



# The Indonesian Journal of Social Studies

Available at <https://journal.unesa.ac.id/index.php/jpips/index>

## Actualization and Modernization of History-Based Traditional Culinary for Preserving Surakarta Local Wisdom

Eko Satriya Hermawan<sup>1</sup> \*

1) History Education Program, Surabaya State University, Indonesia

---

### Abstrak

Indonesia dikenal dengan kekayaan kearifan lokalnya, di antaranya kearifan lokal adalah khazanah kuliner yang sangat beragam. Kuliner tidak hanya dimaknai sebagai makanan tetapi memiliki nilai sejarah, filosofi dan identitas suatu masyarakat, namun kondisi saat ini memprihatinkan karena nasib kuliner tradisional terpinggirkan dan tidak populer. Artikel ini akan membahas tentang identifikasi, penjelasan makna dan filosofi serta model pelestarian kuliner tradisional Surakarta. Untuk mencapai model yang diinginkan, penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif, kemudian mengembangkannya dalam bentuk model. Artikel dari penelitian ini akan memiliki kontribusi teoritis dan praktis, terutama bagi pembuat dan pecinta kuliner tradisional. Keterlibatan masyarakat umum, sejarawan, praktisi dan pelaku usaha kuliner dalam penelitian ini akan menjadikan hasil yang diperoleh dapat dimanfaatkan dan diterapkan oleh para pemangku kepentingan. Dari data temuan permasalahan pertama, mulai dari kuliner tradisional yang tidak terangkat seiring dengan perkembangan zaman, sehingga setara dengan beragam makanan impor; Kedua, kuliner tradisional tidak mengalami keserasian dan penyesuaian dengan kebutuhan masyarakat modernis; Ketiga, konotasi kebelakang yang melekat dan distribusi yang relatif terbatas; dan Keempat, kurangnya pengembangan dan inovasi yang dilakukan. Menyadari permasalahan tersebut, dalam penelitian ini dikembangkan model aktualisasi dan modernisasi kuliner tradisional berbasis sejarah untuk melestarikan kearifan lokal Surakarta.

**Kata Kunci:** Kuliner, Kearifan Lokal, Surakarta,

### Abstract

Indonesia is known for its wealth of local wisdom, among which local wisdom is a very diverse culinary treasure. Culinary is not only interpreted as food but has historical value, philosophy and identity of a society, but the current condition is sad because the fate of traditional culinary is marginalized and unpopular. This article will discuss the identification, explanation of the meaning and philosophy as well as the model of preserving the traditional culinary of Surakarta. To achieve the desired model, this research uses the qualitative method, then develops it in the form of a model. Articles from this research will have theoretical and practical contributions, especially for traditional culinary makers and lovers. The involvement of the general public, historians, practitioners and culinary business actors in this research will make the results obtained can be utilized and applied by stakeholders. From the data findings problem is first, starting from traditional culinary that is not raised in line with the changing times, so that it is equivalent to a variety of imported foods; Second, traditional culinary does not experience harmony and adjustment to the needs of modernist society; Third, the inherent backward connotation and relatively limited distribution; and Fourth, the lack of development and innovation carried out. Recognizing such problems, in this study, a model of the actualization and modernization of history-based traditional culinary was developed to preserve the local wisdom of Surakarta.

**Keywords:** Culinary, Local Wisdom, Surakarta

---

\*Corresponding author:

E-mail: [ekohermawan@unesa.ac.id](mailto:ekohermawan@unesa.ac.id)

e-ISSN 2615-5966 (Online)

This is an open access article under the CC-BY-SA license



## **INTRODUCTION**

An area has an attraction that becomes a magnet that causes people to be interested in visiting the area, for example for traveling, shopping, recreation, watching arts and cultural performances, attending seminars. A tourist attraction owned by a tourism destination or tourist destination, namely something that is seen, for example natural scenery, ancient relics, performances, or something that can be done, for example recreation, sports, research, or something that can be purchased, namely goods unique or souvenir. Besides that, it can also be something that can be enjoyed, for example, cool air free of pollution, special services or something that can be eaten, for example food or drinks typical of the region or country. This means that a tourist attraction is anything that triggers a person and or a group of people to visit a place because something has a certain meaning, for example the natural environment, historical heritage or place, certain events.

According to Law Number 10 of 2009, Chapter 1 Article 1, a tourist attraction business is everything that has uniqueness, beauty, and value in the form of a diversity of natural, cultural, and man-made wealth which is the target or destination of tourist visits, (Law No. - Law of the Republic of Indonesia concerning Tourism).

Surakarta City is a city that has a tourist attraction in Central Java Province. The city of Surakarta is bordered by Karanganyar Regency in the east, in the west Surakarta is directly adjacent to Boyolali Regency and Klaten Regency, in the south there are Sukoharjo Regency and Wonogiri Regency. Surakarta is one of the tourism destinations in Indonesia, with the slogan the spirit of Java.

Surakarta as the center of Javanese culture holds many symbols that represent the nobility of the Javanese people as well as local wisdom. Each symbol has a philosophical value and meaning that is used to become the identity and identity of the Javanese people. The essence of culture is all aspects of human activity, the stronger the instrument is used by humans, the higher the cultural value. One of the elements that most influence Javanese society is culinary. Culinary is not only defined as fulfilling primary human needs, but also as the identity and representation of the people of Surakarta. Every piece of history cannot be separated from the same social phenomenon.

As stated by Heri Priyatmoko (Solopos, 2014) when Paku Buwana IX (1861-1893) bought up Nasi Liwet to pamper the tongue and fill the stomachs of the pangrawit who were willing to play gamelan to entertain the king all night long. Until this moment, morning and night, baskets of liwet rice from Baki are scattered selling their wares. This phenomenon proves that there is a continuity in the history of nasi liwet culinary entrepreneurship, as well as the history of batik entrepreneurship in Laweyan. The changing times and the flow of modernization have not drowned out the existence of a rice liwet. Assisted by media promotion, rice liwet is increasingly in demand. Nasi liwet successfully competes with food sold in restaurants. Nasi liwet is a Solo culinary that breaks down social barriers (rich-poor), ethnicity (native-non-native), and age (old-young). Wealthy shoppers are also willing to smack and sink in the overhang of the shop, enjoying liwet rice.

The second incident was when the transfer of the center of the Mataram palace from its original location in Kartasura to Surakarta in 1745. It is interesting to study that the culinary accompanying this historic move are 17 kinds of jenang which are full of symbolism. It is not surprising that on the anniversary of Surakarta in 2014 there were 17 kinds of jenang. Subsequent culinary developments developed into a representation of a community, region and even a country. When you hear the words pasta, spaghetti or risoto, you will definitely think of Italy, Burger, Colla, and Hot Dogs with the United States, Sushi, Tempura as well as Japanese identity, or rendang with Padang, Gudeng with Jogja, gado-gado with Betawi and so on. much more. While the most popular in Solo are Serabi, Cabuk Rambak, Peek, Tengkleng, Nasi Liwet and many more. The close correlation, namely the loss of Surakarta's culinary treasures, will make Surakarta's identity and identity weak.

Culinary also determines how our ecological awareness plays. Ecological awareness makes

us aware of places, and also adjusts how we then eat. Food does not only contain physical value alone. Food helps shape our spiritual and spiritual instincts. In food there is prayer, there is energy for our bodies. Javanese people have a good spiritual awareness about food. Call it in offerings. Through offerings, the Javanese show how food actually comes from nature, we don't just eat for ourselves, but the spirits of our ancestors also eat. Mak Not surprisingly, offerings are always presented in ceremonies in Java until now. From the type of soto alone, we have a variety of typical soto from all over the archipelago, not to mention fried rice to chicken soup and other regional specialties (Arif Saifudin Yudistira, Joglosemar, 2014).

The current condition is very concerning when the younger generation has very little knowledge and introduction about the treasures of heritage (culinary) they have as a Javanese. The scarcity of this experience is based on the massive current of modernity and is supported by a lack of knowledge about Javanese culture. The second condition is that the Surakarta community has not optimally optimized the potential for culinary treasures to raise the economic level to achieve prosperity.

With these conditions, it is a concern as well as a thought to conduct in-depth studies and create a tested, empirical, and practical development model so that it has multiple contributions, namely: preserving traditional culinary local wisdom, increasing local potential-based economy, taking noble values through extracting meaning. philosophy and symbols of traditional culinary. With such research steps, this research will have a theoretical and practical contribution, especially for traditional culinary makers and lovers. The involvement of the general public, historians, practitioners and culinary business actors in this research will make the results obtained can be utilized and applied by stakeholders.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

The approach model in this research is descriptive qualitative. The author as an instrument goes directly to the research location, so that he can appreciate the customs, and the symptoms of everyday life that are full of local socio-cultural phenomena (Agar, 1980). During the research the author was more involved and tried to appreciate the socio-cultural system of the local community, especially in relation to the context of the historical traditional culinary repertoire as a philosophical embodiment of the Javanese people and loaded with symbolic meanings both from the designation, time of presentation as well as the name and shape (Bernard, R. H. 1994). ). This approach strategy was chosen on the basis of the consideration that (1) the qualitative approach, even though it only covers a small/limited scale of research locations, is able to develop on a broader conceptual framework, (2) this approach model is not only concerned with the results, but the process aspect is something more important, (3) this exploratory-empirical qualitative approach is very good if a study wants to explain a phenomenon in depth and comprehensively, so that the results of the research are detailed descriptions that are not rigid but also in-depth (Bogdan & Tylor, 1982).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Culinary Colonial Period**

One of the interesting things from the Dutch colonial period is the contact of indigenous cultures with Europe. This touch is very much felt in the influence of the taste of the Netherlands on the traditional culinary treasures of the indigenous people. This can not be separated from the mixing of Dutch people with indigenous women who adorn the history of Dutch colonialism in Indonesia. Like the general social order in colonial lands, Europeans (in this case the Dutch) are known as the highest social class that always maintains exclusivity or limits relations. with a social class that is considered low, namely natives. However, the influence of the people who were

colonized in fact heavily affected their daily lives. Likewise, the indigenous people absorbed and were influenced by elements of colonial culture. One of them in terms of food or culinary.

Cultural values that have been embedded in the life of the Indonesian people are difficult to erase because they have merged into a collective habit of society, as shown in the face of Indonesian cuisine. This wealth has existed for a long time even the Dutch who came to admit this.

According to Onghokham, this can be explained that when he visited the Mataram Palace in 1656, the VOC ambassador Rijklofs van Goens was amazed to see the types of dishes ranging from meat, chicken, fish to vegetables that were processed, ranging from grilled, fried to steamed. All of this is served to entertain the guests of the king. The abundance of this dish is an annual tradition of the palace when the regents from each region bring tribute to the king along with their followers, including the farmers who are obliged to serve in the palace. These regents also brought their own cooks and usually the regional specialties of each regent were also offered to serve at the king's table. This is what causes the abundance of dishes on the king's table.

The emergence and development of rijsttafel like other Indic cultures was initially supported by the celibate habit of European officials. Prohibition of bringing wives (except high officials) and bringing women Europeans to the Indies gave rise to blood mixing with European women to the Indies, which led to blood mixing with indigenous women which gave birth to a mixed generation (Indo) so that it also resulted in a mixed lifestyle.

In addition, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 was also a factor in the shorter and wider cultural mix which was marked by the increasing population of Europeans, especially women in the Dutch East Indies.

The role of chefs or cooks of indigenous women who work as cooks in European families is actually very dominant since the arrival of Europeans in the 19th century. This native woman cook is widely used by Europeans to take care of their homes, because at the beginning of the arrival of the Europeans they did not bring their wives and families. This indigenous woman cook has a very big role in introducing Indonesian eating culture. It was from this indigenous woman cook that European society adapted to local food, especially rice and other dishes. This habit of eating rice has become a hereditary habit among Europeans living in Java (Agar, M. H. 1980)

The habit of eating rice for Europeans, especially the Dutch who lived in the Dutch East Indies, finally created a eating culture called rijsttafel. Rijsttafel means rice dish can also be said as a dish to eat rice that is served specifically. According to Fadly Rahman, rijsttafel which among indigenous peoples is a normal daily eating habit, among Europeans, rijsttafel has become a lifestyle that seems luxurious. This luxurious impression is shown through the quantity of dishes and aspects of their presentation. And if you look closely, this rijsttafel can be said to have similarities with the traditions and eating habits of the past Keraton. It is undeniable that this indigenous woman cook has a big contribution to the formation of a new culture, especially in culinary culture that we sometimes don't realize. If these indigenous female cooks had not been employed in European households, the rijsttafel culture would not have formed, and rice would have become an ordinary dish.

## **2. Culinary For Tradition**

Javanese culture does have a myriad of traditions that are still maintained today. Among them have a deep meaning and are rich in cultural and social values and norms. One of them is the Kenduri or genduren tradition, which is a hereditary tradition in Javanese culture. Kenduri is a tradition that has been going on for decades, maybe even hundreds of years. This tradition still takes place, especially in the villages. The essence is the same, only the terms may be different (Abdullah, 1991).



Figure 01. Menu Berkat Ndalem, Source: Researcher documentation

Kenduri is an event to celebrate and be grateful for something, such as for the celebration of building a house, the birth of a child and so on. This event is synonymous with tumpeng with relatives and neighbors. There is no need to make an event that is too big, because what matters is the meaning behind the ritual. The meaning of kenduri is that we are always grateful for all God's gifts and share that happiness with others (Laksono, 1985).

Kenduri itself is divided into several types of traditional ceremonies as a symbol of asking for safety. Kenduren which we already know is closely related to Javanese traditions so that it is almost present in all sessions of Javanese traditional ceremonies such as funeral ceremonies, weton and mitoni. Kenduri ceremony is rarely found, because society has begun to open up to the times. In this kenduri ceremony there are a series of rituals that are interrelated and full of sacred meaning.

Therefore, this report will explain in more detail the kenduren tradition as well as a series of other rituals associated with the ceremony. Kenduren is an event to celebrate and be grateful for something, such as a celebration of building a house, the birth of a child, and so on. This event is synonymous with tumpeng with relatives and neighbors. There is no need to make an event that is too big, because what matters is the meaning behind the event. The meaning of gendorenan is that we are always grateful for all God's gifts and share that happiness with others (Ahimsa-Putra, H.S. 2008).

This feast is the result of the legacy of our ancestors who are said to be able to bring blessings to the community. Before this event starts, the community is required to bring yellow rice which is given a mixture of fried eggs and fried chili sauce wrapped or given a banana leaf container which is commonly called takir. This implementation is led by elders or people who are more knowledgeable or have wider experience whose prayers are offered to the Divine as a form of gratitude and favors given by God. However, according to the times and differences in Complete from various regions, the feast at this time is not limited to yellow rice, but there are other variations such as savory rice, ambeng and tumpeng rice. The complement, called cenggereng, also changed with the contents of srundeng, crackers, peanut brittle, apem and others (Darsiti, 1989). Meanwhile, takir offerings containing betel leaves, village chicken eggs, tobacco, nutmeg and loose change as offerings. who brought it earlier (the owner) and the elders interpret that the person's fortune is not always the same as the beginning and it is hoped that his fate will be better.

### **3. Culinary for the Bazaar/Fair**

The night market is an activity or trade transaction at night which has its own segmentation for the people of Surakarta. The night market is very suitable as entertainment for people who live in a tropical climate, because the air at night is not so cold. The night market is a separate entertainment for the people of Surakarta. In the night market there is a variety of entertainment from children's games, culinary to household needs available. The night market has a distinctive and unique style, both merchandise and sellers to visitors. The night market is one of the alternative entertainments for the community, especially the sub-urban community, which is dominated by people with middle to lower economic strength. Three-way money with the seller which is also generally done by street vendors or micro. The dominant commodities are goods for direct consumption or household needs and practical household tools.



Figure 02. Culinary Bazaar/Fair  
Source: Research Documentation

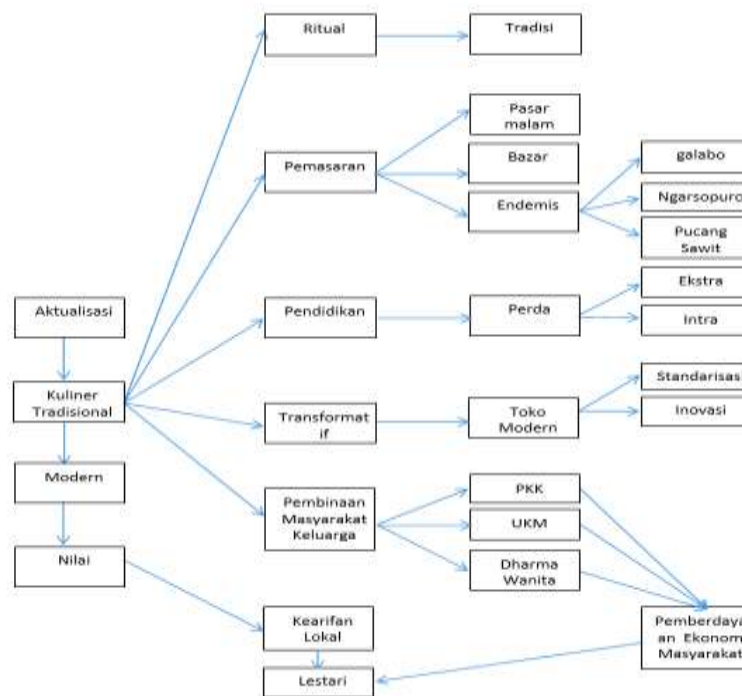
One thing that cannot be separated from the celebration of the night market is the existence of traditional culinary which is increasingly difficult to find. Nostalgia and romantic longing for the past, can be cured a little when you re-discover the traditional culinary treasures which on ordinary days are increasingly gloomy eroded by modernity and practical transformation of society.

### **4. Model Development and Preservation**

In carrying out the actualization and modernization of history-based traditional culinary for the micro-economic empowerment of the community which has an impact on the preservation of local wisdom of Surakarta, it can be done by conducting a historical study of the Surakarta area as the center of Javanese culture, especially in the scope of social history. The scope of social history allows a researcher to obtain a holistic study of the daily lives of people in an area.

The results obtained are a needs analysis of history-based traditional culinary. The results of historical studies are cross-checked with empirical research in the field so that complete and comprehensive data is obtained about traditional culinary arts ranging from historical, philosophical, how to make and the content of other local wisdom in traditional culinary. This in-depth study is expected to be the basis for culinary actualization that has gone through the historical filter. Basically, civilization experiences a cycle (cultural cycle) so that a community cannot be forced to stop evolving at a certain point. Differentiation is something that cannot be avoided, so the current condition of modernity must be one of the references for the development

of traditional culinary arts in the context of preservation and acceleration with the needs of the cultural stakeholder community (Sujamto. 1992).



Even so, the philosophical and symbolic elements contained in culinary must be maintained to strengthen that culinary is not just food but also plays a role and values in society as part of local wisdom (Wahono, Francis, et al. 2004). With the acceleration and continued development of traditional culinary as a necessity, the preservation of traditional culinary will be created. The next factor is the actor who plays an important role in culinary preservation, namely the community. Culinary is an economic business, so that if it is developed seriously and carefully analyzes the needs of the community, it will form community economic empowerment starting from the micro level to the macro level.

## CLOSING

In ethnic cuisine, usually the philosophical meaning contained in it can be characterized by the use of cooking ingredients. This means that each of the basic ingredients of cooking has its own meaning function, not just the final result that is "eaten" but the culinary carries a deep philosophical meaning for the local community. This is because food is a vital agent for body growth. More than that, food comes from nature and all of it will be returned to nature. In other words, nature and the body are in a cyclical cycle, where this cycle will always revolve when the inheritance of ideas / ideas is still running smoothly. good.

The use of food as a philosophical representation of society is not without reason, since ancient times humans have known the habit of offering offerings. As happened in the pagan era (nature worship religion) where in pagan society they used the meat of game animals as offerings. And the meat was burned because at that time the custom of cooking by frying was not known by the community. What happens is that a culture will create its own way to represent the philosophical meaning that is believed by each cultural actor in the form of culinary. Traditional culinary contains a cultural manifestation that takes place in one society. Where this manifestation is a value which will then be passed down to the next generation.

## REFERENSI

- Abdullah, I. 1991. "Kraton, Upacara dan Politik Simbol: Kosmologi dan Sinkretisme di Jawa". *Humaniora.2* : 87-100
- Abdullah, I. 2002. Simbol, Makna dan Pandangan Hidup Jawa Analisis Gununganpada Upacara Garebeg. Yogyakarta: Balai Kajian Sejarah dan Nilai Tradisional.
- Agar, M. H. 1980. *The Profesional Strager: An Informal Introduction to Ethnography*. Florida: Academic Press. Inc.
- Ahimsa-Putra, H.S. 2008. *Ilmuwan Budaya dan Revitalisasi Kearifan Lokal: Tantangan Teoritis dan Metodologis*. Disampaikan pada Rapat Senat Terbuka Dies Natalis ke-62 Fakultas Ilmu Budaya UGM Yogyakarta 3Maret 2008.
- Bernard, R. H. 1994. *Research Methods in Anthropology Qualitative and Quantitative Approach*. USA: Sage Publication. Inc.
- Bogdan & Tylor. 1993. *Kualitatif Dasar-Dasar Penelitian*. Penerjemah: A. Khozim Affandi. Surabaya: Usaha Nasional.
- Borley, L. 1992. "Principles For Revitalizing the Cultural Heritage" dalam *Universal Tourism Enriching Or Degrading culture?*. Yogyakarta: Proceedings On The International Conference On Cultural Tourism GadjahMada University
- Darsiti, 1989. *Kehidupan Dunia Kraton Surakarta 1830-1939*. Yogyakarta: Tamansiswa
- George, Susan. (terj. Sandria Komalasari). 2007. Pangan dari Penindasan sampai ke Ketahanan Pangan. Yogyakarta: Insist.
- Hamengkubowono X, S. S. 1992. "Revitalization Of Cultural Heritage Within The Context Of Tourism" dalam *Universal Tourism Enriching Or Degrading culture?*. Yogyakarta: Proceedings On The International Conference On Cultural Tourism Gadjah Mada University.
- Hold, Claire. 2000. *Melacak jejak Seni Pertunjukan di Indonesia*. Jogjakarta:MSPI
- Koentjaraningrat. 1984. *Kebudayaan Jawa*. Jakarta: Balai Pustaka.
- Laksono. 1985. *Tradisi dalam Struktur Masyarakat Jawa Kerajaan dan PedesaanAlih Ubah Model Berpikir Jawa*. Yogyakarta: Gajah Mada University Press
- Miles, M.B. & Huberman, A.M. 1984. *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Sourcebookof A New Methods*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.
- Nasution. 1988. *Metode Penelitian Naturalistik Kualitatif*. Bandung: Tarsito.
- Sujamto. 1992. Reorientasi dan Revitalisasi Pandangan Hidup Jawa. Semarang:Dahara Prize.
- Wahono, Francis, dkk. 2004. Pangan Kearifan Lokal dan KeanekaragamanHayati. Yogyakarta: Cindelas Pustaka Rakyat Cerdas.