

## KUDUS AND ITS SWEET SOYA SAUCES STORIES IN MEDIATING MULTICULTURALISM LEARNING

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### Abstract

*Multicultural reality of Indonesian society has encouraged many conflicts. Many people have tried to create a multicultural atmosphere. The scholars, politicians, and security forces attempted in their respective fields there are theoretical, ideal, and practical. This approach of simple ethnography research at Kudus reveals the unique role of these sweet soya sauces or ketchups. That is, it is not just being a condiment for flavoring the Kudus people dishes, but also already act as multicultural learning media. The good cooperation between the two ethnic groups, the Chinese as the owner of ketchup industries and their Javanese workers, clients, and customers have shown that these Ketchups has become one of the unifying elements that are commonly depicted always in a conflict; and the latest event clashes between Chinese and pribumi at Kudus was in 1984. Thus, by looking at the Ketchups roles, this research shown that the ketchup industries in Kudus have melted the tongue and heart of Kudus people (China-Native) taste in a delicious thickened of ketchup liquid that always served at home, food-stalls, hotels, and restaurants.*

**Keywords:** Sweet Soya Sauces , Ketchup, Media, Multiculturalism Learning, Kudus

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Culinary research as a window of understanding of multiculturalism and tolerance in a conflict resolution program is not yet done (Rozi, 2006; Hamim, 2007). Moreover, with regard to the handling of the case of majority-minority relations. One of the minority groups who often become the talk is the position of Peranakan citizenship always suspected and even treated as not from the citizens of Indonesia (Cookson, 2010). Prof. Rubin, professor of Arts from the University of Carnegie Mellon has conducted a simple experiment: how to make the American public to more closely know the culture of the countries in conflict, especially in conflict with the United States, through the restaurant project called Conflict Kitchen. The idea is to open the eyes and hearts of Americans to the culture of the community countries that is in conflict with their country through their culinary flavor  
(<http://prospect.org/article/culinary-resolution->

0). The experimental results show that the process of recognition that makes Americans who often come to the restaurant Prof Rubin began to grow more rational setalh several meals at restaurantnya. This is reminiscent of what Donna Gabaccia (1998) invites us to consider: If we are what we eat, who are we?

In Indonesia, in the case of latent conflict Peranakan-native relations (see Habib, 2004; Masyhuri & Asy'ari, 2006; Hamim, 2007; Wibisono, 2012), culinary cultural approach is rarely raised explicitly, probably never even seriously, as a method of entrance to be a medium of learning about multikulturalisme and tolerance (Frankl, 2012). Peranakan culinary repertoire is already a lot written in the form of catalogs, recipe books, the subject of conversation in seminars and discussions culinary (Bromokusumo, 2013; Marahimin, 2011). Already there are also academics who spoke about the role of Peranakan and Indonesia-ness, but almost no one uses it as a window of multiculturalism learning action within the

frame of Good Governance and Food Security issues. On the Commodity Research Grants Guide of UB 2013, for example, raised the issue, "Menuju Desa Mandiri Pangan Berkelanjutan dan Desa Sehat Mandiri Energi 2025." This example focuses only on the issue of Food Security technical aspects of technology and the economic orientation on the side of the agro-industry, while the issue of good governance, impressed only emphasizes on the evaluation aspects of administration and government bureaucracy.

This study is intended to look anthropologically aspects of Food Security and Good Governance is behind the presence of a bottle of ketchup through culinary and social studies (Anthropology of Food and Society Studies). With this research, all parties, especially the government as captain of development and its society as development partners are encouraged to be aware of and familiar with the values that lie behind various phenomena typical of the region. Development programs are effective are the programs that pay attention to the values that appear in the activities of daily life. In this way, directly or indirectly, the government and the public alike in favor and support the Food Security program. Similarly, the development of which depends on the needs and potential of the region to further support the application of the principle of good governance in the area (Ben Fine, 1996).

## **2. METHOD**

Ethnographic study of social and culture of everyday life of Kudus local soy sauce, give qualitative data to determine the peranakan-native ethnic relations in this Santri Town. Supported by quantitative data soy industry and food stalls in the city, qualitative primary data will be used for teaching multiculturalism and tolerance in the Kudus community. This study tried to approach Kudus culinary cultural artifacts through the lens of anthropologist, include visual data, which is trying to uncover the dynamics of life, the company soy sauce, and agencies the family, who live in the midst of political and social cultural wave of Indonesia. Kudus culinary repertoire will be seen on how soy sauce is present and coloring the nation's journey to create harmony of cultural flavors. Culinary anthropology try to see how a culinary artifacts are present and represent the public

relations in its habitus. By being aware of the political representation of soy sauce that has become part of the bodily and the necessities of this nation life, is expected to further bridge the peranakan and native relationship who is not merely artificial and solely in the perspective of state-political centric.

Culinary anthropological research is classified in action research using depth interviews and field observations on each investigated ketchup company's network. Sources of research conducted through literature study to get an overview of the theoretical soy sauce position in society, interviews with relevant bureaucrats, company owners, distributors, the vendors food stalls, consumers, and society. Action research (Mudjiman, 1990) which is intended to involve community groups, in this case would involve high school children from different ethnic and religious groups to engage as young researchers and provide research training and feature writing about the culinary repertoire of Kudus. Thus, they will learn to directly understand the significance behind a bottle of soy sauce for the sake of living together more harmoniously. Selection of the younger generation to engage in action research is intended to instill in the younger generation to be concerned with the cultural heritage of their region, as well as to broaden their multiculturalism view.

This study took place in Kudus, Central Java as an initial starting point serial research on soy sauce in the cities of the North Coast of Java, because according to the plan, the same thing would replicated in other cities. This research took place in Kudus because of written data availability is relatively more comprehensive especially about peranakan-native relations as well as the socio-economic and political culture that still keep the embers of SARA because of significant economic imbalances (Masyhuri & Asy'ari, 2006).

The data collection is done in two ways, namely the collection of primary data and secondary data collection. Primary data were collected in three ways. First, by way of participation or direct observation to determine the distribution of soy sauce since coming out of the factory, its circulation in the agent or distributor, to how the users, both in the household, the food vendors at the food stalls, to the guests in the hotel and restaurant treats and consume this soy sauce. Second, through in-

depth interviews with informants users and producers to get an overview and narratives about everyday social life and culture of these sweet ketchup. Third, through Focus Group Discussions (FGD) together with the stakeholders, namely the parties engaged in the field of tourism, both public and private and community representatives as a user or soy sauce lovers. Secondary data is done through the documentation and study of references related to this research and publication data statistics and monographs on this Kudus' soy sauce industry. Data was analyzed using qualitative perspective to give detailed and clear picture. Narrative descriptions contain the ethnography of Kudus public life in understanding cultural relations with their local culinary and soy sauce. This method is inspired by Appadurai notes on the Social Life of Things (1986), in this case the research look at the social life of a bottle of ketchup or soy sauce.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1. Ketchup, Government, and Social Economics

According to data from the Department of Industry and Trade, in the course of its history, Kudus has about 20 local brands of soy sauce products. However, in the course of time and across a variety of soy sauce production competition, there were among the soy sauce factories that continue to survive until now, but some are no longer in operation. Some of soy sauce factory which is still in operation today are THG, YHG, AHG, Baboons, KAJ, and Enggal. Soy sauce factory which is no longer operational, for example BHG soy sauce and some other soy sauce factory. There is also a soy sauce factory that only produce if there are pre-orders, such as Kecap Manggis mill.

Department of Industry and Trade of Kudus Regency recognizes that the development of local soy sauce in Kudus area is still not done systematically by local authorities. There is no concentration of soy sauce business as a trading center. It is caused by the pattern of development of soy sauce production in Kudus Regency which is still traditional, which is carried from generation to generation by the ethnic Chinese community groups.

However, one positive thing to be recognized is that in the development of soy

sauce production in Kudus, many indigenous people are involved as suppliers of materials, workers, distributors, sellers, and of course users. Until now, admittedly has many indigenous people who absorbed as workers in factories ketchup. It is recognized by the government and indigenous people as a positive thing that really helps the local community. In short, the presence of factories soy sauce in Kudus Regency is strongly supported by the policies of industrial licenses and marketing.

#### 3.2. Stories Ketchup Peranakan: Overview of Relations with Natives

As a general overview, the following is displayed historical development of THG and Babon sweet soy sauce as a representation companies soy sauce in Kudus City. Sweet Soy Sauce THG was founded approximately 50 years ago in the vicinity of Jalan Pemuda by a Peranakan Chinese of Fu Jien named Tan Hwie Gong. According Lany, third generation and also the owner of THG soy sauce today, Tan Hwie Gong as THG's sweet soy sauce founder has known and processing soy sauce since he was in the mainland Chinese. When migrated to Java, Tan Hwi Gong or also known by his Javanese name Kiswanto tried to develop the production of soy sauce in Kudus. He is married to a Javanese named Sukinah and co-founded the family business THG soy sauce.

At the beginning of production, Tan Hwie Gong producing salty soy sauce as it is known in the ethnic Chinese community. Based on the exploration of taste, Tan Hwie Gong then modify this salty taste by adding brown sugar mixture into its. Since then, sweet soy sauce THG known in Kudus and give flavor to many Kudus unique dishes. Along the way, THG as a 'home industry' also experienced ups and downs, just like business in general. However, according to Lany, for family-based management, the low tides were not dampening the intention to continue to develop the soy sauce business. In the understanding of researchers, the work ethic and the spirit of self-reliance as a figure of migrants, appear to be part of the success of this family business to this day. However, the most alarming conditions in the course of this THG ketchup, occurred in 1965. THG had to stop production for 1 year, because of the political problems that occurred in Indonesia at the time, namely the September 30 Movement. That year, Kudus experienced tense circumstances,

especially felt most of the *peranakan*. Tan Hwie Gong family was one of the *peranakan* families who experienced the fear of ethnic sentiment at the time. In March 1966, THG back into production.

In 1979, when THG wants to apply for extension of patent rights, there was a change in the label of THG packaging based on government 'order'. Packaging modified slightly by removing the word of Chinese characters on the left and right of the label, of which in the Indonesian language meant as "sweet" and "Tasty". In 1980 there was an increase of production significantly and there is additional manpower. Until this research, the number of workers in THG amounted to 15 people, with details 5 men and 10 women with a production capacity of 1000 bottles per day. In 1992, the production of THG, moving from Jalan Pemuda to Jalan Bhakti and further since 2008 moved again to the Kudus South Ring Road. About 10 years ago there was a diversification of products made to respond to market demand and facilitate packaging, ie by producing plastic sachet THG. Interestingly enough production system of THG mills is relatively still manual and conventional. The processing of ketchup from start to packaging carried out without any modern equipment. According to Roni, niece of Lany, who also co-manages the family business, although it does not use modern dosing system, but the system has been used for generations have created 'a batch system' that will preserve the quality of THG ketchup production .

Roni added, Ketchup THG did not even have a counter or a special marketing in other areas other than the factory in the South Ring Road. The buyers who want to get ketchup THG directly buy into the market or directly buy into factory. With the amount of production that is not too many, Rony said that the production ketchup THG every day almost nothing was left. All production was sold out once hit the market. It is the policy of ketchup THG to maintain the quality of an all-new production.

Sweet soy sauce Babon was established in 1974 at Jalan Dr. Ramelan, Kudus by Mr. Djuari (*Peranakan*). Currently, Ketchup Babon managed by the second generation on behalf of Mr. Budi. Babon soy sauce itself stems from a family factories of Cap Lele ketchup of Pati around the late 1930s. In 1990 a Babon Ketchup Factory production moved to the South Ring Road. Diversification Babon packing in the form

of plastic sachet and table ketchup, carried out by Babon since 1995. Regional distribution or marketing of products Babon more are in the outskirts of Kudus to Demak and Jepara. This is done because the central area of Kudus, THG ketchup is more socialized and popular.

At the time of this research, the production process has been using modern equipment. Ketchup processing to packaging has been carried out with mechanical equipment. Employee owned numbered 30 people with the details of 21 women and 9 men. With the number of employees approximately 30 people, Ketchup Babon can produce 2 to 3 tons per day of soy sauce. Judging from the use of more modern equipment and mechanistic, Ketchup Babon is more likely to bring the quality of Ketchup are maintained from production to production.

### **3.3. Ketchup Life at Kudus Homes and Culinary stalls**

In homes, shops, stores, hotels, and lodges in Kudus, soy sauce has become an icon of the Kudus citizen pride. At home, hotel, inn, and some stalls, the owner is usually poured some of the contents of this soy sauce bottle into a plastic container vinegar bottles, which serves to facilitate the presentation at the dinner table. The real ketchup bottle, existing brand names, stored in the kitchen because it is not too ethical to bring a bottle of ketchup before the guests, perhaps because of the weight. But for Kudus culinary hawkers, the more often they do is display openly, what Ketchup they used (usually THG), on the shelves of their food stalls. This action seemed to tell that their ketchup is really a choice, and thus they also want to say that their culinary flavor, no less intense with other culinary of other stalls. In Taman Bojana, a 'hot spot' Kudus culinary, the scenery is very clear. Food vendors showing off their favorite ketchup as a guarantor media of the guests' taste and appetite.

Taman Bojana in the area of Kudus City Square is a popular place to eat, a sort of food court. Where ketchup is present to give a flavor of the dish that served for the culinary connoisseur who stopped by at the Taman Bojana stalls. Sightings of local ketchup bottles, such as THG, which dominate the shelves and tables of their stalls, compared with a national brand ketchup, declared that the Kudus peddlers can not be separated from this local ketchup condiments. The owners of stalls in this Bojana,

as well as in the markets claimed that they used THG ketchup for a long time. In fact, we are told that this THG ketchup, in the period leading up to religious festivals holidays and the new year is usually difficult to obtain, because THG ketchup has become a commodity souvenirs, besides the infamous Jenang Kudus products. This is because the increased demand on that special days, so now the ketchup producers have learned to stocking their production in the weeks before the holidays and feast.

Kudus never seems to be devoid of the food vendors from morning till dawn, thus it can be regarded as a culinary city. The hustle of Kudus culinary crowds is no difference between morning and evening. When we headed toward the famous Menara Kudus site in maghrib time along the street the sellers of nasi dan lontong tahu are waiting their customers. Contrary to the east headed to Pasar Kliwon in the evening the same scene can be seen how diverse the food vendors are. There is soto ayam, soto kerbo, satay kerbo, nasi and lontong tahu, chinese food, bakso etc. are ready to welcome those who want to spoil their tongue and stomach. Most Kudus specialties, soto kerbo and soto ayam genre, which is open in the morning then late morning usually is up, sold out. The view of this kind can be found on the vendors of Soto Karjin, Soto Sopyonono Johar, and Karso-Karsi.

In these food stalls, ketchup complements mandatory, satisfied faces and a full stomach as incomplete if a bowl or plate they had not poured a spoonful of ketchup or even a few spoonfuls of this sweet condensed. Chat with friends, family, and even with fellow sellers and buyers across ethnicity, especially Chinese and Javanese are a common sight at food stalls. Kudus peoples even has a unique 'way' to find out where does delicious food stalls and does not based on the size of the little amount of ethnic Chinese who eat at the stalls (interview with parking man of Soto Karjin). Sate Kerbo Pak Sunar in GOR Kudus, Soto Kerbo Sopyonono Johar, Nasi Tahu Pak Raji Museum Kretek, Nasi Goreng MIRASA Bojana, Soto Pak Rame, Soto Pak dan Bu Ramidjan, Nasi Pindang Pak Solichan, Sop dan Sate Kerbo Menara Kudus give the same testimony of the importance of the Kudus typical local ketchup and peranakans as a marker for a tasty and best-selling stalls.

When asked about the whereabouts of Bango ketchup, as one of a national brand competitor's ketchup, Kudus local ketchup

lovers have insisted that they remain local ketchup fanatic users. "Mboten ta mas ... kecape yo isih THG, mung wadahe wae sing Bango ketchup ..." said Min Jastro satay seller, she is smiling and laughing a little. Researches asked this in curious about the present of the front banner of their stall and plastic bottle ketchup with Bango brand in the table. Testimony of Sate Jastro can represent how fanatical of Kudus people with their local condiments, the soy sauces produced by their peranakan brothers.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4.1. Conclusion

Based on the description of the above results, some conclusions can be drawn as follows; First, the dynamics of socio-economic life of the Kudus people are generally quite varied. Based on field data, the majority of the population worked in industry and trade. It illustrates that the people of Kudus pretty drape their economic life in the industrial sector and the trading business. One of the industrial sector is quite well known and became an icon of the Kudus City is the amount of soy sauce industry. It is, in our search results in the field, is very influential and gives color to the dynamics of the social, political, and economic community of this Santri Town. In the field of political and social life, the presence of ketchup industry has contributed a thaw in relations between the native and non native. The majority of owners of ketchup industri are peranakan tionghoa and it absorbed many native workers. And in this work relations, social political life of Kudus people unwittingly melted and dissolved in the relationship of their working procedures. The pattern of this relationship is supported by strong eastern culture that make the relations between the owner of the company with the workers gradually developed into a familial relationship, which involves a strong emotional bond. In a further deepening of this study revealed the influence of this relationship pattern that was able to absorb some of the primordial sentiment movement that occurred some time ago.

Second, the pattern of a sympathetic relationship between ketchup entrepreneur with Kudus people not just stop at the employer relationship with the workers, but also involve consumers and traders in the markets. With

traditional marketing pattern, the production of a ketchup factory can be directly related to the market traders. It is in many ways gives more benefits to small traders because it does not pass through convoluted modern trade chains to go through big merchants, small traders prior to the retail merchants in the stalls and ultimately to consumers. This trade pattern is even very possible the manufacturer directly associated with their loyal customers. It is, in many ways a model of a distinctive emotional bond that can build kinship sentiment across race, religion, or class.

Third, ketchup is a food seasoning that is not only used during the cooking process, but also a companion dish ready to eat at the top of the dish. Ketchup is not only served exclusively in homes, but also served freely in public spaces ranging from food stalls on the roadside up to classy restaurants. In the center of food court alike of Taman Bojana, in a lower class food stall or upper-class restaurant, we can see how much ketchup is present served to be eaten by anyone of class, religion, and social class whatsoever. Customers who do not know each other, but sit at the table, unwittingly became one in a dish along with the one and the same bottle of ketchup. The customer may not speak to each other because they do not know each other, but in a ketchup bottle, they are united in flavor. Because ketchup, customers in the culinary center can be forced to talk to each other even though limited by saying: "tolong kecapnya, mas". That is, hit points of this study is to unravel the role of ketchup as a multicultural learning media is becoming the very thing needed by Indonesia at this time. Fourth, the development multikultur, thus do not always have to begin with official and academic discussions, but it can also start with the simple things in everyday life. Ketchup we eat turned out treasure extraordinary humanity's educational value.

#### **4.2. Recommendations**

Based on the points on the conclusion, some suggestions are given for the sake of preservation of industrial soy sauce in Kudus along with a few other things as a consequence the production of soy sauce. First, be aware of the strategic role of soy sauce in the cultural development of multiculturalism in Indonesia in general and in particular in the Kudus, Kudus District Government is expected to create policies that support the production and

distribution of soy sauce in Kudus region in particular. Such measures are considered important because it turns out the effect is not only for the conservation of soy sauce production process, but also has an influence on the dynamics of social, political, and economic aid community life (Curtin & Heldke, 1992).

Secondly, for the people of Kudus, work in factories that soy is expected to participate actively creating and maintaining a situation conducive working well with fellow workers and business owners. This is important not only for the sake of the continuity of the company soy sauce, but most of all for the sake of survival and the fate of their own lives. Relations between workers with company owners and also have a very large contribution related to the stability of life in the context of national life. Thus, it is expected that with this research, the workers aware of the functions and roles that very large and strategic. Needs to be embedded within business owners and workers that no matter what happens in their relationships at the same time is an event that *menyngkutkan* lives of many people. Their relationship is a miniature system of national and state that it is highly pluralistic. A harmonious relationship reflects the harmonious life of the nation as well. The breakdown of the relationship between them is the mirror of the nation. Recognizing the importance of these relationships, both business owners and workers, it is advisable to build a life and the working relationship between them is getting better from day to day.

Thirdly, another important role in soy sauce business relationships is played also by wholesale and retail traders in the marketplace and in the stalls and culinary center that directly deal with consumers directly. Therefore, the great expectations to the creation of an atmosphere to the good and conducive live also expected to come from these traders. Conduct of business they had built for his business interests not expected to interfere and impose strategic role of this soy sauce. Instead, they are expected to spearhead and promote the delicious soy sauce hidden very strategic role for the life of the nation and the state.

Fourth, for the culinary connoisseur with this study are expected to gradually realize the function ketchup as a unifying himself with another fellow culinary connoisseurs and vendors are in one room 'culinary' with him. It is expected the culinary connoisseur aware of the

need to know each other among connoisseurs of soy sauce. Ketchup as the media is already available, just need the courage to open the door of communication to be able to know and understand others. Awakening consciousness to know each other through the media of culinary such as soy sauce is the door to the establishment of multi-cultural understanding as a demand that can not be avoided in life in Indonesia.

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