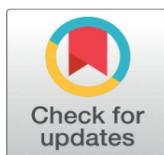
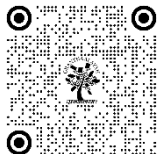


THE ROLE OF VISUAL NARRATIVE IN ADVERTISING: DEPICTIONS OF WOMEN IN THE FRAMEWORK OF TEA CULTURE DURING INDIA'S COLONIAL PERIOD

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the article is to focus on the role of visual narratives in advertising and how women are depicted in the context of the promotion of tea culture during the colonial period of India. India is one of the oldest kingdoms in the world, and India has passed through various ages that brought new innovations, social and economic reforms. Each phase has its own impact on society, as we can see through different forms of art, literature, music, and advertising. India is a massive market for selling products, there are different categories of products available in the market, but some of the brands are centuries old. Advertising plays an important role in the promotion of products. TEA for example: before independence in the promotion of tea culture in India there were different media of advertising; promotional activities and propaganda played an important role, and the changing role of women is represented effectively in tea advertisements. There are various examples that are witness to the significant transformation in the manner where women are portrayed in the promotion of tea culture. India was experiencing the provocative impact of western culture, which reached to new horizons of creativity and aids in the presentation of Indian women in a new framework. My paper through various example focuses on the role of women in the context of promoting tea in India.

Keywords: Visual Narrative, Advertising, Tea Culture, Colonial, Storytelling

1. INTRODUCTION

The history of India and the role of women are recorded in many ways. In the extended journey of India, women were noted for their contributions as entrepreneurs, Olympic medal winners, working women who managed the office, and as housewives, who took care of the entire family. Reforms in Indian society have brought a strong representation of women's positions at various levels, which is noted and enlightens the society. Women were separated from men in various ways during colonial India's journey, including bal vivah, sati pratha, unlearned female, female infanticide, and no permission for widow remarriage. From an

uncivilized to a civilized society, advertising plays the role of one of the major medium of communication, which helps to shape society in a much better way. Advertising is one of the oldest professions in India, and plays an important role in promotion of the products. Advertisers are looking for stories that can connect customers with a product as a solution to a problem. Indian culture refers to the patterns of thought and behavior of people, which include the clothing, food, the language we speak, and the God we worship. All are aspects of culture as well as our day-to-day lives, till the time the influence of western culture has influenced our culture. In India, advertising plays a significant role in promotion of tea culture, that is represents a notable change in society; a movement for female education started by the turn of the century, when many women from middle-class families had received formal or informal education as part of progress and modernity. Women are seen outside the kitchen and in the promotion of the product for Indian society, which is represented through the various media of mass communication like calendars, packaging, and print advertisements. This medium of mass communication brings about a change in society in the context of the promotion of tea culture in India. There are numerous advertising campaigns, and propagandas are witness to the same. Ads also have begun portraying stronger women in their changing roles through projection of strong women personalities.

2. GROWTH OF ADVERTISING AGENCIES IN INDIA

India is one of the oldest countries in the world and has also been known for its trade with other countries since its inception. India has been a huge market for various products and professional services providers. Advertising is one of the distinctive professions that help to create the brand image of a company in the market. Advertising is defined as paid communication, for effective communication different media of communication are used to present the message effectively. The ability of an advertising campaign or advertisement to achieve its intended aims is known as its "advertising effectiveness. This quality is frequently measured by looking at how it affects consumer preference for a brand, brand awareness, and sales volume. [StudyCorgi \(2022\)](#) Visual narratives play an important role in advertising, "The Buddhists were perhaps the first to recognize the value of "visual communication" in the transmission of religion. Emperor Ashok erected rock and pillar edicts all across the nation in order to spread the teaching of Buddha and his concepts to the general populace. The "commandment" of religion is inscribed in stone on a few of these. The first advertisements for a few imported luxury products marked the beginning of advertising in India. The first advertising agency was established in Bombay in 1907, and the second one followed in 1909. These organisations primarily obtained advertising and arranged for their publications in the media. Before the First World War, the majority of the advertising was planned, created, and published by foreign companies themselves, with arrangements made for its publication in India. [Rege \(1984\)](#) In Indian advertising, hawkers have been screaming out for their goods since the inception of towns and markets. The word "advertise" only had the meaning of "inform" up to the end of the eighteenth century, and the first newspapers and magazines only reported on births, funerals, and the arrival of ships from England, the sales of furniture, etc. As the industrial revolution had a stronger impact on our country, there were much more advertisements from British commercial houses. In order to secure advertisements for journals and newspapers on a commission basis, "agents" were in high demand as space contractors at the time; this practice is what spawned the advertising industry. The first "advertising agencies" were these so-called "agents." The installation of the first

rotary linotype machine and the Swadeshi Movement, which gave rise to indigenous industries, were the two key events that contributed to the growth of Indian advertising firms. [History of Advertising in India. \(2022\)](#)

3. CHANGING ROLE OF WOMEN AND VISUAL NARRATIVES

We, Indians, welcome our guests at our home with folded hands is called "Namaste." We offer tea as a token of love to welcome them to our home. The recipe for tea that we Indians call 'chai', the process of 'chai' start with the boiling of tea leaf in with the mixing water, milk, sugar according to test and other ingredients like ginger. The recipe for preparing chai varies from one to another family& chai stall (Tpri) according to the taste. Visual storytelling is important in the promotion of products because it effectively communicates the message; advertisers use graphical forms, illustrations, pictures, copywriting, and videos to attract the attention of the viewers. The effectiveness of visual storytelling touches consumers' emotions and interacts with them about the product. Visual storytelling is the art of representing the information which is to suggest that this information is the solution of their problem or the only solution. In the promotion of tea culture in India, visual stories are narrated in the context of changing roles in society, which are primarily represented through our daily lives; however, dressing styles, surrounding areas, and especially the changing role of women are not promoted, as they are not depicted earlier in the visual to communicate the story. Respect for women and their space in family matters, as well as the idea of westernisation in relation to India and women's roles in society are noted.

Figure 1



Figure 1 A Woman Tennis Player Having a Tea Break.

Source

<http://www.tasveergharindia.net/essay/chai-why-advertisements-consumption#lg=1&slide=2>

Tea advertising targeted rich and middle-class families who accepted modernism in dressing, furniture, as well as people who could afford the luxurious crockery required to brew and serve this beverage prior to independence. The visuals indicates a target audience by emphasising on comfortable lifestyle of middleclass home, modernity in clothing, and furnishings. [Figure 1](#), the visual story focuses on a sari-clad tennis player wearing a Westernized blouse and smart white sneakers, as well as a specific cup of tea in a glossy bone china "tea service," which

is decorative and expensive in the context of Indian standards equipment. [Luthra \(2022\)](#)

Figure 2



Figure 2 Waiters Serve Customers in a Restaurant.

Source <http://www.tasveergharindia.net/essay/modernity-leisure-autonomy-woman.html#lg=1&slide=1>

[Figure 2](#), is another example of visual story which is shows the women so liberated from daily routine work that they appear seated together with men, enjoying the attentive service of waiters who serves them food & beverage prepared in a eatery's kitchen; here, children have missing from the visual, colonial innovations such Indian patrons are started using the high-class service of club and the extended family has contracted to nuclear family of two or three people the number that can be easily seated on all sides of table. [McGowan \(2022\)](#)

Figure 3



Figure 3 Woman at a Tea Table.

Source <http://www.tasveergharindia.net/essay/modernity-leisure-autonomy-woman.html#lg=1&slide=6>

Among the best examples of the colonial period is [Figure 3](#), which depicts woman leaning over a tea table with China tea service, flowers, and snacks, demonstrating that comfort was not just matter of luck but carefully planned out. As the tablecloth pattern mimics the flower shapes in the vase, the framed landscape hanging on the wall mimics the vista in front of the open window. A Westernized Parsi is worn by the woman, her makeup is carefully applied, and she is sporting a modern haircut; the woman appears to be posing for a photograph. [McGowan \(2022\)](#)

4. REPRESENTATION OF THE WOMEN'S IN PROMOTION OF TEA CULTURE

In the early phase of advertising in India, various imported products' advertisements were printed in the Indian newspaper to promote the product for the Indian market. Where various promotional materials were used to promote the concept of tea culture in India, and the drinking of tea was completely new to the Indian market. New commodity aesthetics in tea advertising campaigns transformed the social behavior and aspirations of urban and rural Indians and reduced the market for class and gender distinctions. Because tea was a new product for the Indians, the Tea Board's early advertisements included instructions on how to brew the product (Tea). The board also distributed small packets of tea for 'one paisa' in villages to familiarise people with the taste of tea. In 1903, the Tea Cess Committee was formed as a British government propaganda unit to promote tea consumption. [Banerjee \(2022\)](#)

Figure 4

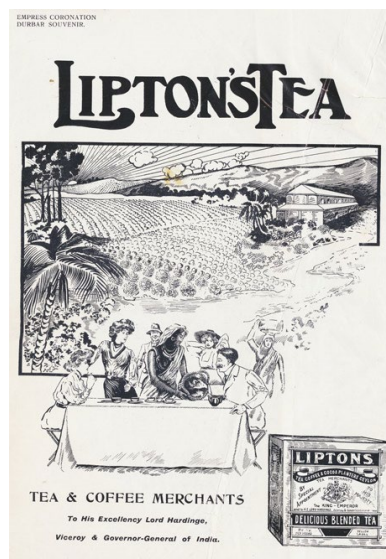


Figure 4 An Advertisement for Liptons Tea.

Source

<http://www.tasveergharindia.net/essay/chai-why-advertisements-consumption#lg=1&slide=1>

Published in the 1911 edition of the Express, in the "Coronation Durbar Souvenir" section, is an advertisement for the Thomas Lipton Company, this advertisement narrates the story of colonial time, The visual focuses on the brown-skinned lady who offered tea as a gift to the smartly dressed English ladies and a gentleman, background is covered with a garden plantation, with bungalow-style

factory building and the sun rays in the background, on the table "china" pots, accompanied by pitchers of warm milk and spoonful of sugar. Chari (2022) In 1936, the Indian Tea Market Expansion Board launched another aggressive marketing campaign to hook ordinary Indians on the drink. At railway stations and public markets, free samples of brewed tea were distributed; promotional posters and literature demonstrated the "correct," that is, English way to brew and serve tea. Station (2022)

Figure 5



Figure 5 An Advertisement for Brooke Bond Kora Dust.

Source <http://www.tasveergharindia.net/essay/chai-why-advertisements-consumption#lg=1&slide=5>

It remained relatively expensive for Indian consumers to buy leaf Darjeeling and Assam teas, and most pre-Independence advertising aimed at the middle class. A cheaper quality of "dust" and "fanning" was also offered for sale. An example is Brooke Bond's "Kora Dust," an advertisement for the subject of a rural "folk" festival, featuring musicians, Indian traditional-dressed male and female dancers withholding the cup of tea, the packaging of the tea pack, and the teacup with kettle also present in the right-side corner. Lutgendorf (2022)

Figure 6

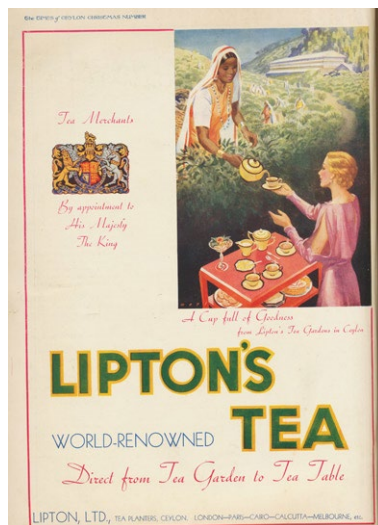


Figure 6 An Advertisement for Lipton's Tea.

Source <http://www.tasveergharindia.net/essay/chai-why-advertisements-consumption#lg=1&slide=6>

Tea is one of the drinks that gained popularity in India after independence, when the majority of the ownership of wholesaling companies transferred from British to Indian hands. The visual of tea garden to consumer, is carefully narrated in image 06; this visual clearly focuses on "the journey of tea" from Teagarden to a consumer, a hard-working female subaltern with the happy faces offering tea to an elegantly dressed English woman. [Lutgendorf \(2022\)](#)

Figure 7



Figure 7 Tea Garden a Sample Calendar.

Source

<http://www.tasveergharindia.net/essay/chai-why-advertisements-consumption#lg=1&slide=7>

An Empire Calendar Manufacturing Company sample calendar with a picture of Tea Garden, No. 386; ca 1940 is shown here. In the foreground of the calendar Indian Parsi way of draping sari women, holding a cup of tea, enjoying the tea with smiling face and in the middle of the calendar Indian traditional way of a dressed woman holding serving tray with tea, cups with kettle, in the background of the calendar tea picker's labor are depicted in the tea garden. They influenced several print advertisements that portrayed sari-clad, shoe-wearing, pearl-adorning women as modern Indian women. [Luthra \(2022\)](#)

Figure 8



Figure 8 Tea is 100% Swadeshi.

Source <http://www.tasveergharindia.net/essay/chai-why-advertisements-consumption#lg=1&slide=8>

"Indian Tea Market Expansion Board" of the colonial era was replaced with the "imperial brew" I 1953 and it was declared it to be "swadeshi". Annada Munshi, one of India's forefathers of new commercial art design, erased the approval of imperial association with tea. As a replacement for a number of imperial insignia, he put the spinning wheel as an emblem on the poster. [Bhadra \(2005\)](#) With a single stroke, tea was positioned within the idioms of Gandhian self-reliance and the nationalist movement, with its central image of a modest, sari-clad spinner enjoying a refreshing break. [Lutgendorf \(2022\)](#) While coffee had become the traditional drink in South India by the 20th century, similarly, tea had become the popular drink in North India. Factories, mines, and textile mills were, for the first time, being encouraged to offer tea breaks for workers.

5. CONCLUSION

The basic findings are consistent with the study showing that India is one of the prime markets to sell the product from its inception, and advertising is one of the major mediums of mass communication that helps to communicate the message effectively. Advertisements affect us in our daily lives, whether consciously or subconsciously, advertising plays a significant role in shaping society from a much broader perspective. Visual narratives are playing a significant role in communicating messages effectively; in the Journey of tea culture in India an Imperial product to nationalized drink, there are various advertisements or visuals examples are witnessed. During the colonial time of India, under the shadow of westernized culture visual narratives played a significant role in the promotion of product, especially tea culture women who accept mordantly dress up with Parsi style sari, shoes, sipping tea, enjoying the alternative service from outside the home and focus on the autonomy in the promotion of tea, which reflects the women's are socialized them in the context of tea considered the imperial subjects. After the independence tea is considered as a national drink and the majority change also reflects in visual narratives. The major changes come in the Indian traditional way dressed sari women, holding a cup of tea mention 100% Swadeshi, so tea is accepted as the social beverage of India, now tea has become the product of India.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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None.

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