcome symbols that condense familiar meanings and have broad political connotations. Dramatic actions, striking personalities, or evocative slogans can serve as symbols. The basis of this production bias is the assumption that readers/viewers will more easily understand popular symbols. Symbols can mean familiar stereotypes or shared public understanding of the subjects covered in the story. For example, students are often associated with 'struggle' and 'sacrifice'. Journalists use both words to symbolize the identity of students.

The moral judgments in *Republika* and *Suara Karya*, on the other hand, tended to emphasize the conditions of disappointment, regret, solidarity, and hope for the victims and their families. The news coverage in both media stopped at the current condition of the victims and their families and did not provide future challenges to be experienced in the future. Meanwhile, the main function of journalists is to help the public hold the government accountable (Entman, 2005). In the legal context, there is a term 'expiration' which refers to the validity period of a legal case to be brought to court. This means that if the expiration date of the May 1998 riot case has passed, the case cannot be brought to court ever again. Therefore, the media should be able to disseminate the issues of the expiration date of this case with the aim that the government can immediately resolve the May 1998 tragedy.

The moral judgments made by the three national newspapers that can be refuted are in the articles entitled "Don't Dwell on the Past" ("*Soal kerusuhan Mei*", May 13, 2004) and "We Must Stop Looking Back. We Have to Move Forward" ("*Pada peringatan*", May 14, 2004) as both articles were from the political elites, namely the former presidential candidate from Golkar, General (Ret.) Wiranto and former President Megawati made the last statement when attending the sixth commemoration of the May 1998 tragedy. Even though the statements came from different people, it can be interpreted that both political elites had one emphasis: *It has already happened, what's done is done* (or "*sing wis ya wis*" in Javanese). Such arguments tend to be presented by perpetrators and authorities in general (Budiawan, 2004). The term '*sing wis ya wis*' refers to the emphasis that the problem has been resolved; there is nothing to argue about anymore. According to the political elites, the May 1998 tragedy was a series of riots caused by a mob of looters who destroyed DKI Jakarta on a large scale, following the deaths of four Trisakti students who were shot dead by security officers. The masses of looters grew bigger due to the economic crisis marked by the drop in the value of the rupiah and the difficulty of getting nine basic commodities (*sembako*).

As for the G30S incident, the media want the May 1998 riots not to be remembered anymore since we want to move forward. Although the May 1998 tragedy was different from the G30S naïve, the people interviewed by Goodfellow admitted that the atmosphere before the fall of President Suharto was indeed similar to that of the G30S event (Goodfellow, 2003). Goodfellow's statements to "not dwell on the past" and to "stop looking back and start moving forward" are part of the social mechanism of forgetting and the power process in historical writing. There are several types of forgetting acts, namely: (1) forgiving and forgetting; (2) forgiving but not forgetting; (3) forgetting but not forgiving; and (4) not forgiving and forgetting (Budiawan, 2004).

The fourth framing made by the three national media is the framing of post-tragedy events in its association with the last element of Robert M. Entman's framing analysis, i.e., treatment recommendation (the recommended process to solve the problem). In general, the three national newspapers recommended the government completely resolve the May 1998 tragedy. The recommendations included implementing TGPF recommendations through the establishment of an Ad Hoc Human Rights Court, filing a public class action against the government, dismissing the Attorney General, and establishing a Human Rights Violation Investigation Commission (KPP HAM), all of which can be implemented if there is political will from the government.

Political will is a representation of the desire to expand efforts to pursue political goals (Mintzberg, 1983 as cited in Treadway et al., 2005). One of TGPF's recommendations that the government should follow up on is to provide rehabilitation and compensation for all victims of the riots. In addition, the government must make it easier for the victims to take care of their security. The government must also immediately help rebuild the burnt buildings, especially economic and trade centres as well as social facilities. With the total physical damage caused by the riots, the May 1998 tragedy should be compared to the Malari (*Malapetaka Limabelas Januari*) incident on January 15, 1974, which damaged 144 buildings, or, to the Kudatuli (*Kerusuhan Dua Puluh Tujuh Juli*) incident on July 27, 1996, which destroyed dozens of buildings and vehicles, with a total loss of IDR100 billion. For the May 1998 tragedy itself, the Information Center for the Indonesian National Armed Forces reported that 500 people died in the riots in DKI Jakarta. This number did not include 100 people who died based on the reports from the Tangerang regional government and dozens of dead bodies based on the reports from the Bekasi regional government (Habibie, 2006, p. 7). With all the loss and trauma felt by the victims, rehabilitation is therefore extremely needed. One of the reasons is that some of the people who died were labelled as looters, making them suffer twice: died in the looting and were labelled as criminals.

The media, particularly *Kompas*, also gave recommendations to the victims and their families to stay united and not forget this terrible incident. *Kompas* suggested the victims and their families, especially the female victims, keep in line. *Kompas* seemed to remind the public that women can act as agencies or individual actors who can process social experiences and deal with ways of tackling life's problems (Sjoberg & Gentry, 2011). This means that women are not seen as objects but as subjects who can change the conditions of their lives. In the context of the May 1998 tragedy, the victims and their families, particularly the female victims, not only stopped crying and lamenting about what had happened but also strengthened each other by spreading hopes and preserving memories of this dark incident.

CONCLUSION

In a decade, there are four dominant framings in the news coverage of the three newspapers for the May 1998 tragedy, namely: the framing of a tragedy of humanity, the framing of intellectual actors, the framing of the victims' suffering, and the framing of post-tragedy events. About the framing of the tragedy of humanity, the media highlighted humanitarian issues in the context of the May 1998 tragedy; this framing is dominantly shown in *Kompas*. The media framed intellectual actors by viewing who was responsible for the May 1998 tragedy. Meanwhile, the framing of the victims' suffering defines the moral judgment of the media, whereas the framing of post-tragedy events covers recommendations made by the media in resolving the May 1998 tragedy.

Of the three national newspapers, *Republika* and *Suara Karya* consistently made political framing, while *Kompas* shifted to using the framing of the tragedy of humanity (16 news reports). The framing of the tragedy of humanity by *Kompas* is shown in the headlines, news leads, and news resource persons/interviewees, most of whom are the victims of the May 1998 tragedy and their families.

Kompas initially framed the May 1998 tragedy as a political issue. However, this has shifted since 2001 and the framing of the tragedy of humanity has begun to dominate the news published from then onwards. This framing was used as the master frame for *Kompas* and can be interpreted as its use of the victim's perspective. By highlighting the personalization, symbolization, and simplification of the victims and their families as the centre of discussion, the tragedy they experienced and their problems of traumatic memories must be preserved as capital to fight for justice. The framing of the tragedy of humanity becomes a frame practiced by the media at the mezzo or moderate level.

By not highlighting legal framing as the main frame, the three newspapers put aside the issues of legal liability in the May 1998 tragedy. The efforts and recommendations made by the Joint Fact Finding Team (TGPF) for the May 1998 riots as an official team appointed by President Habibie did not appear in the news coverage of the commemoration of the May 1998 tragedy. This means that TGPF and its recommendations were chosen by the media to be forgotten.

The second is the framing of the intellectual actors, which relates to the second element of framing, i.e., 'diagnose causes'. This framing is used to consider who or what is the cause of a problem. Most of the reports in the three newspapers regarded the government as the actor who was held responsible for not resolving the May 1998 tragedy. President Megawati and President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (SBY) were among the names of important figures in the government directly mentioned by the media as the actors related to the resolution of the May 1998 tragedy. *Suara Karya* even mentioned President SBY in its headline ("*Kasus HAM SBY*", May 12, 2007), explicitly stating that SBY was the cause of the unresolved settlement of the May 1998 tragedy, which contradicted his statement as a presidential candidate in 2004. Meanwhile, President Megawati was mentioned in the news when she attended the sixth commemoration event of the May 1998 tragedy.

Although the police as a symbol of the central security force have failed to fulfil their duty to protect the citizens of DKI Jakarta, the police were not framed by the media as the actor responsible for the incident, likewise the DKI Jakarta Provincial Government. Sutiyoso, the governor of DKI Jakarta at that time, even managed to be re-elected for a second term in the period of 2002-2007. The three media seemed to have framed the National Police Chief and the heads of regional government (in this case DKI Jakarta Provincial Government) as the forgotten parties to be held accountable, likewise, TGPF recommended the government to investigate Major General Prabowo Subianto. In addition, the media also did not remind the public that the former head of the Joint Fact Finding Team (TGPF), Marzuki Darusman, served as Attorney General from 1999 to 2001.

The third dominant media framing is the framing of the victims' suffering, which relates to the moral judgments made by the media to provide arguments for the definition of the problem created. Each media had its moral judgment on the news reported. *Kompas* focused more on the problems of forgetting and forgetfulness which have become obstacles and challenges for the victims and their families, whereas *Republika* and *Suara Karya* tended to emphasize more the conditions of disappointment, regret, solidarity, and hopes for the

victims and their families. While the main function of journalism is to help citizens hold the government accountable (Entman, 2005), both *Republika* and *Suara Karya* stopped at the current condition of the victims and their families and did not look ahead to future challenges.

The moral judgment forgotten by the three media is that history and memory do not always go hand in hand and have the possibility of clashing with each other. The public should be reminded that there are always groups of people who want to monopolize history and suppress people's memories.

The last media framing is the framing of post-tragedy events in the form of treatment recommendations made by the media to solve the problem. The three national newspapers generally recommended the government resolve the case of the May 1998 tragedy by implementing TGPF recommendations through the establishment of an Ad Hoc Human Rights Court, filing a public class action against the government, dismissing the Attorney General, and establishing Human Rights Violation Investigation Commission (KPP HAM). All of these recommendations can be implemented if there is political will from the government. According to Mintzberg (1983), political will is a representation of the desire to expand efforts to pursue political goals.

The three newspapers forgot to remind the public that in order to remember an incident, the public will need the media, which are the sites of memory (Nora, 1989). If the public wants to always remember the May 1998 tragedy, something newsworthy should be made to commemorate it.

BIODATA

Doddy Salman is a graduate student of Universitas Sebelas Maret Graduate School, Surakarta Central Java Indonesia. His area of interest is Cultural Studies, Journalism, and Memory Studies. Email: doddysalman@student.uns.ac.id

Andrik Purwasito is a Professor of Communication Science at the Faculty of Social and Political Science Universitas Sebelas Maret Surakarta Central Java Indonesia. His interests are Cultural Studies, International Relations, and Cultural Diplomacy. He is also an artist (poetry, painting, wayang) Email: andrikpurwasito@gmail.com

Wakit Abdullah Rais is a Professor of Ethnolinguistics at the Faculty of Culture Universitas Sebelas Maret Surakarta Central Java Indonesia. His interests are ethnolinguistics, dialectology, and semantics. Email: wakit.a.rais_1460@staff.uns.ac.id

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