

Acculturation Narrative of *Cina Benteng* on the Packaging of Cookies Produced by *Koperasi Lentera Benteng Jaya*

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Abstract

Cina Benteng is a term for people of Chinese descent who since the Netherlands colonial era have settled in the Tangerang region, Indonesia. Acculturation with the local community is ongoing, and covers various aspects of life, such as: mixed marriage, art, culture, language, and daily activities. However, unlike most other rich Chinese people in Indonesia, Cina Benteng is a poor society. One of the local organizations provided assistance by forming a 'Koperasi' named "Koperasi Lentera Benteng Jaya". The flagship product of this 'Koperasi' is cookies. The sale succeeded progressing the community's economy and had an impact on the progress of the Cina Benteng village, namely: Tehyan Village. At the end, the Tangerang City Government designated Tehyan Village as a Cultural Village and was used as one of the tourist areas in the Tangerang area. Cookies products are used as souvenirs for tourists. But unfortunately, the packaging of the superior product is still modest. The packaging are not able to represent the superiority of the product and the various uniqueness of the Cina Benteng that underlies it. This design research redesigns the cookies packaging so that it can be more representative as souvenirs packaging. The design method is carried out through the study of historical and cultural narratives, and creative strategies that raise the aspect of acculturation as a unique aspect. The results of this design research produced six types of packaging with narrative visuals, each based on the unique theme of Chinese acculturation of the Fort. The theme covers the acculturation of historical, artistic, cultural, and daily activities. This design research concludes that a packaging is not just a product container but can be positioned as a kind of entity that has its own storytelling power about the advantages of a product and the context behind it. Especially for the tourism sector, souvenir packaging can be used as an effective "tourism ambassador" in introducing the uniqueness of a tourist area and its superior products.

Keywords: narrative, acculturation, packaging, culture, Cina Benteng

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1. Introduction

Cina Benteng is a term for people of Chinese descent who since the Netherlands colonial era have settled in the Tangerang region, Indonesia. They live along the banks of the Cisadane River. The word "fortress" or *Benteng* was the name for the city of Tangerang at that time. This has to do with the fortress built by the Netherlands government as a defensive fortress from the attack of the Banten sultanate troops.

Soon, the acculturation process continues to *take* place intensely. Starting from socializing, daily activities together, mutual adoption of several aspects of life, to mixed marriages between Chinese immigrants and local residence. The unique fact found from the descendants of the *Cina Benteng* is that none of them can speak Chinese (Mandarin language). This is because since generations of descendants have been mixed with residents. In addition, they were never taught how to speak Mandarin. In their daily lives, they are more accustomed to using Indonesian and Sundanese. Such a process of mixing also occurs in the aspects of art and culture, so it can be said that the socio-cultural life of the *Cina Benteng* people was formed from the process of acculturation between Chinese culture, Betawi and Sundanese.

In terms of economy, this society is also different from the Chinese or Sundanese descendants. This is what distinguishes Cina Benteng from other Chinatowns in Indonesia. In addition to the acculturation that has



occurred with local communities since the colonial era, they are also not like the commonly Chinese descendants seen as a society with an upper economic class. Instead of being "rich Chinese", they are classified as poor people and have difficulty getting access from government social assistance programs. On the other hand, the history of Chinese citizens in Indonesia is relatively long, they have often felt the bittersweet of life in Indonesia for a long time. The Chinese in Indonesia themselves are often associated with conglomerates or people with an upper-middle economy, so they often receive socio-economic jealousy from the indigenous people. However, this is not the case with the *Cina Benteng* people. Most of the *Cina Benteng* citizens are poor people. The average profession is limited to diggers and grave guards, laundry workers, small traders, and others. Meanwhile, housewives take care of more household affairs and no other activities. Many of them are forced to borrow money from loan sharks with large loan interest to meet their daily needs.

The phenomenon is then captured as one of the problems that the Care Program is trying to solve. The Care Program is a form of cooperation between the government and several civil society organizations to encourage social inclusion movements that are able to reduce poverty levels in Indonesia. The Care Program collaborates with a local organization, namely the Women's Resource Development Center (PPSW). They came to educate the women of *Cina Benteng* about cooperatives. In the end, on May 5, 2015, the "*Benteng Jaya Lantern Cooperative*" was successfully formed. In this cooperative, the members practice making cakes and cookies to make small businesses. The flagship product is in the form of cookies, which they sell with the aim of increasing their income. This effort has also succeeded in improving the economy of the residents. And at end, this was able to make their village, namely Tehyan Village, even more developed. The Tangerang City Government also designated Tehyan Village as a "Cultural Village" and was used as one of the tourist areas in Tangerang city area.

However, their superior products have not been supported by adequate packaging designs. Neither in shape, structure, material, color, image, typography, have not met as a good packaging. In fact, all these things are important requirements for product packaging (Klimchuk & Krasovec, 2012:39). The packaging is still in the form of makeshift plastic packaging, so that various uniqueness – such as history, cultural acculturation, people's daily culture, etc. – owned by Tehyan Village is not properly represented.

For this reason, it is necessary to take action to solve this problem, especially related to the design of cookies product packaging as a superior product. Through this effort, it is hoped that it can produce packaging that is not only able to represent the characteristics of the superior products of the Benteng Jaya Lentera Cooperative, but at the same time it is able to play a role as a medium that can tell stories about the various unique cultures behind the products. Thus, through the attraction of a package, tourists can be invited to enjoy the superiority of the cookies taste while getting to know more closely the uniqueness *Cina Benteng* culture of the people.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Cina Benteng History

The history of the arrival of the *Cina Benteng* people in Indonesia is written in the Sundanese history book, namely Tina Layang Parahyang. According to the book, in 1740—after the Batavian war—a group of Chinese citizens led by Tjen Tjie Lung landed at the Cisadane river. In the past, the river was called Dragon Bay. The group came in a simple boats, their purpose was to find work, such as being farmers and traders. They all lived a mediocre life and cooperated with the Netherlands government which at that time-controlled Tangerang area. This is the origin of the *Cina Benteng* in Tangerang.

According to the CNN Indonesia website (Darmayana, 2017), the *Cina Benteng* people have Manchu blood from the Qing Dynasty, but they do not speak Mandarin and physically their skin color is darker than other Chinese descendants. In addition, they also very much maintain traditions, such as performing the Cio Tao wedding which is a traditional Manchu wedding. In China itself, this tradition is rare.

According to the article "How Ethnic Cina Benteng Buys a Sense of Security During Anti-Chinese Riots" on the REQ-news website, the city of Tangerang used to experience anti-Chinese riots. Such as the rebellion of Tangerang farmers led by Kaiin Bapa Kayah in 1924, and the Pao An Tui incident in 1946. The Kaiin Bapa Kayah rebellion is said to be a relatively small rebellion, because it only involved peasants in the lands of the lords in Pangkalan and Kampung Melayu but still managed to frighten almost the entire Cina Benteng community. Meanwhile, the Pou An Tui Incident in 1946, had an impact on almost all of Tangerang and as if there was no longer a safe area for the people of Cina Benteng. Many of them evacuated to Jakarta and crowded into the Sin Ming Hui building.

Regarding livelihoods, most of the Cina Benteng people work as fishermen, this is because of the location of the



settlement on the edge of the Cisadane River. Some of them also work as farmers. As for personality characteristics, generally the Chinese people of Benteng are known as a closed figure. This is related to the story of the dark past. During the Japan colonial era, many *Cina Benteng* citizens were targeted to be killed. Therefore, many *Cina Benteng* are closed off and do not easily trust outsiders. And the issue of eviction in 2010 also added to the fear and anxiety of most of the *Cina Benteng* people, so that they increasingly became closed individuals.

2.2 Culture, Arts and cutome tradition of Cina Benteng

Some of the Chinese cultures that are still preserved in the *Cina Benteng* society are: Cisadane Festival, Peh Cun celebration, Cia Tao death and wedding ceremonies, Cap Go Meh, Ceng Beng, and gambling culture. The Cisadane Festival is usually held around August or July, the activity is to do a dragon boat rowing competition, while the Peh Cun celebration is celebrated after Chinese New Year, in this celebration there are traditions such as eating bacang or bathing in the middle of the night using the water of the Cisadane River. This water is believed can make you young. Regarding gambling, usually this activity is only carried out under certain conditions, such as during the death of one of the residents. This is more aimed at accompanying the bereaved family members so that they do not become lonely. In gambling, *Cina Benteng* residents use check cards that have unique and diverse motifs.



Figure 1. Ceki Card

Meanwhile, its acculturation with Betawi culture can be seen from its arts such as Tehyan musical instruments and the traditional dance of *Cokek Sipatmo*, besides that it can also be seen from its traditional clothing, namely *kebaya encim*. For the *Cokek Sipatmo* dance, the dancers usually use *baju kurung* and silk trousers, equipped with a long scarf tied at the waist. In addition, *kebaya encim* is a traditional clothing worn by Chinese descendants in Indonesia in the past, usually the color of this kebaya tends to be bright and diverse.



Figure 2. Cokek Sipatmo dance

2.3 Tehyan Village

Tehyan Village is a village where the *Cina Benteng* community lives. Based on an article on the *Suara Nusantara* website, Tehyan Village is one of the villages located near the Cisadane river, precisely in Mekarsari Village, Neglasari District, Tangerang City. The name Tehyan itself is taken from the Tehyan musical instrument, because this village is famous for the Tehyan musical instrument. Based on an article on the Genpi website, the origin of this musical instrument is from China. During the Netherlands colonial period, Chinese citizens brought



it to Indonesia, and over time Tehyan became part of the art of traditional Indonesia musical instruments, especially Betawi. Usually, this tool is combined with other Betawi arts, such as ondel-ondel. The basic ingredients to make Tehyan are teak wood and coconut shells with two strings. All the ingredients are then put together in such a way that they can produce a tone.

Nowadays, Tehyan musical instruments can be considered as a very rare traditional musical instrument. In addition, it is rare for anyone to be able to play this musical instrument. According to an article on the coil website, in Tehyan village there is only one Tehyan artist, namely Mr. Goyong. It can be said that Mr. Goyong is the only last Tehyan artist in Tangerang. His parents are *Gambang Kromong* artists, which is one of the typical Betawi musical instruments. When his father died, Mr. Goyong continued his family legacy of preserving musical culture with *Gambang Kromong*, as well as preserving the art of music with Tehyan musical instruments.



Figure 3. Mr. Goyong as Tehyan last artist in Tangerang and Tehyan Instrument.

In addition to Tehyan musical culture, in Tehyan Village there is also a movement to promote the green environment by the community, which is called the "1 (one) Tree 1 (one) Lantern Movement". This movement is a kind of movement to regreen the village environment which is pursued through the activity of planting one tree and installing one lantern on each house. This movement aims to increase awareness of environmental health and cultural preservation.

2.4 Koperasi Lentera Benteng Jaya

Since 2015, the *Cina Benteng* community has had a cooperative. Before the existence of cooperatives, they experienced economic difficulties. At first, one of the administrators of the Women's Resource Development Center (PPSW) came to the Tehyan Village area. The goal is to educate and empower the potential of *Cina Benteng* women. To be able to carry out their intentions, of course, PPSW members must blend in with the Cina Benteng citizens. At first, the *Cina Benteng* citizens did not accept their arrival. This is due to the appearance of PPSW members who wear hijab and look like part of the government. But the PPSW management still tried to make an approach. After approximately three months, this effort finally paid off. The citizens of the *Cina Benteng*, especially the *Cina Benteng* women can receive and have a dialogue with PPSW.

The presence of PPSW is very helpful for the people of *Cina Benteng*, especially in terms of the economy. This is because PPSW educates *Cina Benteng* women to become independent and help them create cooperatives. At first, many *Cina Benteng* citizens used the services of loan sharks so that they were involved in a lot of debt and various other problems. With the formation of cooperatives, their economy can gradually improve.

In 2015, a cooperative was successfully established named "Koperasi Lentera Benteng Jaya". The name was chosen to represent a hope that this cooperative will be brighter and more successful. The vision and mission of this cooperative is to improve the economy through women's empowerment and the welfare of its members.





Figure 4. Managing Team of Koperasi Lentera Benteng Jaya

As time goes by, the Koperasi Lentera Benteng Jaya has also grown rapidly. The initial capital, which was only 60,000 rupiah, grew rapidly to reach a nominal of 1.3 billion. Similarly, the members, which originally consisted of only 20 members, grew to 1,000 people. In this Koperasi, members are taught to be independent and open a business so that they become more productive, enthusiastic, open and cheerful.

In the *koperasi*, there are also several divisions, namely the Lantern Dance Studio division which focuses on the *Cokek Sipatmo* dance, the *Lentera Farmer Women's Group* division which focuses on farming, the Culture and Tourism division which focuses on creating cultural villages such as Tehyan Village, and the Lentera Cake division which focuses on producing food that can be sold and helps improve the economy.

2.4.1 Lentera Cake and Cookies Products Division

The Lentera Cake Division began to exist around 2016 and is operated by female members of the *Koperasi Lentera Benteng Jaya*. The food produced are varied, ranging from bread, traditional cakes, sponge cakes to cookies. One of their flagship products is cookie. They will sell these cakes as typical souvenirs from Tehyan village. Their cakes do not contain preservatives, the cake ingredients are also quite high quality and sold at affordable prices. In addition, the recipe used is a family recipe from a *koperasi* member who is a descendant of the *Cina Benteng*.



Figure 5. Cookies variant (from left) Putri Salju, Semprit, Kastengel, Nastar, Sagu Keju, and Kue Satu

There are quite a lot of variants of their cookies, including nastar, snow white, kastengel, kue satu, semprit

cookie, cheese sago. The price of these cookies does not reach 100 thousand rupiah, the most expensive is only 80 thousand rupiah.





Figure 6. Packaging and Labels of *Lentera Benteng Jaya* Products (Sumber: Facebook *Koperasi Lentera Benteng Jaya*)

Lentera Cake packaging usually uses a rectangular plastic jar that is given a label. The design of the red and yellow label because in Chinese culture it symbolizes prosperity, prosperity and good luck, in addition to that



there is a logo, the location of the cake making and a phone number. The plan is that *Lentera* Cake products will be sold as souvenir products for tourists.

3. Objectives

The purpose of this research was: 1. Designing packaging that can represent the uniqueness of the acculturation of *Cina Benteng* culture, 2. Designing packaging that has story-telling power 3. Enhancing the cultural and social existence of the *Cina Benteng*.

4. Research Methodology

This design research uses a narrative method based on a historical and cultural approach. As Creswell said, such narrative studies focus on narratives, stories, or descriptions of a series of events (2014: 97-98) Analysis of data and storytelling related to culture, art, and customs in the *Cina Benteng* society, is carried out to obtain the main themes that will be raised as the underlying concepts for the design of cookies product packaging. The keyword "acculturation" is used as the focal point of the narrative theme that is visualized on each package.

These main themes are then used as visual narrative variants of each cookie's product packaging. Through this method, packaging will be produced with thematic visuals and has story-telling power that is able to represent the existence and uniqueness of the culture of the *Cina Benteng* people.

5. Result and discussion

Through the analysis of Chinese culture in the Chinese community, the shape of the packaging in the form of a hexagon was designed. Hexagon is one of the pagoda shapes. According to the website a'design award & Competition, the hexagonal shape in Chinese culture symbolizes six directions: North, South, East, West, Heaven and Earth, so it means completeness. Like the *Cina Benteng* people who cooperate with each other and complement each other to live a better life.

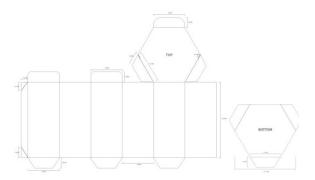


Figure 7. Packaging Framework

Furthermore, 6 stories were determined that could represent the "Spirit" of the *Cina Benteng* community, namely the history of *Cina Benteng*, Tehyan music, the one tree one lantern movement, the *Koperasi Lentera Benteng Jaya*, the Cisadane Festival and the Peh Cun Festival. The selected stories are assembled into a narrative that will be depicted on the packaging.



Sagu Keju Packaging



Figure 7. Illustration and Packaging of Cheese Sago

The cheese sago packaging tells about the one tree and one lantern movement applied in *Kampung Cina Benteng* to increase public awareness of the environment and preserve culture. Illustrations of lanterns and tree branches are placed as ornaments to support the story.

The illustration on the cheese sago packaging depicts a woman who is thinking around the settlement of the population, then she gets the idea for the movement of one tree and one lantern, after that she tries to plant one tree and hang one lantern in each house, until finally the whole house has a tree and lanterns.

Semprit Cookie Packaging



Figure 8. Illustration and Packaging of Semprit Cookie

Semprit cookie packaging tells about the Cisadane Festival which is always celebrated every year, this festival is known for its dragon boat race which is synonymous with Chinese culture. To support the story, illustrations of the red and white flag and Chinese drums that are always used during the Cisadane Festival are placed on the top side as ornaments. The illustration depicts a person pushing a dragon boat into the river, then decorating the dragon boat with a red and white flag, after which he gets ready at the start line and starts rowing his boat until he reaches the finish line.



Snow White Packaging



Figure 9. Illustration and Packaging o Snow White (Putri Salju)

Snow white packaging tells about the early history of the first time the ancestors of the Cina Benteng came to Indonesia and mingled with local residents so that cultural acculturation occurred. An illustration depicting a boat sailing in the water is placed on the top side of the package to support the story.

The illustration begins with the arrival of Chinese citizens who emptied into the river, because in ancient times their ancestors emptied into the Cisadane river. Then the Chinese people met and mingled with the local residents, over time the Chinese people married the local residents there so as to produce offspring and cultural acculturation, after that they settled in Indonesia and worked as fishermen.

Nastar Packaging

Nastar packaging tells the story of the *Koperasi Lentera Benteng Jaya* which helps the economy of the Cina Benteng community by selling cakes produced by *koperasi* members. An illustration of a Chinese coin purse and some Chinese coins are placed as ornaments to support the story.



Figure 10. Illustration and Packaging of Nastar

The illustration depicts a woman who is sad to see the contents of her empty wallet, then someone comes to the woman and invites her to join a *koperasi*, after which they make cakes and sell them in the *koperasi*, so that they can make money and prosper the economy.



Kastengels Packaging



Figure 11. Illustration and Packaging of Kastengel

The kastengel packaging tells about the Pehcun Festival, which is a tradition of the *Cina Benteng* people every year to bathe at midnight of the full moon using the water of the Cisadane river and perform the ritual of bathing a sacred boat. Illustrations depicting smoky incense and several flying flower petals are used as ornaments that can support the story.

The illustration begins with a woman bathing in the river on the night of the full moon, then the woman takes river water and brings it to the altar table to pray, after the water has been prayed, it is used to perform the ritual of comparing sacred boats.

Kue Satu Packaging



Figure 12. Illustration and Packaging of Kue Satu

Kue Satu packaging tells about the Tehyan musical instrument which in the past was often played by Indonesians of Chinese descent and is getting rarer and rarer, but the Chinese people of Benteng have begun to preserve it. To support the story, images of Tehyan musical instruments and red cloth wraps that are usually used by *Cokek* dancers are placed as ornaments.

The illustration begins with a group of people playing the Tehyan musical instrument while accompanied by the *Cokek* dancers, then the longer the group of people who play the Tehyan musical instrument decreases so that only one person remains, until finally the person is old and no one else can play the Tehyan musical instrument, after that there is a child who is interested in the Tehyan musical instrument, because of the interest of these children, finally many children began to be interested in Tehyan musical instruments so that this musical instrument could be preserved again by the younger generation.



6. Conclusion

Basically, packaging functions as a container for products so that products can be properly and safely protected. In addition, packaging is also useful for adding to the attractiveness and selling value of a product, but what is more important here is how the packaging is also able to "tell a story", or represent regarding the superiority and uniqueness of the product as well as the cultural context behind it, this means that the story-telling power of a packaging is an important factor that needs to be considered in the process of designing a package. The precise strategy to shape it is through designing with a narrative method based on historical and cultural approaches.

Especially for tourism purposes, packaging that has story-telling power can be a kind of "tourism ambassador" from the area. The visual narrative design on the six packaging of Tehyan village cookies products has a strong story-telling power in representing the interesting aspects of history, culture, and customs of the *Cina Benteng* community. Thus, the six packages can be positioned as tourism ambassadors from Tehyan Village. Through it, the product advantages and uniqueness of the *Cina Benteng* people can be conveyed in an interesting way.

As a result, it can be concluded that, basically, packaging design is the process of designing a medium that has its own speaking power about a product entity, message, as well as the traditions and culture behind it.

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