

Karsten's Work as a City Branding Strengthener for The Semarang City, Indonesia

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Abstract

Currently the City of Semarang, Indonesia, is trying to have a BRAND which is expected to be able to show the potential of Semarang city. Semarang city is one of the cities in Indonesia which in planning the development of the form of town planning, was planned by a city planner who is also an architect named Ir. Herman Thomas Karsten. Karsten has a lot of architectural works in Semarang city, ranging from buildings that function as houses, offices, to other public buildings such as schools, markets, theater, office building, housings, and hospitals. Karsten's architectural works are known to be comfortable to view or use for their activities. This is shown by the many works of Karsten which are still being used well by building users. This study aims to reveal the potential of the city of Semarang related to the urban cultural heritage of Karsten's work. This research will provide benefits for the stakeholders of the Semarang City in determining the city branding of Semarang city. In addition, this research is also beneficial for the development of architectural scholarship, and will provide new insights to the academic community about the importance of cultural heritage in a city. This research will provide clarity, that the Urban Cultural Heritage will affect the city identity and city character. As for the community, this research will contribute to helping the creation of a new built environment for cultural heritage artifacts through the city's brand image.

Keywords: brand image, city branding, Karsten's work, Semarang city, urban cultural heritage

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Introduction

Several times the Semarang City has been given a slogan, starting from Semarang, the city of ATLAS (Safe, Orderly, Smooth, Healthy, Healthy); and in 2019 Semarang City was proclaimed as a creative city in the fashion sector. In fact, there is another tagline that is expected to become a slogan in City Branding, namely Semarang, The Variety of Culture. To see the potential of the city, in the context of Semarang city, it must be realized that Semarang city has its potential: Geographic, History of the formation of the city, Culture, Culinary, and Fashion Design. In relation to the potential of this city, it must be realized that architecture is a place for human activities; in this case the architectural work includes the city and buildings.

The discussion of the formation of Semarang city, which started from the embryo of its formation until its development until around the 1940s, is very interesting, because of that the historiography of Semarang city really must be well understood. The positive impact of the development of Semarang City that can be felt today is due to the decision taken in 1916, when the implementation of modern town planning by Ir. Herman Thomas Karsten. This modern town planning was the first to be applied to town planning in Indonesia at that time. Semarang city is the first city in Indonesia to inherit the application of the modern town planning concept; even completely.

The facts show that before Karsten's arrival, Semarang city was formed based on race/ethnicity, so we know the Old Town (Colonial) Area, Chinatown Area, and Indigenous Area.

Karsten made plans for the expansion of Semarang City to cover five areas. These areas are, the Candi Baru Area (1916), the areas of Pekunden, Peterongan, Batan, Wonodri (1919), the Sompok Area (1919), the East Semarang Area (1919), and the Mlaten Area (1924). If these five areas are put together, then this is the city of Semarang that now exists, outside the Old City. Thus, it can be concluded that Semarang City outside the Old City was the work of Karsten, and Karsten was the one who designed the New Semarang City at that time (figure 1).



Description:

1. Candi Baru Area
2. Pekunden, Peterongan, Batan, Wonodri.
Here can be seen the Simpang Lima embryo.
3. Sompok Area
4. East Semarang Area
5. Mlaten Area

Figure 1
Semarang City expansion
planning
map by Karsten
Source: A. Plate, NION, Zesde
Jaargang, 1921/1922: 148

The Simpang Lima area in the Pekunden area, from a map of 1909 it can be concluded that it was Karsten who designed Pahlawan, and KHA Dahlan Street (Seroja Street), and before 1909, there were only Pandanaran Street, Gajahmada Street, and A. Yani Street. Thus, it can be concluded that the point embryo of the intersection area was designed by Karsten (figure 2).

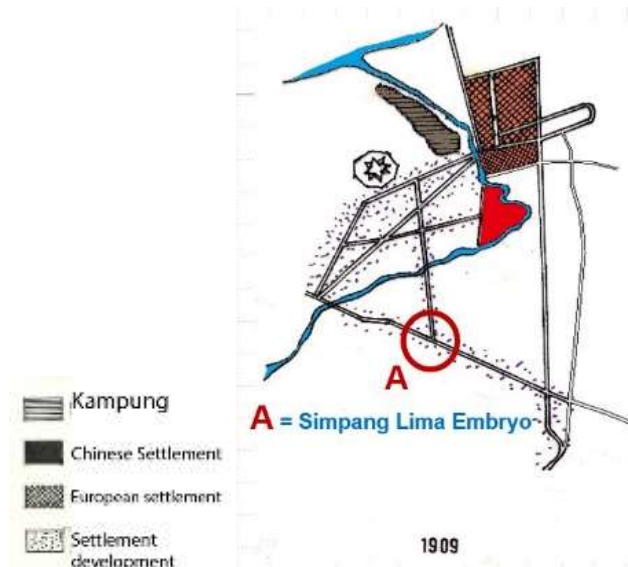


Figure 2
Semarang City morphological
map 1909

On the other hand, many buildings in the Semarang City, both within the Old City of Semarang area and outside the Old City, are the result of Karsten's designs. These buildings include: Djakarta Lloyd Building, PTP XIV Office, Jiwasraya Insurance Building, Sobokarti Folk Theater, PT KAI Office, House of Puri Gajahmungkur (Good Fellas Restaurant), Residential House on Wungkal Street, Puri Wedari, Elisabeth Hospital, Van Deventer High School, etc.



Figure 3
Djakarta Lloyd building



Figure 4
Jiwasraya insurance office



Figure 5
Gajahmungkur house; now,
Goodfelaas restaurant

Based on this fact, it is worth considering that this cultural heritage can strengthen the City Branding of Semarang City.

Departing from the phenomenon of Karsten's works as a cultural heritage of Semarang City, the specific issue of this research focuses on Karsten's works as a city branding reinforcement for Semarang City. This issue has never been discussed in Architectural research. This study aims to reveal the potential of Karsten's work in architectural and city design that can strengthen the city branding of Semarang City. The benefit of this research is to provide new insights to the academic community about the importance of cultural heritage in a city. By understanding this research, architects and graphic design experts can work together in finding city branding related to cultural heritage, in line with today's rapidly developing science.

Materials and Methods

Study object and case study

The object of study was selected empirically on Karsten's works in Semarang City, which include town planning works and architectural design works.

Semarang city is the object of study, and there are five case studies, namely 1). The hilly area of Candi Baru (1916). 2). The area of Pekunden, Peterongan, Batan, Wonodri (1919). 3). Sompok area (1919). 4). East Semarang Area (1919). 5). Mlaten Area (1924). Apart from the city area, another case study is all of Karsten's buildings which are cultural heritage heritages.

Research operational method

This study uses a qualitative research method with a descriptive method approach.

Method of collecting data

Stage 1

Understanding the issue of this research, namely the potential of Karsten's work which can be a factor in strengthening the city branding of Semarang City. So, the initial stage of this research will be focused on document data by Karsten, namely in the form of Karsten planning maps for the five areas.

Stage 2

The maps of these five areas were studied and understood to be cross-checked in the field, in order to obtain real-world data between the maps and the physical reality on the ground. In addition, observations and data collection of Karsten's buildings that became cultural heritage buildings were carried out in the five areas planned by Karsten.

Thus, field observations are a very important part of this research, because the maps that have been studied and analyzed will be cross-checked with the reality of the field data; as well as observations on the buildings that have been determined.

Stage 3

At this stage, an analysis is carried out by outlining the potentials found in the case study and formulating the Karsten concept based on the findings in the field. So, at this stage an analysis is carried out to determine the dominance and role of local aspects found in the case study.

Stage 4

At this stage, the potential of Karsten's work can be found which can be a factor in strengthening the city branding of Semarang City.

Data analysis method

The data analysis method used in this study is as follows:

1. The collection of Semarang City planning maps by Karsten is the first step that must be taken.
2. Analysis of the maps of Semarang City resulted in a morphological map of the formation of the New Semarang City. Apart from that, Karsten's buildings were also analyzed.
3. The Conclusions and recommendations regarding the potential of Karsten's work as a strengthening factor for the city branding of Semarang City.

Result and Discussion

The development of a city needs to pay attention to local aspects, so that the development carried out does not then become something completely new, which makes people who live in the city become strangers to their own city. Quite a lot of buildings in Semarang City are Karsten's works, this has the potential to be displayed because of the distinctive character of the activities to be accommodated, but still given a touch of novelty through the shape of the building and the construction in it. This was one of the efforts made by Karsten in planning a New Semarang City (at that time). This architectural work can be a source of the formation of the city branding of the city of Semarang today. This is because a branding is built not only because of the desire of the party who will create a brand for the product to be appointed, but also must pay attention to the image that has been built in the minds of the targets to be addressed in a structured and planned manner. (Schultz & Barnes, 1999).

The use of things that are already known from a product by the target will make the specific introduction of the product (including the city) will make the introduction of a specific product easier (Moser, 2006).

Semarang city is widely known for several things, including:

- The history of Semarang City has artifacts that can still be seen in its development.
- Diverse geography, has lowlands, middlelands, and highlands.
- Diverse cultures, so there is a *peranakan* culture which is a form of cultural acculturation that occurs in Semarang city.
- Diverse cuisine is a tangible form of the meeting of several cultures in society that has developed to this day.
- Design (city and building) which is a place for human activities. There are many forms of design that become something specific, which is marked by the many relics of buildings that appeared in the colonial era, many of which are still preserved with the various unique features in them.

These potentials actually have the opportunity to be developed so that the city of Semarang can develop its brand image to become stronger. Things that have the potential to be developed will be able to support the city of Semarang to become a CREATIVE CITY.

By utilizing things that are already known from a product by the target will make the specific introduction of the product (including the city) will make the specific introduction of a product easier (Moser, 2006). Regarding Karsten's work, Karsten's work cannot be separated from locality. Locality is a part of culture that can contribute to the physical architecture of a community that has a tradition at a certain time (Antariksa, 2017: 1).

Based on the studies on Karsten's works, it can be concluded that all of these studies discuss Karsten's works related to architectural works, and the concept of modern town planning. Research by Karsten as a potential for forming city branding, has never been done (State of the Art).

Currently the city of Semarang is trying to have a BRAND which is expected to be able to show the potential of the city of Semarang directly to the intended target, both residents of Semarang City and its surroundings to the world community. In 2019, the city of Semarang was proclaimed as a creative city in the fashion sector. there is another tagline that is expected to become a slogan in City Branding, namely Semarang, The Variety of Culture; but the slogan has never been inaugurated by the Semarang City Government as a tagline to strengthen the city's city branding.

In relation to The Variety of Culture, it is very important to examine the history of the formation of the City of Semarang, which cannot be separated from culture. The city of Semarang has a very interesting history of city formation, which cannot be separated from Ir. Herman Thomas Karsten.

Karsten's reputation as an architect and city advisor in Indonesia during the colonial period is undeniable. Karsten's town planning works are found in many cities in Indonesia, such as Bandung, Surabaya, Jakarta, Semarang, Magelang, Bogor, Madiun, Cirebon, Jatinegara, Yogyakarta, Solo, Purwokerto, Palembang, Padang, Medan, and Banjarmasin. (Nas, 1986: 74-75). According to Akihary's records, there were forty-seven works of architecture and urban planning by Karsten in several cities in Indonesia; and 50% of this work is in Semarang City, which includes urban planning and architectural design of buildings. So, it can be said that the city of Semarang is Karsten's most complete work, including architectural works and town planning works.

Architecture places historical facts and the meaning of buildings for human life with an effort to maintain technical and functional values. The city of Semarang as a city that has a heritage of cultural heritage, in the preservation of historic buildings must open a new interpretation of new meanings; means that concepts in architectural planning and design must be implemented that take into account the aspects of art, engineering, social, culture and new functions (figure 6).

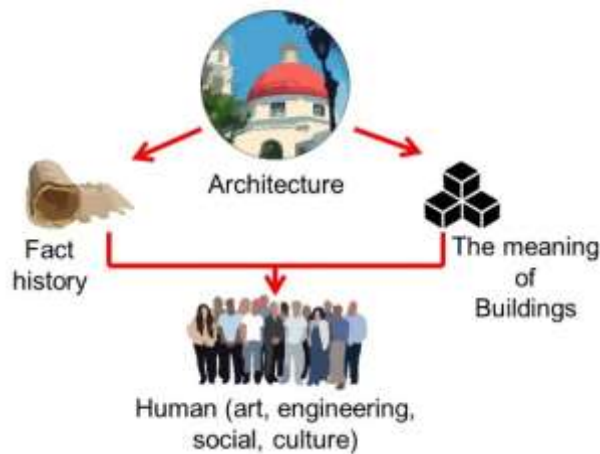


Figure 6
The role of architecture in the identity of the city

This is very important to understand, especially in relation to efforts to find the potential of urban heritage to become the identity of a city, and ultimately determine the character of the city.

Vision of a city

When we are faced with the choice of 'conservation' in a city, we must realize that heritage, which has survived for centuries, cannot be grasped or seen all at once, within the constraints of time and place. Furthermore, the legacy of a century full of innovation, development, human experience, mutation, and change, requires a holistic vision to uncover the true dimensions. This holistic vision cannot be achieved easily, and unfortunately it is often permeated by assumptions and attempts towards predestined conclusions and synthesis through self-projection and prior knowledge.

Thus, to get a holistic vision, it is necessary to know everything that is related to all the potential of the city, which is related to aspects: City identity/character, social, cultural, political, economic development of the city (figure 7).



Figure 7
City vision

If we observe the scenery in cities in Indonesia, we often find the city slogans/jargons written on banners or on large billboards, for example, “Berhiber”, “Beriman” (clean, beautiful, comfortable), etc. But what happens, often the facts are found, the reality in the city does not reflect the slogan. Actually, it should be a question, what exactly do city stakeholders (in this case the city government) want with the many slogans that are echoed in a city? Ironically, things like this are followed by small towns, who want to show their true identity! In this context, it is very important to understand the character of a city.

City character

In examining the character of a city that has a rich heritage of cultural heritage and all its potential, in an effort to find the identity of the city, this cannot be separated from the conservation of architecture and the city. Malcom Miles in *Cities and Cultures* said that, a city can undergo transformation in many ways. He cited the transformation of Barcelona from a Mediterranean port to a world city in the 1990s as an example of re-branding a city through cultural means (Malcom Miles, 2007: 75). Indonesia, which has experienced Dutch colonialism for 350 years, its cities must have undergone a city transformation from the embryonic period of the formation of the city until the time of Indonesia's independence, even today. All of this will definitely affect the character of the city. The character of this city is influenced by reality:

- Cities as living organisms.
- Cities produce culture.

- The importance of city historiography.
- The importance of Urban Heritage in the creation of the city's

Cities as living organisms

A city that has a long history of forming its city, must obtain an architectural conservation approach that does not focus only on buildings, but must be comprehensive in its urban structure. This requires concerted thinking to achieve good conservation outcomes. Of course, the long history of the formation of a city indicates that the city as a living organism.

In the 1920s (After planning the Candi Baru area, the areas of Pekunden - Simpang Lima, the Sompok area, the East Semarang area), Karsten saw the fact that a city is an organism that "lives", "grows", the city must be considered as something that dynamic and never static.

Aldo Rossi in his book *The Architecture of the City* criticizes the lack of understanding of the city in current architectural practice. Regarding cultural heritage, cities must be studied and appreciated as something that was built over time; there is of particular importance here, namely urban artefacts that resist the passage of time. Cities remind us of the past (our "collective memory"), and that we use memory through monuments; Thus, monuments give structure to the city. The form of a city is always a particular time form of the city. Thus, a city in the course of its formation and growth, will always develop over time. All of this will leave the city's artifacts in the form of monuments, landscapes, and others. All of this will remind the past (it is our collective memory), so it can be said that monuments give structure to a city. So, heritage can be analogous to DNA. As is known, DNA is a kind of biomolecule that stores and encodes the genetic instructions of each organism. These genetic instructions play an important role in the growth, development and function of organisms. This heritage should be the strengthening spirit of a city; In other words, the existence of cultural heritage must be studied carefully because it contains a wealth of instructional information that plays an important role in determining the growth, development and function of a city. So, the character of a city actually grows from the heritage of cultural heritage.

Cities produce culture

Rhyne in *Cultural Diversity and Conservation*, states that "Culture" as a concept, refers to the whole complex of learned behaviors of various human groups: their beliefs, social forms, property, and language. Although our current primary concern is with visual forms of culture (especially art, architecture, and sites), these are of course densely interconnected with other aspects of culture and cannot be properly considered in isolation (Charles S. Rhyne, 1995: 4).

Meanwhile, according to Malcom Miles, the idea of modern life is when modern society produces 'commodities, buildings, fashion, types of social and cultural movements and these are all destined to be quickly replaced by others' to strengthen the temporary movement.

Learning from Paris which began to develop into a modern city at that time, new cultural movements emerged in Paris as a different modern city in the second half of the nineteenth century.

So as Rhyne said that culture as a concept, refers to the whole complex of behaviors learned from several groups of people: their beliefs, social forms, possessions, and language; what happened in Paris shows that the city produces culture in accordance with the social aspects and technological advances that were developing at that time, and this continues to grow, grow and lasts until now.

Culture producing city

Miles argues, besides the city producing culture, it turns out that on the other hand, culture reproduces the city. Miles once conducted a study, he moved from cultural products to cultural consumption and its role in the reproduction of a city character. Then he investigates the transformation of Barcelona from a Mediterranean port to a world city in the 1990s as an example of re-branding a city through cultural means (as mentioned in the paragraph above).

This is in line with Van Peursen's statement that we should not miss romantically returning a cultural pattern that has been in the past. But on the other hand, let's not just look ahead, hoping for a utopia, a form of society that has not yet materialized. Thus culture/culture is the work and responsibility of the community (city) itself; Culture is described functionally, namely as a relation to our own life plan (society). So, the development of culture (a city) does not occur outside of ourselves, but humans themselves must find their own strategy (Van Peursen, 1976: 233). All of these will contribute to the formation of the character of a city.

Learning from the Malacca case

Malacca has a cultural heritage in the form of a colonial city area and a Chinatown that is similar to the city of Semarang. Through a very long struggle (twenty years), finally this urban heritage area is well laid out, and has become the city branding of Malacca.



Figure 8
The Malacca Old Town area is a
tourist destination for
foreign tourists



Figure 9
The river that was once dirty, is now one of the mainstay assets of tourism. River activities stay alive for tourists until 08.30 pm.

The struggle to achieve all of this requires a paradigm shift in the thinking of city stakeholders. In this case, it is necessary to understand the aspects of modernity related to economic, social, and cultural aspects.

If Malacca has a cultural heritage heritage in the form of a colonial city and Chinatown, it can only be changed and obtain a city branding related to urban heritage, then the City of Semarang which has a cultural heritage heritage is much wider and better, with a modern town planning arrangement and many cultural heritage buildings by Karsten, this potential must be seen and become a strengthening factor for the city branding of Semarang City.

In the context of the city of Semarang, it must be acknowledged that the comfort felt by the people of the city of Semarang. The comfort that is obtained by the community associated with the city, is not only felt in terms of appearance, but also when used for activities. The zoning system in various activities makes it easier for someone to find what they need. A comfort in one's activities is determined by how one can see well the papa who is around him, both the path that has been passed or the path that will be passed (Widiantoro, 2015).

Conclusion

Based on the analytical process, it can be concluded that:

Firstly, this research concludes that so many parts of Semarang city still survive both in terms of buildings and town planning. The pattern of the structure of roads and settlements as well as the placement of existing buildings make so many people feel comfortable to do activities in them. This is felt by residents of Semarang City, people who have lived in Semarang or people who are visiting Semarang City.

Secondly, this study shows that in Semarang city there is comfort in activities, and this is obtained from the town planning model which is the result of the arrangement carried out by Herman Thomas Karsten.

Thirdly, the comfort that has been felt by many people can be used as one of the factors that can be included in the formation of City Branding for Semarang city.

Fourthly, in its application, of course, it is not only the convenience obtained from history, but also needs to consider other conveniences that exist at this time, considering that Semarang city is not only a city of memories or a city of history, but also a city that has a diverse and quite tourist area.

complete in terms of culinary, landscape, religion, and includes a city full of legends and history as well as a comfortable city with cultural acculturation that can blend well in it.

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