

# GREEN MARKETING AND REPRESENTATION OF THE OTHER

## (An Analysis of Green Image Ad Represented by Teh Kotak Ad, 'Persembahan dari Alam' Version)

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**Abstract.** This paper presents a theoretical link among green marketing of Teh Kotak ad, "Persembahan dari Alam" version. This is an ad telling as if the product of Teh Kotak is truly from nature. In addition, this research explored the portrayal of how this ad contains metaphorical element to juxtapose nature and technology as the same level. In the analysis, this study attempts to use Green marketing theory as a tool for analysis to explore what is the message behind the ad. Moreover, exploring the representation of the portion of the position of gender where the ad uses a woman as the main actor picking tea leaf, as if this ad looks natural. The result of the study revealed that Green marketing showed its competences to cover with political agenda. It is reflected in green image which told that The Kotak is a gift from nature. Overall, this study concludes that green image of this ad relays the hidden meaning, where the main aim is inviting people to buy its product as political agendas.

**Keywords:** Green marketin; gift; Nature; Teh Kotak

**Abstrak.** Penelitian ini menyajikan hubungan teoretis antara pemasaran hijau iklan Kotak Teh, versi "Persembahan dari Alam". Ini adalah sebuah iklan yang mengatakan seolah-olah produk Teh Kotak benar-benar dari alam. Selain itu, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi penggambaran bagaimana iklan ini mengandung elemen metafora untuk menyesuaikan sifat dan teknologi sebagai level yang sama. Dalam analisisnya, penelitian ini mencoba menggunakan teori pemasaran hijau sebagai alat analisis untuk mengeksplorasi apa pesan dibalik iklan tersebut. Apalagi menjajaki representasi porsi posisi jender dimana iklan menggunakan wanita sebagai pemeran utama memetik daun teh, seolah iklan ini terlihat alami. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pemasaran hijau menunjukkan kompetensi untuk mencakup agenda politik. Hal ini tercermin dalam citra hijau yang diceritakan bahwa The Kotak adalah hadiah dari alam. Secara keseluruhan, penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa citra hijau dari iklan ini menyiratkan makna tersembunyi, di mana tujuan utamanya adalah mengundang orang untuk membeli produknya sebagai agenda politik.

**Keywords:** Green marketin, gift, Nature, Teh Kotak

## INTRODUCTION

*“Sea level rise is accelerating. The number of large wildfires is growing. Dangerous heat waves are becoming more common. Extreme storm events are increasing in many areas. More severe droughts are occurring in others. We must take immediate action to address global warming, these consequences will continue to intensify, grow ever more costly, and increasingly affect the entire planet — including you, your community, and your family.”* (Ucsusa, 2013)

The quotation above provides some impacts from global warming which is coming to us now. There is no way to escape this condition now. The only prominent way is to prevent these effects which will threaten us. The seriousness of these kinds of environmental issues invites us to be involved in caring and protecting our nature.

While debates about how to cope with the impact of human activity on the environment continue in full force, such as the global warming talks that dominate political circles, businesses have entered the ‘green’ market (Woolverton and Dimitri, 2010). Some companies adopt these issues to make a benefit with labeling their products in the term of eco-product/ green product which builds a trust to people. These eco-products are claiming and linking the relationship toward environment that these products are safe and friendly for environment.

Some examples of green products are hybrid automobiles, eco-friendly paint, organic food, recycled copy paper and environmentally friendly cleaning products (Woolverton and Dimitri, 2010). Some of these green products speak volumes about a relationship with the natural world as a central part of its message (Corbett, 2006:148). Then, their products are coming up to people with using non-human material

as a special power of nature in their advertising.

Based on Corbett (2006) that in advertising depictions, nature is pristine, not endangered, and holds simple solutions to what are essentially complex dilemmas, lifestyles, and choices (148). Those are the main strategy for companies to use green as their tool to attract people become their consumer. Khandelwal and Bajpai (2011) argues that the last decade had witnessed an arrival of green brands in the market due to consumer demand, thus permitting green marketing to emerge into a multidimensional strategic and tactical process. While regarding this topic of green marketing, it is important to examine the content of the advertising in the way how they use non-human material as green attributes and nature as their backdrops.

Inside of this study, the particular interest is to invite reader to examine specific characteristics of a green ad when this ad has been marketed on television. Although this ad now does not appear again on the television, it does not mean that this ad is not important to be examined, because the study wants to invite critical view on a simple ad in which way the ad makes shift a tea leaves to be *Teh Kotak*. Only around 16 seconds of the length of the ad, that is why, it should be more challenging to examine and explore the hidden message behind this ad. Through this ad, it wants to invite people in the silence (no speaker and jingle) to legitimate that The Kotak is a product which they want to speak that it is a gift from nature regarding in the end of this ad, it is labeled with *Persembahan dari Alam*. Now, it can only be watched on Youtube. It is an ad from Thanks to Nature Teh Kotak channel with the title is *Persembahan dari Alam*.

That is why, this study takes a particular interest of examining in which way it can be said that The Kotak is a gift from nature. The main focus of the findings here is examining in some research questions: how does the ad hide the manufacturing issue?, how does the ad precisely occupy the actor for supporting the

portrayal of the message, and last, how does the ad contain an oxymoron behind its content? Thus, the objective of this research is to examine the whole of this ad inside of the use of the words *Persembahan dari Alam* in the end of the ad as viable strategy of green marketing towards consumer purchase intention.

### **Green Marketing**

Green marketing is identified as any marketing activity, related to a certain organization, aims at creating negative influence or removing negative influence for a certain product on environment (Stanton et al, 1997; Hashem and Al-Rifai, 2011). Many company marketers are responding to this trend by engaging in ‘green advertising’ or ‘eco-labeling’, making marketing claims that a product is made of environmentally sound materials or is contained in an environmentally sound package. With a higher consumer awareness of environmental issues, firms obviously adopt ‘green’ strategies (Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004; Khandelwal and Bajpai, 2011).

### **Types of green advertising**

Then, to refer the types of ads that use the natural world based on Corbett (2006), but it should be confined on the limitation of the analysis only focused on the combination of two types, nature as backdrops and green image, in the case of necessity as a tool for analysis:

- 1. Nature as Backdrops:** Using nature merely as a backdrop—whether in the form of wild animals, mountain vistas, or sparkling rivers—is the most common use of the natural world in advertisements and the environment blends into the background.
- 2. Green Image:** Image advertising is also called “institutional advertising” because it focuses on the institution rather than on a discrete product or service. A green image ad tries to draw attention to actions of the organization that could be seen as pro-environment (p. 149-153).

### **Oxymoron of Green Advertising**

Does an oxymoron to label marginally useful or necessary products as somehow “good” for the environment? Can an advertisement that encourages consumption of a product (or patronage of a company that produces the product) ever be green with a capital “G”? (Corbett: 156) Advocating green consumption is advocating more consumption, more technology, and more economic growth all considered anathema to the ecological position. To ecologists, the only Green advertising would be promoting their socio-political agenda; and the only Green product is the one that is not produced (Kilbourne; 1995:16). The hidden message is still that “consuming is good, more is better, and the ecological cost is minimal” (Corbett: 157).

### **Stereotyping Gender**

Each culture has a set of general beliefs about what constitutes masculinity and femininity: these are known as gender roles. Stereotypes in advertising conform, for the most part, to cultural expectations of gender (Frith and Mueller, 2003:226). Instrumental traits tend to be more “male valued” (e.g., assertive, independent, and goal oriented), whereas expressive traits tend to be more “female valued” (e.g., warm, caring, and family oriented) (Bem, 1981; Koestner and Wheeler, 1988; Winn and Rubin, 2001).

Women working part time outside the home ads that use stereotypes do not only reflect but also tend to reinforce the stereotypical representations that are already present in a culture (Frith and Mueller, 2003:227). Wernick (1991) said that at the symbolic summit was technological Man himself, represented most clearly in a recurrent image best described as ‘the hand of God’ then Nature is already ‘cooked’: and cooked indeed to look like nature in precisely this compliant, that is verdant, tranquil, and orderly, sense.

Basically, this study focuses on an ad of *The Kotak – the Gift of the Nature* version which was uploaded on Youtube from *Thanks to Nature Teh Kotak Channel*

as the main material to be analyzed. By understanding the motives of the ad uses green image, in the analysis, the study tries to analyze properly which is regarding the sequence methods of logical thinking. First, to establish what the ad wants to convey about, this paper would apply in illustration step. This step actually explores the first impression of watching the ad.

Next step is exploring who is the actor in the ad, apprehending the position of the actor regarding the gender's issue to scrutiny behind the use of the actor for political agenda of the ad. After that, the contradictive meaning, actually hidden message, is to be explored. To examine this part, rendering the oxymoron of the ad will be developed. After analyzing some issues behind the ad, the last part of the study is summarizing a conclusion.

### Illustrating the ad

The prime endeavor is actually analyzing the illustration of this ad before analyzing green image and oxymoron of green marketing with putting Corbett (2006) argument that "real" in advertising is a cultural construct: "The makers of commercials do not want what is real but what will seem real on film (167). Before exploring more about what is actually constructed in the ad, the best way is delineating the first impression of the motion picture of the ad wants to tell about.

#### a. Background

In *Teh Kotak 'Persembahan dari Alam'* ad, actually it does not use any speaker voice, no sound from tea picker, and jingle tone. Indeed, it only the tranquil sound of animal that living around tea garden and the sound of 'bug.. bug.. bug...' (a sound of throwing a thing). From this sound, the ad was coding that it tried to arouse the silent situation around tea garden which referred by animal sound to make this ad looked natural. While the sound effect of 'bug... bug... bug...', it relayed of the focus the action from a woman picked some tealeaves and threw into a basket, it was coded for emphasizing the **transferring moment** between tealeaves to be *Teh Kotak*.

#### b. Actor

To make it clearly for analysis, this part puts screenshot of four pictures from the ad. The actors are anonymous as individual people and portray only social roles tailored to specific demographic categories (Corbett, 2006:172). The ad shows a woman as an actor referring the stereotype of the labors on the tea garden who are usually women. Tea picker constitutes the main job for women in tea garden and this job is dominated by women (Islami, 2010:3). Beside of the main actor, there is a woman (signed with her *caping*), yet her present is not significant, because the camera focuses only a woman as a tea picker. The woman in the ad as a tea picker is picking some tea leaves. She throws it into a basket on her back. In the picture 3, as we can see, while the movement of the camera and shifting into another scene from scene 2 to scene 3 which is portraying the tea leaves change becoming a ready packaging tea.



Figure 1. Screenshot of The Sequences moments of Teh Kotak Ad

#### c. Written Text

The last second of this ad shown a text (see pict. 4): "Persembahan dari Alam", this text was coded to indicate that this product (*The Kotak*) is truly a product which is produced by nature, an environmentally

sound package (more analysis on gendering of Mother Nature).

To make an easy understanding for the sequences of process of this ad, I have already put on this table 1 for the illustration.

Table 1. The Sequences of Process of Teh Kotak Ad

Teh Kotak Ad	Tea garden → a woman → picks tea leaves → bug.. bug... bug... (sound effect) → <i>Teh Kotak</i> → a Gift from Nature
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From those illustrations above between background and the actor in the ad, it is coded that this ad represents to connect with a specific product (a ready packaging tea). There is a disappearance from this ad. It is a manufacturing process, where by the process of tea leaves is collected in a factory, then extracted to be a tea, or the process of packaging goods where after tea leaves became a ready drinking tea orderly packaged into a beverage-box, *Teh Kotak*. This *Teh Kotak* is a gift from nature.

## FINDING AND DISCUSSION

### Gendering of Mother Nature

Actually, the illustration above has already illustrated that the worth of what is communicated from the ad of how the way the ad to be shown introducing a gift from nature materialized in a specific product, *Teh Kotak*. Then the next step is to scrutinize the intention of the use a woman as the actor should be highlighted.

Referring the substitution method provided by Frith and Mueller (2003) on representation of the other chapter in their book, it should be applied to examine the rational thinking to see more details especially on the gender issue. The method's rationale is that exposure of cultural mores

depends on one's ability to engage in self-conscious introspection, for only by viewing what appears "normal" from an outsider's perspective—that of the "other"—can common assumptions about natural behaviors be exposed as merely partial worldviews (123). While Winn and Rubin (2001) also argue that one may emphasize one aspect of identity (e.g., gender) in one context and emphasize another aspect (e.g., ethnicity) in another context.

The first stage of the analysis explored the position of actor in the ad. It is a woman. It tends to be more "female valued". When we substitute this position to be a man, it tends to be more "male valued". It will be very different position, where a man is usually assertive and goal oriented, now to be a tranquil man who picks tea leaves silently. As Wernick stated above, a man always represented as a person connected with technology and described as 'the hand of God'. Furthermore, Wernick (1991) said that the hand is evidently divine, but its connection with more earthly powers is not concealed.

From the consideration above, if this ad uses a man as its actor, the meaning may be that he displays characteristics that different from "female valued," and then it will give an impact in failing to convince people regarding the transferring message of nature. Again, why in this ad does not use man as its actor, because of the consideration of discourse in the society that tea picker dominated by women. This job (tea picker) is dominated by women (Islami, 2010:3). That is why, this ad reinforces the use of a woman as its actor, taking a benefit for using this prominent discourse.

Furthermore, the characteristics of women can be explored more. Not only uses the discourse that tea picker dominated by women, but also uses the relationship between women and nature. As Wernick said above, where the term of nature is already cooked with verdant, tranquil and orderly sense, the use of woman in the ad reinforces traditional gender expectations, associated with nurturing and tranquil sense. In the process of gendering of Mother

Nature, a woman in this ad represented as the Mother Nature regarding some characteristics which is same with nature.

Referring to the research question above, in which way the actor can support the representation of the green message, it is answered that since a woman has some characteristics with the nature has. Then, these findings described above would seem to imply that the use of a woman potentially reflects the same characteristics for nature, therefore, it brings a dimension that a woman picked tea leaves indicate that this woman as if giving a birth of children. Wernick (1991) said that nature is the emphatically dominated bride and we (ourselves) arms outstretched to receive the gift of life from above, the grateful children.

The term of children refers to the expression of thankful feeling because of the gift life from above. Indirectly, if we correlate between children (completed with the characteristics above) and Teh Kotak, it would be a new finding of why in the ad used written text of *Persembahan dari Alam*. That is why, it is heard an environmentally sound package.

If it is drawn of the logic thought of these findings should be like the following sequences in table 2:

Table 2. The Logic Thought in Teh Kotak Ad

Nature	Women → the grateful children → the gift of life from above
<i>The Kotak</i>	Technology → <i>Teh Kotak</i> → “Persembahan dari Alam”

The same process in the table 2, this illustration means that the ad wants to reproduce the discourse which is Teh Kotak is like the grateful children. It will indicate from this metaphor that Teh Kotak replicates the sublime for taking benefit the

characteristics of the nature and the grateful children, and the juxtaposition between nature and technology.

### Oxymoron of producing *Teh Kotak*

Then, the last part of the analysis is finding the oxymoron explore the contradictive statements in the ad. The comparison of scenes in the analysis above contains the juxtaposition nature and technology metaphorically is the same level. In which way technology and nature are in the same level. Before it is going to be more complex, it should be taken from the first logical thinking of the movement scene of the ad in shifting tea leaves to be a ready to drink Teh Kotak. The changing process from this scene indicates that it should be clearly visible as an oxymoron.

Indeed, a truly Green ad is indeed an oxymoron: “the only Green product is the one that is not produced (Corbett, 2006:157). In this oxymoron, it shows that the ad wants to hide the manufacturing process, the process of producing goods. As we know, manufacturing process is a process which uses technology as well. It means manufacturing activity, of course in a factory, it uses a material from the nature (eg. coals for the electricity), the packaging process (eg. the use of woods and polymer for package<sup>1</sup>) and the emission from this process (eg. black fumes, bad liquid chemical) are the issues for contaminating the nature itself. These mean this ad tries to disconnect technology from nature. The cutting process of technology in the ad (clearly can be seen in picture 2 and 3) stimulates that Teh Kotak is truly a product from nature.

Green product image has positive impact towards green purchase intention directly or mediated by green corporate reputation (Batu, 2013). Based on Batu’s research that reputation of the company mostly influenced by green product image, this will increase consumers purchase intention. Then, the next reflection based on this citation is the hidden message is still

<sup>1</sup> Read more about the packaging process of *Teh Kotak* on <http://untukalam.com>

that “do not worry to consume *Teh Kotak*, it is gift from nature, so it is good for nature”.

There is a mismatch between the production side and the consumption side of green labels. Social and environmental complexities are typically translated into a simple and categorical label (Boström and Klintman, 2008:195). The process of using green image in this ad only labeled the product. When humans are introduced into sublime scenes, their representation is also idealized (Corbett, 2006:170). Based on the oxymoron in this analysis, it can be explored that the political agendas of labeling green image are not only taking a benefit for neglecting process of technology, but applying a positioning strategy to attract people to consume this product as well. Bounding the name of *Teh Kotak* as a gift from nature, it competences to give a positive impact in building a green reputation to the brand and convinces people to buy this product.

## CONCLUSION

As a result of analyzing in the illustration, gendering of Mother Nature and oxymoron, it can be found the absence of manufacturing process and the metaphor between nature and technology and the political agendas can be explored. Then, the result from this study shows that green image inside of this ad misleads with juxtaposing between nature and technology as the same level. From this metaphor, it gives a positive impact to the brand and convince people to buy this product.

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