

**Food Cultural Wrapping Heritages of
Japanese and Thai for the Food Package Development**

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The purpose of this study is to search for the model of package development from cultural food heritages including comparative relations among Japanese and Thai. The study is the qualitative research, non-probability and purposive samplings are chosen. Thirty Japanese and Thai people from each parts of the country were observed and interviewed. The research was designed by following the theory of “Creative Thinking”. The community’s comparative relations described attitudes towards the description of legends, traditional beliefs & styles, local natural-materials and handicraft techniques. The Japanese traditional beliefs and preservation techniques were mainly identified by bamboo leaves. The fastening and wrapping techniques with pieces of bamboo has been shown. The traditional wearing styles: Kimono, and believability: Origami have transformed. In the meantime, Thai tradition beliefs and preservation techniques are mainly derived from banana leaves. The stem of bamboo and sharpened coconut-leaf stalks has been used for pinning. Some of Thai dressing techniques are transformed as shown by farmers’ lunch-wrapped food. There are 40% of wrapping techniques that Japanese and Thai are likeness. In addition, there are 15% causes which are different between natural materials from geographical problems. In conclusion, the food cultural heritages of Japanese and Thai cultural wrapping development factors obviously involved the package design and development by the transformative styles. Therefore, the direction to achieve the creative economy from local product is to attempt the achievement by increasing the package productivity from the food-package development model.

Keywords: food wrapping, value-added, culture heritages, package design

Introduction

Packaging is one system whose objective is to protect the contained product against an always-hostile environment of water, water vapor, air and its oxygen, microorganisms, insects, other intruders, dirt, pilferage, and so on—because a constant competition exists between humans and their surroundings. Packaging is designed to facilitate the movement of a product from its point of production to its ultimate consumption. It is arguably the single most important link in the distribution chain that places a product into the hands of the consumer. Protection means the establishment of a barrier between the contained product and the environment that competes with man for the product. For example, some food product must be protected to control its moisture content. In conclusion, the development of food product and packaging become the main aspect of creativity to achieve economic goals in community. (Brody, 1994) In the past, food packaging was for carrying out food to be ready for each meal. Some food obviously kept for more than one day, some were turned to be new type of food with contaminated taste and stink. As the matter of fact, food cultural wrapping heritages from each community had been established since people learned how to live with wrapping techniques. The differences of geographic, ethnography and so on may identify the traditional food and culture in the community. There are 3 main aspects to be focused, as following 1) natural plants and herbs 2) traditional techniques of ingredients and procedure 3) specific direction of having meal. (Chuko, Cheng and Chang & Hsiao-Yun, 2007) The knowledge form culture heritages have not presented to the public. They were kept to be secret either food recipes or techniques. (Wilkinson Geology, 2000)

The food packaging today contains the use of many production techniques most of them are new technologies, electronic parts and chemical materials. As mentioned above, the value of adding cultural heritages then passed on creative development to the package. The more traditional and culture heritages value added, the more package productivity appeared. (Chuko, Cheng and Chang & Hsiao-Yun, 2007) There hasn't any paper discussion in terms of knowledge from wrapping heritages for package development before. This paper has introduced the factors of package development from cultural heritages by analyzing from Japanese and Thai. The purpose is to search for the food-package development model increasing the packing productivity to the packages.

Brief Literature Review

All cultures are inherently predisposed to change and, at the same time, to resist change. There are dynamic processes operating that encourage the acceptance of new ideas and things while there are others that encourage changeless stability. It is likely that social and psychological chaos would result if there were not the conservative forces resisting change. There are three general sources of influence or pressure that are responsible for both change and resistance to it: 1) forces at work within a society; 2) contact between societies; 3) changes in the natural environment. Within a society, processes leading to change include invention and culture loss. Culture loss is an inevitable result of old cultural patterns being replaced by new ones. (Wilkinson Geology, 2000) The development of package design is also change by conveying more sciences & technologies, which cause to the sustainability problem. There might have some change because of the usages in society together with new techniques and then transfer to add the value properly. Japan is the leader of packaging development both new technology and functional design & styles. (Deena DeNaro-Bickerstaffe, 2011)

In the early days of the Japanese railroad, farmers started selling lunch sets to train travelers passing by rural stations: They prepared onigiri, rice balls, with pickled radish and wrapped them in bamboo sheaths. There are still premium caterers in various regions who create specialty products like these traditional sasa-dango, dumplings wrapped in bamboo grass, from Niigata. The leaves are used as they are, from the tip to the stalk. Only a single thread of straw ties up each piece. Some designer found such packages were not products of contemplation (Paul E. Bierly III, Eric H. Kressler & Edward W. Christensen, 2001). They assumed their shapes over years and years of unconscious use and experimentation. The green color of the dumplings derives from yomogi (a kind of mugwort) mixed into the dough. Bamboo sheath - the leaf that covers the sprouting bamboo shoot - is a traditional Japanese food wrapping material. It is by far the most common material used in Japanese packaging (Figure 1). In modern times bamboo is also the most replicated. In order to benefit from its luxurious, implication and increases efficiency, the today's food packages are often simply printed with the bamboo sheath's texture on the wrapper. The use of some materials were due to regional availability while the use of others had also to do with the interactions that these materials would have with they would wrap. A

good example here is the common and ubiquitous snack of fermented soybeans, called “natto”. Despite natto being still available in these straw packages, a method to produce a starter culture in the laboratory replaces this natural process and therefore makes other packaging materials possible (Aaron L Brody, 1994)

Although unquestionably, even today the most amazing examples of traditional Japanese packaging are those made of natural materials such as bamboo, straw or wood, mass production does have a tendency to replace natural materials with synthetic ones. However nature and its connotations still play a key role in Japanese aesthetics. In Japanese packaging design, imitation isn’t looked down upon; the difference provides both a degree of abstraction and an allusion to a spiritual connection with nature. Japanese packaging celebrates the process of opening. The transition from one mood into another - from attraction to anticipation to surprise to delight - is handled with attentive care (Hideyuki Oka, 2010)



Figure 1

In the meantime, Thailand national strategy plan is to develop Thai handicraft product and build up brand image to increase national economic. The creative economy is now concerning to be mainly problem which should be urgently solved. The best valued-added economic direction of product derive from packaging, we founded that 35 percent of OTOPs (One Tumbon One Product) are food, 30 percent are fabric which mean silk and cotton, 20 percent stand for home decorative products and 15 percent is beauty products which is from local herbs. Thai products need to be improved for performing into standard creations outcome. (SMEs, 2011) In the past 200 years, there were food cultural heritages mixed up. Thailand contains 4 parts: Northern, North-Eastern, Central & Eastern and Southern. There are banana leafs is the typical natural plants and still be favorite until today. There are various types of bananas in Thailand: banana leaves have served many dishes in Asian cooking, from adding flavor to foods cooked

inside, to simply being used as a colorful and exotic background for serving-plates and party platters. Banana leaves are beautiful, fun to use, and easy to cook with. (Fig. 2) So, Thai people also developed the cultural wrapping techniques beyond the natural material in Thailand. The technique from Thai dressing styles and woven process had been applied. (Marilyn Walker, 1996)

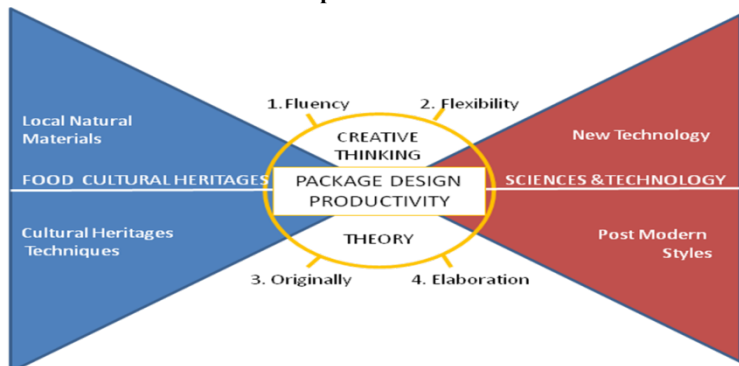


Figure 2

Objectives

This study is to find the model of package development from food cultural heritages by following the comparison of changing situation in Japan and Thailand and identifies the factors for national creative economy.

Conceptual framework



**THE FOOD-PACKAGE DEVELOPMENT MODEL
(THE FOOD CULTURAL HERITAGES: VALUE ADDED ASPECTS)**

Figure 3

The 2 main aspects for Package Design Packing Productivities are 1) the food cultural heritages aspect which derived from 2 factors: local natural materials and cultural heritages techniques and 2) the sciences & technologies aspect which derived from the new technologies and the postmodern styles. Those 2 aspects have to be synthesized by follow the creative thinking theory (Torrance & Safer, 1990).

Hypotheses

It is hypothesized that the package development model from food cultural heritages is the direction to increase the package productivities for adding more value to the national creative economy.

Methodology

This research has done by the qualitative research method, non-probability and purposive sampling strategies were selected. The main study variables were the dependent variable: the package development model from food cultural heritages and the independent variable: the package design productivity. Japanese and Thai local chefs from each part of the country were selected to be group of samples. The research has been done separated to be 2 stages: first stage is to find the comparison between Japanese and Thai cultural food heritages, data factors collected by follow the principles of product design: material and process. The field study has done upon 2 types of research tools. There were observation and depth interview strategies and tools. Second stage is the focus group discussion of the 3 package design experts. The discussion followed the 4 aspects of Creative Thinking: 1) Fluency; 2) Flexibility; 3) Originally; 4) Elaboration (Torrance, 1996) In addition, the research project's data has attempted to explain by the descriptive analysis.

Results

The observation and depth interview strategies were made as a result of the comparison in food cultural heritage to the development of package design between Japanese and Thai which can be described into 2 factors of principles of design. 1) Material: The Japanese traditional material is bamboo leaves while Thai practiced with bananas leaves.

Anyhow, Thai has more kinds of leaves suggested such as Teak leaves in the northern part, Lotus leaves, Nypa Palm leaves in the central part. And the processes of traditional technique from both nations were similar. In conclusion, there are 40% of wrapping techniques are similar but 15% of natural materials causes are unlikeness because of geographical problems.

2) Process: In Japan, the Japanese had started the package development since 1872: the train began to transport across the country. There were new material applied to the package and attempt to collaborate patterns and textures of the natural material which were used in the past. Japan has developed not only the materials and styles but also the new technology and chemical material. They were developed as a whole system. Then Japan is the pioneer in food package development especially in wrapping heritages. Japanese food was wrapped in Japanese styles and increase the value added to the nation economy lately. In the meantime, Thailand has slowly moved in food package development. The food economy in Thailand normally has been followed the local life styles. People have food in banana-leaves wrapping. Some of plastics have been applied by untraditionally packing. There are new material unsatisfactory accepted. The Thai traditional and styles were somewhat disappeared. The final stage of methodology is the discussion of the knowledge from the comparative relations between Japan and Thailand. By gathering data from interviewing and observation technique, the research found 2 main factors of the development: food cultural heritages and science & technology. The collaboration of those 2 factors shall express the package design productivity beyond the creative thinking theory. The food package development model can explain the relationship between them with some small factors inside. The productivities are not only the high technology in production technique but also the detail of cultural heritage techniques applied.

Discussion

The study has provided the answer to illustrate the picture of a food package development model from the cultural heritages. The results from the observations and interview showed the similarity and differentiation between wrapping heritages of Japanese and Thai. The wrapping techniques with bamboo and banana leaves were shown to be the typical plants of each country through the geographic problems (Wilkinson Geology, 2000). There are 2 main factors of the development which are

food cultural heritages and science & technology. The result related to the discussion from previous research about the development in the society which has usually done to get the betterment for living (Chuko, Cheng and Chang & Hsiao-Yun, 2007). The strength of this research is the specific samples. On the other hand, this research had limitation in the participation strategy usage. Some people kept the information to be a secret. A greater depth of information may have been obtained by conducting focus groups comprised of participants' representative. The sample size could have been expanded by including traditional food product consumers. The methodology could have also included surveying with the participants. For example, the food entrepreneurs, tourists, etc. could have been part of the study.

The food package development model can be experimented in some other location with the difference nationality to find the fact of cultural food package usage through the present living styles.

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