

## ISLAMIC ESTHETIC IDEOLOGY IN PROMOTION MEDIA

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### ABSTRACT

*A company, in selling its product, uses both direct and indirect selling to the prospect user. In indirect product selling, a promotion media is used, whether in product packaging, publication, or advertising. This research uses a qualitative research method. Qualitative method is the right choice since it is able to provide a rich and holistic picture. The data collection in this research was collected using observation, interview and document techniques. Base on the analysis, it appear that the promotion media designed based on certain target audience should take the market esthetics into account. The audiences, majority of which are Moslem, of course have spiritual character pointing to divinity. It is through Islamic esthetics that the company makes its product close to the Moslem audience. With hegemonic ideology approach strategy applied, the audience voluntarily and consciously feels requiring the promoted product. The doctrine packaged in promotion media makes the reader, as the prospect consumer, follows the message conveyed, because of Islamic emotional proximity.*

**Keywords:** Media, ideology, Madurasa, audience, Islam

### INTRODUCTION

Media is a means of delivering news, assessment or general description on many things; it has an ability to serve as an institution that can create public opinion, among others, because media can also develop into stressor group on an idea or thought, and even an interest or image that it represents to be put into a more empirical life context (Rohani, 1997).

Regarding this, the media existing in dualism position, in the sense that it can affect either “positively” or negatively. This normative attributes is very relative in nature, depending on the interest dimension it represents. Media can create what we know about world and can be the primary source of various ideas and opinions. Media can be influenced by the way we think and act (Burton, 2008). Media can enable us to establish moral solidarity relationship imaginatively. Media can be an instrument used freely and directly to establish a separated relationship from the reverse of what we say or we tend to believe (Fiske, 2007).

When cultural media presents amid industrial and contemporary societies, it will encounter and face ideology. In such the situation, the definition of ideology has changed. Ideology serves not only as a social political strength, but also as an economic one. Ideology has changed its community’s perception; it is not only a doctrine requiring its proponents’ loyalty, but it has shifted into a kind of imagination, a kind of figure existing in cultural discourse. In contemporary or postmodernism cultural discourse, ideology exists there, within cultural media, either printed or electronic (Christomy, 2004). Ideology expression in media intended to the community can be, among other (1) ideology, referring to the ideas about the essence and operation of power relationship as well as a variety of believers and values within the community culture. How various aspects of media contribute to the sustainability

of various beliefs and values within the society, (2) institution, is organizations undertaking and controlling media, (3) text, all of products (packages) are media paying attention to the readable fact to find out its meanings. But, how the texts can be read differently by different audience, (4) social context, there should be public perception about the news contextualized by social environment, (5) audiences can be defined in relation to various social groupings. How good the audience's own perception on the social group affecting its preference, reading, and material targeted to him/her.

The ideology constructed by a dominant group aims to produce and legitimize its dominance. One of its main strategies is to make the audience aware that dominance is taken for granted. The discourse in such the approach is considered as a medium by the dominant group, to persuade and to communicate to the audience the power and dominance production they have, so that it will be apparently legitimate and correct. Ideology is inherently social in nature that requires sharing among the members of organization group or collectivity with others, to establish solidarity and measure oneness in the form of acting and behaving. Ideology is internally used between the members of group or community. Ideology is not only coordination and cohesion, but also creates group identity differing them from others (Dijk, 1997). James Lull adds that recently the media incessantly manipulate the information and public image in constructing a strong ideology. It is to make the dominant ideology an 'information elite' (Lull, 1998). Power or dominance derives directly from the ability in articulating the idea system within the society. For that reason, ideology has strength when it can be developed with communication. In community empowerment, ideology is employed with several techniques, including: (1) agitation, (2) provocation, (3) propaganda, (4) infiltration, and (5) organizing (Syafaat, 2008).

Media serving as product promotion not only delivers the message but also seduces the audience through ideology in order to react, thereby doing purchasing action. Marx uses the term ideology to refer to the idea rule system attempting to disguise the contradiction existing in the capitalist system center. He views that capitalism spirit cannot be defined randomly based on the economic greed in many things, but otherwise. It is an ethic system and an ethos supporting the economic success (Rizer, 2009). Pierre Bourdieu views that economy is not only ideology mask or simple evasion from economic interest. On the one hand, the new producer with merely belief as their capital, can establish them in the market by holding on strongly the values they use (Bourdieu, 2010).

This research using a sample of herbal medicine company in Indonesia that is PT Air Mancur. PT. Air Mancur is one of medicinal herb companies producing "Madurasa" brand deriving from honey as basic material. The product packaging honey labeled with that brand is much sold out in the market so that it supports other products within the company. This honey product becomes an extraordinary one because it is wrapped with manipulation with promotion media from the product packaging, publication in mass media, and advertisement media. The ideology packaged in promotion media changes "Madurasa" product into the special one that always be consumed by the society. The presence of Islamic esthetic elements in promotion media design makes the Moslem audiences interested in purchasing the product.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses a qualitative research method. Qualitative method is the right choice since it is able to provide a rich and holistic picture (see Merriam, 2008). The decision to use this method is related to the characteristics of the research topic, the data sources, and the

research data (Marohaini Yusoff, 2004). This research trying to analyze the utilization of Islamic esthetic ideology in promotion media at the product of company that is well-known in Indonesia, PT. Air Mancur. The name of company product is “Madurasa”, honey in packs.

The data collection in this research was collected using observation, interview and document techniques. The observation was conducted by conducting direct observation in house in PT. Air Mancur Solo, to find its promotion media and publication. The interview was conducted with the designer as the one making the concept of promotion media, the marketing division who knows about market condition, and the purchasers consuming “Madurasa” of PT Air Mancur. The data from document was obtained from the sample published product “Madurasa” in *Ummat* magazine, printed ads in *Sedap Sekejap* magazine, and printed ads constituting *Leaflet*. All of the data were intended to find out the extent to which the promotion media design contained ideology having textual and contextual aspect in its application and publication. In this research, some adaptation and data integration was made as necessary; the necessary analysis techniques were also employed. The analysis was examined using Antonio Gramsci’s theory that the special social power relation through media can create and maintain the alliance system through ideological mission in the form of “hegemony”.

#### MAKING LEBARAN “MADURASA” CAKE IN *SEDAP SEKEJAP* MAGAZINE

“Madurasa” ads in *Sedap Sekejap* third edition/III/2002 page 44 is apparently cheerful replete with meaning. These ads contain headline, sub headline, body copy, and recipe to make cake. The headline reads “cake lebaran” choosing *Edwardian Script ITC* type with light green color attached on the top quickly caught by eye to read. Such the type has tender, soft and modest characteristics, while green color is closed to Islamic color. It results in the tender and modest impression in “Madurasa” or PT. Air Mancur’s delivery to the audience, particularly Moslem. The headline sentence is the special message in Idul Fitri day. This peculiarity is because of “Madurasa” product in sub headline increasing the cake delicacy. Headline and sub headline are reconfirmed with body copy read “amid greasy meals during lebaran, you must want a light but refreshing cake. Madurasa Lebaran cake can be one of your choices made of sout cream from lime fruit and Madurasa. This cake provides fragrance and enjoyment for lebaran meal”. Body copy used Arial black type seems to be firm, clear, and communicative. This message is delivered through headline, sub headline, and body copy seems to be intended to the Moslem audiences celebrating the cheerful and happy victory day because of the presence of low-fat light special meal. In the presence of this meal, those with high cholesterol do not need to worry about.

For those who want to learn preparing the apparently delicious and tasty cake as displayed in figure 1, the cake figure is featured with photography technique without reengineering. In addition to cake, there is something interesting in this ads, namely the presence of two *ketupat* (rice cake boiled in a rhombus-shaped packet of plaited young coconut leaves) hung on the left. In the society life, there are three types of *ketupat* (Sabana, 2001): *ketupat kepal*, the small one made of one piece of young coconut leaf with rather round shape; *ketupat selamat*, the medium one made of two pieces of young coconut leaf with rhombus shape; and *ketupat koja*, the big one made of two pieces of young coconut leaf with rectangular shape. The *ketupat* frequently used for Idul Fitri day celebration is *ketupat selamat* with rhombus shape.

*Ketupat selamat* is made of young coconut leaf bunched vertically and horizontally, interlocked up-down. *Janur* (young coconut leaf) is the young leaf (bud) symbolizing the newborn. It means that human being is as if reborn in Idul Fitri day, just like a pure baby

without sin. *Janur* bunched vertically and horizontally represents that human being is advised to *habrur minannas* and *habrur minallah* in the world. This principles overlap in undertaking life. The rhombus shaped *ketupat* has longer size in vertical side. It characterizes spirituality. It means that *ketupat selamat* warns the human being to prioritize and to keep remembering Allah providing livelihood and safety. Two pieces of *ketupat* represents two contradictory concepts, man and woman, handsome and beautiful, day and night, and so on. It means that Allah creates everything in couple in the world.



Figure 1. “Madurasa” ads in *Sedap Sekejap* Magazine Source: *Sedap Sekejap* Magazine

In this context, the use of *ketupat* in Idul Fitri is Indonesian Muslim culture, just like the society consumes “Madurasa” as beverage or food additive. The approach using the figure of two “*ketupat selamat*” is an ideology the PT. Air Mancur builds as the “Madurasa” product producer for the Moslem audiences who celebrate Idul Fitri day. In this case, PT. Air Mancur pays more attention and is very concerned with the Muslim audiences. Behind that, the society “is served” with “Madurasa” product that as if makes the holiday meal more special. Moreover, there is a cake recipe below the ads and “Madurasa” product and PT. Air Mancur as the message sender on the bottom right.

### FASTING AND SHOLAT SCHEDULES IN “MADURASA LEAFLET”

Ramadhan 1427 H (2006) leaflet is one piece of paper consisting of two pages folded in the center. Although it is made of one piece of paper, when observed more closely, it consists of four pages, front cover, back cover, and two inside pages. Headline and tagline are presented in front cover. Slogan and body copy are in back cover. The pages 2 and 3 contain fasting and sholat schedules. This media has two functions: as product ads, and as poster. Product ads can be felt in the front and back covers promoting “Madurasa”, while the inside pages constitute the poster informing fasting and sholat schedules. The target is Moslem audiences undertaking fasting, as shown in figure 2.

Headline reading “Madurasa” uses *Opus Sans Medium Caps Bold black* type with tagline reading, “*hidup sehat... dengan madu* (live healthily ... with honey)” choosing *Times New Roman Italic Capital* type. The slogan reads “*hidup sehat dengan madu* (live healthily with honey)” using *Times New Roman*, and body copy contains many sentences in 3 paragraph. The first one confirms that honey had ever been used as tax payment in Ancient Egypt time.

The second paragraph cites Quran’s verse, Surah An-Nahl 69, that honey is potential to cure various diseases. The third paragraph recommends eating the sweet meals during breaking the fasting to increase the blood glucose level to the normal level, by means of drinking water because it is absorbable and digestible. In body copy there is an implicit message that honey can improve body immunity and health. The audience can read body copy without feeling ‘being guided’ to recognize the honey’s superiority, and the audiences unconsciously indirectly agree that the intended product is “Madurasa”, like the figure beside. Through this ideology strategy, it is as if “Madurasa” product that can help all daily activities.



Figure 2. Cover and content design of “Madurasa” brochure version Ramadhan Source: In house advertising of PT. Air Mancur

When head line, tagline, slogan and body copy are integrated, it has connotation that “Madurasa” is a honey-based product that can make the body healthy. When connected to the Moslem audiences with activities in Ramadhan, they will have well-maintained stamina because of “Madurasa” consumption. The inside pages as the poster writing the fasting and sholat schedules for the period of 1427 Hijriah particularly for Jakarta and surrounding areas. The schedule was made for 30 days from *Imsak, Shubuh, Terbit (Dawn), Dzuhr, Ashar, Maghrib, and Isya'*. In order to be used in other areas, on the bottom of page, there is time reduction or addition for the schedule of other areas such as Bandung, Semarang, Solo & Jogjakarta, Surabaya, Cirebon, Banten, Medan, and Ujung Pandang. These cities are not only areas in fasting scheduling but also geographic area of “Madurasa” market segmentation. To make the message closer, the design features Islamic characteristics, such as figure of masjid (mosque) with green nuance.

As the message ornament and confirmation, masjid illustration and crescent moon are displayed on the upper right. The figure and table of fasting and sholat schedule seems to unite because it is supported by the bee nest throughout page background. The green masjid figure serves to confirm Islamism, while the yellow bee nest serves to confirm “Madurasa”

product. The masjid with crescent moon figure shows the presence of night circumstance as the activity in Ramadhan moon. The activity such as fast, *sahur* (the meal eaten before daybreak during the fasting month), night pray, night sholat (tarawih), lailatul Qodar, and etc.

The layout and face of this leaflet media cover is different from inside pages. The front cover is organized differently from the back one. The front cover is made symmetrically with same balance when measured using imaginary line. Meanwhile, the back cover contains body copy explaining the origin and benefit of honey organized in justification providing tidy and serious impression. The inside pages conveys the poster about fasting and shalat schedule for 1427 H period. This message is organized simply, chronologically and tidily, so that the Moslem audience can read the schedule more easily and quickly.

By the means of religious emotional proximity, the audiences are unconsciously entrapped in hegemonic ideology. The audience receives happily the message the PT. Air Mancur sends. Such the message is very desirable including the imsak and magrib schedules relative to fasting. The audiences are unconsciously “indoctrinated” by “Madurasa” product to consume it to make their fasting run smoothly, prestigiously and without “break”.

### **PERSUASION OF “HALAL” SIGNATURE IN “MADURASA” PRODUCT**

“Halal” predicate on a product is always waited for by the company. “Halal (rightful)” predicate, launched in 1989 by Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI: Indonesian Islamic Scholars Chamber), constitutes a prestigious predicate to a company. A company’s pride is the obligation to inform this predicate through signature (logo) featured in the product package or advertising media. Signature, from Latin “signare”, means *to mark, sign*. Generally, signature means the characteristics, identity, token, special characteristics applied to an object (Rustam, 2009). Signature includes logo, but in signature the name of object is featured wholly, not as an ‘initial’.

“Halal” is the result of MUI’s ijthah instruction (*fatwa*) as the legal status of an object or action as the product of Islam law about a product’s ‘rightfulness’ certification (Hosen, 2008). The presence of MUI’s role in food, beverage, and cosmetics should register them to the Drug and Food Supervisory and Investigation Agency of Indonesian Scholar Chambers (LPPOM-MUI) to get “halal” certification. To get it is not easy; because it should follow the role of LPPOM-MUI, and two years after obtaining it, the product should be re-register to extend the certificate, and so on.

“Halal” predicate is a prestige to food or beverage product. “Halal” is the measurement of quality from Islam law the LPPOM-MUI legitimizes and issues on the food and beverage product or similar product produced by the society or a group of societies. PT. Air Mancur’s product is very inherent to “halal” predicate. The society will believe more and be happier when there a word or label “halal” on the package. If it is not so, most society, the majority (80%) of which are Moslem, will be reluctant to consume it. Suroso Natakusuma, the General Principal of Indonesian Food Communication Forum (FKPI) states that most Indonesian consumers, particularly those embracing Islam, consider the “halal” label first when they want to purchase a product. This view is based on the survey released by Frontier Consulting Group in 2001, stating that 57.9% people always consider label ‘halal’ (Uway, 2007).

PT. Air Mancur as one of largest and most experienced medicinal herbs companies in producing, should undertake a long procedure to get certificate “halal”. With full struggle and high dedication, finally on February 14, 1998, MUI conferred certificate ‘halal’ to the solid medicinal herbs product, and on December, 1998, the liquid one. To get certificate “halal”

requires concentration and seriousness in complying with the rule imposed by LPPOM-MUI. This company had been waiting for a long time for certificate “halal”, although MUI had delivered “halal” information since January 6, 1989. This certificate acquisition means that PT. Air Mancur has had the right to feature “halal” signature on its product package and advertising media.



Figure 3. “Halal” signature in 1989 & 2007 Source: Indonesian Islamic Scholars Chamber (MUI)

The “halal” signature is written in Arabic Khat Riq’ah type “حلال” (*halal*) confirmed by circular line (figure 3). The “halal” writing is closed to Arabic culture as the Moslem barometer. “Halal” is antonym of *haram* (proscribed). “Halal” is the sign allowing to eat, to drink or to wear or to consume a product or a good. If it is *haram*, the Moslem is prohibited from consuming such the product or good.

“Halal” Certification for a product to MUI is one way to make the company produce product not arbitrarily, but regarding the consumers, most of which are Moslem aware about “halal” or haram. Bambang Widjanarko states that “halal certificate” is profitable to the company when it is featured in the product packaging, because it can attract the consumers’, particularly the Muslim’s, attention. Sony Sumarsono, as the Moslem user prefers choosing the product with ‘halal’ signature (Sony, 2012). Similarly, Ellyastuti representing non-Moslem (Christian) community prefers choosing ‘halal’ product, because it can be drunk more quietly. Ideology strategy applied to the company through ‘halal’ signature has been proven, so that the consumers are more interested and composed (quiet) in consuming it.

The consumer’s enthusiasm to the product given “halal” signature triggers other companies to draw the public’s attention. Some companies used shortcut, by featuring the “halal” signature on their product packaging, while they had not gotten yet the certificate from MUI. This is committed by many companies, particularly home industries, using product selling strategy by featuring “halal” signature in the package. Such this condition, of course, harms the Moslem community. Considering this phenomenon, MUI evaluates why the community can feature the ‘halal’ signature on the product packaging with no certificate.

One of the reasons is that because signature ‘halal’ is very simple, so that it is imitated easily and printed using simple technology on the product package. Because of the “halal” signature deviation or misuse within the society, on December 28, 2007, LPPOM-MUI no longer uses old “halal” signature but the new one. The new signature is more varied, better, and more complicated, integrating Arabic and Latin. Rahayu, as the marketing director states that this new ‘halal’ signature is small in size and good but difficult to apply to the product packaging if not printed with high-tech machine. The presence of new ‘halal’ signature using Arabic Khat Koufi type, based on SK10/Dir/LP POM MUI/XII/07 of Indonesian Islamic Scholars Chamber means that the old signature is not recognized. It can be concluded that the packaging featuring the old “halal” signature means that the product sold has not had “halal” certificate or its certificate has been expired, meaning that LPPOM-MUI does not recognize it as well.

## CONCLUSION

Ideology is the means the PT. Air Mancur uses to convey information to the audiences (consumers) through promotion media. Hegemony through consumer's confidence without compulsion in consuming "Madurasa" product. This strategy is used by the company (producer) to make the users always loyal to and cannot be apart from the product they have purchased. Through power and courage, the company can compel the consumer to accept it. Ideology is conducted through the company name, product brand, raw material, and "halal" certificate, so that the consumers feel confident and composed in consuming.

The society's confidence in PT. Air Mancur should be supported by the product quality. When the product has been consumed by the society and they feel the benefit and usefulness of it, and some changes occur in their health, they believe in the honey product like conveyed by the information in promotion media.

Brand is a means of communicating a product's identity. As a communication instrument, the brand should have both superficial esthetic value or face, and internal esthetic value, namely spirit or soul, so that it will be responded positively by the society's heart. Brand as a product identity is the means of generating confidence among those seeing it. The presence of brand in a product reflects on the legality of company leading to the confidence and composure among the society consuming it. The consumers are unconsciously entrapped with the image of primary brand "Madurasa" always foreshadowing and accompanying the secondary brand such as "Madurasa Stick", "Madurasa Lemon Tea", "Madurasa Green Tea", and so on. They consider that everything with "Madurasa" brand is good, superior and the best.

Madu as basic material of product. There are some sources confirming the consumers' confidence in honey. Qoran Surah An-Nahl verse 68 states, *Wa auhaa rabbuka ilan nahli antittakhizii minal jibaali buyuutaw wa minasy syajari wa mima ya'risyuuna*. It means that, and your God reveals to the bee "Make the nests on the hills, on the trees, wood, and on the place the human being makes". The verse 68 states, *Summa kulil min kullis samaraati faslukil subula rabbiki yazululaan, yakhruju min butuu nihaa syaraabum mukhtalifun alwaanuhuu, fihl syifaa'ul lin naasi, inna fi zaalika la aayatal li qaumiy yatafakkaruuna*. It means that, then eats from each (kind) of fruits and walk on your God's path that has facilitated you. From the bee's body releases the honey with various colors, in which the medicine is contained to cure the human being. This actually a sign of (Allah's greatness) for those thinking of. Some people consider honey as medicinal herb and drinking. Viewed from its history, honey can cure a variety of diseases since the Prophet's time. In its development, honey can be used as food and beverage mixture.

"Halal" Certification. Honey is a herbal product made of natural materials. Honey, when consumed has less risk than its counterpart from chemicals. Honey, as herbal product, does not have side effect. This factor makes the people more confidently consume honey product, because it has very little risk, so that the users feel composed, moreover when the product consumed obtained "halal" certificate from the Drug and Food Supervisory and Investigation Agency of Indonesian Islamic Scholar Chambers (LPPOM-MUI). The presence of "halal" through signature attached to the product packaging or media promotion is expected to improve the minimal image of the marketed product. "Halal" certificate prevails for only two years that can be extended further; this becomes hot issue, particularly for the product that had not gotten it. Several products sold in market sometimes are labeled "halal", while it had not gotten "halal" certificate. Some communities, as consumers, are Moslem that of course knows about "halal" and "haram". To convey that the sold product is "halal", one way is



used, for example by featuring the signature on the promotion media. The community seems to expect it, because they undertake the the sayings and conducts of the Prophet Muhammad and it makes them composed in consuming. This ideology is always carried by the producer to make its product sold out, and the consumers bring it with them because of obligation and composure.

Religious Picture. For the “Madurasa” promotion media to be united with the Moslem audience, there should be religious pictures such as *ketupat*, *masjid*, or other activity relating to Islamic activity. Islamic pictorial approach is more directed to certain moment to make the target more focused. The special target is intended, for example, to Idul Fitri or Idul Adha holidays. The presence of pictures closed to such the circumstance makes the Moslem more confidently following the message conveyed. In the presence of Islamic pictures (figures), the Muslim audiences feel appreciated and considered. The presence of happiness within the audiences’ heart makes the “Madurasa” product acceptable voluntarily.

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