



CULINARY MAPPING IN SEMARANG CITY (CHINESE MENU)

Aletta Dewi Maria¹, Mukhamad Kholil Aswan², Ahmad Mansur³, Mulyoko⁴, Ray Octafian⁵

^{1) 2) 3) 4) 5)} STIEPARI Semarang

¹⁾ aletta.dewimaria@gmail.com

²⁾ kholilaswan14@gmail.com

³⁾ chefahmad30@gmail.com

⁴⁾ mulyoko1973@gmail.com

⁵⁾ octafianray@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The general objective of this study was to determine the culinary mapping of Peranakan Chinese menu in Semarang City, Central Java. The specific objectives of this research are to find out how to provide Peranakan Chinese menu culinary based on the number and types that exist in Semarang City. Furthermore, to find out how to serve the Peranakan Chinese menu culinary provision and to find out efforts to preserve the Peranakan Chinese menu as a culinary speciality of Semarang City. The technique of collecting primary data is very useful for collecting information needed for analysis and decision making.

Based on the results of the research, it is obtained that the provision of Peranakan Chinese menu culinary in the city of Semarang in several types of dishes and drinks still uses original recipes from ancestors, both cooking ingredients, spices and cooking techniques. The culinary presentation of the Peranakan Chinese menu in some culinary shows distinctiveness without leaving its authenticity even though there are several additional menu variants. Efforts to preserve the Peranakan Chinese menu as a culinary speciality of the city of Semarang have been made by culinary business people, families, communities and the Semarang City government.

Keywords: Peranakan Chinese Culinary Menu; Culinary Preservation

1. Introduction

Culinary is one part of culture, closely related to daily food consumption. Culinary is defined as the result of processed cuisine, in the form of side dishes, meals or snacks and drinks. Since ancient times many Chinese people in the city of Semarang have pursued culinary businesses so that the culinary in the city of Semarang is acculturated with Chinese culture. Chinese people who settled in Semarang made culinary as a business field. (Soegihartono, 2015)

The presence of Chinese people in Semarang is quite large, the concentration of ethnic Chinese is quite high so that Chinese culture and food become part of the daily culture. The characteristics of Chinese food in each region are different. Semarang's popular cuisine is influenced by Chinese kitchen traditions. The process of acculturation produces unique culinary delights that are not found in the country of origin. "Peranakan Chinese in Nusantara Culinary" book (Bromokusumo, 2013) examples of Peranakan Chinese food include laksa nyonya, ayam tong teh, prawns cooked in pineapple fat and so on. Snacks such as tofu pong, lunpia, mochi cake and others, while for drinks, wedang tahu is a real trace of Chinese culinary acculturation as a signature in the city of Semarang.

In addition to the typical culinary results of adaptation and acculturation with local culture, Chinese culture prioritises food for certain celebrations and that culture was not lost when the Chinese moved to Indonesia. Chinese food is definitely present at important celebrations that are eaten with various hopes and prayers embedded. One of the most popular ethnic Chinese celebrations is the Chinese New Year celebration. Foods that are always present at Chinese New Year celebrations include fish basket cakes, pineapple tarts, haisom (sea cucumber), and lontong capgome. Lontong capgome, usually eaten on Capgome Day, which is the 15th day after Chinese New Year. (Rochmawati et al., 2013)

Chinese or Peranakan Chinese are considered to be people who are very easy to adapt to the surrounding culture and environment. Peranakan Chinese are considered to be people who do not have an identity, but they consider themselves to be multicultural people with a unique identity (Devanny, 2017).



The problem is that there are not many Peranakan Chinese culinary providers in Semarang. Flavour, preparation, ingredients and presentation are not of the same standard. Many Peranakan Chinese descendants do not understand the culinary menu. There are many kinds of culinary in the city of Semarang, including Javanese menus, archipelago menus, and Arabic cultural acculturation menus. Peranakan Chinese culinary menus are gradually decreasing in number, so it is necessary to map Peranakan Chinese culinary menus in Semarang City.

Many Peranakan Chinese culinary providers lack understanding of the menu served due to a lack of understanding of the philosophy of ancestral food, limited ingredients, manufacturing and processing. The descendants of ethnic Chinese in Semarang city are only a small part of those who do business in Chinese cuisine. The reasons include education, employment, marriage with other ethnicities and so on. According to the author's initial observations, Peranakan Chinese cuisine is gradually decreasing in number, so it is necessary to map Peranakan Chinese cuisine in Semarang City.

The questions in this study include how to provide Peranakan Chinese menu culinary based on the number and type in Semarang City? How is the Peranakan Chinese menu served? What efforts have been made to preserve the Peranakan Chinese menu as a culinary speciality of Semarang City?

The general objective of this study was to determine the culinary mapping of Peranakan Chinese menu in Semarang City, Central Java. The specific objectives of this research are to find out how to provide Peranakan Chinese menu culinary based on the number and types that exist in Semarang City. Furthermore, to find out how to serve the Peranakan Chinese menu culinary provision and to find out efforts to preserve the Peranakan Chinese menu as a culinary speciality of Semarang City.

2. Literature Review

a. Cultural Acculturation

Acculturation is influenced by both driving and inhibiting factors. Encouraging factors include location or place of residence, the existence of mixed marriages, and the opening of interaction space. The location of the residence is close to each other, so people will interact more often, so that cultural acculturation is easily realised. Mixed marriages cause two different cultures to merge more easily. Interaction space causes cultures to enter each other so that it will be easier to experience acculturation. The inhibiting factor for acculturation is negative prejudice against individuals so that it will hinder the process of forming acculturation. (Wardana, 2017)

Food culture is a system of values and behaviours that are patterned in eating activities by a particular society. This system of values and patterned behaviours strongly influences the concept, etiquette, and manner of eating, including dining room layout and tableware. (Gumulya, 2017). The discussion of Chinese dining culture will include (Gumulya, 2017) :

1. Understanding Eating
2. Eating Habits
3. Dining Etiquette
4. Chinese Tableware

b. Culinary

Culinary is a part of life that is closely related to daily food consumption. (Soegihartono, 2015). Culinary as part of culture can be the identity of a group. Culinary in each region is preserved as a shared identity that develops dynamically from time to time. Culinary as part of history affects the culinary variety of a region. The development of culinary in Semarang cannot be separated from the fusion of various cultures. (Susanti & Purwaningsih, 2015).

Culinary mapping is defined as food that is differentiated according to the region, ethnicity or national origin that has entered an area, for example Chinese menu, Arabic menu and European menu. Semarang City is one of the cities that holds various historical and cultural values as a legacy of previous ancestors. (Sarwopeni & Saraswati, 2021).

Culinary in Semarang is not only influenced by the culture of the local community, but also by the Chinese and Arabs. Semarang's famous culinary icons include lumpia, wingko babad and bandeng presto. Semarang's well-known culinary food mappings include chicken rice, titee noodles, Semarang soup, petis kangkung, pindang serani, mangut panggang, and others. Drinks include wedang kacang, es gempol, jamu jun, es kombor, es lilin, jamu bopo biyung, jamu jago, jamu nyonya meneer, and Semarang beer. Semarang snacks include serabi kukur, srikaya sticky rice, ongol-ongol, jongkong, kocomoto, gelek mletek, onde-onde ceplis, sentiling, ganjel ril, elephant ear, putu mayang, pisang plenet, kacang gris, jubika fennel, mentho, mouse ear cake, blanggem, klenyem, kue pia, pistuban, rondo royal, duda kemul, rasikan, ketan salak, etc. (Rochmawati dkk., 2013)

The original Chinese culinary is difficult to find, what exists is the culinary result of Chinese and indigenous



acculturation. The culinary is in the form of food, drinks, and snacks. Main meals include lontong cap go meh, cap jay, and siomay. Drinks include wedang tahu, snacks include Semarang lunpia, moon cake, noodles, Semarang moaci cake, kranjang cake. ote-ote, pia cake, bolang-baling, jakue, wingko babad and others. The ancestors of Peranakan Chinese who came from China (sinkheh) tried the local food but it did not suit their taste. Spices were not always available at home, so dishes were made with local ingredients. As a result, new and different types of food emerged, and children tended to favour these dishes, but were still influenced by their father's tastes. (Sienatra et al., 2020)

c. Research Model

Peranakan Chinese culinary menu by number and type includes a variety of foods, snacks and drinks. As time goes by and the development of the era, the Peranakan Chinese culinary menu is decreasing in number and type. Peranakan Chinese culinary menu is not found much in the city of Semarang compared to other culinary menus. This is because many people of Chinese descent do not understand the Peranakan Chinese culinary menu both how to make and serve, spices, how to make and serve. Efforts to preserve the Peranakan Chinese culinary menu are needed. The research framework is as follows:

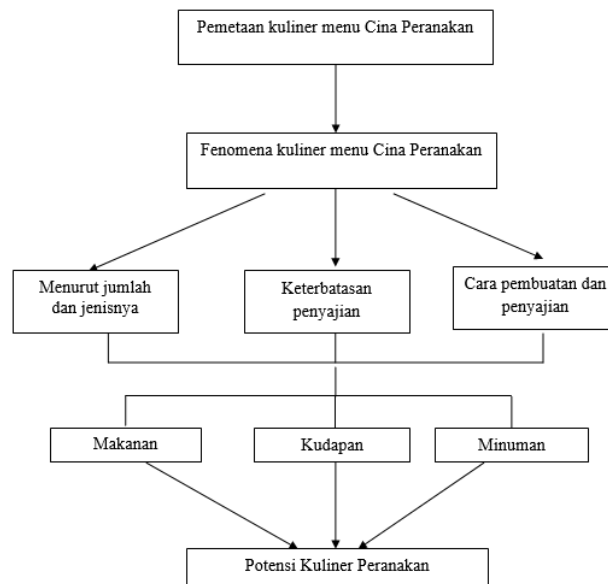


Figure 1 Theoretical framework

3. Methods

a. Data Source

The data sources used in this study are primary data and secondary data. Primary data is a data source that directly provides data to data collectors without going through intermediaries. (Sugiyono, 2018). Primary data is specifically collected by researchers to answer researcher questions. Primary data sources are obtained through observation or direct observation in the field and interviews with research subjects.

Sugiyono (2018) states that secondary data is a data source that does not directly provide data to data collectors, for example through other people or through documents. Secondary data sources are used to support information obtained from primary data sources, namely from literature or library materials, previous research, books, websites, activity reports by sources.

b. Data Collection Technique



Primary data collection techniques are very useful for collecting information needed for analysis and decision making. The method of collecting primary data used by the author is by collecting data obtained from the first source both from individuals and individuals who are directly collected from the object under study. Data collection through interviews, observations, and interviews conducted directly with:

- a. Chinese historians in Semarang city to obtain information about the history of Chinese in Semarang city, and the process of cultural acculturation that occurred.
- b. Owners or managers of Peranakan Chinese culinary businesses, to obtain information about the processing, presentation and taste of Peranakan Chinese culinary menus.

c. Research Procedures

There are several sequences that are used as guidelines in carrying out this research, the research procedure is as follows:

1. Preparation
 - a. Develop a research proposal.
 - b. Preparation of research permits.
 - c. Determination of research information.
 - d. Create activity schedules and data/information collection guidelines
2. Data collection
 - a. Collecting data at the research site with interviews, observations and documents.
 - b. Review the data that has been collected and collated.
 - c. Collect more focused data by analysing the data.
3. Data Analysis
 - a. Analyse preliminary data when data is complete.
 - b. Analyse the findings of the preliminary data development.
 - c. Organise enrichment and deepening of data if there are gaps.
 - d. Formulate conclusions.
4. Report preparation
 - a. Compile an interim research report.
 - b. Research report.
 - c. Report preparation.

4.Results

1. How to provide Peranakan Chinese cuisine by number and type in Semarang city

Interviewee 1 tells the story of the origin of wedang ronde, which is an offering to God. Every late December, when China's harsh winter begins, ronde prayers are held in temples by placing warm wedang ronde on the altar of the deity. The ronde prayer is intended as a request to God, through the intermediary of the Deity, to grant a mild winter. The sticky ronde is a symbol of family and neighbour sticking together to face the harsh winter. Wedang ronde also developed among peranakan Chinese. The couple will drink wedang ronde first before the bride's veil is removed in the hope that they will love each other and stick together as one.

According to Interviewee 2, there is no special recipe to maintain the family business. The attraction of Gang Lombok's lumpia is that the bamboo shoots do not smell bad when eaten, and the prawns and eggs do not smell fishy. The flavour of the spring rolls is kept the same, unchanged. The spring roll concoction from the time of his great-grandfather until now is maintained, so that no process is missed so as not to cause a fishy smell. The fishy taste is due to the process of washing the bamboo shoots that are not clean, as well as when processing the bamboo shoots with the spices used. Clean bamboo shoots and quality spices with proper processing will make spring rolls fishy-free and long-lasting.

Interviewee 3 explained the history of lontong cap go meh against the backdrop of Chinese New Year traditions. Chinese people usually carry out Chinese New Year activities including cleaning the house, decorating the house, buying new clothes and shoes, reunion dinners, paying off debts, giving angpau and putting up Mei flower decorations. Before the arrival of the new year, it is very important to ensure that the house is in a completely clean condition. Decorating the house, doors and windows are repainted generally in red colour. In addition, the doors and windows are plastered with paper with auspicious words or sentences. The most common and favourite is paper with the character "fu", not a few who deliberately stick it upside down. The word upside down when pronounced is "dao" which also means arrive, so the meaning becomes arrive or "fu dao".



2. How to Serve Peranakan Chinese Cuisine

Interviewee 1 was of the opinion that a good presentation of the food will elevate it to a classy dish. Interviewee 1 explained that, although adapted from ketupat lebaran, lontong cap go meh still has its own characteristics. Lontong Cap Go Meh is one of Semarang's signature dishes that is a blend of Chinese and Javanese cultures. The presentation of the set menu in lontong cap go meh is not always the same, but in general the presentation of the lontong cap go meh dish is in the form of pieces of lontong wallowing in a thick opor sauce with small slices of fried sambal ati ampela, lodeh vegetables, and sprinkled with savoury soybean powder (dokcang). Dokcang is made from soya beans that are roasted until browned, mixed with a little stock, then finely ground to a powder. The speciality of lontong cap gomeh in Semarang is that it is served with satay abing. Abing comes from the Javanese language, the colour red in Javanese is called abang, and when it is very red it is called abing. Sate abing is just a term, not like satay in general, but similar to opor. It is called satay because the colour is red and tends to be brownish so it is like the peanut sauce on satay so it is also called red opor.

Interviewee 2 stated that Lumpia Gang Lombok serves fried spring rolls and wet spring rolls. The spring rolls are served with fresh lettuce leaves, spring onions and cayenne pepper to add a spicy sensation. A dipping sauce made from cornstarch, soy sauce and sliced garlic is provided, resulting in sweet, salty and savoury flavours. Takeaway spring rolls are packed in a bamboo basket with pickled cucumber, thick sauce and chives. Deep-fried spring rolls last up to three days, while wet spring rolls only last 24 hours, all without preservatives. Spring rolls taste better when they are still hot, as the freshness and softness of the texture will be more pronounced.

Interviewee 3 explained that Lontong cap go meh is believed to symbolise good luck. The long shape of the rice cake symbolises longevity. The rice cake is served with an egg, which symbolises good luck, while the opor sauce, which is spiked with turmeric, is golden yellow, symbolising gold and good luck. Sambal goreng ati ampela tends to be red, the obligatory colour of Chinese New Year celebrations and everything the Chinese believe in. Lontong cap go meh shows the cross-cultural melting pot of assimilation.

3. Efforts have been made to preserve Peranakan Chinese cuisine as a culinary speciality of Semarang city.

Interviewee 1, the founder of Semarang Restaurant Heritage Cuisin, shared the ups and downs of maintaining his business. Since its establishment around 1991, his culinary business has managed to elevate the image of kampung cuisine to a higher class. According to Interviewee 1, his restaurant is the first large restaurant in Semarang that serves traditional dishes with international quality and service. His restaurant serves kampung food as the main menu, and he does not want kampung cuisine to disappear. Semarang Restaurant Heritage Cuisin was established with the concept of International & Garden Restaurant that specialises in serving kampung food and acculturated food. There are several mainstay menus, such as Bestik Jawa Pendrikan, Semur, Glewo Koyor, Asem-asem Daging Koyor, Bakmi Jawa Kampung, Lontong Opor Cap Go Meh, and others. Until now, the restaurant is still maintained both in terms of menu concept and business location. However, that doesn't mean the business is smooth. There are various obstacles faced, especially in the midst of business competition. When it comes to staff, many chefs have been trained, but after mastering all the recipes in Restaurant Semarang, they move to work elsewhere or open their own businesses.

Interviewee 2 also answered that the effort made by the manager of Lumpia Gang Lombok is to maintain the taste of spring rolls in accordance with the hereditary recipe. According to him, a distinctive flavour ensures the continuity of a culinary business. Interviewee 2 added that he is reluctant to open a branch, so that Lumpia Gang Lombok is better handled.

The effort to preserve spring rolls is done in many ways, including participating in culinary festivals or bazaars, collaborating with travel or travel agencies and through social media. Another effort is in the family history, several generations are also in the spring roll culinary business, including Lumpia Mbak Lien, and Lumpia Cik Me Me.

5. Discussion

1. How to provide Peranakan Chinese cuisine by number and type in Semarang city

Based on the results of data findings from the three groups of participants, it was found that the way culinary provision varies from one place to another. The preparation of Chinese cuisine is actually



much simpler than other Indonesian dishes. The quality of cooking is largely determined by the ingredients, spices, and cooking techniques. Peranakan Chinese cuisine is inseparable from the basic ingredients of Peranakan cuisine, which is a combination of the main spices that are most common in China, combined with spices and spices native to Indonesia. This characteristic is the most prominent and dominates the distinctive taste of Semarang Peranakan cuisine. Cooking ingredients and seasonings are not difficult to obtain but must be of good quality.

2. How to Serve Peranakan Chinese Cuisine

The culinary presentation of the Peranakan Chinese menu is actually simpler and very easy, no need to use a complete dining set, just a plate and bowl. Cuisine will be more delicious when served hot. The basic form of eating and drinking utensils, there are several indicators, namely the type of food that is contained, how it is used, its relationship with other utensils and its relationship with the user. Each utensil functions according to its shape and type of food.

3. Efforts have been made to preserve Peranakan Chinese cuisine as a culinary speciality of Semarang city.

There are several efforts made to preserve the Peranakan Chinese menu as a culinary speciality of Semarang City:

1. Teaching or passing on to family and neighbours.

Peranakan Chinese cuisine, which eventually became a hereditary culinary business, still maintains the original recipes of its founder, of course with developments according to the times. Efforts to preserve Peranakan Chinese culinary cuisine began with family efforts by teaching it to their descendants, employees and those around them.

2. Innovation elevates Peranakan Chinese food to class

The efforts of these culinary entrepreneurs are very innovative. Food and drinks that were once only sold by being carried or sold by carts have moved to shophouses, restaurants, airports and so on.

3. Promotion through social media

The influence of social media is now a major influence in helping to popularise Semarang's culinary scene. The fast, easy, and cheap flow of social media is often the choice for business people to market a business. Social media is an important part of marketing a product because social media has become a reference for people to find information, including information about culinary.

4. Organise a Peranakan Chinese festival/event

In addition to social media, there are other things that support the promotion of Semarang's culinary scene, such as culinary exhibitions or festivals. The provision of Semarang culinary events, in addition to popularising Semarang's culinary delights, can also help small and medium industry entrepreneurs in promoting their culinary products.

5. Government recognises lumpia culinary managers

Spring roll culinary is a cultural heritage product that must be preserved, because it has a high meaning and historical value. On 17 October 2014, the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia has designated Semarang spring rolls as one of the "National Intangible Cultural Heritage", as stated in the Decree of the Ministry of Education and Culture Number 153991/MPK.A/DO/2014. This is encouraging news for the citizens of Semarang, given the centuries-old culinary heritage of spring rolls.

6. Daring to defend spring rolls as Indonesian food

7. Dare to innovate menu variants

Along with its development, spring roll culinary develops and varies more and more, so that spring roll culinary remains the most popular culinary and can still compete with other popular culinary delights..

6. Conclusion

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that the provision of Peranakan Chinese menu culinary in the city of Semarang in several types of dishes and drinks still use the original recipes from ancestors, both ingredients, spices and cooking techniques. The culinary presentation of the Peranakan Chinese menu in some culinary shows its distinctiveness without leaving its authenticity even though there are several additional menu variants. Efforts to preserve the Peranakan Chinese menu as a culinary speciality of the city of Semarang have



been made by culinary business people, families, communities and the Semarang City government.

The suggestions that can be given include the provision of Peranakan Chinese culinary places in Semarang City, organising Peranakan Chinese menu festivals in particular, introducing gastronomic tourism, especially Peranakan Chinese cuisine and introducing the presentation of Peranakan Chinese cuisine.

7.Recognition

We would like to thank those who directly or indirectly participated in this research.

Reference

- Bromokusumo, A. C. (2013). *Peranakan Chinese in Nusantara Culinary*. Kompas.
- Gumulya, D. (2017). The Blending of Chinese, Javanese, and Dutch Cultures in Peranakan Chinese Dining Culture. *ANDHARUPA: Journal of Visual Communication Design & Multimedia*, 3(02), 130-143. <https://doi.org/10.33633/andharupa.v3i02.1353>
- Rochmawati, N., Nailah, N., & Oktariadi, I. (2013). Traceability of Semarang's Typical Food as an Asset Inventory and Promotion of Central Java Culinary Tourism. *DIPOIPTEKS: Undip Student Scientific Journal*, 1(1), 7-11. <http://ejournal-s1.undip.ac.id/index.php/dipoipteks/article/view/5462>
- Sarwopeni, S. D., & Saraswati, U. (2021). Intangible Conservation: The Existence of Wingko Babat, Semarang's Typical Culinary Year. *Journal of Indonesian History*, 10(1), 77-85. <https://journal.unnes.ac.id/sju/index.php/jih/article/view/47029/19707>
- Sienatra, R., Sulistyawati, A., & Kusumaningrum, N. K. V. (2020). Chinese-Indonesian Peranakan Culinary Innovation. *Journey*, 3(2), 21-32.
- Soegihartono. (2015). The Influence of Chinese & Javanese Acculturation in Business Development in Semarang. *Respons*, 20(02), 187-211. <http://ejournal.atmajaya.ac.id/index.php/response/article/view/548>
- Sugiyono. (2018). *quantitative research methods* (Setiyawami (ed.); 1st ed.). Alfabeta.
- Susanti, I. E., & Purwaningsih, S. M. (2015). Semarang Spring Rolls during the New Order Period (Spring Rolls as Cultural Identity of Semarang Peranakan Chinese Ethnic). *Avatara E-Journal of History Education*, 3(3), 384-390. <https://jurnalmahasiswa.unesa.ac.id/index.php/29/article/view/12661/11681>
- Wardana, B. R. (2017). Cultural Acculturation of Chinese Communities with Indigenous Communities in Karangturi Village, Lasem District, Rembang Regency. *Journal of Social Science*, 53(9), 1689-1699.