

BAMBOO RICE: FOOD CULTURAL HERITAGE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

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ABSTRACT

The food cultural heritage in Southeast Asia countries related to rice culture including bamboo rice cooking. The objectives of this research are to find out the rudimentary knowledge of bamboo rice in these countries and how it was developed in each country. This is documentary research in the qualitative analysis. The data were collected from research articles, books, websites, and social media. The finding was shown that in the past time, people attempted cooking the rice inside the bamboo tube for a few reasons; travelling, long day work, and celebration. In the present, it was developed to be commercially food. In the mainland countries, Vietnam and Thailand have mixed new ingredients while Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia have maintained the traditional process. Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia have adapted the bamboo to be Halaj food as they have Muslim and develop it to be food business and street food. Therefore, it is not only being the traditional food this region but it also shows how the people remain their culture food in the modern society among coming of international food culture.

KEYWORDS: Food culture, Bamboo rice, Local food, food development

1. INTRODUCTION

Southeast Asia is primarily agricultural area. Rice being dominant and preferred cereal crop, is used for making noodles, rice flour, and rice wine (Esterik2008). The development of wet-rice, or irrigated rice cultivation systems in Southeast Asia, led to the continual development of large-scale civilizations, societies, and hierarchies of nobles, commoners, and dependents (Roman & Russell,2009). It has been adapted to be various cooking including bamboo rice. It made from sticky rice being local food in Southeast Asian countries. The bamboo rice has named in different countries; Paung Din in Myanmar, Kralan in Cambodia, Khao Lam in Thailand and Laos, Com Lam in Vietnam, and Lemang in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia. The bamboo rice, therefore, is co-cultural food of them. In the present time, local food is not only the cultural value but it also becomes a central identity marker and relationships from family, to community, to ethnic groups or nationality, changing through time and place. The more recent trend towards food heritage reveals the dynamic role of history in understanding culture, as well as the marketization of culinary traditions (Buataud,2016). The way of bamboo rice cooking discloses the local development way as well.

As the rice is basically main item of Southeast Asia meal, it has used for cooking variously kind of desserts. The bamboo rice in the past time was not be the dessert one as same as in the present time

but it was a cooking process. This article will be reviewed the state of bamboo rice in Southeast Asian Countries and the link between the bamboo rice and its people and society.

2. METHODOLOGY

This qualitative research paper is a documentary research in food co-cultural heritage in Southeast ASEAN countries; Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia. The objectives are to review a state of knowledge of Bamboo rice cooking and to display its development in a country. The data were collected from research articles, books, websites, and social media in 2020. The outsider observation was in the Northeastern Thai where the famous Bamboo rice representing. The finding will be present in terms of the present state and how it was related to it society.

3. FINDING

3.1 Bamboo rice in Southeast ASEAN Countries

Bamboo is a grass species and growing in Asian and South America. Wong (2004) reveals that many Chinese, Japanese, Indians and the peoples of Southeast Asia and South America, bamboos are intricately linked to both culture and even survival, since ancient times. Although bamboo's role in daily life is diminishing, it plays an important role in the preservation of the local cultural food in ASEAN countries. One common food known having to use the bamboo is bamboo rice. So, bamboo still has been an important ingredient one. The people in Southeast Asia have cooked it by burning as well as in the past time. Talapphan (2018) showed the Bamboo rice ceremony arranged in eastern region of Thailand as the figure 1 below;



Fig.1: The Bamboo rice burning ceremony in Thailand

Bamboo rice was cooked by put the sticky rice and some ingredients; coconut, bean, sugar, salt or other local ingredients of each country mixed into Bamboo. Banana leaves used to close on top of the bamboo rice before burning around 1-2 hours. The ceremony in figure above, the villagers have maintained their traditional cooking of bamboo rice by arranging annual ceremony in the big Buddha

day 'Makha Bucha' that the people living near this area have to participate. This ceremony, therefore, is a strategy to preserve cooking process of ancient time. This ceremony, moreover, disclose the relation between bamboo rice and people and its society.

3.2 Development of bamboo rice in a country

The travelling across the countries in Southeast Asian mainland in the past time was easier than the present since there were not governed by the state. This lead the knowledge and cultures have been exchanged and absorbed from each other including food and cooking cultures. The bamboo sticky rice or bamboo rice is food one having shared in this region. It was shown in the preparing and cooking process of each country similarly as well as how to pick out type of bamboo and how long to burn it.

There are few different points of each country such a size or bamboo length and some ingredients mixed with rice in a country. Myanmar and Lao use slim and long bamboo than Thailand and Vietnam while Vietnam and Thailand have mixed various ingredients than both countries; such as red or black bean, sesame, coconut milk, sugar, fruits, and herbs for customers have much more choice to buying as the figure 2 below;



Fig. 2 the variously ingredients in Thailand

(Thailand tourism organization, Northern Thai)

Fig. 3 the different ingredients in Vietnam

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nz_KhxWdBCI)

Seemingly, the bamboo rice was developed to the commercial local product by government and tourism sector supporting well in Vietnam and Thailand. There are many researches (Rujipasornpong,2007; Jesadachaiyut,2010; Tanyong,2013; Chaiyot2016; Wichakit,2019) reveal achieves of bamboo rice product in local areas of Thailand. The bamboo rice, however, it has been maintained the cooking process by burning the bamboo. In peninsular countries; Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia, it has adapted to be street food or sweet snack. As these countries have shared the Muslim food cultural, their ingredients are similar to other Muslim food. The content creators in YouTube show the different ways to cook bamboo and it was cooked by steaming to make it is easier selling in the market places. In Malaysia the people will put the banana leave into bamboo before put the rice and some ingredients so the bamboo rice was called another name ‘banana leaves rice’ as the figure 5 below.



Fig.5: Food order by Food Panda Company in Malaysia and www.halal.com.my

The figure 5 above was shown that the bamboo rice is popular food in Malaysia and it has become the snack food that it is added in menu by food company or restaurant particularly Halaj food. People can order bamboo rice whenever they prefer to have it that is how the bam boo rice is able to stand as a food in modern culture of the Southeast Asian countries.

3. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The interconnected area countries affect to expedient travelling to each other. Southeast Asian people are similar in their ways of life and shared many cultures, including food culture. Bamboo rice is one shared. It is easy to cook having rice being main ingredient and bamboo getting from natural material.

The rice consumption way of life as a staple of these countries has led them to use rice as the main ingredient many foods, including bamboo rice. Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia retain their traditional way of cooking and burning bamboo rice, while Thailand and Vietnam have modified the ingredients so that it can be a commodity for sale. Muslim in peninsular countries, they have converted bamboo

rice into Halaj food and it became snacks or desserts in the restaurant's menu or food delivery business, moreover, it was added ingredients to be modern flavors. In addition, it also uses a steaming method to comfortable cooking process, since the process of burning bamboo is not consistent with the space in modern homes. The results of this research show the common culture of Southeast Asian countries for food and the adaptation of khao Lam amidst the trend of international food culture.

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