

THE SYMBOLIC AESTHETIC OF PACKAGING DESIGN

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ABSTRACT

Packaging design not only serves as the container of product, but also is assigned as the message sending media. Indirect communication through packaging design media is the producer's way of delivering message to the audience. The message delivered through the symbols related to product in packaging design closed with the audience's social-cultural condition. The packaging design is the human's work taking into account the market's aesthetics through the symbols related to product and target audience. The presence of symbolic esthetics in packaging design, such as "Madurasa product" is the communication strategy from message sender (producer) to the audience (consumer) in order that the message is received well.

Keywords: Aesthetics, symbol, packaging design, madurasa

INTRODUCTION

Aesthetics in the context of creation, according to John Hospers, is the part of philosophy related to the process of creating beautiful works. Edmund Burke states that, the term aesthetics as an observation activity not separated from art and design experience (Suradjijo, 1990). Then the term esthetics develops into beauty, the effort of getting a general definition about beautiful work, our assessment on it, and motif underlying the creator's act (Humardani, 1981). Aesthetics means the distribution of the sensible, constituting the fact and sensory perception simultaneously, revealing the presence of something concomitantly and restriction related inside (Ranciere, 2004).

Plato states that the beautiful things are a group of objects that we see, and enjoy. The beautiful objects (works) are a group of object that we see, enjoy and hear. This work is in our sensory object room scope. Such the beauty abides without inherent to sensory objects world, but existing in formal world containing the details of knowledge on the beauty itself. Plato also argues that aesthetics abides in two places, the beauty can be seen visually and non-visual beauty constitutes the symbols (Sutrisno, 1999).

The product packaging design is the designer's work as a manifestation of symbolic object. The packaging design functions not only as product information but also promotion media of a company. The product packaging is the starting point of marketing, so that its presence always takes into account the aesthetic taste. The presence of stores stimulates the creation of good packaging with high aesthetics. Product display through packaging design aesthetics in supermarket is the marketing strategy. Every product should cater and sell itself, so that every producer attempts to create packaging design with high aesthetics. Product display is of course not alone, but contiguous with some similar products. It becomes the product competition through packaging design aesthetics. The competition of packaging design creating science is one strategy of defeating other rival product to seduce the consumer preference. Therefore, the packaging design should have aesthetics to attract the prospect buyers. The presence of good design through symbols generates the interaction and communication between producer and audience (consumer) providing aesthetic dialect.

In societal life, it was created through interaction and communication process using symbols understood for its meaning through learning process. An individual's act in interaction process is done through learning process in understanding symbols and the adjustment of symbol's meaning. The understanding of symbol is not merely a direct response to stimulus coming from internal or external environment. Human being has free ability of thinking to determine the objective to achieve despite norms, social values, and symbol's meaning limiting it (Ritzer, 2009).

For the interaction between groups to run smoothly, the symbols applied in certain area should be recognized. As Irwan Abdullah states (2010), actually the culture has a territorial border in which a group of people searches for meaning of symbols. The culture is generic leading conduct through the symbols interpreted with the contextual analysis in which the symbol is built. Clifford Geertz states that in understanding a culture an individual should take into account the meaning of human's conduct. To understand the meaning of a culture, an individual should interpret the symbols used by others. An interpretation of configuration or meaningful symbolic system should be conducted comprehensively and in-depth manner (Poerwanto, 2000).

Human act and interaction is not a mental process isolated creating meaning and symbol, but they learn it during interaction generally and during socialization specially. In symbolic interaction, the main focus is not on how the people mentally create meaning and symbol, but on how they learn during interaction generally and during socialization particularly (Ritzer & Goodman, 2009).

Art is the part of cultural element or sub system of culture. Considering its concept parallel, art, just like culture, can be said as a life guideline to the proponents in undertaking their activity (working). This guideline contains cognition (knowledge) model, symbolic system, or meaning assignment intertwined comprehensively into the symbols transmitted through learning. This cognition model is then used selectively by the proponents to communicate, to conserve, to connect knowledge, and to have attitude or to act in order to meet their integrative needs related to its aesthetic disclosure or comprehension (Rohendi, 2000). Paul Ricouer argues that every object or society's work essentially is symbol, and the symbols are replete with 'hidden' meaning. Human activity in doing something or creating something is an attempt of creating meaning (Sachari, 1989). Peirce categorizes sign into some typologies: icon, index, and symbol based on the relation between representative and object (Noth, 1990).

Packaging design is the part of visual communication design, the discipline studying symbolic aesthetic concept and creative power expression applied to a variety of visual communications by processing the elements of graphic design. All of them are undertaken to deliver message visually to the intended target. The creative journey of visual communication design as one part of applied art studying planning and designing a variety of visual communication information that is functional, persuasive, artistic, aesthetic, and communicative in the form of symbols.

RESEARCH METHODS

Product packaging design is the media of delivering message from the sender (producer) to the receiver (consumer). The media used is the meaningful symbol thereby acceptable to the society. Human being as the creator of symbol manifested into packaging design work of course had symbolic aesthetics presented through brand, picture, packaging color, logo, and appearance layout and packaging shape. All of them are communication media for promotion

activity. The extent to which the symbols are used in “Madurasa” packaging design aesthetic makes the message media acceptable to the audience. It is this problem that will be explored.

The data collection in this research was one using observation, interview, and document techniques. An open, independent or non-participatory observation was done, meaning that the author served merely as an observer. The observation with natural (non-structured) setting is the one conducted in actual location in qualitative method. If attributed to the observer, the open observation is the observer is acquainted each other with the object observed. Observation was conducted with direct observation in PT. Air Mancur Indonesia about in house designing, promotion media, and publication. Observation for finding out the extent to which printed promotion media design has textual and contextual elements. The interview used was structured interview. In this interview, the author employed interview guideline as the specific form containing instruction directing the author in conducting interview. This technique referred to situation when an author poses a set of question for each respondent based on certain categories of answer generally. The informant in the interview consisted of company director, designer, and media expert to find out the aesthetics of “Madurasa” promotion media in PT. Air Mancur Indonesia. The data of document was secondary data. Document is the data obtained from printed mass media obtained from the document either inside or outside company.

From the three techniques of collecting data above, the data were categorized into three: by nature, by collection method, and by source. The type of data by the collection method consists of primary and secondary data. The primary data were obtained from observation and interview, while secondary data is the one obtained from document constituting document. The type of data by data source consists of internal and external data. Internal data is the one obtained from inside company and the external one from outside company or the data source external to the company.

In this research, the data adaptation and integration was done as necessary, according to the analysis techniques needed. The research analysis was done using Peirce’s symbolic aesthetics. According to Peirce, symbol as a sign is divided into three based on the relation between representative and object (Noth, 1990). The analysis was done using data triangulation method, the integration of various overlapping data in order to be valid and objective. Data triangulation was done by means of: (a) comparing the data of interview result, observation, library, and document, (b) comparing the informant’s personally admission and the institutional (company) (claim), (c) comparing argument during a research with the situation ever occurring along the history of company, and (d) comparing argument between designer, company principal, and media expert.

In collecting data, the author took three sample designs of “Madurasa anak-anak (Madurasa for kid)” product packaging or variant brand: “Madurasa Superman”, “Madurasa Stick”, and “Madurasa Curcuma” produced by PT. Air Mancur Solo. Those three types of variant is produced based on certain positioning, such as: (1) “Madurasa Superman” constituting the product for children positioning according to attribute, connecting product and symbol of power for those consuming, (2) “Madurasa Stick” is the one intended to children, positioned according to its function, connecting product and use, for example for provision for children at school, and (3) “Madurasa curcuma” is the one consumed by children, positioned according to its benefit, connecting product and benefit to the customers. Those three types of packaging features different visual design that symbolically had different aesthetic value. Klimchuk (2007) states that ideally from visual and symbolic perspectives, when the packaging design can provide clear and specific information to the consumer will get on control point, in which a product seems to be more effective, better in value, and comfortable

in packaging. The physical appearance supported by the symbol in product packaging frequently becoming the main reason is a product's sell.

Symbolic Aesthetics of “Madurasa Superman” Packaging

Superman with blue cloth, red robe, and “S” letter on his breast, is the favorite comic character for the children. The character created by two American youths, Jerry Siegel and Joe Suster, emerged in not only comic form but also movie under Detective Comics Incorporate (<http://www.anneaihira.com/kartun-superman.htm>). Since PT. Air Mancur had collaboration with Detective Comics Incorporate, “Madurasa Superman” brand was directed to product positioning. It positioned itself based on attributes: connecting the product to the symbol of power to those consuming. Considering this position, “Madurasa” was expected to increase appetite, body endurance, and stamina, particularly among the children.

“Madurasa” seems to be different because of “Superman's” presence onto the product. Corresponding to its secondary brand name “Madurasa Superman”, the packaging features the American heroic comic figure, Superman. This figure adorns most part of packaging side such as top, front, and back. The illustration of Superman seems to be strong, brave, and prestigious as shown in half-body. Superman appears sturdily with clenching hand reflecting the presence of a strong, brave, sturdy, and tough just like the benefit of “Madurasa Superman” that can increase appetite, body endurance, and stamina. The presence of Superman in “Madurasa” is expected to motivate the children as its market target. This presence gives a global impression as the go international brand, because Superman figure has been known in many countries (Ind-Jamu Tabloid, third edition, March 3, 2007). The presence of Superman makes the packaging design enlivened, because of the appearance of the comic character, bee nest, explosive effect, and orange or grape fruits.

To inform the audience that “Madurasa Superman” is a honey product, the packaging appears in a brownish yellow long hexagon put on the edge of packaging. The hexagon symbolize bee nest as the honey container. Some hexagons are piled tidily in the edge of packaging spreading to the center provides integral, alive impression, and symbolizes the honey newly produced by the bee. The bee nest appears suddenly because of explosive effect. This effect apparently emerges suddenly. To vary the taste of product, the clarifier of variant product taste is needed, for example the appearance of orange or strawberry figures. The fruit pictures are featured appropriately above the explosive effect as the product taste clarifier. The presence of fruit pictures facilitates the consumers in choosing orange- or strawberry-taste product.

The cloth and robe color the Superman wears who always wears blue cloth and red robe inspires the designer to create the blue-red combination of Madurasa Superman packaging. The color is applied to the packaging corresponding to the color of Superman character. Blue color is featured as the basic color and red one is brought closer to “Madurasa” color. For the blue giving distinctive meaning, golden yellow background is added to the front part of packaging. The bright blue is featured in the front, top and back parts. This blue color gives familiarity and freshness images. Explosive effect of yellow color symbolizes spirit and energy, such as in tagline reading “promote appetite, body endurance and stamina”. The brownish yellow color of hexagon signifies the color of honey existing in the bee nest. Color also appears on the fruit as the symbol of product taste and variant, for example, yellow for orange, and red for strawberry. Two colors of fruits serve as the sign of “Madurasa Superman” product's taste.

Bright yellow is present on “Madurasa Superman” packaging located in the upper edge. Yellow space combined with corporate identity of PT. Air Mancur becomes holding ship.

The rather oval yellow hexagon space seems to be strange because it is present amid the blue one. Holding ship indicates that “Madurasa Superman” is produced by PT. Air Mancur as the one responsible for the product. To compensate the yellow color in holding ship, a yellow oval circle is put onto the upper left corner as the background of product clarifier reading “plus pyllanthi herba & lysine”. In the presence of product clarifier, the consumer will trust more the product he/she consumes.

There is an interesting thing in addition to logo of PT. Air Mancur and “Madurasa” brand, namely “halal” signature and TM & DM Comic. *Halal* signature is the evidence for a product that had gotten its rightfulness certification. *Halal* signature is in circle in which *Arabic Khat Riq’ah* type ... (*halal* logo) is written, while the Latin type of *halal* is written below it in Arial Capital black type. The “*halal*” signature on packaging is the sign that honey product with “Madurasa Superman” brand had gotten “*halal*” certificate, meaning that this product may be consumed by the consumers particularly embracing Islam. Another logo is Detective Comics one, in logotype and logogram forms. “DC” Logotype represents Detective Comics written in white *Plusz Brush Script* type. Logogram in oval circle is blue as the background of “DC” logotype that is also blue as the company identity. If logotype and logogram are combined it indicates Detective Comics Incorporate International orbiting “The Big Boy Scout with Blue Costume”, Superman (<http://clip-clipping.blogspot.com>).

Such the “Madurasa Superman” packaging is organized leading to informal and formal one. The informal organization is presented on the front, top, and back of packaging, while the formal one is presented on the right and left of packaging. The elements of design organization leads to informal balance based on the placement of big-sized Superman illustration added with blue property put on to the right. Yellow color of explosive effect serves to counterbalance the dominantly blue Superman illustration. In order to have same weight, the position of Superman tends to incline slightly to the upper right, particularly on his head. This informal composition organization provides dynamic and boring impressions. The formal balance is presented on the back of primary packaging and on the left-and right of secondary packaging. The formal organization with symmetric balance has same weight and size between the left and the right. Formal organization provides composed, modest, ordered and readable impressions.

Symbolic Aesthetics of “Madurasa Curcuma Kids” packaging

“Madurasa Curcuma Kids” is positioned by its benefit, connecting product to benefit particularly for the customers. The advantage of “Madurasa Curcuma Kids” is that it can help the function of accomplishing the food digestion process for the children. This product is intended to the children; to make it cheerful, the design of packaging is adjusted with the target market and market taste. The design of packaging seems to be interesting, because the pictures of orange and strawberry are featured as the background of packaging. As the target market, the illustration of happy and cheerful boy and girl is featured.

“Madurasa Curcuma Kids” is produced in two taste variants: orange and strawberry. These two tastes are indicated by the color of kids’ hair: the red hair of the boy indicates strawberry tastes and the yellow hair of the girl indicates orange tastes. The wish to deliver product superiority generates an interesting impression in the design, particularly the front part of primary and secondary packages. Cheer can also be seen from the typography choice in “*rasa jeruk* (orange taste) and “*rasa stroberi* (strawberry taste) featured in cheerful primary and secondary package. Because the package serves as product information, there should be visual language in the form of picture and verbal language in writing. Visually, the picture of some orange or strawberry, honey, and ginger is featured.

The design of secondary package created in 2004 in 5.5 x 4 x 10 cm dimensions has similar design with white color. The cheer is also reflected on the background and illustration of both laughing and happy kids. The cartoon picture of boy and girl's face attracts attention and becomes the focus as if it addresses happily the consumer purchasing. The picture of two faces serves also as the sign of product intended to 3-7 years old kid functioning to digest the food within the body, to improve appetite, to increase body resistance, and to prevent wormy disease.

The picture of red hair boy and yellow hair girl serves as the sign of product taste color. To strengthen the secondary brand, the picture of *temulawak* (wild ginger) is put onto the right lower corner and the orange or strawberry onto the left lower corner. The picture explains that "Madurasa Curcuma Kids" is the honey product having wild ginger plus orange and strawberry taste. As the clarifier of tastes, orange or strawberry fruits picture are featured throughout the background of packaging in both primary and secondary packaging. On the upper front side of packaging, there is a picture of honey drip to strengthen the message as the product made of preferred honey material. Visually, the design of orange and strawberry taste-packaging has similar character; what distinguishing is only the color, red or yellow.

When observed closely, the layout of primary and secondary layout has similarity, particularly in the front side of packaging. The elements appearing, particularly typography and picture, is organized tidily with equal margin. For example the beginning letter "M" in "Madurasa", when drew linearly down will reach the picture of the boy's head exactly in "R" and "J" letter in the word *rasa jeruk*. The last letter "a" in "Madurasa", when observed closely is also in line with the picture of the girl's head and is in the same distance with the wild ginger picture circle. If it is ordered from the upper part, the elements of packaging design are corporate identity in holding ship form, primary brand, 'romantic text', illustration picture, and closed with the product taste on the left lower part and secondary brand "Curcuma Kids" on the right lower corner.

Symbolic Aesthetics of "Madurasa Stick" Packaging

"Madurasa Stick" is created for the first time in 2004. "Madurasa Stick" is positioned by its use, connecting product to a use, for example as the provision at school. This honey product is enriched with vitamin C is intended to the kids as a friend in Elementary School, to avoid them from buying other snacks at school. This brand has appropriate product character for 5-12 years old kids; therefore this product packaging is designed according to the target market (*Product Brief* of PT. Air Mancur, 2012).

The primary packaging "Madurasa Stick" in 150 mm x 18 mm dimension is horizontal oriented appearing typography, picture, color, logo, and layout. Typography is a verbal communication media explaining brand or product into the packaging. There are several typographies presented in the packaging, including: company name, primary and secondary brand names, composition text, compulsory text, and etcetera. When observed closely, the design seems to be natural because the background is filled in with grape, orange and strawberry pictures. The presence of fruit picture with photography technique intensifies the message of fruit tastes. The design of packaging created on January 24, 2007 originally featured grape photograph but, on the promotion medium created on June 2008, the picture was changed into a purple hexagon, as can be seen in figures. The picture was changed on the recommendation of BPOM (Food and Drug Administration), because the fruit is no more than taste of honey, so it is not allowed to feature photograph. To maintain its image, the color of fruit is retained to represent the fruit taste.

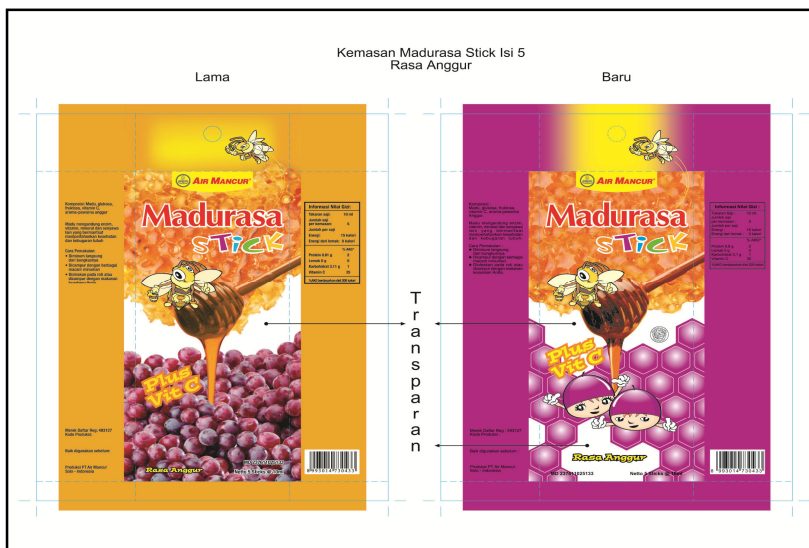


Figure 1. Secondary packaging redesign of “grape-taste Madurasa Stick”

Source: In house advertising of PT. Air Mancur

On the front side of packaging there is a funny illustration of a bee flying toward the “Madurasa Stick” brand on the right upper part. This living bee image indicates that the honey product is actually still new. The dominant picture in this packaging is that of *jelly* and honey stirrer. *Jelly* indicates the product inside the packaging. Honey stirrer is the clarifier of product made of honey as the main material. This picture appearance is intended to make the consumers understand easily the content of packaging. In secondary packaging, there is an illustration of two bees in activity. A bee brings honey while raising thumb. This picture is resembled with the honey stirrer indicating that the honey is obtained from the nature with extraordinary benefit. One of bees flies wearing glove while carrying the honey, indicating that “Madurasa Stick” is the brand of healthy honey product.

To attract the consumer’s attention, “Madurasa Stick” color is featured prominently because it is intended as the kid snack. To appeal the kids, this product is made in three tastes: orange, strawberry, and grape. It is these three products that underlie the color of primary and secondary packaging. It can be seen from the illustration of hat worn by the two kids and hexagon as the bee nest containing honey. In addition, color also serves to strengthen the fruit taste, for example, green denotes lime fruit, red denotes strawberry, and purple denotes grape. The color is closed to the product color, such as orange in the jelly. The orange color of jelly is featured with photography as the confirmer of the sample of product character in orange jelly form. The orange color-product contains vitamin C, as written in ‘beautifying text’ providing sour-sweet image.

The yellow color is also present on holding ship as the typical characteristic of PT. Air Mancur color. The presence of holding ship is confirmed by the presence of gleam surrounding it, like in secondary packaging. The gleam in holding ship symbolizes that PT. Air Mancur illuminates the world, providing the light into the public health. The color as the product confirmer is also found in the yellow circle in the word “madu”. To aim the market segment, the cheer is also presented in various colors in the secondary brand letter “STICK” like the character of cheerful children.

In old design of “Madurasa Stick” primary packaging, the elements are organized tidily, for example the *holding ship* is put onto the upper center edge, below which there is “Madurasa” brand. On the left and right side of “Madurasa” brand there is a bee, and “product confirmer” put onto the left right and “sweetening text” on the right. In new design of packaging, there is a change, in which the illustration of bee formerly put onto the left is replaced by the kid head wearing fruit hat. This packaging is more interesting, because of the presence of honey stirrer closed to “M” letter in “Madurasa” brand. This object invites the audience to attend and to read the writing.

When observed closely, there is a little difference between old design and new design. The old design actually features the picture of fruit completely that is apparently crowd and less focusing on “Madurasa Stick” brand. In new design, it is apparently simpler, so that “Madurasa Stick” brand is more focused, observable, and readable. Similarly, the secondary packaging is organized tidily and symmetrically, from holding ship, “Madurasa” brand, a bee and honey stirrer, and two kids’ heads to the sentence confirming the product. To soften this formal-oriented design rigidity, a bee is presented flying out of the main design box space in the packaging. Nevertheless, the design of packaging seems to be integrated because of the dominant color indicating the content of product taste.

ANALYSIS

Roland Barthes divides sign into three parts by its level: signifier, signified, and signs (Noth, 1990). Peirce categorizes sign into some typologies based on the relation between representative and object: icon, index, and symbol. The design of “madurasa anak-anak” product packaging is the medium delivering the message from the consumer to the audience. In order to be acceptable to the audience, there should be signs on the element of packaging design, such as brand name, picture, logo, color, layout, and packaging shape.

The brand or product name is the sign constituting picture, name, sentence, letter, number, color pattern, or combination of them functioning as the identity to distinguish the product produced by the producer. “Madurasa” is the honey product brand produced by PT. Air Mancur Company. The product brand is written as “Madurasa” using red Opus Sans Medium Caps Bold 30-35 point type. The writing is put onto the top of packaging. The type of letter seems to be soft elegant, and communicative. If the word “madurasa” is separated into “madu (honey)” and “rasa (taste)”, it will have different meaning. If the emphasis is on “madu”, it means that this product contains more honey. In addition, it also means that the honey product has various tastes deriving from honey raw material, for example ‘madu kelengkeng’ derives from kelengkeng flower sucked by the bee. If the emphasis is on “taste”, it means that “Madurasa” prioritizes other tastes, such as orange in “orange taste of Madurasa”, strawberry in “strawberry taste” grape in “grape taste” and tea in “Madurasa Green Tea”.

The picture is the appeal to audience, as the message deliverer. The picture in packaging medium technically can be featured through illustration or photography. Photography technique has authenticity element providing strong, realistic, and not deceiving, while the illustration technique can simplify the visual message and can be focused on the detail of picture. There are some pictures existing on the design of “Madurasa anak-anak” packaging, including hexagon, human, and fruit.

The picture of hexagon is organized repeatedly and diffusely on every side. The color inherent to the hexagon is brownish yellow, so is the honey stirrer. These picture shape and color serve as bee nest or honey and its stirrer representing that “Madurasa” product derives from honey material. The picture is featured with photography and illustration technique. The

picture with photography technique symbolizes that honey content in “Madurasa” is higher than the product taste. Illustration technique picture symbolizes that “Madurasa” has less honey content than other element, such as fruit, tea, and etcetera.

The picture of human serves as model in packaging. The presence of kid cartoon picture and “Superman” heroic figure indicates that “Madurasa” product is intended to children. The picture of laughing kid symbolizes that the children consuming this product will do any activity cheerfully, happily, healthily, vigorously. The picture of “Superman” is the globalized character. Most people know who “Superman” is. He is an American comic character or movie character who likes defending truth. The presence of this superhero symbolizes that “Madurasa” is an international brand/product that can increase strength and health for those consuming.

The picture of fruit indicates that the content of fruit extract in “Madurasa product”. The presence of fruit picture with photography technique indicates that the product contains the actually fresh fruit extract. This presence of picture also symbolizes that the product contains more fruit extract than honey. These pictures are the information media indicating the product. When the society purchases according to their preference by the fruit taste, by seeing the picture of fruit existing in the packaging.

Color indicates identity, so does the one in promotion media of “Madurasa” of PT. Air Mancur, such as blue, yellow, red, and green. The color is closed with the company, raw material of product, product taste, product color, product use, as well as model picture attribute. Green, yellow, and red are corporate identity. Considering the agrarian factor, color is an evolution process of either leaf or fruit as the symbol of medicinal herb material produced by PT. Air Mancur, from fruit element, the young fruit to the ripe one; so is the leaf element, from bud to fallen leaves. There is another definition when color is attributed to consumers. Market segmenting consists of three audience groups targeted by the producer as the media message receiver and the product target all at once. Javanese people are symbolized with yellow color, Chinese with red, while Arabic with green.

The color can also be attributed to the product. The color emphasizing on product’s basic color, like green, indicates green tea in “Madurasa green tea” and yellow in “Madurasa Lemon tea”. Color is related to product taste, like purple symbolizing grape fruit taste, red symbolizing strawberry. Color also indicates the material of product. For example, brownish yellow symbolizes that the product in the packaging derives from honey material. The color affects the product user, for example, yellow symbolizes cheer and spirit full of activity. Some color is also related model attribute, for example, the attribute worn by “Superman” dominated by blue is exposed in the color of “Madurasa Superman” packaging.

Logo is a specific design, constituting the symbol and picture pattern or letter representing the company’s or institution’s image. The logo of Air Mancur derives from the shape of fountain in bundaran Hotel Indonesia. Considering its history, this company was born in Pucang Sawit village, the area on the bank of Bengawan Solo River, meaning that the element of water supporting the farm in the area. The picture of 17 fountains is confirmed with the black circular line. On the right there is “air mancur” phrase written in red Arial Bold Italic type. The picture of fountain constitutes the logogram and “air mancur” writing is logotype. If integrated, this becomes corporate identity. *Air mancur* derives from two words: “*air* (water)” and “*mancur* (spraying upward)”. “Water” is source of living, while “*mancur* (spraying upward)” means continuously or incessantly.

If the name is attributed to a medicinal herb (*jamu*) company, the beginning letters of the two words “air mancur” change into capital one “Air Mancur”. The change indicated that “Air

Mancur” is the medicinal herb (*jamu*) company located in Solo. It means that Air Mancur is the medicinal herb (*jamu*) company considering the society’s health continuously. It is confirmed by the Arial Bold Italic type indicating the activity of producing *jamu*. The circular line surrounding the fountain picture is the sign of determination in running *jamu* business.

Signature (logo) “halal” from Indonesian Islamic Scholar Chamber (MUI) is written in Arabic Khat Riq’ah type confirmed by green circular line, such the logo is a product’s rightfulness legality legalized by MUI based on decree SK10/Dir/LPPOM MUI/XII/07. The “*halal*” certificate the MUI had conferred make the products obtaining it prestigious. The hard process of obtaining the 3 year-certification logo is always waited for by the company to improve the product image within the society. It is not surprising that the society displays this logo in the product packaging or other promotion media. The appearance of such the logo is intended to make the product sold-out and to reassure those consuming. In trade sector, this logo is frequently misused by the company or the employer by featuring it on the packaging or promotion media while the product it sells had never been registered to or had never been recognized by MUI. They excuse that getting rightfulness (*kehalalan*) certification takes high cost and long time.

“Top Brand” signature (logo) in dark blue bold circular line in which the top brand phrase is written uses *Time Roman* type. On the margin of circular block there are golden tapes distributed surrounding it. “Top Brand” is the reward for “Madurasa” product or the position of brand compared with the rivals, product penetration in market, and consumers respond to a brand. “Top Brand” is the pride of PT. Air Mancur as the producer of Madurasa. The presence of “Top Brand” logo means that “Madurasa had been recognized by the consumer”, this logo is frequently featured on the packaging expected to boost the market. For the society, “Top Brand” logo featured on the promotion media represents that “Madurasa” product had been recognized by the society.

Layout or face arrangement is the management and the arrangement of promotion media design including product packaging in order to be apparently beautiful and communicative. The layout of “Madurasa” is mainly balanced between the right and the left. Only in “Madurasa Superman” brand, it is featured asymmetrically because it prioritizes Superman figure on the right. Both layout styles, viewed from the sequence of element organization, are similar, from corporate identity packaged in holding ship, primary brand, to secondary brand. The symmetric layout seems to be tidy and apparently formal so that it is readable. The asymmetric layout seems to be not monotonous but apparently alive. The organization of packaging design elements oriented to symmetric composition is very familiar within the society. Such the composition is frequently seen and made by the society during arranging a room, because it is considered as easy to do and enjoyable and giving formal image. Otherwise, the informal arrangement with unequal elements still considers the equal visual weight balance. Based on the target audience, informal balance is intended to the relaxed society that does not like to be regulated, wants something new, not-monotonous, and different.

When the product has character similarity, there should be a different design appearance. In this case, the design of packaging serves to communicate the difference of product visually. From appearance perspective, in the absence of different design aesthetics of packaging, all products will be apparently the same. There are some product packages: rectangle made of plastic material in the form of sachet, box in length, width and height dimension made of paper material, and bottle made of glass. The container is created based on the function, like Louis Sullivan’s slogan “*form follows function*”. The packaging is the container of product to be portable anywhere; in addition, the packaging as information media explains the quantity

and quality of product included into the packaging. Additionally, the packaging serves as the way of consuming product, such as for example, the use of sachet is disposable by means of tearing it. So is the bottle with small outlet to make the content released piecemeal. From beauty aspect, the packaging has applied aesthetics that is enjoyable to see, enjoyable to hold, as the media of product communication, and as the decoration of store display.

Visually, “Madurasa” packaging is like the one of drug. The presence of such the design symbolizes that this product is processed with modern technology just like the drug. In the presence of design taking into account mass aesthetics, the audience feels composed and comfortable in consuming it because the product’s advantage and benefit included into the packaging. Psychologically, the audience will consume it self-confidently because there will be no more “*grandma drinks medicinal herb*” idiom, but drink made-of-honey medicine (drug).

CONCLUSION

Symbol is a sign inherent to a work. Packaging medium is a visual communication design work replete with symbols. Such the medium has mass esthetic that can be enjoyed by any people. The medium used as communication tool has special duty, to deliver the producer’s message to the consumers (audiences) through symbols. For the message to be understood and conceived, the symbols are used frequently encountered and inherent to the society’s social-cultural aspect.

The logo of PT. Air Mancur has been familiar and acceptable to the public in any condition. Similarly, “Madurasa” brand or product that has been recognized by most audiences as the product of PT. Air Mancur. The elements presented in packaging design are the symbol of mass culture frequently seen and encountered, so that the audience, without much thinking, will accept the message delivered. Symbolic esthetic present in the packaging has dual duties: design beauty and product selling. The symbolic esthetic of “Madurasa Superman” packaging is presented by taking the target audiences into account in order that the message delivered can be accepted as the way it is

The appearance of product packaging design’s elements should be adjusted with target audience’s social cultural condition. The presence of social-cultural proximity to the audience’s habit, make the symbols of packaging design acceptable to them. The presence of western culture in packaging design result in multi-perception between the element of design and promotion duty. For example, “Madurasa Superman”, although Superman figure has been well-known among the audience, but it has not been maximal in selling product. Majority audience purchases not because of its product quality but of super hero figure embedded to “Madurasa Superman” packaging. They buy it not to consume but to collect.

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