

Traditional Moke Drinks as Gastronomy Tourism: An Exploratory Study

¹Farah Fadilah Putri Joan, ²Setyo Prasiyono Nugroho, ³Yudi Setiaji

Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata AMPTA

Yogyakarta

(¹Farrafdl24@gmail.com, ²g4n.tiyo@gmail.com, ³kumisy@yahoo.com)

Abstrak: *Moke* is a traditional drink from Flores. This drink is the result of fermenting *lontar* (palm) fruit which is then distilled to get the best *moke* results. The aims of this study are to explore the origin of the traditional *moke* drink, the benefits and functions of the traditional *moke* drink as well as the materials used and the tools and how to process them. The population and sample in this study were *moke* as traditional drink. Key informants in this study are gastronomic experts, historian, and the producers of “*Kuwu Habi*” who understand the manufacture of traditional *moke* drinks and he can explain the origins and culture associated with traditional *moke* drinks. Meanwhile, additional informants are the Tourism Office, and the community. The analysis technique in this study is using the theory of Milles and Hubberman including data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of this study show that the traditional *moke* drink is a typical Flores drink made from palm fruit, besides that *moke* is also known as *sopi* or *dewe*. The process of making *moke* drinks has two stages, the first stage is fermenting the palm fruit and the second stage is distillation the fermented palm fruit. The traditional *moke* drink is usually served in the *tua kalok* ceremony, the *Tung Piong* ceremony, and the wedding ceremony. *Moke* traditional drink is a traditional symbol drink where this drink is a symbol of brotherhood in social life.

Keyword: gastronomy; *moke*; traditional drink

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The province of East Nusa Tenggara is one of many places in Indonesia that has a lot of tourism potential that can compete with other regions in Indonesia. Flores Island is one of the islands in the province of East Nusa Tenggara which is currently in the stage of developing its tourism industry. This island which consists of 9 districts has different traditions, arts and culture. Even though it is located on the same island, each district also has their own characteristics, especially in terms of culinary, for example in one district, namely Ngada - Bajawa district. which has a special culinary originating from fermented lard which has been mixed with corn flour and fermented in bamboo which is commonly known as “*sui wu'u*”, this food is a food that has been passed down from generation to generation from ancestors which will usually be served during traditional ceremonies and as offerings for the ancestors of the Ngada people.

In addition to traditional food, one of the districts on the island of Flores, namely Sikka district also has a traditional drink. The district which has an area of 7,553.24 Km² has a traditional drink called “*moke*”. “*Moke*” is a traditional drink made from *lontar* fruit, where this fruit is

often found in the eastern mainland, this lontar fruit will later be distilled and the droplets from the distillation are called "moke", the purpose of the distillation is to lower the alcohol content so that can be enjoyed. For the people of Maumere, "moke" is a symbol of hospitality and harmony, and consuming moke has become a lifestyle for most people in Maumere. Researchers see that moke has considerable potential to become a gastronomic tourist attraction, because moke has strong historical elements and cultural values. Its strong attachment to every traditional ceremony in Maumere makes moke not only an ordinary traditional drink, but also a form of hospitality and kinship from the Maumere community and its potential to develop gastronomic tourism in Maumere.

Gastronomy, according to Sanitch B in Nugroho (2020), is a guide on various ways that involve everything about food and drink. Studies in gastronomy are related to historical descriptions and environmental conditions regarding where (where), when (when), why (why), and how (how) (Nugroho 2020: 52). A significant difference between culinary tourism and gastronomy is the study, if culinary tourism only focuses on the taste or taste of the food or drink served, then gastronomy focuses on the origin or origin of the food or drink. Based on the explanation above, this research will explain how the origin of *moke* as a traditional Flores drink, how to make it, the tools and materials used, as well as its function in the culture of the Maumere people.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Tourism Concept

Based on Law Number 10 of 2009 concerning to tourism, it is stated that tourism is a travel activity carried out by a person or group of people by visiting certain places for recreational purposes, personal development, or studying the uniqueness of tourist attractions visited for a temporary period. Meanwhile, according to Cooper et.al in Nugroho (2020: 54) tourism is a temporary movement to a destination outside the home and workplace, activities carried out during the stay and facilities made to meet the needs of tourists. according to Prof. Salah Wahab in his book entitled *An Introduction on Tourism Theory* suggests that the notion of tourism should show the anatomy of the symptoms consisting of three elements, namely: humans (man), people who travel; the space, the area or scope of the place to travel; and time, the time used while traveling and staying in tourist destinations. The word tourism comes from the Sanskrit language which means full of journey (Nugroho, 2020: 54).

Culinary tour

According to Lucy Long, an assistant professor from Bowling Green State University, Ohio who is working in the field of food and culture, culinary tourism is a new type of tourism that has a fairly well-known trend among tourists. The term culinary tourism first appeared in 1998, which was proposed by Lucy Long. Meanwhile, according to Muliani (2019: 51) said that culinary tourism is an exploration of tourists to the habits and tastes of food from certain regions. Hall et al (2003) argue that culinary tourism is tourism that is influenced by the desire to make visits to places of manufacture, food festivals, restaurants, or a location with the aim of trying food. Based on the level of interest, Hall and Sharples (2003) in Widhya (2020: 177) divide into 3 forms / variants of food tourism, namely:

1. Rural / Urban Tourism: A form of tourism that views food and drink as a necessity, usually this activity is an activity of visiting restaurants/restaurants when traveling and the main purpose is to travel, not to enjoy local food.

2. Culinary Tourism: A form of tourism whose activities are visiting traditional markets, local restaurants or local food festivals, and this is done because it is part of the destinations visited.
3. Gastronomic Tourism: Tourism activities that have a high interest in learning and enjoying local food, because the main purpose is specifically to enjoy and study seriously things related to local food, and make it the main attraction in travel activities.

Gastronomy

Albala (2013) in Mandradhitya (2021: 96) suggests that gastronomy has the meaning of a form of appreciation for the process of cooking and serving food. This is reinforced by a statement that says that gastronomy is not only focused on the food and drink, but also on the selection of raw materials, how to taste, serve food and learn it, seek experience in consuming food, the nutritional value contained in food or beverages related to food and drink. ethics and etiquette, as well as knowing history, philosophy and traditions (Sinthiya, 2021: 33). Gastronomy has 4 elements of study corridors that are usually used as tangible or tangible benchmarks, namely: (Ketaren, 2017)

1. History: regarding the origin of the raw materials used, how and where they are cultivated
2. Culture: about the factors or reasons people consume the food
3. Landscape: about environmental factors (nature and ethnicity that affect the community to cook the food)
4. Cooking method: about the cooking process in general. It's not about the technicalities of cooking because a gastronome doesn't have to be able to cook.

Traditional drink

Drinks are anything that can be consumed and can relieve thirst, drinks are a basic human need. While traditional is a habit that comes from ancestors passed down from generation to generation and is still carried out today. Thus, traditional drinks are everything that humans have inherited from their ancestors from generation to generation, which are usually consumed by the community using ingredients from nature and have become the hallmark of an area and have a taste that suits the tastes of the community (Harisan, 2020: 198). Traditional drinks are not just enjoyed, but usually have their own symbolism, such as in the eastern region, traditional drinks are usually used in offering ceremonies and honors to ancestral spirits, Christian religious celebrations and so on. In making traditional drinks, the cultural aspect and the way of making it are one of the main attractions that attract the attention of tourists, the closer a traditional drink is to culture, the more interested tourists will be to know and try it directly, as well as how to make traditional drinks that still use traditional drinks. traditional materials from nature that make it look unique and different from the others.

RESEARCH METHOD

The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative with "moke" as the object of this research, while the subjects are historians, gastronomists and cultural experts. The purpose of this study was to explore the origin of the traditional *moke* drink, the benefits and functions of the traditional *moke* drink as well as the materials used and the tools, how to process it and its relation to the culture of the Maumere community with data collection methods using observation techniques, in-depth interviews, literature and documentation. The population and

sample in this study were the traditional drink *moke*, while the key informants in this study were gastronomists and historians. Meanwhile, the additional informant is one of the well-known manufacturers of traditional *moke* drinks named "Kuwu Habi", where the additional informants know the processing methods, materials and tools used, and know the origins of the traditional *moke* drinks. The method in this study uses the method of observation, interviews, documentation, and literature studies, while the data analysis technique in this study employs Milles and Hubberman technique, including data reduction, data presentation and conclusions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Origin of *Moke*

According to Mr. Markus, who is a *Moke* producer, said that the traditional drink "Moke" is a traditional drink made from palm fruit which is fermented and then distilled, and is still made using the traditional method. According to Mr. Lorens Lepo, an observer of the history and culture of Sikka district, that the term "moke" has been used since ancient times and is still used today, there is no further certainty why this traditional drink is called "moke", he also said that the origin of *moke* is believed to come from a story of a host named Mo'at who was having a banquet together in a traditional house which is usually called Lepo Gete or big house if interpreted in Indonesian. At that time the host who was in charge of entertaining the guests who were present had difficulty getting drinks because at that time the Sikka area was hit by a dry season, causing many springs to die. Then the host took the palm fruit that had fallen around his yard and sliced the fruit. Then he found the water content in the lontar fruit, at that time the host immediately served the lontar fruit water to the invited guests who were gathered. Then the host said in Sikka language "tu'at naha dolo wair naha ringing dading, yang ani, minu dena giang tap" which means that "the water source must flow all season long so that we can drink and share with our relatives". Then the *Moke* or drink derived from the lontar fruit developed among the Sikka community, and is known as a brotherly drink by the community. Not surprisingly, tourists who visit several traditional villages in Sikka, will later be treated to a *moke* as a "welcome drink" and a sign of their acceptance in the village.



Figure 1: *Moke* Traditional Drink

Source : <https://www.penasantara.com/peringatan-kecelakaan-akibat-moke-tidak-ditanggung-bpjs/>

How to Make

The manufacture of traditional *moke* drinks still uses traditional methods and also ingredients that are mostly made from nature, here is the process of making traditional *moke* drinks:

Table 1 Recepte of Moke

INGREDIENTS	TOOLS	HOW TO MAKE
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Ripe palm (lontar) fruit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fruit Clamp - Knife - Bamboo container - Clay Pot - Bamboo size 15-20 meters - Pineapples leaves - Palm Fiber - Pan 	<p>Pinch the palm fruit for 4 days, to ensure the maturity of the palm fruit</p> <p>Slice both sides of the palm, to get the water contained in the fruit</p> <p>Collect all the water from the palm fruit into a bamboo container, and let it rest for 3 days</p> <p>Move the palm water that has been fermented for 3 days into an earthen pot then boil until it releases steam</p> <p>The boiling water vapor is then flowed into the bamboo to be distilled</p> <p>In order to the steam water which is being distilled does not come out, the bamboo must be coated with a vapor barrier made of pineapple leaves</p> <p>Strain the steam that has become droplets of <i>moke</i> using palm fiber, to remove the dirt that is still attached</p> <p><i>Moke</i> droplets that have been accommodated are then re-cooked to reduce the alcohol content</p>
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Source: Field Observation (2022)



Figure 2. *Moke* Traditional Beverage Distillation Process
 Source: Field Observation (2022)

According to Mr. Markus, who is a *moke* producer, a good and correct fermentation and distillation process will produce a quality *moke*. Markus said that a *Moke* with very good quality is usually called a BM *moke* (burning on fire), the way to find out is quite easy, namely by lighting a fire above the *moke* and if the fire does not go out, then the *moke* can be said to

have good quality. *Moke* of the highest quality will not taste bitter. Unlike other drinks, which are usually mixed with other ingredients to enhance the taste, most people from Sikka Regency prefer not to mix any other ingredients into this drink. This is because the taste of the *moke* is very distinctive and it is not necessary to mix other ingredients that can interfere with the original taste of the *moke*. However, for some health reasons, many also mix *moke* with herbal ingredients such as ginseng, and plant roots which do not give a hangover effect, but to add vitality, freshness and health.

Advantages

According to Lorens Lepo, a historian said that, *moke* has become an important and essential thing in Sikka Regency society. Its great cultural and philosophical values make *moke* have a large enough benefit and role in supporting community activities. One of the benefits and also the role of *moke* in community activities, especially in Sikka Regency, is as follows:

1. In traditional activities, *moke* becomes a unifying drink and the main media in reconciling a problem or in Sikka terms it is called tu'a sumpa
2. In terms of culture, *moke* is used as an introduction or conversation starter to start the activities to be carried out.

In addition to having a role, Lorens also said that *moke* also has important benefits in every traditional activity as well as in commemorating religious holidays. Activities that often present *moke* are as follows:

1. Kalok Old Ceremony

This ceremony comes from one of the areas in Sikka district, namely Talibura. This ceremony is a ceremony whose activity is to drink *moke* in groups - busy drinking *moke* as a symbol of the statement of an agreement. The ceremony usually begins with a prayer and also a traditional greeting led by the chief of the Talibura tribe or commonly called Tana Puan and will be followed by drinking a bottle of *moke*. This ceremony will be attended by 11 tribal chiefs from other regions, community leaders and young people. The purpose of doing this traditional ceremony is as a form of confirmation of determination and support.

2. Tung Piong Ceremony

This ceremony is a form of respect for ancestral spirits which is often carried out by most of the people in Sikka Regency. One area that quite often carries out this activity is the community from Wolomotong Village, Sikka Regency. The community believes that ancestral spirits have an important role in everyday life, so their existence should not be underestimated and also ignored, and if they violate these customary rules, the community believes that they will be afflicted with misfortune and disaster. This is also supported by the expression in the Sikka language which says "eat naha piong tinut naha tewok" which means "eating and drinking must remember the ancestors and not be forgotten". The name "piong" itself in Sikka has the meaning of feeding the ancestors through offerings or offerings to people who have died. There are 2 types of Tung Piong rituals, namely the big Tung Piong ritual and the small Tung Piong ritual. The difference between the two types of rituals is that the offerings are presented, in the large tung piong ritual, usually the dish that will be offered is in the form of free-range chicken eggs, fish tails, pork liver which have all been cooked, and also *moke*, while in the small tung piong ritual usually only presenting existing dishes along with *moke*,. All dishes that have been prepared will later be placed on a flat stone surface or commonly called "mahe".

3. Wedding Ceremony

In the traditional wedding ceremony held in Sikka Regency, usually an agreement or agreement will be made between the bride's family and the groom in establishing a family relationship, or what is commonly called in Sikka language "tua sumpa widening jaji". In this agreement or agreement, *moke* becomes a unifying means as well as binding the agreement, and if it is violated, the community believes that the person concerned will receive a punishment called "tua go'o" which is a harsh punishment, as hard as water *moke*.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above analysis, it can be concluded that the traditional *moke* drink is not just an ordinary drink consumed by the Sikka community. However, this traditional drink also has historical and cultural values, besides that there are also many environmental factors that influence the people of Sikka Regency to this day continue to preserve traditional *Moke* drinks, such as the custom of Sikka Regency people who make *moke* as an offering for their ancestors, and also the habits of the people who use *moke* as an introduction and deliberation. Historical values, culture, environmental factors and also traditional cooking methods, make this traditional drink *Moke* has 4 elements of study in gastronomy as stated by Ketaren (2017). The development of traditional *moke* drinks as gastronomic tourism cannot be separated from the role of the government. The Department of Culture and Tourism of Sikka Regency, which oversees all forms of tourism activities in Sikka Regency, continues to make efforts so that traditional *moke* drinks can become one of the new forms of tourism in Sikka Regency, namely gastronomic tourism. The Department of Culture and Tourism of Sikka Regency has taken a policy to maintain *moke* not as a liquor, but as a traditional drink that must be preserved, and provide understanding to the people in Sikka Regency not to consume *moke* in excess.

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