

Culinary for The Spirits: The Reality of Cultural Acculturation of The Chinese Peranakan of Palembang

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ABSTRACT

We usually talk about food, the way it is served, its types, and its beauty aspects in terms of satisfying the pleasures of the human eye and sense of taste. Therefore, in gastronomy, the things above receive great attention. Unsurprisingly, culinary art institutions have been established up to the academic level since decades ago. However, this paper presents a slightly different field of gastronomy, namely gastronomy for the ancestral spirits prayer ceremony, named *coki/cuki* prayer in Hokkian language (祖祭) which is still practiced today by the Chinese Peranakan of Palembang or we can say “Peranakan Palembang”, South Sumatra. This ritual ceremony, which is hundreds of years old is quite interesting, carried out by people of Chinese descent, both Totok and Peranakan, old and young generations. This paper focuses only on the Chinese Peranakan in Palembang. From here the question arises, why is this custom still maintained in modern times, even though the costs involved are not small? What type of food shows cultural acculturation? From a gastronomic point of view, how are the dishes served arranged? Are there rules? Research data consists of photos and information obtained from informants, and also researchers’ observations of Chinese Peranakan Palembang families because they are considered to know more about and carry out the rules related to the teaching of Confucianism (Tan, 1979). *Shenism* (Gondomono, 2013) and filial piety or 孝 *xiào* in Confucian religious teachings are two philosophical thinking to know the reason why this ceremony is still carried out today. The research method is descriptive qualitative. The data from the informants will be sorted based on the type of dish, and how it is served, then will be described qualitatively, so that an understanding will be gained regarding the preservation of this prayer ceremony. The novelty of this paper is to increase knowledge about the existence of the culinary for spirits and the philosophical background.

KEYWORDS

Gastronomy; Chinese Peranakan; Acculturation; Confucianism; Shenism

INTRODUCTION

Chinese people are believed to have lived in the archipelago for centuries. According to Kabul (2002:2) quoting Purcell (1951:15), the arrival of Chinese people to the archipelago had occurred since the early century AD, namely during the Han 汉 dynasty (206 AD-220 AD). Evidence of their arrival can be seen from archaeological discoveries in Sumatra, Java, and Kalimantan which are estimated to date back to 45 BC.

Their centuries-old existence has led to cultural acculturation between the local population and immigrants from China in various fields such as buildings, language, clothing, religious celebrations, marriages, and death, including culinary delights. This paper is the result of research into dishes, snacks, and pastries served in prayer ceremonies for Peranakan Palembang's deceased ancestors who came from the province of Fujian in China. This prayer ceremony with typical culinary delights has been carried out consistently until the 21st century. This paper focuses only on the Chinese Peranakan in Palembang. From here the question arises, why is this custom still maintained in modern times, even though the costs involved are not small? What type of food shows cultural acculturation? From a gastronomic point of view, how are the dishes served arranged? Are there rules? Besides the culinary, this research aims to show the persistence of the philosophical teachings and the trust in *shen* that underlie this prayer ceremony to ancestral spirits. *Shen* 神 is translated by Gondomono as 'arwah' in Bahasa Indonesia (2013:273). *Shenism* is a name given by Western experts in the sociology of religion (Elliot, 1955 cited by Gondomono, 2013:272-273). The essence of *shenism* is worshipping the spirits of ancestors.

There are four female informants who currently still carry out complete prayer ceremonies to ancestral spirits. It means that they still believe in *shenism*. All of them are 60-70 years old, two of them believe in Tridharma (Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism), and the other two informants are Catholic. Researchers also made observations of families who still carried out this prayer ceremony. According to Tan (1979), the Peranakans are considered to know more about and carry out the rules related to the teaching of Confucianism (Tan, 1979). Data from informants regarding the food served, its type, equipment, and how to place it on the ancestral spirits ash table. This food serving is based on *Shenism* and Confucius' moral principle Xiao 孝. Both are the basis for preserving prayer ceremonies for ancestral spirits.

RESEARCH METHODS

The data obtained were classified based on the type of dish, the meat that must be served, original ingredients from China, and Indonesia. This kind of analysis is also carried out on pastries and fruits. Briefly, the method used is first, researching the philosophical basis of the prayer ceremony for the ancestors. Second, researching cultural acculturation in the field of food. Third, in the field of gastronomy regarding the rules for serving food to make it look good and attractive. With this method, it is hoped that Peranakan Palembang's culture in Indonesia will be better understood. The novelty of this paper is to increase our knowledge about the existence of culinary for spirits prayer and their philosophical background.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Chinese in Indonesia: Peranakan dan Totok

In English, China people are named Chinese, Dutch "Chineezen". In the colonial period at that time the term Chineezen was used for both immigrant and local-born Chinese (Ong, 1943:13 as cited by Tan, 2008:1). The ethnic Indonesians used the term "Tjina" (or Cina in Ejaan Yang Disempurnakan or EYD) or "Tjino" (Cino) in Javanese-speaking areas, also in

South Sumatra. Another term “baba” or “babah” was used for Chinese men. In Pasar Senen, Jakarta 1970 there was a store named “Toko Baba Gemuk” (Fatty Baba Store). At that time the term *Cina* or *Cino* had no derogatory meaning. Coppel (2002) and Ong (1943) as cited by Tan (2008:1-2) mentioned that:

At the beginning of the twentieth century, when China became a republic by overthrowing the Manchu Ch'ing Dynasty, the fervor of Chinese nationalism also influenced the Chinese overseas, including those in the Indies.

The influence of the fall of the Qing dynasty reached Nusantara. The Chinese community in Nusantara, and also the Chinese government prefer to use the Hokkian term “Tionghoa” for Chinese, and “Tiongkok” for China. This term can increase the feelings of self-worth and identity with “Chineseness”. The Indonesian press also used this term during the Japanese occupation and throughout the regime of Sukarno (Tan, 2008:2). In the Suharto era the term “Cina” was used officially instead of “Tiongkok” and “Tionghoa”.

After the Reformation in 1998, the old Chinese generation preferred “Tiongkok” and “Tionghoa”, while the young generation still uses “Cina” because they are used to that term and feel no derogatory meaning anymore. There are also Indonesian Chinese who use “China”, such as *negara China*, and *orang China*. The use of “China” in Bahasa Indonesia does not support the government's program to use Bahasa Indonesia in all fields as fully as possible.

Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono on March 19, 2014, through Presidential Decree Number 12 of 2014 decided for people and the community to use “Tionghoa”. We find they call themselves “orang Tionghoa”. Chinese community associations also use “Tionghoa”, such as Paguyuban Sosial Marga Tionghoa Indonesia (PSMTI), Perhimpunan Indonesia Tionghoa (INTI), Perkumpulan Pengusaha Indonesia Tionghoa. What about Tiongkok? According to that Decree, the term “Tiongkok” is used for the country. There is a change from Tjina/Cina/China into the Republik Rakyat Tiongkok. In informal situations, people still use the term “Cina”.

The Indonesian Chinese is not a homogenous ethnic group. Tan (1979:x) revealed that there is a difference between those who are known as Chinese or *orang Tionghoa*. Broadly speaking, they consist of two large groups, namely Peranakan and Totok. She characterized the Totok as below:

Kalaupun dapat diadakan perbedaan antara orang-orang etnis Tionghoa menurut kewarganegaraannya, masih ada suatu perbedaan pokok lainnya, ialah menurut orientasi kebudayaannya. Kita dapat membedakan antara mereka yang orientasi kebudayaannya berintikan kebudayaan yang berasal dari Tiongkok (berbahasa Tionghoa di rumah, pernah bersekolah di sekolah Tionghoa, mempunyai hubungan kerabat atau dagang dengan orang Tionghoa lain di luar Indonesia), yang biasanya dinamakan orang Tionghoa ”Totok”.

Translated by Google translation:

Even if a distinction can be made between ethnic Chinese people according to their nationality, there is still another main difference, namely, according to their cultural orientation. We can distinguish between those whose cultural orientation is based on culture originating from China (speaks Chinese at home, has attended a Chinese school, has kinship or trade relations with other Chinese people outside Indonesia), usually called "Totok" Chinese people.

The Peranakan can be identified:

[...] mereka yang orientasi kebudayaannya berintikan kebudayaan setempat, seperti Jawa, Sunda, Ambon, Manado, yang di rumahnya menggunakan bahasa setempat; pendeknya mereka yang telah mengalami proses akulturasi yang mendalam dengan kebudayaan di mana mereka dilahirkan dan dibesarkan. Orang-orang ini biasanya dinamakan orang "Peranakan".

Translated by Google translation:

[...] those whose cultural orientation is based on local cultures, such as Javanese, Sundanese, Ambon, and Manado, use the local language at home; in short, those who have experienced a deep acculturation process with the culture in which they were born and raised. These people are usually called "Peranakan" people.

Gondomono's opinion, an Indonesian anthropologist, specializing in Indonesian Chinese, was not much different from Tan, who is an expert in the field of sociology regarding Chinese ethnicity. Gondomono called them Golongan Cina-Indonesia as cited below (1996:2-3).

"Ketika kehidupan di Nusantara terbukti lebih baik dan memberi harapan yang cerah daripada di tanah tumpah darahnya di Cina Tenggara pada waktu itu, maka banyak imigran mulai berdatangan dalam jumlah besar ke Indonesia, tanpa kaum perempuannya. Pada awalnya mereka masih merencanakan untuk kembali ke negeri Cina apabila meeka telah mengumpulkan kekayaan yang cukup banyak untuk hari tuanya, namun lama kelamaan mereka meninggalkan gagasan untuk kembali ke tanah asalnya. Mereka kemudian malahan hidup dengan perempuan setempat dan menetap di Indonesia untuk selama-lamanya. Mereka membentuk komunitas sendiri yang makin lama makin berbeda secara kultural dengan masyarakat leluhur Cina. Maka terbentuklah sebuah kelompok yang dalam banyak tulisan disebut sebagai golongan "peranakan", namun di dalam tulisan ini disebut sebagai golongan Cina-Indonesia. Kaum imigran yang datang pada abad kesembilan belas sampai awal tahun 1930-an banyak yang membawa istri atau keluarganya sehingga mereka pun membentuk komunitas sendiri yang biasanya disebut golongan Cina Totok, yang secara kultural lebih akrab dengan budaya leluhur mereka daripada golongan Cina-Indonesia".

Translated by Google translation:

"When life in the archipelago proved to be better and gave brighter hope than in its homeland in Southeast China, many immigrants arrived in large numbers in Indonesia, without the women. At first, they still planned to return to China when they had accumulated enough wealth for their old age, but over time, they abandoned the idea of returning to their homeland. They then ended up living with local women and staying in Indonesia forever. They then ended up living with local women and staying in Indonesia forever. They formed their community, which became increasingly culturally different from their ancestral Chinese society. A group was formed, which in many

writings is referred to as the "Peranakan" group, but in this article, it is referred to as the Chinese-Indonesian group. Many immigrants in the nineteenth century until the early 1930s brought their wives or families. Hence, they formed their community, usually called the Totok Chinese group, which is more familiar with their ancestral culture than the Chinese-Indonesian group".

The criteria for distinguishing between Peranakan and Totok used by Tan and Gondomono are similar. Until around the 70s, these criteria could still be used to identify members of the two groups. The differences between the two are very clear, for example, cultural orientation, religion, language, work, clothing, accessories, and lifestyle. This is because the Peranakans maintain their status as much as possible by identifying themselves with local culture. However, in his article "Pelangi Cina in Indonesia", Gondomono (2002:5) says:

"Kaum Peranakan Cina ini, kebudayaannya tidak sepenuhnya berciri pribumi seperti kelompok etnik ibunya (Jawa, Sunda, Bali, Bugis, dll.) dan tidak juga sepenuhnya Cina (Hokkian, Teociu, Hinghua, dsb.)".

Translated by Google translation

"The Chinese Peranakans, culture is not completely indigenous like their mother's ethnic group (Javanese, Sundanese, Balinese, Bugis, etc.), and neither is completely Chinese (Hokkien, Teociu, Hinghua, etc.)".

Thus, it could be said that the Peranakans have a "half-half" culture, meaning half-Chinese and half-native. They cannot be said to be completely indigenous because they still have Chinese characteristics such as their names, they still follow the religion of China, and they still carry out the customs of their ancestors from mainland China, even though they are no longer pure. However, they are also not full-blooded Chinese anymore.

Because of this cultural assimilation and acculturation - although not completely - it is not surprising that they feel they are "higher" than the full-blooded people, as well as feeling that they understand and know Confucian ceremonial procedures better. In general, Peranakan feels more "cultured" than Totoks. "Cultured" in the sense that they have blended in and adopted local culture in Indonesia, but uphold the teachings of Confucius with all its religious procedures. As a result, marriages between Peranakans and Totoks are very rare due to differences in outlook on life and ways of life.

This difference is no longer very clear because of the large number of mixed marriages between Peranakan and Totok. Now most of the Totok children in Jakarta, Bandung, and other cities can only speak Indonesian. In several places such as Batam, Medan, Riau, Pontianak, and Singkawang, residents still use Hakka, Teociu, or Hokkien as their daily language. The identification of Totok-Peranakan as stated above must be updated. Many of them are oriented towards Western countries. This paper discusses the Peranakan with the above criteria, especially in the city of Palembang, South Sumatra.

Peranakan Palembang's life in this city has not been widely studied. Their existence for hundreds of years is known from the travel records of Zheng He 郑和 to Palembang in the 14th century to catch a Chinese robber named Chen Zuyi 陈祖义 who fled to Palembang.

For hundreds of years, it is believed that marriages between native people and immigrants from China have occurred. Apart from that, there is also a cultural crossover in

the fields of language, clothing, make-up, culinary arts, buildings, and even religious ceremonies.

This paper presents cultural acculturation in the culinary delights, specifically to commemorate the death day of ancestral spirits (*coki/cuki*). Serving food in the form of culinary delights that originate from China, but culinary delights from local places in Nusantara are also not prohibited. The influence of Indonesian culinary delights can be seen in the use of spices, whether dishes use pork or not. The use of Indonesian cakes is not prohibited, nor is fruit.

It is important to know that the food served for the ancestor spirits differs from the days when they died. The offerings at the prayer ceremony are much simpler. Nowadays some people serve very simplified culinary delights as a result of vegetarianism. In the past, dishes for the ancestors all used meat. If at the spirits prayer day, the family in question has more money, the side dishes served will be more "luxurious". If not, the offerings are simpler.

Basic Philosophy of Ancestors' Spirits Prayer Ceremony

When someone is still alive, what is celebrated is his/her birthday. After he died, what was commemorated was his/her death day or *coki/cuki* 祖祭. Due to the lack of knowledge about the Chinese New Year calendar among the Peranakan, the commemoration is carried out on the date of death according to the Gregorian calendar. The ritual ceremony is carried out in a house that has a *meja abu* (ash table) from the ancestor whose death day will be commemorated. On the *meja abu* was placed ancestral tablets. They believe the spirits of the dead ancestors are inside the tablet. This ancestral tablet in the Hokkien language in Palembang is known as *bokcu* 木主. The ceremony may also be carried out in a house that does not have a table for ancestral ashes due to the distance or someone wanting to hold the ritual ceremony themselves.

Worship and respect for ancestral spirits have been going on for thousands of years. Jia (2011:96) in his article 论汉代的祖先崇拜 said:

"祖先崇拜起原于鬼魂信仰，它是由灵魂观念与图腾及生殖崇拜交合而成的一种信仰形式".

Translated by Google translation:

"Ancestor worship originated from ghost belief. It is a belief formed by the intersection of the soul concept, totem, and reproductive worship".

This prayer or spirits worship originates from human belief in spirits or souls since the Han dynasty. This belief is called *Shenism*. The term *shenism* comes from *shen* 神 which means 'spirit'; 'deity'; and 'immortal' (Gondomono, 1996, 2013). *Shen* denotes the spirit of a deceased person. Except for ancestors, they can be gods such as Kuankong 关公, Confucius 孔子, Kwan Im (观音), etc.

Normally, a deceased person's spirits are taken care of by his/her family, but many are not taken care of, and then they become evil spirits which are commonly called demons. The ancestral spirits cared for by the family are placed in ancestral tablets (*bokcu*) placed on the ash table shown below.



Figure 1. The ancestral ashes table holds the ancestral tablets of Mr. Oen Tjong Pin's family (Hakim 2020:10)

There are six ancestral tablets (*boku*) on the table. Inside each tablet is a piece of brief information about the deceased, such as date of birth and death, his/her father and mother's name, the order of children in the family, gender, etc. All of the information was curved in Han characters. Because most of the Peranakan do not speak Hokkien and write Han characters anymore, they use the deceased photo to substitute ancestral tablet without information about the deceased person.

The worship of spirits ceremony is held every year and has been passed down from generation to generation. If in a house there are five ancestor tablets, then there are five prayer ceremonies commemorating the day of death in a year. The number of spirits worshiped will increase when other family members die, and one tablet is made for him/her. This also means that the number of worship ceremonies increases. During the prayer ceremony for a certain spirit, other spirits whose tablets or photos are on the ash table, are also invited to the banquet.

In addition to worshipping ancestors' spirits' death days, there are other ritual ceremonies such as Chinese New Year, and other ceremonies. In Indonesia, Chinese descendants name it Imlek or Tahun Baru 过年. Imlek is closed by Capgomeh prayer 元宵 on the fifteenth day. Then, there is Cengbeng prayer 清明, Pekcun prayer 端午, Open the Gates of Hell or Buka Lawang Setan in Palembang Malay 中元, Moon Cake prayer 中秋, and Tangce or Makan Onde prayer or Onde-onde Eating prayer 冬至 as a sign of entering winter. For those who believe in Confucianism and Shenism, the important idea is to worship ancestral spirits, that's why I use the word "prayer" instead of "festival" as we find in modern Chinese Dictionaries and books.

This worship of ancestors or *Shen*, I can say, is strengthened by the teaching of Confucius about filial piety. In his conversation with his disciple Zeng Zi 曾子, taken from the book of Xiao Jing 孝经, Confucius says that devotion is the basis of morals, it is also the starting point of enlightenment. The human body, even a hair or a piece of skin is all inherited from one's parents. It is proper for a child to understand the feelings of his parents' love for him by taking care of himself and not destroying it. Thus, parental love is the beginning of devotion or *xiao* 孝, or *bakti* in Bahasa Indonesia (Theobald, 2010, cited by Sutami and Assa

(2022:147)). A *u hao* 有孝 child or filial son devotes his life to his parents.

In chapter 1:6 of the book of Xiao Jing, there are three stages of devotion or *xiao* 孝 of a person (Sutami and Assa, 2022:147-148).

(1) The initial stage

At a young age, devotion is manifested in caring for and serving parents and making them happy.

(2) The second stage

It is at the time of middle age. Devotion is intended to serve the community because of one's position as an official or public servant.

(3) The third stage

It is at the age of service. It is interpreted as being oneself with a strong personality

Chapter 10:1 from Xiao Jing mentions how a child should treat his parents. It means parental love is the beginning of devotion.

(1) A child must respect his parents while they are still alive.

(2) A child should serve his parents with pleasure.

(3) A child is obliged to take care of his parents when they are sick.

(4) A child feels sad when a parent dies.

(5) A child with respect and sincerity performs prayers

Chapters 1:6 and 10:1 contain Confucius' instructions on how a child should behave towards his parents. In the Book Zhong Yong 中庸 'The Doctrine of the Mean' verse 19, Confucius says that there exist five relationships:

(1) Superior and subordinate

(2) Father and son

(3) Husband and wife

(4) Brother and sister

(5) Friend and friend

Three of the five relations relate to family. It means that the harmonious relationship among family members plays the main role before one enters the community. This is one reason why the worship of a deceased person is very important in Chinese families until now. From the five relationships, the concept of filial piety also relates to the relationship between brother and sister or can be said from a younger generation to an older generation. It is not surprising that on the ashes table, there are grandparents' tablets, grandparents' brothers or sisters, uncles, or other family members whose tablets were not taken care of after they died (see Figure 1).

Side Dishes for Ancestors' Spirits Prayer Ceremony

Serving food, cakes, pastries, snacks, and fruits are the important things in each ceremony such as the Chinese New Year, *Cengbeng*, *Pekcun*, *Open the Gates of Hell (Buka Lawang Setan)* prayer ceremony. It means the concept of *Shen* has been very important for Chinese society from the past until now. When the prayer ceremony is over, family members eat the food together. The commemoration of the day of ancestors' death is not called a festival, it is a prayer ceremony. The side dishes served are smaller in number and simple, not as luxurious as Chinese New Year. People do not forget to serve the spirits' favorite food.

The cuisine served in every region in Indonesia has something in common which is "obligatory", namely side dishes with pork as the basic ingredient. Why pork? Pigs are pets that can help improve a family's economy. They raise pigs to sell and eat, therefore pork is one of the basic ingredients for the dishes. Apart from pork, chicken is an obligatory raw material. Cow meat cannot be offered at all, even though they consume it every day because

cows help them plow the rice fields, so may not be killed. Goat meat is not commonly to be consumed, so it is not offered. Fish is only served at a certain ceremony or when someone dies.

Culinary offerings consist of rice, side dishes, pastries, fruits, and beverages. In picture (2) below there are three kinds of bowls and a duck spoon. From left to right, the smallest bowl is for tea and wine, the big one is for rice, and the bigger one is for side dish. Pastry and fruits are put on small and big plates. Because this is a ceremony—not for living people, but for spirits—people use good cutlery. Rich families use expensive ceramic, while normal families use the average price of ceramic or plastic.



Figure 2. From left to right: tea and wine bowl, rice bowl, soup bowl, duck spoon
(private collection of Hermina Sutami)

Kinds of Side Dishes, Pastries, Fruits, Snacks

As mentioned above, this prayer ceremony is still conducted in the city of Palembang and its surroundings by the Peranakan who still adhere to the teachings of Confucianism and Shenism. The important thing to remember is all of the food may not be tasted or eaten first, they must be "clean" and fresh, just like entertaining guests. The favorite food of the spirit being worshiped is also served whenever possible. By pleasing their ancestors, they hope that their ancestors will give them lots of good fortune, good health, and a happy life.

Side Dishes

On the ash table, there are at least 6 kinds of side dishes. Each side dish is placed in the largest bowl (see Figure 2). On top of the food is placed a small piece of celery leaves. The rice served must be rice specially cooked for prayer purposes. Usually, the rice that is cooked is white.

The sum of side dishes is at least six kinds. It has been stated above that the obligatory raw materials are *caisim/pakcoi* vegetables, pork, and chicken. Several types of side dishes use spices found in the Nusantara, for example, coriander, pepper, turmeric, lemongrass, bay leaves, ginger root, galangal, and so on. I will mention each of these side dishes:

(1) Sayur Tuang (*poured vegetables*)

Sayur tuang is a plain soup containing 6-8 *caisim* vegetables, poured with boiling water without seasoning. This soup is intended for spirits who were vegan while they were still alive.

(2) Babi Hong (红烧肉 *braised pork*)

In the city of Palembang, *babi hong* or *babi kecap* (pork with soy sauce) is a side dish that must be served. We can add chicken thighs and breasts inside. *Babi hong* is cooked with shallots, garlic, pepper, coriander, ginger, and soy sauce. The word *hong* 红 in Hokkien means 'red'. It is called "red" because it is cooked with

soy sauce. As we know, China does not have spices such as coriander and pepper. The addition of these two types of spices shows that the taste of Indonesian food has been accepted by the Peranakan tongue.

(3) Bakwan (肉丸 *meat ball*)

Bakwan is a soup containing pork meatballs. The pork meatballs are seasoned with shallots, garlic, pepper, and finely chopped celery leaves, then rolled into marbles and boiled. This *bakwan* soup is added with mouse-ear mushrooms (*jamur kuping tikus*) 木耳, tuberose flowers (*bunga sedap malam*), celery leaves, and spring onions. In the Imlek ceremony, *bakwan* soup can be made extravagant with the addition of *kembang telur* (*egg flower*)—a type of pork sausage stuffed with egg and chopped celery leaves. The sausage was cut into 3 cm lengths and then sliced into four parts at both ends. When boiled, the incision will open making it look like a flower. That's why this soup is called egg flower soup because the eggs are made in such a way that they resemble flowers.

(4) Opor Ayam (*chicken braised in coconut milk*)

Coconut milk dishes are also obligatory side dishes. This type of chicken side dish with coconut is called *opor ayam* (*chicken opor*). Another kind of chicken dish is *ayam asem-aseman* (sour chicken). *Ayam asem-aseman* (sour chicken) is a typical Peranakan Palembang side dish that is rich in spices. *Soto ayam* is not served because it is not Palembang food. The coconut milk dish above is full of herbs and spices as well as coconut milk that is not found in China.

(5) Bakmi Goreng (炒面 *fried noodle*)

This side dish came from China, Fujian, and Guandong provinces originally. Especially for serving the spirits, fried noodles do not use beef meatballs or beef meat, but rather shrimp, pork, or chicken meat.

(6) Aneka cah (*various cah dish*)

A way of cooking using a little oil is called *cah* 炸; there is *cah pete*, *cah nanas* (*pineapple*) cooked together with slices of pork or chicken meat and shrimp. As far as I know, *pete* does not exist in China. Besides the *cah*, you can serve other side dishes.

Snacks, Cake, and Pastries

Besides side dishes, there are also snacks, cakes, and pastries. There are certain Indonesian snacks which is called *kue basah*, such as *wajik*, *kue ku*. The basic ingredient for these two types of *kue basah* is glutinous rice. *Wajik* must be served because it is made from sticky glutinous rice. When a spirit eats *wajik*, the sticky rice sticks to the spirit's nails, causing his/her nails to fall off. It was the time that the spirits realized that he was dead. *Wajik* is served to remind spirits that their world is different from the world of the relatives who serve them food. He was invited to the mortal world just for that ceremony. After finishing eating, he had to return to his world.

Another snack, *kue ku* is a typical Chinese that resembles a turtle shell, in red color, and the taste inside is sweet smooth green beans. This *kue basah* symbolizes eternity in life in the afterlife. Others are *kue lapis* (layer cakes made from rice flour), *kue mangkok* (发糕, 发饅 or cupcakes), *bakpao* (包子), *lemper* (made from sticky rice wrapped in oval-shaped banana leaves, filled with spiced chicken), bread, *kue pisang* (made from cornstarch wrapped in four-square shape banana leaves, filled with a slice of banana), and other *jajanan pasar* (snacks that can be bought at the market).

Kue basah is a daily life snack. A long time ago, people ate cakes such as *bolu lapis* (layer cakes), marmer cakes, *lapis nanas* (pineapple layer cakes), or pastries such as *nastar* (pineapple small pastries), and other kinds of pastries only for a special occasion, such as Imlek. These rather luxurious cakes can be served during this prayer.

Fruits

The fruits served are Indonesian tropical fruits because a long time ago apples, grapes, and pears had not been imported into Indonesia. Thus, bananas, mangosteen, *duku*, *durian*, *rambutan* are served. *Duku* and *durian* are typical Palembang fruits. Nowadays imported fruit is also served. There are no specific rules about what kind of fruit must be served.

Cutlery

All the food is placed on the ash table. There are rules for placing dishes, duck spoons, chopsticks, tea and wine cups, soup bowls, rice bowls, pastries, snacks and cakes. Everything is arranged on the table the same as when entertaining guests, only in this ceremony the guests are not visible. Now the rules are not as strict as they used to be.

The ash table should be placed in the center of the house facing the main gate. In Figure (2) we see that the table consists of a higher part and a lower part. The higher part is narrower in size than the lower part. In this higher part, people place ancestors' tablets and/or photos and *hiolo* 香炉 to place incense. Each ancestor has his/her *hiolo*.

The lower part table is placed right after the higher part. All of the food and serving utensils are placed here. This low part is for placing dishes when there is a prayer ceremony. In Figure (2) the table is empty because no prayer ceremony.

As a ceremony, to serve all the things on the table has its rules, or I can say there is an etiquette for serving food. We put all the things on the lower part table. To make it look neat, do not place the dishes haphazardly. Now the rule is not very as strict as before. The important thing is food arrangement looks neat and orderly. The layout of the dishes is divided into three groups in a row position. The position of those three rows varies now.

Row one: Side dishes are placed on the top of the ash table close to the higher part table where photos, tablets, and *hiolo* are placed. Side dishes are placed in two rows if the ash table is not too wide. In the middle of the first row is the place for poured vegetables, on the left side and right side are *babi hong* and *bakwan*. *Opor ayam*, fried noodles, and *cah nanas* are in the second row.

Row two: Pastries, snacks, and cakes are placed after side dishes, lined up like side dishes in the above.

Row three: Fruits are placed in the last row. There is no specific order in placing the types of fruit. The fruit served must be partially peeled because the spirits do not have the tools to peel it.

Such food arrangements are understandable. People ask the spirits to have a meal first, then dessert, and the last one is fruits. Tableware like duck spoons, chopsticks, tea, and wine bowls, and rice bowls are placed side by side because they are utensils used when eating.

After all the utensils and offerings have been arranged on the ash table, the prayer ceremony begins, initiated by the head of the family or senior male family member. After that, the female family members prayed. The prayer ceremony lasts at least one hour,

usually two hours or more. For families who still adhere to tradition, the ceremony ends by asking the spirit whether the ceremony can end. There is a certain way to ask about this. After completing the prayer ceremony, family members eat the food together. Figures (3) and (4) below are spirit prayer ceremonies in a house that has no ash table.



Figure 3. Spirits prayer ceremony (A)
(private collection, Hermina Sutami)



Figure 4. Spirits prayer ceremony (B)
(private collection, Hermina Sutami)

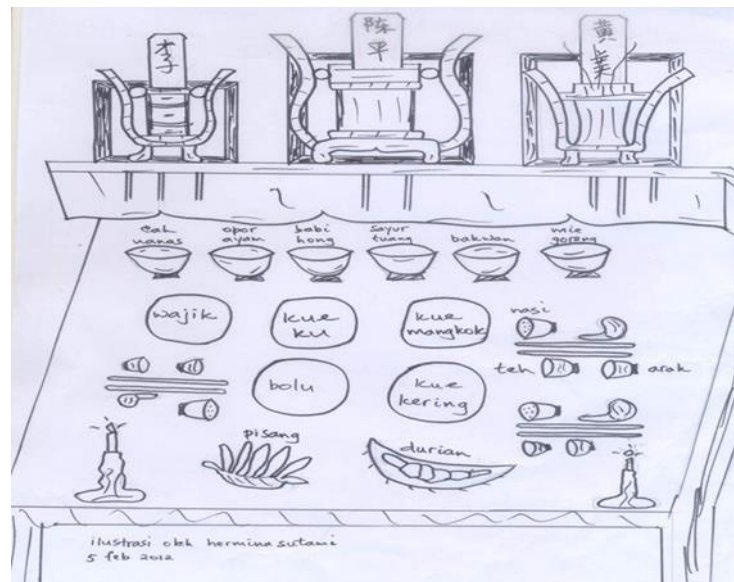


Figure 5. Illustration of ash table
(private collection, Hermina Sutami)

CONCLUSION

The presence of Chinese people in the archipelago who have absorbed Indonesian culture for hundreds of years seems to have penetrated quite deeply. This is reflected in spiritual things, such as offerings for ancestral spirits in spirit prayer ceremonies. Acculturation can be seen in culinary delights which show the influence of Indonesian cooking spices, even though the basic ingredients contain pork. There are also authentic Indonesian dishes such as opor ayam, gulai ayam, ayam asem-aseman as well as cakes and fruit such as banana, duku, manggis, and durian served to the spirits because they consumed all these foods during their lifetime. Everything served is food consumed by Peranakan Chinese in Indonesia.

The reality of the culinary field for spirits is proof of how deeply rooted Indonesian cultural acculturation is among the Peranakans. Spices are an ingredient that adds flavor to dishes originating from China such as babi hong and bakwan. The acceptance of Indonesian culinary delights as the culinary delights of the Peranakans does not only occur in mortal life but also in the afterlife. This fact is one of the characteristics of the Peranakans.

In the fields of philosophy of life and religion, there appears to be mutually beneficial cooperation between humans and spirits. There is a reciprocal relationship, living humans serve them special food and the spirits pray for humans' good lives in this world.

Acculturation in the culinary field goes both ways. This article explains the influence of Indonesian cuisine on Chinese cuisine. On the other hand, the entry of Chinese food to Nusantara was marked by the presence of bakso, (meatballs), mie (noodles), bihun (rice noodles), tahu (tofu), capcai (mix vegetables dish), puyonghai (scramble eggs with crabs), siomai (kind of dumplings), and so on which became our daily food now. Hopefully, this paper has contributed information about the culture of the Peranakan people, so that understanding about them in Indonesia becomes better.

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GLOSARIUM

No	Bahasa Indonesia	English
1	Hari Raya Imlek: hari raya yang dilakukan untuk menyambut musim semi di Tiongkok, sekaligus penanda dimulainya tahun baru pada penanggalan bulan (lunar).	Chinese New Year: a holiday held to welcome spring in China, as well as marking the start of the new year on the lunar calendar.
2	Hari Sembahyang Capgomeh: hari ke-15 setelah hari raya Imlek, sebagai tanda diakhirinya perayaan Imlek pada tahun tersebut.	Capgomeh Day: the 15th day after the Chinese New Year holiday, as a sign of the end of the Chinese New Year celebrations that year.
3	Hari Sembahyang Cengbeng: hari yang dikhusus untuk menyembahyangi leluhur yang sudah meninggal. Upacara sembahyang pertama-tama dilakukan di rumah, sehari sesudahnya dilakukan di kuburan dengan membawa sajian makanan dan minuman. Ini bukan hari raya, tetapi hari untuk berdoa dan membersihkan makam keluarga.	Cengbeng Prayer Day: a special day to worship deceased ancestors. The prayer ceremony is first carried out at home, then the day after it is carried out at the grave with offerings of food and drink. This is not a holiday, but a day for praying and cleaning family graves.
4	Hari Sembahyang Pekcun: disebut juga hari makan bacang. Pada umumnya kaum Peranakan tidak mengetahui makna perayaan yang memperingati hari kematian Chu Yuan ini. Yang dipersembahkan hanya bacang dan kue cang saja, tidak ada makanan lain.	Pekcun Prayer Day: also called the day of eating bacang. In general, the Peranakans do not know the meaning of the celebration that commemorates the death day of Chu Yuan's death. What is offered is only <i>bacang</i> and <i>kue cang</i> no other food.
5	Hari Sembahyang Buka Lawang Setan: hari raya dilakukan pada tanggal 15 bulan tujuh penanggalan bulan untuk memberi makan para setan di akhirat supaya tidak merebut makanan para leluhur.	Day of Prayer for Opening the Gates of Hell: the prayer is held on the 15th of the seventh month of the lunar calendar to feed the devils in the afterlife so that they do not steal the food of the ancestors.
6	Hari Sembahyang Kue Tiongcupia: hari raya makan kue pia atau kue bulan. Pada umumnya kaum Peranakan tidak mengetahui lagi makna sembahyang ini. Yang dipersembahkan hanya kue bulan saja.	Moon Cake Prayer Day: a prayer day of eating <i>kue pia</i> or moon cakes. In general, the Peranakan no longer knows the meaning of this special day. They offer mooncakes on the ash table.
7	Hari Sembahyang Onde: hari sembahyang khusus untuk menyambut musim dingin, sajiannya adalah onde-onde berkuah wedang jahe.	Onde Prayer Day: a special prayer day to welcome winter, the dish is <i>onde-onde</i> with ginger wedang sauce.
8	hiolo: tempat khusus untuk menancapkan garu atau dupa, terbuat dari timah, berbentuk khusus, berkaki dua dan bertangan dua.	hiolo: a special place for sticking rakes or incense, made of tin, special shape, two-legged and two-handed.
9	meja abu: meja khusus tempat meletakkan papan arwah atau bokcu dari orang yang sudah meninggal. Papan ini ditulis dengan menggunakan karakter Han. Keberadaan meja abu menjadi tanggung jawab pemilik rumah untuk	ash table: a special table on which to place the spirit tablet or <i>bokcu</i> of a deceased person. This tablet was written using Han characters. The presence of an ash table is the responsibility of the homeowner to worship it on certain days each year. A

	menyembahyanginya pada hari-hari tertentu setiap tahun. Di depan papan arwah diletakkan <i>hiolo</i> . <i>Hiolo</i> berisi abu dari <i>hio</i> atau dupa yang sudah terbakar. Perlengkapan lainnya adalah tempat lilin yang diletakkan di sisi kiri dan kanan bagian depan meja .	<i>hiolo</i> is placed in front of the tablet. <i>Hiolo</i> contains ashes from burned incense. Other equipment is candle holders which are placed on the left and right sides of the front of the table.
10	Sembahyang coki atau cuki: menyembahyangi arwah leluhur pada hari kematiannya.	Coki or cuki 祖祭 prayer: worshiping the spirits of ancestors on the day of their death.