



## **Narratives of Class in Indonesian TV Commercials**

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It has been argued that very little attention has been paid to the notion of class in many forms of popular culture (Foster 2005, Bettie 2000). Despite the ongoing widening gap between the rich and the poor, the discussion of class is increasingly sidelined. Ortner (1991), however, argues that class actually continues to appear in popular discourse, but just not in terms we recognize as being 'about class' (in Bettie 2000, p.18). Class relations, in this understanding, are actually present among imagery of popular culture, but it is articulated through other terms such as gender, race or sexuality. In the context of advertising, the notion of class has been entailed in the process of selling products. Most of advertising imageries are set within wealthy class milieus, which are associated with a consumerist lifestyle. It has nothing much to say about the lower class. This inclination sounds plausible with regard to the position of advertisements as engines of consumption. As Valdivia (1998, p.228) points out, it makes little sense for advertisements to represent a class that is below the levels of consumption, to which people are supposed to aspire. To stimulate the purchase of

products, it is hardly surprising that advertisers tend to focus their energies on addressing social groups with higher amounts of disposable income. Advertisements, therefore, have been marked mostly by images of upper and middle class with their cultural preferences and tastes, which are associated with products. Class serves as one critical perspective which structures the narrative and imaging system of advertisement. Distinctive markers are produced and reproduced in advertisements to signify class subjects and class relations.

Following these insights, this study is aimed to reveal how the notion of class is inscribed in advertising representation. I situate this study particularly in the socio-political context during two political regimes characterized by a different political agenda in Indonesia, namely the New Order (in the period of 1993-1998) and the Post New Order era (in the period of 1999-2005). The authoritarian New Order regime which governed Indonesia for about 32 years was toppled down in May 1998. In the aftermath of the New Order's fall, Indonesia has been in a transition from decades of authoritarian government to a more democratic government which is also attempting to position itself in the face of globalization.

This study focuses particularly on Indonesian television advertisements which have been honoured with *The Citra Pariwara Award*, an annual and prestigious national advertising competition aiming at awarding prestige to creative advertisements in Indonesia. I find it important to examine how television advertisements articulate and reproduce ideological discourses on issues of class in line with the socio-political transition in Indonesia. In the context of this study, I refer to Bourdieu's theory of class, which links class position with cultural preferences and tastes, as the point of departure. In his book *Distinction*, Bourdieu argues that together, the economic, social and cultural conditions constitute class (2000, p.114). Class and status are, actually, related dimensions of social life. Bourdieu observes that distinctions of economy necessarily engender distinctions of culture. Therefore, different ranks of class will choose, maintain and exhibit different tastes and preferences, which function to represent class position in a society. Furthermore, the dominant class tends to use the power of its position to impose recognition of distinction between good taste and vulgar taste, between legitimate and illegitimate styles, and thereby strengthens the

boundaries between classes in a society. It should be noted that in this study I refer to three major class divisions (upper, middle and lower class) to delineate different class positions. As described earlier, class is not merely presented and expressed through the presence of wealth, which is manifested through choices of fashion, setting, or décor. Rather, skin colour and gender behaviour also function as signs of class rank (Brown 2005, p.75). Accordingly, this study is also aimed to analyze how gender is mobilized and functionalized in the studied advertisements to define and narrativize class distinctions.

### The Myth of Hero

As have been mentioned, advertisements have very little to say about the lower class due to their lesser amount of disposable income. If they do appear, the appeals of the lower class are different from those of the upper and middle classes, and thereby class boundaries are reinforced. As shown for example in the *Daihatsu Rocky* advertisement, the lower class is depicted as deviant and rule breaker, whereas the higher class appears as the opposite. The *Daihatsu Rocky* advertisement has been honoured with the Citra Pariwara Award during the New Order era, namely, in 1996.



Figure 1. Lower class in *Daihatsu Rocky* advertisement as deviant and rule breaker; they perpetrate crime and violence to achieve their goals.

The advertisement is selling a four-wheel-drive vehicle, *Daihatsu Rocky*, which is suitable for adventure purposes. The advertisement sells a product by weaving the

story of domination, conquest and strength. It should be stressed that it becomes a prevalent way in vehicle advertisements, narrating a snippet of an adventurous male life. As Frith (1995, p.191) asserts, automobile advertising frequently refers to nature as an obstacle, which by means of the product can be surmounted [by men]. By doing so, the advertisements emphasize that man is indeed the most powerful being on earth. A four-

wheel-drive vehicle especially is considered as a macho, masculine vehicle (Lauer 2005, p.158). The same image is also attached to the *Daihatsu Rocky*. All characters in the advertisement are male. The advertisement entails concern about inhospitable environments, self-defense, invincibility and safety, which is intricately related to the male world.

The advertisement conveys messages regarding class distinctions through its narrative of child kidnap for ransom. In general, the advertisement tells a story of how a man who drives the *Daihatsu Rocky* fools three hefty kidnappers who ask for a ransom. The vehicle is depicted as a great tool by which he can successfully save the kidnapped boy and run away from the kidnappers. The kidnapped boy is depicted as a member of an affluent family. It is seen, for instance, from his clean appearance. He wears a nice t-shirt, a hat and holds his red Power Ranger robotic toy, which is afforded only by the middle and upper class. His appeal is different compared with his kidnappers. The kidnappers in this advertisement are depicted as hefty, rude, and sloppy men. It is shown by the way they dress and by their body language. In other words, costume and appearance become social codes, which signify the different ranks of class. The lower class is depicted less attractive and their choices of dress are less tasteful and less expensive than the middle and upper class. Another marker of their lower class status is their ignorance, as they are easily deceived by the Rocky's driver. The kidnappers in the advertisement are fooled by the driver, as they do not anticipate the possibility of being deceived. Furthermore, the man can bring the boy back and run him safely with his vehicle. Although trying hard to blockade the vehicle, the kidnappers are depicted having not enough resources to catch or even stop them. At the end, the man with *Daihatsu Rocky* and the boy are depicted winning, as they can get out of trouble.

The winning, in my view, represents the winning of middle class over the lower class. In this advertisement, the members of lower class are depicted as villains, rule breakers, rude, dirty and physically strong but ignorant. The lower class also appears as being eager to make money by committing such a crime. The ransom can be used as capital to improve their life chances and, if possible, for class climbing. However, the story does not intend to allow the lower class criminals to win. Instead, it prefers to inscribe a story of class warfare. The advertisement demonstrates that to show their power, the

lower class tends to use strong physical tools which function as their weapon against the middle class. The lower class relies particularly on the usage of physical tools rather than on tactic and strategies.

The middle class, in contrast, is depicted as heroic, wealthy, clean, strong and educated. The presence of wealth is represented mainly by the product. It is well to remember that along with the growing middle class groups in Indonesia since the early 1990s, new symbols of middle class lifestyle are increasingly circulated in the country. It is a well known fact that prosperity, which followed economic liberalism in the early 1990s, has resulted in the emergence of an affluent urban middle class in Indonesia (Vickers 2005, p.198; Robison 1996, p.79). Their affluence has supported expansion in all areas of capital spending, increased investment on housing, clothing, entertainment, private education and also transportation. The boom of middle class in this country manifested itself in symbols of a consumer culture and lifestyle. As Heryanto (1999, p.165) asserts, middle class in Indonesia has been described as the main agent of contemporary consumer culture and lifestyle. Consumption and public display became the most legitimate ways to mark the middle class off from others [lower class] socially. Advertisements play a significant role to stimulate people's participation in consumer lifestyles. The four-wheel-drive *Daihatsu Rocky* offers an adventurous lifestyle for the middle class. This advertisement is connected to the fact that the growing middle class in the 1990s has resulted in high levels of vehicle sales in Indonesia (Robison 1996, p.80).

It is essential to realise that there is an assumption that crime never ceases to be an aspect of the lower class life (Lea 1999, p.312). This *Daihatsu Rocky* advertisement articulates and reproduces the assumption through its imagery of lower class. In the context of New Order Indonesia, the prosperity resulting from the policy of economic liberalisation since the late 1980s has widened the gap between the rich and the poor (Vickers 2005, p.199). As Rasyid (1995, p.157) asserts, despite its success in reducing the percentage of people living below the poverty line, there were many people who were unable to benefit directly from the development process. Some even considered themselves as marginalized or victims of the development. Furthermore, the New Order government had to deal with the basic problems of unemployment and underemployment, the rates of which had

been increasing since the beginning of 1990s. Such a condition resulted in the widening gap between the rich and the poor, especially in some Indonesian urban areas, which undoubtedly led to such a class conflict. The *Daihatsu Rocky* advertisement, to some extent, represents the widening gap between the rich and the poor in Indonesia during the New Order era of the 1990s. Its narrative reinforces the distinctions between the rich and the poor, and suggests clear boundaries between them.

In the advertisement the product itself functions as a class marker, which distinguishes the lower and the middle class within the narrative. It also positions the product as the vehicle of a hero who has bravery to save other people's lives. It is important to note, however, that, in the advertisement, the middle class hero comes to save a middle class kidnapped boy. In other words, he comes to save his own class. The class warfare depicted in the advertisement, therefore, is aimed to preserve and sustain the boundaries between the lower and middle class. Unlike the lower class, the middle class gains its power not only through physical strength but also, and mostly, through its knowledge and intelligence. As shown in the advertisement, the middle class hero successfully deceives the lower class kidnappers with his tactic to fill the bag with gas instead of money. By means of the vehicle and his high skill of driving, he can avoid all the obstacles and run away from the kidnappers without using any heavy physical tools. The middle class, in other words, relies on brain activity rather than physical or muscular activity. On this point, the advertisement makes use of different codes of masculinity to symbolize different positions of class.

The lower class masculinity is represented by physical strength, including its mechanical extension into hard instruments such as the big barbell and bunch of logs, and aggressiveness. This masculinity, according to Fiske (1993, p.201), is the style of masculinity that is fantasised by young boys, who have not strong bodies to grant them the power and who also occupy powerless positions in family and school. This immature masculinity is also attached to the lower class men, whose bodies are strong enough, but occupy powerless social positions in a society. Since their masculinity requires them to be dominant, the lower class men make use of their physical strength and aggressiveness to meet this requirement. The middle class men show what Fiske (*Ibid*, p.200) terms "adult masculinity". They use

their physical strength and its extensions, such as mechanical and driving skills, but their masculine power is exercised more by social means than physical, i.e., through the work of the brain and the ability to plan.

Both lower class/ villain masculinity and middle class/ hero masculinity in the *Daihatsu Rocky* advertisement in fact equally exercise violence. However, the middle class/ hero is depicted more successful in his violence, while the lower class/ villains are not. All this goes to narratively underscore the powerless social positions of the lower class. Images of the lower class in the advertisement, in my view, imply prejudice or anxiety among the middle class about social tensions, which were possibly ignited by the lower class due to their socio-economic problems. Those images are taken from the eyes of the middle class rather than from the eyes of the lower class. The life of the lower class is judged and stereotypically visualized from the perspective of the upper and middle class. Ehrenreich (2001) also reveals the same fact on her study of disappearance of working class people in American media. She points out, “[W]orking class people are likely to cross the screen only as witnesses to crimes or sports events, never as commentators, or even when their own lives are under discussion, [they never appear] as ‘experts’” (2001, p.40; internal quote in original). It could be said that the *Daihatsu Rocky* advertisement is about praising the position of the middle class in a society, by depicting them as the heroic, the morally excellent and, thereby, the winner. It symbolically works to ensure the middle class to be superior in the narrative.

During the Post New Order era, images of the affluent middle class as the heroic and the virtuous remain visible. Class relations between the rich and the poor, however, are depicted in a more modified way. It is illustrated, for instance, in the cigarette advertisement, *Dji Sam Soe*, which has been honoured with the Citra Pariwara Award in 2001 (Figure 2).



Figure 2. The middle class in *Dji Sam Soe* Advertisement is positioned as a hero that readily gives a hand to the lower class

The advertisement begins with a scene of a middle-aged woman, who is looking for her train and not able to find it. It is followed with an image of a man who is sitting in a train. With white shirt and glasses, the man looks like a young professional. He is holding the papers from his bag and reads them. The next scene shows that the confused woman gets serious attention from the man in the train. He is probably worrying that she might get into a wrong train. He promptly leaves his seat and gets out from his train. He walks quickly toward the other train to help her. At the same time, the train conductor gives a signal that the train is going to leave. Both of them look panicky, but the man quickly asks the woman to come with him. He holds her hand and takes her to his train. The scene moves to a dark scene indicating that some of the shooting has been skipped. The next scene is set on a moving train. The middle-aged woman smiles while taking food from her dinner container. The man is also eating food from her dinner container. Both of them are depicted having dinner and sharing stories. The woman, however, still looks timid, whereas the man attempts to comfort her by showing his down-to-earth personality. A male voice-over is heard, accompanying a later scene of the advertisement. The voice-over says, "Sometimes, not being silent means gold for others". The advertisement finally is closed with a text "*Dji Sam Soe* Filter, Crossing Boundaries."

The last text "Crossing Boundaries" reflects the advertising story of a middle class man crossing class boundaries by giving a hand to a lower class woman. The saying 'the clothes make the man' is applied in this advertisement. According to Valdivia (1998, p.227), social class is often described in terms of clothing. White collar workers are considered as middle class workers. The man in the *Dji Sam Soe* advertisement apparently personifies this idiom. He wears a white-collar shirt and glasses, which generate the image of a well-educated, middle class man. This image is reinforced by the scenes, in which he is depicted opening his bag, pulling out



papers and reading them. These scenes illustrate that he is a young professional and a hard worker. In contrast, the lower class middle aged woman in the advertisement is depicted as timid and less educated. She wears glasses too, but it is aimed to signify her state of age rather than her knowledge or educational status. Her appearance is old-fashioned, with a loose outfit and a headscarf. Her lack of knowledge is illustrated through her face and body language, as if it is her first time being in a train station.

The advertisement depicts a similar image of middle class as the *Daihatsu Rocky* advertisement. In this advertisement, the middle class man is also depicted as the virtuous, the hero, who readily gives a hand to others, particularly, to the lower class. As shown in the advertisement, the man does not merely help the woman, but he also lets himself share food with the woman. He is not reluctant to eat lower class food with lower class manners as he eats the food with bare hands. Though nowadays eating with hands has become a new eating style even among the upper and middle class in Indonesia, this habit is basically considered belonging to the lower class, based on the assumption that the lower class can not afford any eating utensils. The text "Crossing Boundaries" is well-matched on this point. Instead of reinforcing the class boundaries, the man is depicted crossing the boundaries which separate his class position and the woman's. He asks the woman to sit with him, and what is more, he opens himself to 'go down' and experience a slice of life of the lower class.

Similar with the *Daihatsu Rocky* advertisement, the *Dji Sam Soe* advertisement works to ensure the middle class a place to create values for themselves. It is observable, for instance, that the advertisement seeks to convey a normative message, especially for the middle class, to show concern and do something for someone in trouble. In 1997, a year before the fall of the New Order regime, the Indonesian economy began to deteriorate. Due to the economic crisis of 1997-1998, the number of people living in poverty increased sharply (Rabasa and Chalk 2001, p.15), which led to the significant fall in real standards of living. More specifically, the crisis primarily worsened the life chances of the lower class. People from the lower socio-economic level had to survive and live at a very minimal standard. The *Dji Sam Soe* advertisement, accordingly, addresses the affluent middle class to give more concern about the lower class. In other words, the

advertisement attempts to improve social cohesion between classes, which had been getting weaker, especially during the 1990s.

It is important to note that, unlike advertisements during the New Order era, the *Dji Sam Soe* advertisement does not depict a middle class man as a hero of his class. Instead, the advertisement depicts the middle class as the hero for the lower class. Added to that, during the Post New Order era, the lower class is represented differently. Although the advertising narrative is still driven by the middle class perspective, the lower class is not depicted or represented negatively, such as deviant, rule breaker or loser. Yet, the image of the lower class as being ignorant or having lack of knowledge is still intact. But, despite their timidity and lack of knowledge, they do not appear totally weak and dependent upon the people from a higher rank of class. The advertisement, hence, provides a space for the lower class to negotiate their position in the face of the middle class. It is illustrated, for instance, in the scene in which the middle class man and the lower class woman sit and have dinner together in the train. It is narrated that the middle class man comes right on time and saves the woman from getting into a wrong train. Although it might be not aimed as a reward, the woman does provide dinner for the man, as they sit together in the train. She shares her food with the man, which she brought from home in her dinner container. Her food, in my view, represents the pride of the lower class, since the food embodies her hard work, both in earning the money for the food and in producing or cooking the food. The pride of the lower class, sometimes, is simply overlooked by those in the higher rank of class. It is often claimed that only the middle class can necessarily provide assistance to the lower class.

The advertisement, in contrast, illustrates that the lower class can provide something valuable as well for the middle class. It obviously symbolises the fact that the lower class works to nourish the middle class. By providing dinner for the middle class man, the lower class woman does not fully owe him, if rational calculation will be applied on this point. Most importantly, it is observable that despite their timidity, lack of knowledge and, generally, socio-economic problems, the lower class still has a bargaining position in the face of those in the higher rank of class.

### Guardian of Class Mobility

Advertisements play a significant role in generating desire for class mobility in society. More specifically, advertisements provide certain cues about how to move upwardly, especially through consuming activities. Foster (2005, p.4) calls this process “class passing”, that is, moving through social positions because of a change in job, marriage, or any number of plot contrivances. In the context of advertising, products can function as agents, which facilitate people to engage in class-passing.

In the *Daihatsu Rocky* advertisement, the desire for upward social mobility and class-passing is associated mainly with the lower class. They seek to move their social position upwardly by practicing crime. The middle class, in contrast, is depicted not exercising class mobility and class-passing, but as the guardian of their own class. The middle class, in the advertisement, attempts to protect and secure its position. The advertisement works to ensure the middle class, maintains its position and protects itself from any external threats, which can reduce or disrupt its position. The rich people, indeed, attempt to protect their economic power and material privileges available for them and their family. They will make efforts to ensure their offspring stay continuously in their class, or, if possible, are mobile upwardly

to the higher rank. It is illustrated, for instance, in the *Sustagen Junior* advertisement, which has been honoured with the Citra Pariwara Award in 1995 (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Middle class mother in *Sustagen Junior* advertisement as a guardian of class mobility. She provides her offspring with better education, facilitate him to engage in good activities to move upwardly in society



The advertisement presents a mother as the first narrator telling a story about her son. She describes how her son is growing to be an active and ingenious person. The mother, in this advertisement, does not merely describe her son's curiosity and activities, but the narrative of her son implies her own expectations as a mother, and of her son's bright future. They, mother and son, are depicted as members of the rich. Some markers which refer to their state of wealth are readily



seen in the advertisement such as the standing lamp, the painting hanging on the wall, the beautiful vase with flowers and some more obvious markers of the rich. All the son's activities entail high cost instruments and a high level of education, which can be afforded only by the upper or middle class. Those activities reflect cultural preferences and tastes, which correspond to their education level and social class. The mother, in my view, projects her own desire for class-mobility to her son, as if those activities are her son's desire. She tends to stimulate and facilitate her son to have the expectation of being a violist, photographer, marathon runner or marching band player. She attempts to provide her offspring with a better education, facilitate them to engage in good activities and, thereby, her offspring can gain a greater capacity to move upwardly in society. Or, at least, she attempts to secure their current position of class. Bourdieu (2000, p.132) observes this tendency and argues that the dominant class and middle class, who are the richest in economic capital, tend to make increased use of educational opportunities to ensure their class standing. Better education and academic qualifications become important investments and the central mechanism for securing and upgrading their position in the class structure.

In the advertisement, the product functions as an agent, which helps the mother to prepare and guide her son to achieve a greater capacity to enjoy a superior social standing. It becomes very useful to support the physical and mental development of children. From an early age, the son is well prepared by his mother, physically and mentally, to secure his class position, and, more importantly, to move upwardly to the higher rank. It would be apparent, then, that middle class women, especially mothers, are charged with the responsibility to protect and secure her family's class from within. Sustainability of her family's class position depends on her success in preparing her offspring physically and mentally. It becomes obvious that women, in the role of mothers in particular, are often considered as the guardians of class and the guardians of class passing (Foster 2005, p.27). Different from middle class men, who are attached with responsibility to protect his class from external threats, middle class women are responsible for the protection of their class from threats which come from within. Her offspring are obviously the main factors which play a significant role to secure her current class or ensure its upward mobility.

As described earlier, during the New Order era the lower class was depicted doing class passing by practicing crime. It should be admitted that the desire for upward mobility in a society is possessed mainly by the lower class people. They always attempt to find ways in which they can cross barriers and move to a higher rank of class. During the Post New Order era, the desire for class-passing among the lower class is still present in the advertisements and education becomes a central mechanism that enables the lower class to make it real. In the Post New Order era, a woman, either middle or lower class, is also depicted as a guardian mother of class-mobility. Advertisements tend to depict the lower class mother, in particular, as being very supportive to her offspring to seek upward class mobility. All this goes to underline that upward class mobility is considered as beginning from home, and therefore, the mother is depicted as the most responsible for that. More specifically, the lower class is depicted as the site from where the middle class could have originated. The upward social climbing of the lower class is enabled and underpinned by the figure of mother.

### **Conclusion**

In the context of Indonesia, discussion of class cannot be detached from socio-economic dynamics occurring in the country. In line with the tremendous economic growth under the New Order government, during the 1990s the so-called urban middle class grew phenomenally. The newly rich middle class in Indonesia in this period has been described as the main agent of contemporary consumer culture in a sense of their conspicuous consumption lifestyle. Advertisements, on this point, played a significant role in stimulating and facilitating this lifestyle. As a result, advertising narratives were driven by a middle class perspective, which, no wonder, praised its own position and denigrated those who resided in the lower position. The presence of middle class was signified by cosmopolitan fashionable outfits and adventurous lifestyle. It was associated with the middle class image as hero. This tendency has been apparently visualized in the *Daihatsu Rocky* and *Sustagen Junior* advertisements, which were produced during the New Order era. Middle class, in *Daihatsu Rocky* advertisement, is personified by the figure of a virtuous, educated, masculine hero, who showed his bravery and readiness to protect his own class from external threats. For doing so, the middle class hero relied on brain activity rather than on muscle or

physical strength. The middle class in advertisements during the New Order era was also represented having a great concern for securing their position and wealth, and for achieving a greater capacity for social climbing and class passing. As seen in *Sustagen Junior* advertisement, education becomes the central mechanism for securing position and for moving upwardly in society. A middle class family was depicted providing a better education for their offspring from an early age, leading them to superior social standing and power in their future life.

The lower class, meanwhile, was depicted less positive than the middle class. In their marginal presence, the lower class was depicted as deviant, rude, the loser and lacking in knowledge, or ignorant. Since the lower class was considered as ignorant, advertisements tended to picture them relying upon their muscle or physical strength rather than their brain in dealing with their works as has been depicted in *Daihatsu Rocky* advertisement. Desire for class mobility and class passing was also owned by the lower class. However, due to their limited resources, the lower class was depicted practicing crime in order to acquire economic power for social climbing. Advertising imagery and narrative of the lower class as deviants or villains could be said to be a result of anxiety among the middle class about the resentment of the poor. If they did appear together with the middle class, the lower class was positioned as the one which served and provided materials and comfort for the middle class. It could be concluded that during the New Order era advertisements tended to reinforce class distinctions between the lower and the middle class. Advertising narratives particularly worked to ensure the middle class maintained and sharpened the boundaries between their class positions. In this process, the product serves as a significant agent, which facilitates the middle class to secure its position, or to be upwardly mobile to the higher position.

During the Post New Order era until 2005, class relations were depicted more fluid and permeated. Class distinctions were obviously present, but not in terms of opposition. The middle class was still depicted as a morally excellent educated hero. Unlike in the previous era, the middle class hero during the new era was not depicted protecting his own class. Instead, he appeared as the hero for lower class. The middle class, therefore, was depicted crossing the boundaries and having empathy towards the lower

class. Advertisements during the Post New Order era sought to illustrate the middle class as down-to-earth people and having tolerance towards others, especially those who resided in the lower rank of class. This tendency has been apparently illustrated in the *Dji Sam Soe* advertisement. The lower class during this era, meanwhile, appeared as people with pride or dignity. They are depicted having bargaining power in the face of the middle class. They did not appear as the ones who always provide comfort, materials or companionship for the middle class either. Instead, both classes operated in an exchange relationship.

Advertisements during the two different eras tended to illustrate that the desire for upward class mobility and class passing mostly embraced the lower class. In this regard, education became the central mechanism for moving their social position upwardly. In addition, gendering class has obviously taken place in Indonesian advertisements during the two different eras in Indonesia. Women were positioned as the guardians of class and the guardians of class mobility, as depicted for instance in *Sustagen Junior* advertisement. Stereotypical traits of the lower class, such as being uneducated, having illegitimate tastes of dress, or showing timidity, were also embodied in women. Advertisements during the two different eras, as have been analyzed above, inclined to position middle class women as consumers rather than producers. In contrast, lower class women were positioned as producers rather than consumers. This comparison has been revealed in *Sustagen Junior* advertisement produced in New Order era and *Dji Sam Soe* advertisement produced after the fall of the New Order era. Men tended to personify middle class characters with morally excellent traits and behaviours. It is not surprising that men were mostly depicted exercising their economic power and enjoying cultural privileges available to them.

Codes of masculinity and male conduct were used in the advertisements under discussion to narrativize class distinction in terms of opposition. The advertisements also made use of different codes of masculinity to symbolise the different social positions between lower and middle class. Those codes are functionalised in the narrative to maintain and reinforce class borders that need to be defended. Codes of femininity, especially in the figure of motherhood, were used to narrativize the permeability of class boundaries and the possibility of social climbing and class-passing. Advertisements

during the two different eras have shown the same tendency to place women as heroes of class in terms of nurturing the middle class. The lower class, particularly, is depicted playing a motherly role of nourishing the middle class. It could be said, on this point, that the existence of the middle class is narratively enabled and underpinned by women and the lower class.

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### Figures

Figure 1: Scenes from *Daihatsu Rocky* Advertisement (1996)

Figure 2: Scenes from *Dji Sam Soe* Advertisement (2001)

Figure 3: Scenes from *Sustagen Junior* Advertisement (1996)

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