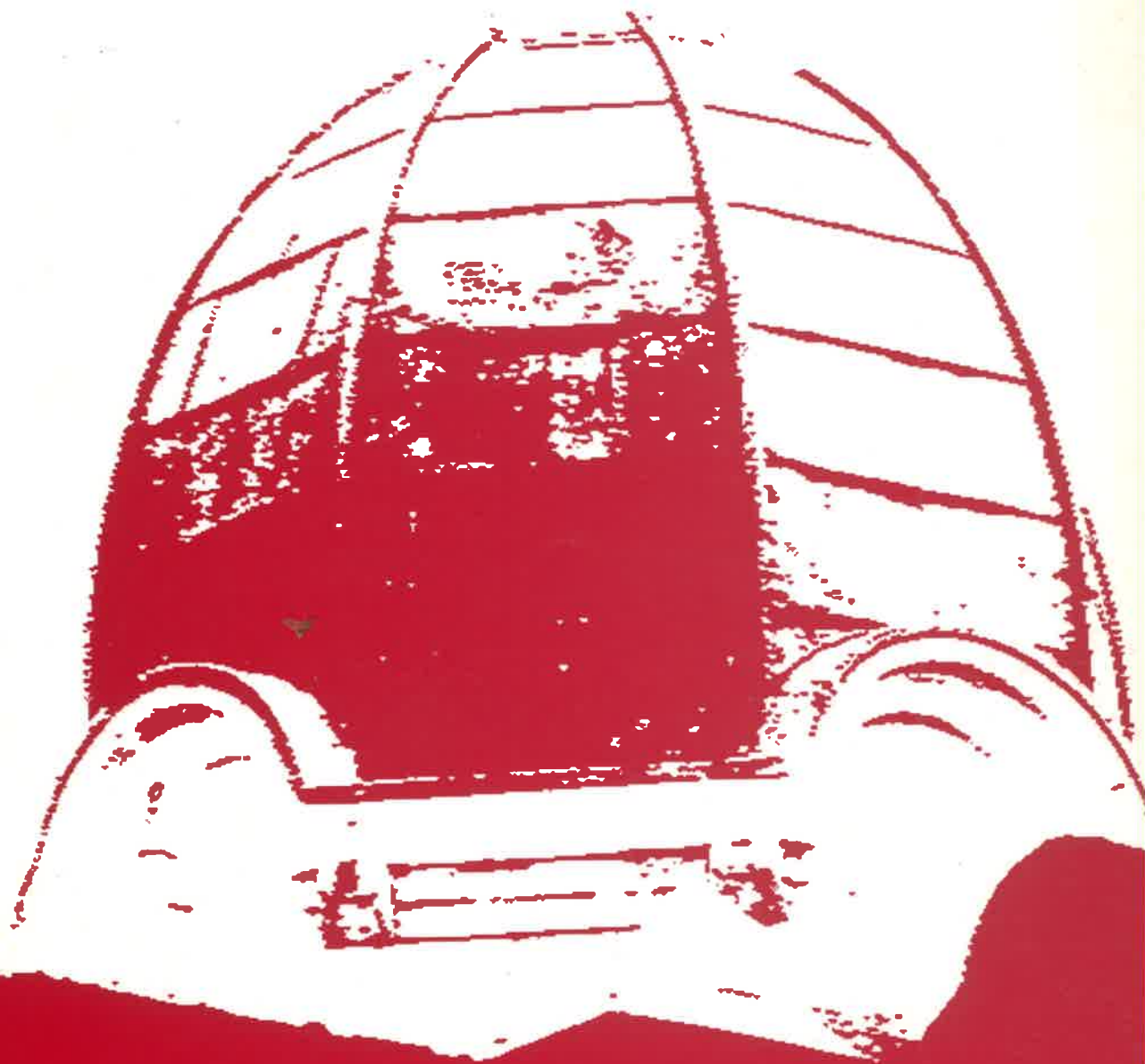




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Post Graduate on Environment and Urban Studies

proceeding



The 3rd International Conference

City Marketing, Heritage and Identity

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FOREWORD

On behalf of the organising committee of the conference on "City Marketing, Heritage and Identity" I would like to thank all the participants of the conference, and especially those who have submitted their paper abstracts presented in this abstract book. This conference is the third in a series of conferences that the Post Graduate Program on Environmental and Urban Studies-Soegijapranata Catholic University has organised under the heading of International Conference on Environment and Urban Management.

Up to the closing date for submission the organising committee have received more than sixty papers. From these we can see the diversity in countries and backgrounds the authors represent, as well as the diverse approaches they have taken in discussing the issues of city marketing, urban heritage, urban identity and urban environmental problems of our urban areas.

Given this diversity, I am confident that this will be an interesting and useful conference. Furthermore, I hope it will be useful not only for those participating, but more importantly for the urban population in general, in particular those living in poor conditions in the fast growing, cities of the developing world. As we know, 2007 is the year in which for the first time in history half of world population are living in urban areas. This will open up many opportunities but at the same time pose unprecedented challenges for us. This conference can and should be our small contribution in responding to those immense opportunities and challenges.

Warm regards,

Tjahjono Rahardjo

The Third International Conference on
Environment and Urban Studies

City Marketing, Heritage and Identity

Proceeding

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UI1.11 FOOD AS A CITY IDENTITY: THE CASE OF LOENPIA IN SEMARANG

Fransesco Limawan, Rosalia Devi, Probo Y. Nugrahedi, Budi Widianarko

INTRODUCTION

Identity is a source of meaning based on what are experienced. City identity is the identity of a city as far as it is influenced by its belonging to a group of culture or city (www.en.wikipedia.org). The identity of a city is usually represented by physical buildings or artifacts, location, or people. In some cities, food is signed as the identity the city. Food is not only a product which is consumed to meet the requirements of one's life. Food also has symbolic meaning linked with certain history, culture, religion and identity. Food represents culture, the way of life and the way of eating (Muchnik *et al.*, 2005).

The identity of a city as represented by its local food can be shown such as *Gudeg* as an identity of city Yogyakarta, *Pempek* of Palembang, *Kerak Telor* of Jakarta, *Pailla* of Barcelona, *Haring* fish of Volendam and Northern Netherlands, *Loenpia* of Semarang, *Okonomiyaki* *Hiroshimayaki* of Hiroshima, etc. Those kinds of food are widely known to the other cities even across nation and usually taking part to the tourism destination consideration particularly as a culinary tourism.

LOENPIA OF SEMARANG

Tracing back when loenpia of Semarang was firstly produced as it is now is more dominated by oral history than written references. Fortunately, this loenpia was formerly produced as a family business so that the history could be traced back from their families who have been continuously running the business. Several articles about loenpia of Semarang also were found in the newspaper, such as ones written by Wargatjie, a journalist.

Typical loenpia of Semarang is a fusion product between Chinese and Javanese foods. In about the mid of 19th century, Tjoa Thay Yoe, who was born in Fujian, China, came to Indonesia and produced and sold a traditional food from his homeland. He met Wasih, a Javanese who also produced and sold a similar food but with different ingredients. Tjoa's product was filled with pork and bamboo shoot, while Wasih's product was filled with potato and shrimp. They got married and have a daughter Tjoa Po Nio. This family further created and produced a fusion of previous recipes.

By the time being, it was then called loenpia of Semarang, a pastry similar to spring roll filled with *pihi* fish, shrimp, and bamboo shoot (Wargatjie, 2003).

There are two types of loenpia produced. One is fried loenpia, and another is no-fried loenpia (wet loenpia). Loenpia is served with a certain sauce made from tapioca starch, onion, chilli, coconut sugar, white pepper and sometime with dried shrimp. There are also green onion leaves, cucumber pickles, and fresh chilli to be accompanied to loenpia. At "Loenpia Xpres", a new loenpia producer that created a modern design of loenpia shop/ restaurant, one can eat it in accompanied with rice.

Up to now, there are five streams of loenpia producers/ sellers, each with their own typical taste and price. Loenpia of *Gang Lombok* (Siem Swie Kiem), loenpia of *Jalan Pemuda* (the late Siem Swie Hie) and loenpia of *Jalan Mataram* (the late Siem Hwa Nio) are the first three main streams respectively. They are from a family of the late Siem Gwan Sing – Tjoa Po Nio couple, the generation after the late Tjoa Thay Yoe – Wasih couple, the creator of loenpia of Semarang (Wargatjie, 2005).

The oldest generation of loenpia of Semarang who still exists now is Siem Swie Kiem, the third generation, who has been continuing his father business, the late Siem Gwan Sing, at Gang Lombok No. 11 (Wargatjie, 2003). Loenpia of Semarang from the fourth generation is sold in Jalan Pemuda and Jalan Pandanaran, by Siem Siok Lien (also familiar as Mbak Lien), who has been continuing her father business, the late Siem Swie Hie, the older brother of Siem Swie Kiem. Mbak Lien produced and sold three types of loenpia with different fillers, i.e. shrimp, chicken, and the mix of both. But now, she only produces a loenpia with a mix of bamboo shoot, shrimp and chicken as filler ingredients. Other fourth generations are the children from the late Siem Hwa Nio, the older sister of Siem Swie Kiem, who have been continuing their mother business at Jalan MT Haryono and other several places in Semarang, even in the capital of Jakarta (Wargatjie, 2005).

The fourth stream is loenpia which are produced and sold by the ex employees of loenpia of *Jalan Pemuda*. And the last one is loenpia produced and sold by ones who have already gift-food stores or the hobbyist with a good culinary background (Wargatjie, 2005).

IS LOENPIA QUALIFIED AS A CITY IDENTITY OF SEMARANG?

Loenpia itself can be directly linked to its original place. The term loenpia, or lumpia derives from *lunpia* in the Hokkien dialect of Chinese (www.wikipedia.org). However, as a fusion of two different ethnics of food product, loenpia of Semarang have been unintentionally created as a specific local loenpia which linked to Semarang as the origin of the fusion. According to Amilien et al., 2007, in its broadest sense, a "local food product" is a food that is typically linked to an identified location either through

geography, know-how or tradition. Loenpia of Semarang is almost qualified as a city identity.

Loenpia of Semarang is a result of a long and unintentional construction to the city identity. As a city identity, the existence of loenpia of Semarang was supported mainly by the expanding of Tjoa - Wasih family business to the city and the production of loenpia by other food producers. Loenpia can be found easily at any places in Semarang and many street-food vendors sell loenpia at most of the main streets in Semarang, such as Jalan MT. Haryono, Pandanaran, and Gajahmada. Interestingly, all of them claim that their product is the original loenpia of Semarang. Also, loenpia has been sold at the gift-food stores. It is therefore, Semarang is claimed as the city of loenpia. Loenpia has become one of the must-bring-gifts when ones or tourists go (back) to other cities from Semarang.

The identity construction of loenpia as a food of Semarang is also contributed by several examples as shown below:

(1) A restaurant in Jakarta (namely Bamboo restaurant) has a special menu offered, i.e. loenpia of Semarang. Interestingly, the bamboo shoot is supplied directly from Semarang to give a kind of guarantee to the consumer that they sell original loenpia of Semarang.

(2) Loenpia produced by Siem Swie Kiem at Gang Lombok No. 11 was published in a tourism catalogue in France, which mentioned his name and address, although he never asked an advertisement on that catalogue (Wargatjie, 2003).

(3) The design of label particularly from the loenpia produced by the Tjoa - Wasih's family shows a typical old fashioned style which probably to indicate that the product was already created long time ago as a heritage food and so gives a strong impression of identity (Figure 1).

(4) A private branded loenpia of Semarang, "Loenpia Xpres", gives a special service to consumer by delivering fresh loenpia from Semarang to the destination cities. It can give the supportive impression that original loenpia must be from Semarang.



Figure 1. Label of Loenpia

Branding of Loenpia of Semarang

Branding became much more ethereal and image-based, and ads only occasionally nodded to a product's attributes (Rushkoff, 2007). Generic brands of consumer products are distinguished by the absence of brand name (www.wikipedia.org). In the case of loenpia of Semarang, many producers/seller put a generic brand on their product, as Loenpia Semarang, plus an additional name of the producer or location, such as "Loenpia Semarang Gang Lombok" and "Lunpia Mataram Semarang". Loenpia of Semarang does not exclusively refer to a certain brand. Few others put a private brand for their products, such as "Loenpia Mbak Lien" and "Loenpia Xpres". The "Loenpia Semarang Gang Lombok" brand already has a patent right for it (Wargatjie, 2003). The generic branding of Semarang's loenpia conveys a perfect identity of the city without being interfered with conflicting business interests

As a product that can be produced by anyone with a generic brand, Loenpia of Semarang will open opportunities for ones who want to start their loenpia business. The increased competition between producers/ sellers will challenge them to produce a unique taste, healthy, and other better qualities as expected by the consumers. From the consumers' perspective, there is a freedom to choose which loenpia they want to buy since all of them are originally and made in Semarang.

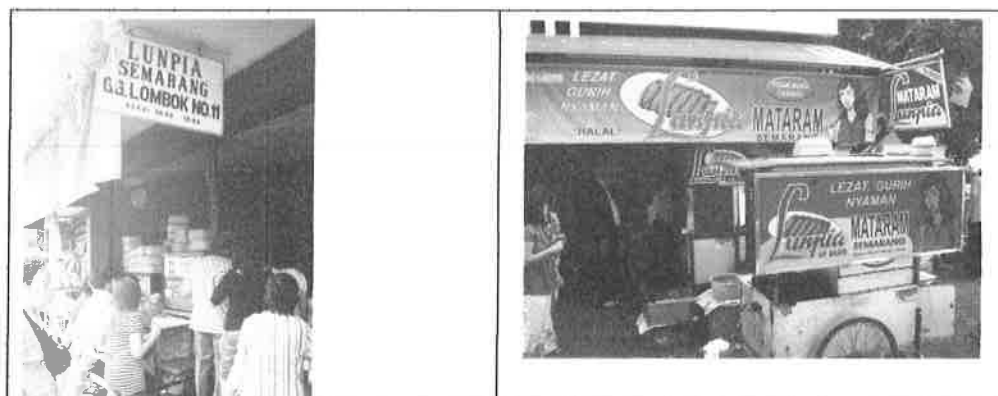




Figure 2. Some loempia producers/sellers

Conclusions

As conclusions, food can be used as an identity of a city. It is shown by loempia of Semarang, a family's heritage that could be one of the identities of Semarang encouraging heritage tourism as a mean of economic development. Furthermore, generic branding of loempia of Semarang contributes to the city identity and opens for more opportunities, particularly for small and medium scale industries in Semarang.

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