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Local Wisdom and Identity in a Chain of Puduk Elisabeth Christine Yuwono Petra Christian University, Faculty of Art and Design Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia xine_y@petra.ac.id Listia Natadjaja Petra Christian University, Faculty of Art and Design Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia listia@petra.ac.id

ABSTRACT As an archipelago, Indonesia has a diverse culture that lives and grows according to the uniqueness of a region. It could be influenced by habits, the way of thinking and act of the people, or geographic characteristic, that created certain values, which known as local wisdom. Just like Gresik in East Java. As a small city on the edge of the northern coast of Java, Gresik has characteristic that distinguished with another city in Indonesia. For example by its traditional snack, namely puduk. Traditional snack is a typical food of a region, generally a small formed food or snacks. They are typical because mostly they can be found in the specific region only. As a traditional snack, puduk has typical that different to others. One of them is its packaging material that use natural material, namely ope. As a cultural work, puduk and its packaging have values of local wisdom that interesting to be analyzed. This research shows that cooking process, packaging' materials, and the process of packing contain local wisdoms that become an identity of Gresik. This identity becomes important, due to the globalization era, many people do not know (even do not care) about the cultural meaning of puduk and its packaging. **KEYWORDS:** local wisdom, traditional snack, puduk, natural packaging, identity 1.

INTRODUCTION As an archipelago, Indonesia has a diverse culture in it. The cultural wealth comes from habit, mindset, as well as beliefs. With thousands of islands and tribes, Indonesia has a remarkable culture and it can be a valuable asset. One of the cultural assets is a traditional food. Food is a cultural product that is very close to human life. The main materials that are used in the traditional food are usually their ingredients which are widely available in the area. Such as the area that is rich of coconut, will draw heavily on coconut in food production. Or areas of abundant marine resources, people in the area will take advantage of marine products to be processed into food. In the process from raw materials into food, usually local people to use certain ways and means that will be passed down to the next generation, so that the processing of food can be said as hereditary. The traditional food is poured with uniqueness which becomes the characteristic of a region and its people. Thus that the food is a representation of a specific area. In this term, traditional foods can be said is closely linked to community and the environment. Base on the type, traditional foods can be divided into main and additional / substitute foods. The main food is a food that serves as a staple food menu for the local community, or better known as a side dish. This is often eaten with rice, as the majority of Indonesian

population consume rice as the main energy source. The main food such as rendang, gudeg, krawu, and curry, etc. While the additional food is a food that is supplementary, outside the staple food. Generally, this additional food consumed outside of main meal times without having eaten with rice. Additional food is better known as snacks / small. For example getuk, nagasari wingko, spring rolls, etc. Some snack has specific characteristics, in accordance with the conditions of the environment and local communities. Based on this, the snack to be typical and is considered to represent an area. With its relatively small size and easily carried, making the snack often used as souvenirs which represents the area. In a traditional food, both main foods and snacks, are contained mindset, knowledge, and wisdom of local communities. This local wisdom possessed by the people in an area. Permana (in Alfian, 2013) revealed that local knowledge is a way of life, knowledge and coping strategies in the form of life of local community activities in an effort to answer the problems in order to make ends meet. How do local people think about how to meet their physical needs by leveraging existing resources through specific ways, in accordance with the practices and policies in the area. One of them is reflected on the traditional foods. Thus, the local knowledge that exist in the region can be different from others and this is a factor that shapes the identity and enriches the cultural diversity of Indonesia. The use of natural materials for packaging is one of the example of implementation of local wisdom in the traditional snack. In the middle of the development era which is marked by advancing technology and industry, local wisdom is faced with a situation that is not easy. It is inevitable that the advanced technology and the industry offer convenience and practicality that will have an impact on time and cost production efficiency. No wonder today many traditional foods are adjusted with the advance of technology and industry. The impact of this can be seen also on the role of natural materials once used to wrap or pack traditional snacks, are being replaced by non-natural materials that are produced from the factory. For example, lemper (food made from cassava) which was wholly wrapped in banana leaves, now combined banana leaf with green plastic, to wrap the outside of it. Green plastic is certainly intended to remain associated with banana leaves. It was also found that a cardboard box packaging adds graphical elements such as banana or banana leaf texture. Another example is a cardboard packaging with pictures and texture of woven bamboo, so it seems to resemble the actual traditional baskets. Lately, there is a tendency to use plastic as a wrapper that direct contact with food, for example in rice cakes and traditional drink, legen. In terms of time and cost, the changes are certainly more efficient, but when associated to a local knowledge, it is a challenge that must be addressed wisely. Gresik is one area in East Java which has a traditional cakes called pudak, which is made from rice flour, sugar / brown sugar and coconut milk, sometimes is added by vanilla to make it more fragrant aroma. Pudak has a unique shape, which is packed with ope (midrib of jambe or areca palm/areca nut palm), stitched circle from the bottom right corner to the top left side, forming a quarter circle formations. As far as we know, pudak with the form as it is known today does not exist in the other areas. Because of that peculiar, pudak is often used as souvenirs. In the middle of the advancement of technology and industry, pudak is still retained packaged by ope. This certainly not easy, in addition to efficiency, there is a worries and possibility that to change ope with other materials, as ope is increasingly difficult to get. Rapid industrial development is marked by rampant land clearing for settlement and having impact on the reducing of jambe trees population. To get ope, one of pudak producers in Gresik, had bought at it from Jember, eastern area of Java island because there is no one in Gresik area could supply ope. These conditions in the foreseeable future is likely to affect the use of ope as pudak packaging, and indirectly affect the existence of pudak itself. Without understanding and awareness of the values of local wisdom contained in the packaging of pudak, it will be easily disregarded. As a local knowledge is one of the factors that play a role in shaping and enriching the cultural diversity of Indonesia, the basis for this study aimed to explore the values of local wisdom contained in the pudak packaging.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Scope of the Study

The object of research is pudak which is typical snack of Gresik. Pudak is selected as the research object due to its characteristics of

uniqueness and distinctiveness as traditional snack. In addition, its packaging and packaging processes that still maintain traditional values. It becomes interesting, in the middle of the advancement of technology and industry today, pudak is still survived in its traditional form. Geographically, Gresik is located on the north coast of East Java. The northern coastal region which has different characteristics from other areas (such as the south coast), in which it will affect the pattern and behavior of local residents in response to the things around him. On the other hand, the north coast is the main point of trade which has a strategic position in the economic domain. Traditional snacks have contributed significantly to the local revenues and residents.

2.2 Data Collection Methods This is qualitative research approach. The initial stage was to conduct a study of literature, including journals, newspapers, books, to collect data on traditional snacks and local wisdom. The next step was collecting data about the condition of pudak by conducting observations and interviews with sellers of pudak in Gresik. We also interviewed producers of pudak which includes the pioneer in Gresik, Mrs. Suharsih owners of pudak brand 'Kuda.' The interviews were conducted to determine the traditional production process of pudak, the role of ope as packaging, as well as gather information on pudak developments in Gresik. In addition, interviews were also conducted to a culture analysts to provide information on the culture of Gresik in relation to the culinary culture, as well as packaging experts to provide 'insight data' of traditional and modern packaging.

2.3 Data Analysis Methods The collected data were then analyzed to produce a description of the material, shape of packaging, the packaging process, and further explored the values of local wisdom and meaning contained in pudak. This was followed by the analysis of local knowledge as an element which constructed the identity of Gresik.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION Packaging plays

an important role for a product. The primary function **of** packaging is to

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wrap and protect a product. Along with the development of technology and industry, the packaging functions also evolve, adapt to the demands, especially the needs of the people and economic interests. Packaging is also expected to have an additional function to store, transmit, differentiate products among competitors, given the identity of the product, as well as give an incentive to encourage sales (Klimchuck and Krasovec, 2007: 33; Roth, 1990; Wirya, 1999). The material used for packaging can vary. In ancient times, people tend to use natural materials that are all around them. Abundant natural resources in Indonesia, has a wealth of material that can be used to package food, especially food / traditional snacks. Natural resources are widely used for packaging is part of a plant or tree. In Indonesia, natural material most widely used is the leaves and stem of the banana tree, the rind of corn, guava and coconut tree leaves, hanjuang and teak tree leaves. Palm tree leaves and stems can be used as well (Sabana, 2000). Pudak which is the traditional snacks of Gresik, is unique both in terms of shape and packaging. Pudak snack packaging uses ope which is sewn curled into a quarter circle. The tip of the packaging is tied with a string. Figure 1. Pudak

3.1 The values of Local Wisdom in a Batch of Pudak To read a local wisdom on the packaging can not be separated from pudak production processing and its packaging. The following values of local wisdom contained in pudak:

3.1.1 Persistence Pudak production to packaging take a long process. Pudak raw material is rice flour, coconut milk, brown sugar, and vanilla. According to Mrs. Suharsih, to get the maximum results, use self-made rice flour instead of buying from the market. Firstly, the rice is washed until completely clean beforehand. This will affect the quality of the pudak. If the rice is not clean in the washing process, the pudak will be not durable or stale faster. After washing, the rice is soaked, dried, then pounded up into flour. Coconut milk is used also obtained from grate the coconut. In the making of this pudak, coconut milk used is the red one. The red color is obtained from the bark of reddish brown coconut. So need to be careful when stripping the coconut bark, so that it is not peeling. Brown sugar also need to be

processed separately using a large skillet. Then all the ingredients are stirred together, added with vanilla. The stirring process in the past used manual mixer but now using electrical. The next step is inserting the batter into the packaging made from ope (the stem of areca palm/areca nut palm). Before it, the packaging should be prepared first. The ope is cleaned and cut into pieces (approximately measuring 15 x 15 cm). Furthermore, a single sheet of ope is folded longitudinally (in the direction of flow of the fiber) and stitched with thread, starting from the bottom side of the circular upward so as quarter-circle and form a space such as glass, or a small purse (inigresik.com, 2015). This ope sewing process in the past was manual, i.e using a sewing needle and thread, but now using a sewing machine. Packaging that has been sewn is ready to be filled with the batter. Once filled, the packaging contains the batter, steamed until cooked. Once baked, the packaging immediately pursed and tied with rope. The whole process of making this pudak, ranging from preparation of pudak snack materials to the processing of packaging indicates a long process. Pudak production and its packaging are a representation of persistence. Figure 2. Ope Sewing Process Figure 3. The process of pouring the batter into the ope

3.1.2 Functional (Intellectual Property)

The interesting thing about pudak is the packaging, which ope has an irreplaceable function, resulting in a natural reaction in the pudak production process. Ope uniqueness lies in the structure of the inside layer which is smooth (but not sticky) and porous. This makes pudak not sticky and easily to be removed from the packaging when it will be eaten. The pores main function in the ope is to make pudak can last longer or not get stale. At a room temperature, pudak can last for two to three days. For snack that contains coconut milk, it is long enough time to be expired. Generally, snack contains coconut milk just to survive one day at a room temperature. The importance of ope as said by Mrs. Suharsih: "That is pakem (standard). Can not replaced by banana leaves because of broken, replaced by bakcang leaves also failed, he has a plastic-like layer and pores. There are palm leaves that are similar, but there is no plastic membranes and pores. If there are no that materials, (the pudak) will be still wet and stale faster." (Suharsih, 2016). Another benefit is a distinctive aroma and flavor produced by ope during the steaming process is a kind of corn fragrant aroma. This makes pudak has a distinctive fragrance and make it more delicious. Mrs. Suharsih said that, "If replaced by plastic, it does not have pores, can quickly stale. Other materials is not strong, can not be sewn. This smells like of corn, but is not corn." (Suharsih, 2016). Packaging as well as the entire process of creating intellectual property of pudak shows local residents response to natural materials and utilize its benefits or uniqueness.

3.1.3 Environmental factors

Ope packaging is natural materials which has natural properties. Like most other natural materials, ope also environmentally friendly because its waste can be decomposed by microbes. Unlike the factory production materials such as plastics that are difficult to unravel. In other words, ope is also energy efficient because it does not require a special process to make it decompose. This is a positive impact on the survival of an ecosystem. Geographical conditions also relates to environmental conditions, in this case the availability of natural materials in the region. Gresik which is on the coast has a variety of coastal areas flora. However, the the expansion of residential and industrial areas results in the reduction of areca palm/areca nut palm, so that the pudak producers is difficult to obtain ope. Currently, the ope supply is obtained from Jember, South Malang, or Blitar. It certainly should be a concern as considering the function of ope which is difficult to be replaced by other materials, such as corn husks, banana leaf, teak leaves, palm leaves even been tried as an alternative but failed.

3.1.4 Aesthetics

In terms of form, pudak has a unique look, ope that is sewn in quarter of a circle, when it has been filled with the batter will look fuller. The Shape and the packaging materials which becomes synonymous with pudak. Although there is other snack has a similar shape and material, e. g arem-arem which is similar to rice cake, pudak has exclusive and aesthetic shape. Another one is its uniqueness when to display in sales. It is used to sell in a group or batch. One batch consist oh five or ten pieces which are tied together, and then hung. This marks the distinctiveness of the pudak. Functionally, the hanging system is intended to avoid damp, because moisture can bring mold and make pudak stale faster.

3.2 Local Wisdom as Identity

Identity is an

important thing for anyone as a differentiator for someone / something compared to the others. Identity is a mental construction, a social product, the power to take action that seemed stable, while malleable. The concept of identity is not just easy to shape, but rather a dynamic construction, which has implications for the concept of how people think and what they do. (Leary and Tangney, Ed., 2012: 88). Base on this insight, local knowledge which is contained into a batch of pudak can be an identity of Gresik. The values that exist in pudak along with the packaging is a reflection of how the local community to respond to nature in their surrounding areas. Similarly, the visual is an important factor as forming an identity. The form of pudak naturally represents the whole identity of Gresik as coastal city. Interestingly, the issue of the environment can also be attributed to the existence of pudak. It is not just a typical Gresik souvenirs but also illustrates a change in the social and environment. For example, the difficulty of obtaining supplies of ope as the result of residential areas or how jambe tree (areca palm/areca nut palm) is now difficult to find, as it was one of the icon of Gresik. It may become a factor affecting the construction of identity that was close to nature and took care of it (symbolized by jambe tree), becomes something difference. 4.

CONCLUSION A cultural practice is significant in shaping the concept of the identity of a specific region, through the values of local wisdom which is contained therein. Local knowledge is unique and distinctive so that it can be a differentiator which is a key element in the identity. In this case, the traditional pudak snack, along with its packaging, can play as a role of shaping the identity of Gresik. Yet, identity is not static, but rather dynamic. The existing concept of identity can be changed or remained the same, it depends on the social, economic, and cultural dimensions and other factors that occurs in the society and its region. The difficulty to obtain ope of jambe tree that is decrease year by year could be the warning of the potential lost of pudak, one of the identity of Gresik.

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