REPRESENTATION OF BEAUTY
IN PACKAGING ILLUSTRATIONS OF MADURESE TRADITIONAL HERBAL MEDICINE FOR BEAUTY CARE

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the characteristics of Madurese traditional herbal medicine packaging for beauty treatment and reveal the beauty concept that prevail in the life of the Madurese culture by interpreting the packaging illustrations. In addition, this study also aims to document one of the cultural assets of Madurese in the form of scientific papers. The research approach is qualitative, relying on cultural semiotics analysis. The concepts of beauty that familiar in Madurese people are raddin (pretty/cute), sengset (tight body) and the most importance is raddin atena (inner beauty) have undergone a change in value. There are findings that the meaning of the physical beauty which is represented in the illustrations of the packagings tend to accommodate the values of sexuality.

Keywords: Beauty, madurese, herbal, packaging, illustration

A. Introduction

In general, people outside the Madurese community or who less interact with them, knowing Madurese culture through bull race festival, or batik which has been becoming more popular recently. They actually also have a strong culture in the field of cultivation of medicinal plants to produce herbal concoction known as Ramuan Madura. One of the herbal products which is produced for female beauty care, both face and maintaining overall body appearance.

The starting point why researchers get interested in this research because the style of the illustrations in the packaging neither less use of local cultural icons like batik ornaments nor local woman characters, such as some characters of illustration models do not represent the Madurese women lifestyle and behavior that are courteous, dress modestly or wear their traditional costumes. Thus make the products are far from the impression of Madurese traditional herbal medicines. From this point, it becomes interesting to discuss and try to understand what the traditional concept of beauty in the Madurese culture is now. The first step is to reveal the cultural codes of beauty that prevail in the life of the Madurese culture. Secondly, to know what the concept of beauty in general, and thirdly, identify the characteristics of illustration in the Madurese
traditional herbs packaging for beauty treatments, and the last, analyze all the connections within those variables then interpret them using semiotics.

B. Research Method

This research is resting on semiotics and using qualitative paradigm. Samples are determined by purposive sampling. The main criterion is the packaging should have illustrations. Other aspect is that the product should explicitly state its function as a herbal beauty care / beauty treatment such as for the breast, face, stomach / waist, and so on in its packaging. Product is not limited to one particular brand. After going through the process of observation based on those criteria are found 8 (eight) packagings are strongly associated with the physical beauty treatments (facial and body). In the observation we get information from the owner of the stores that some traditional herbs are sold through online as well. For that reason researchers use of Internet resources to increase the number of research samples. we found 3 (three) packagings that meet the criteria, bringing the total number of samples is 11 packagings.

Data relating to the concept of beauty in Madurese culture are supported by literature and interviewing Madurese humanists such as D. Zawawi Imron and Edi Setiawan. We also interview A. Dardiri Zubaeri, cultural observer of Madurese culture via e-mail. We also meet and talk to producers and consumers of Madurese traditional herbal medicine products.

C. Discussion

In Madura Island, the main purpose among women taking herbs to keep the body healthy. Thus physically fit body is one of the attractions of consuming it. Various cultures say that beauty of the female body signifies the value of youth, fertility, and health (Grammer et al., 2003, p.387). It can be the basis of the assumption that health body remains a factor supporting the concept of beauty.

Illustration in the packaging of Madurese traditional herbs packaging for beauty care can give an idea of beauty value concept among the Madurese people today. It can be observed from the various illustrations on the packagings, which are directly or symbolically reflects those values. The interpretation uses semiotics of Roland Barthes which aid that every sign has a value of contextuality meaning. Its meaning can be understood as part of a cultural phenomenon surrounding the interpretation. In this case the packaging illustrations are seen as a local artifacts so that the sign that appears later using references that have been agreed upon and be part of the local culture. For example, in Madurese culture, strong colors such as red, blue, and yellow and other colors are sometimes applied with a bold / contrast style. It is a representation of Madurese people that always passionate, open-minded, and honest in express their opinions.

However, it is possible to use the comparison beyond the product or concept of Madurese local culture to see the concepts that are more general. Barthes in Aiello (2006) claims that visual meaning can be interpreted by two level, denotation which is corresponded with literal meaning of an object and connotation which is related to symbolic or ideological meaning of an object inscribed by cultural codes. Interpret an a visual object should not be limited by homogeneous reference space. As said by Aiello that same denotative meanings can be attributed to different connotative meanings,
according to historical and cultural context in which the message is produced and interpreted. In contrast, the same symbolic meanings can be expressed through different denotative meanings (p. 94). In this point, culture manifests itself in an object, and as such, any ideology manifests itself through a variety of code that infiltrates into the object in the form of signifiers.

1. The Concept of Beauty

a). The Concept of Beauty in Terms of Cross-Cultural Studies.

Definition of beauty so far is still debatable. Many aspects underlying a variety of opinions about beauty itself. Darwin after making a variety of cross-cultural observations concludes that beauty has no single standard. However, in view of Ford and Beach, a slim body is the ideals of beauty among many cultures and communities (Mazur, 1986, p. 208).

The question arises then is why women in general tend to view the body as an important asset that should - wherever possible - be maintained? What about the men? Symons in Mazur (p. 208) explains that in fact both women and men can be sexually aroused by visual stimulus. However, under normal circumstances, men tend to look for and express appreciation for the erotic imagery of the opposite sex. Similarly some researchers Berscheid & Walster, Dion, Huston & Levinger in Mazur (p. 208) explains that from some surveys men tend to put physical attributes as the first choice as the most interesting picture about women, while women tend to see that the man's appeal on merits personal traits such as sensitivity and intelligence. The result is predictable; Symons sees that women are more depressed than men, in relation to attract the opposite sex, so they are confronted the concept of ideal beauty. They begin understand that their social opportunities are determined by the beauty of their body. Sensitivity on the so-called beautiful becomes the important thing in their lives. From the descriptions of some research it can be concluded why women, in some various ways, try to keep or become beautiful according to men’s point of view and social perception on beauty.

The social construction of beauty has been established for a long time. The philosophers, poets, and other thinkers believe that there is a fundamental relationship between beauty and positive qualities. This what makes Judith H. Langlois conducts a research to reveal whether popular metaphors of beauty is just a myth or reality, such as Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, never judge a book by its cover and beauty is only skin-deep, In her research, entitled Maxims or Myths of Beauty? A Meta-Analytic and Theoretical Review (2000). She uses children and adults in a variety of cultural groups as the respondents to find attractive or unattractive criteria of person. Found that physical beauty can not affect the assessment, treatment, and one's attitude toward others. It was concluded that the words of the popular metaphor is a myth and not reality. Beauty is not just what is seen and not just as well as deep layers of the skin (2000, p. 404).

Most likely why metaphor later becomes a myth since children and adults have often heard and assimilated by it so they confidently have their own standard of beauty. They know how to assess or treat others not only by outward appearance, and it does not relate to attitudes and the nature of man (Langlois, 2000, p. 408). With the ability of people to see the attraction as a consequence of the non-physical human being is able to resist the traditional concept of beauty which influences for a long time. One can determine something is worthy or not, good or bad, even smart or not is someone, it is
not based on the value of physical beauty. One’s quality and considered as attractive if he/she meets the criteria of virtue or moral norms. Maybe this is then known as inner beauty. As revealed by Rumson in Tung Chung-hsuang (2008, p. 2) which he distinguishes inner and outer beauty. He said that what gives satisfaction to the sensory experience (sight) is called a sensual beauty or outer beauty, but which satisfies the mind/soul is called mental beauty. Such as kindness, sensitivity/tenderness, compassion, creativity, and intelligence. There is other study relates to the general concept of beauty but focuses on the facial one. Gillian Rhodes in The Evolutionary Psychology of Facial Beauty (2006) maps out what is beautiful in a variety of social and ethnic communities among Asian and Caucasian. Her starting point is several previous studies that conclude that an attractive face naturally cause a kind of sexual attraction and also bring a kind of positive impression and treatment to person. However, the standard of beauty in general is still arbitrary (2006, p. 200). For example is Darwin observations to practices of beauty in many cultures that beauty values are influenced by culture. Contrary to Darwin's statement, Cunningham, et al., say that beauty is not influenced by culture but by biological background as based on research in various cultures that shows in general, the standard of beauty is the same (Rhodes, 2006, p. 200).

b). Beauty Concepts in Media

Research in the field of media frequently discuss about how the print and electronic media create the concept of beauty that will inevitably push the women to conform to a certain standard to be called as beautiful. Standardization, implicitly or explicitly, can be seen on display, print and electronic advertising, TV programs, and beauty contests in which their primary sponsorships in the general are beauty products. The effect of globalization has its own beauty concept, so pretty and feminine values are represented through media channels. In the context of beauty in pop culture or popular, advertisement has formed a meaning of beauty. According to Aprilia (2005, p. 42), advertising plays a major role in generating and shaping it. It is common among Indonesian people in particular that main standard of beauty are look young, has a light skin, smooth face with no acne, straight black hair without dandruff, and slender body. Adding by Wiasti, woman must be has a tall body, symmetrical face, slim hip and full breasts. She adds that idealism of light/fair skin phenomenon can be seen in various lightening product advertisements in magazines and television, ranging from a sitcom actress, models and other artists that the majority of them have light skin (www.ejournal-unud.ac.id). The result is predictable, in persuading of their obsession, women straighten and color their hair. In some cases they commit wax, bleach injection, and liposuction. For women today, being old or wrinkled is the biggest concern. The media has been constructing these fears for their advantage. They throw the bait in the form of hipierreality imageries. As expressed by Aprillia (2005, p. 45) that what is represented in the ad is not actually the real thing, but imaginary. That is what is shown in the mass media about the beauty is not the real thing, but that has been distorted. For instance, advertisement models are probably not as pretty as in the ads. Their bodies are made thinner and their skin lightened by the sophistication of digital technology.
c). Woman Beauty Concept in Relation to the Popularity of Herbal Treatments among Madurese Population.

Like most of the prevailing concept of beauty in different social and cultural community, the meaning of beauty it could express the physical and non-physical domains. However, the physical appearance of a woman, as in general, has been a concern for a long time. In Madurese culture, body treatments using traditional herbs, has been a tradition for hundreds of years. Does it have a relation to the local concept of beauty? Is it similar to the concept of beauty in general? There is no research to discuss it. However, there is an old expression is still frequently heard by the Madurese. As is expressed by Zubairi that Madurese actually has its own concept of beauty. Such "Potrekoneng potre Madura, pajalanna neter kolenang palembayya meltas manjalins, Matanamorka', Alessa daun membha, bibirra jerruk salone..." That potrekoneng daughter of Madurese, really gracef ul gait, such as rattan, her eyes flick, her eye brows are like membha leaves, her lips such as a slice of orange..." (www.sosbud.kompasiana .com/2012/03/21). According to him, the phrases are now likely experiencing a shift of meaning. On slaught of mythical beauty and new construction of beauty concept that is raised by the media and advertising, affecting women and men on the island of Madura on understanding of what is beauty. In the past, a woman is called beautiful when acting in accordance with local custom. It means that beauty is not just limited to the skin surface value. However, it is also necessary to find out about the importance of body care among Madurese women as a basis to determine the extent of beauty that has rolled in the life of the Madurese people. All of that can be traced through a common habit of consuming herbs that is easily found among Madurese women.

Based on the results of previous studies, entitled “Inventarisasi Jamu Madura yang dimanfaatkan untuk Perawatan Kesehatan dan Pengobatan Gejala Penyakit yang berkaitan dengan Fungsi Reproduksi pada Wanita”/ “Inventory of Madurese Herbal Medicine that used for Health Care and Symptoms Treatment that Relate to Reproductive Function in Women" by Lestari Handayani et.al in 1996, shows that consuming herbal medicine is a habit of Madurese woman. It has been conducting since adolescence. In general, said Handayani, herbs are usually taken by woman when stepping on period of first menstruation. Herbal Medicine is widely consumed in this period is Galian Putri (Princess Pit). Herbal Medicine is consumed to keep the body and the uterus becoming tight and reducing painful menstruation as well (1996: 18-19). Based on our observations in some herbalist on the island of Madura, particularly in towns, the herbs are consumed by many young women to prevent them from leucorrhoea ocure. They know or are interested in consuming herbal medicine base on colleagues or parents. According Handayani et.al that in the wedding preparations, woman also consume Sari Rapet herb to prevent them from excessive discharge and mucus in the vagina. In addition, they also consume herbal decoction (godogan) so that the body is smelling fragrant and not sweat then sprinkled with cold powder to make the skin looks smoother and brighter.

In relation to sexual problems.Woman who is married generally consume herbs as daily care to prevent body from odor and vaginal discharge. According to Lestari, in relation to sexual relationships, liquid herbal drink is consumed regularly on Monday and Thursday, if required the frequency is added to obtain maximum results. Besides herbal drink, Madura woman also use herbal powder, soap and rod that is inserted into the vagina. This type is usually used just before sexual intercourse (Handayaniet. al,
1996:20). From the explanation it can be concluded that the consumption of herbal medicine aim to keep the body healthy. It will lead to a stronger appeal than an unhealthy body. In relation to male-female relationships, physical health is one of the attractions, especially from man point of view. In the study of human evolutionary psychology of different cultures, it is shown that beauty signifies the value of youth, fertility, and health (Grammer et.al., 2003, p. 387). Early research by Westermarck (1921) then Ellis (1926) and Symons (1979, 1995) say that the appeal of the face and body are physically assessed from its health. It is a representation of the quality of genetic (Grammer et.al. 2003, p. 399). The results of this study can be the basis of the assumption that the physical body remains a factor supporting the interest of the opposite sex and a fit/healthy body is the trigger of the appeal.

Indicator of a healthy body in general is tight body, having light/fair skin and natural aromatic. For the reproduction issue, it is not moist and suffering vaginal discharge. Which in the end, husbands become more satisfied. Physical fitness will be achieved if women consume herbal medicines and treatments regularly since puberty. However, face and body beauty are just one factor supporting the achievement of household harmony, citing in Wahyuningsih and Julijanti research entitled “Pemanfaatan Jamu Madura oleh Perempuan Madura di Kabupaten Bangkalan” (Herbal Consumption among Madurese Woman in Bangkalan District) which reveals that the integrity of the household is not determined only by the woman’s physical appearance, but also by a good communication within housewife, husband, and family. If this is achieved then the husband reluctants to turn to someone else. More over, the herbs lead the woman healthier and actively support the family economy (2007: 14-15). In Madura island and other parts of Indonesia, Madurese woman also has a role as worker in the rice fields, fresh fish seller, and engaging in inter-regional trades. Those roles are representation of the concept that Madurese woman such as a rattan that is physically strong but flexible in carrying out her roles as the backbone of the family besides the husband. It can be concluded that in Madurese culture, physical attractiveness remains to be an inevitable part of social life. A healthy body concept makes the local herbal industries to survive and become an integral part in the lives of the people, especially Madurese woman.

2. Characteristic of Illustrations and Concept of Beauty

The illustration characteristics are represented by their styles. Each illustration has the ability to convey meaning directly (denotative) and the connotative. The image resembles the original reality called realist, that the meaning of the message is usually immediately understood, or symbolic if it cannot be interpreted directly without understanding the contextual value. In this study, to determine the value of contextuality can be done by identifying the types of herbs and their functions through written information listed on the packaging. This is the starting point of interpretation that can be raised in the context of objects (illustrations) and meanings. Overall, there are 3 types of illustration styles, namely symbolic, realist, and combination of realist and symbolic illustrations.

According to interview with D. Zawawi Imron and Edi Setiawan, the term of beauty can be physically or mentally (inner beauty). In Madurese culture, recognition of the inner beauty places in a higher level than the physical appearance. However, media exposures affect it in a new perception. As Dardiri Zubaeri says (in his email) that generally there is a shift of meaning of beauty in any society in Indonesia, including in
Madura Island. Formerly, in this island the term of beauty is "cute dark-face" which associated to the climate of Madura Island which is sunny. Currently there are many women in the villages have been becoming the victims of Madurese "lightening powder". Pale and flaky faces can be found in many places in Madura Island. Zubaeri say as well that the meaning of beauty is ultimately the same with another places in and outside Madura Island, light/fair skin, slim, and tall. Regarding the term of slim and tall, traditional Madurese people do not recognize the concepts. Madurese man crave a woman who *raddin* (cute), *sengset* (tight body) and the most important is *raddin atena* (inner beauty). It can be seen that the balance between physical and mental is the main characteristic of ideal woman in Madura island.

In some illustrations, stomach and small waist represent ideal female body. This concept as the same as characteristic of slimming product advertisements that are common found in TV, printing media, and internet. The difference is in the style of illustration technique, which in ramuan Madura packagings are used to using manual style but in modern body slimming products using photography. It can be concluded that that there is a common value of slender as physical attractiveness has been absorbed into the concept of traditional woman's herbal body care packagings. This phenomenon is affected by many of modern body care products and advertisements circulating widely in the local communities (see Figures 1).


A depiction of an open women's body parts such as in figure 1 is taboo in the context of the local custom. Based on the observation of the writers all the way on the island of Madura, girls usually wear *hijab* and to assert that they are not out of style, are found in the major towns on the island of Madura, some girls have adopted the 'modern' hijab style. A common model is wearing a long sleeve shirt combined with a tight jeans. Some others wear Madurese batik fabric loops to cover their legs and heads. The contradiction with local manner is also found in a product of teenage beauty care (figure 2). Depicted a teenager with skimpy outfit is drinking a glass of herbal drink.

The hand that raises the glass followed by a face that looks up to the glass can be interpreted that herbal medicine is something worthwhile. A slender raised arm is a metonymy, a part of the body that stands for an ideal teen body in awhile since the fat arm is usually associated with obesity. The position of her body while squatting usually
find in people who buy herbal drink on the roadside. Because there is no place to sit and
the consumers should drink it quickly, they usually squat close to the herbalist.
However, with this style of dress, it is not in accordance with the value of local
politeness. This attitude is something controversial in Madurese culture. In conclusion,
this depiction as if confirms that the ideal physical beauty is slim. Teenage girl will look
more attractive if the dress also open as the girls in the cities. A very different picture to
the value of politeness of Madurese tradition which generally remains firmly roots in
the local culture to date.

Sensuality and physical appearance are used as a means of attraction such as
shown in figure 3. It depicts the position of woman in front of a man who sits in relax
manner as if enjoys a 'show.' This is a general overview that places female sexuality is
just as satisfying man's desire. The picture can be interpreted that the body language on
the figure of a woman is a visual language of 'provocative and seductive'. Long curly
and a bit messy hair, hands on hips, and the waist and breasts rotate slightly sideways
showing her body curves signify 'naughty/kinky'. The red color on the cloth can be
associated with impression of challenging and represents the vitality and sensuality. A
man represents the common view that woman is object for men. Man looks woman only
on physical beauty only, and woman tries to become what is attractive in the eyes of the
man, that is slim, curvaceous, and sensuous.

The nuances of sexuality in Madurese traditional herbs packaging illustrations
are in contrast to local traditions. It also shows that there is a significance external value
concept that influences local people, packaging designers, and manufacturers of herbal
medicine as well. That is a ‘modern’ concept of beauty that has exchange the local one
which is represented in traditional herb packagings for beauty treatment as its signifier.
The local people have described the beauty concept as the same as the construction of
beauty as is found in the mass media. Global aesthetic has penetrated into Jamu
Madura, which is one of the local actualizations of Madurese cultures.

Style of illustration that shows external influences not only deals with the style of dress as described in Figure 3, but also uses the style of anime hairstyles, which is becoming a trend among young people or communities in big cities not only in Japan but also in major cities in Indonesia namely Harajuku (figure 4). Illustration that refers to anime and Harajuku style is likely to make a good impression that the product as modern as products that circulate nationally and internationally. This visual concept will make the product gets attention of teenagers or young people easier although the illustration style obviously does not reflect a local value. In conclusion, there is a kind of self-distrust that local character portrayal will give less strength to the image of the product. Thus the picture that adopts external imagery that is widely used in modern products signifies that a local beauty concept has been substituted by external concept of beauty and pride.
However, the use of local culture is apparently not completely abandoned. There are some products that continue to use the approach. As shown at figure 5, the use of local characters is shown using symbol of women dress like princess. It is signified by strapless, batik, and accessories that are often found at the palace or in seremonial events.


On the left side, is depicted a woman who is kneeling, looking down, and her hands in worship position. She dress in strapless cloth style mix with batik skirt and a red scarf tied around her waist. In the background there is a large yellow sphere with ornament on the left and right. At the top of this woman's head is floating a white crown. Strangely though her hair is white, her body and face look young. The depiction of the atmosphere in the illustration impresses mystical. A fresh face white-haired woman represents a long lasting beauty. White can also be a symbol of eternity and purity. White crown hovering over his head is a symbol of the sacred blessing. Kneeling and worshiping positions represent nobility, loyalty, and devotion. Traditional clothing and red shawl binds strongly represent the value of tradition persisted due to loyalty and noble intentions. The large yellow sphere surrounding this woman's body can mean greatness. Decorative ornaments on the right and left are a symbol of tradition. Overall this can be interpreted as that medicinal herb derives from a long tradition. Processed by sincerity and devotion. It will bring great blessings to the drinkers; They will look beautiful and fresh even though the age of aging.

On the right one, the illustration on the packaging of boiling herbs product represents the impression a fresh/healthy and fragrant young woman. The freshness and fragrance are represented by a flower in her ears and a tray containing fruits and colorful plants. The girl's face is cheerful, with slightly decomposes hair, revealing the graceful sensuality. A healthy and tight body are described with a curvaceous body with a hefty hand holding a tray full of flowers and fruit. Great necklace signifies social status like a girl who lives in the palace. This is supported by a variety of colors and contrast in her shirt as a characteristic motif of Madurese batik. The use of traditional visual approach in illustrations aims to emphasize that the products are a heritage that will make the consumers are look like a princess, which is graceful and attractive.
A combination of some icons in defining the meaning of beauty is found in herbal products called *Awet Ayu* or 'a long lasting beauty'. This product Packaging illustration features a blend of human face and butterfly. As a local product, such a symbolic illustration style is beyond expectation. Packaging designer must have the ability to analyze the function of the product well and express it in a subtle visual language support. Butterfly live process (metamorphosis) which is from a caterpillar - which for some people is disgusting or frightening because it can cause itching - at a time changes into something interesting and beautiful. The Butterfly represents ‘transformation’ as the ugly caterpillar changes into the beautiful creature. The nature of its lifecycle represents growth toward the better. Thus, the picture explains that taking jamu ‘Awet Ayu’ would make a dull woman's face will be bright. Icon of an eye that is staring sharply represents a high confidence because the woman in the picture has a face that has matched the standard of beauty in general: light/fair color, smooth, and fresh.

![Picture of Awet Ayu product](image)

**D. Conclusion**

Illustration on the packaging of herbal beauty care, in some degrees, describing the shift of meaning of beauty among the local population. Madurese culture knows no beautiful as light skinned body, such as East Asians or even Western people. Verbally, this term does not appear in the box, but visually it does. A tight body or *sengset* often appears in the packaging by illustrated with a flat stomach or a slim waist body and buxom breasts. This is a general construction of beauty in recent value that associated with sexuality. In terms of hair style, similar to that find in advertisements, the long and black hair is representing femininity. Interestingly, there is a sense of using a wavy long hair in the illustration models, not straight long hair like in TVs or print media. Is this something related to subconscious that wavy hair brings a certain kind of sensation? Nature and sea wave of Madura Island may be very close association with this hair style aesthetic value. In general, the local values are still presented in the packaging illustration of Madurese traditional herbs for beauty care, although they remain a little.
Bibliography


