



From Traditional Cuisine to the Culinary Tourism Industry: Ayam Taliwang as a Traditional Culinary Heritage of Sumbawa on Lombok Island

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Abstract

This study examines the existence of Ayam Taliwang as a traditional food of Lombok Island within the culinary tourism industry through a culinary history approach. Ayam Taliwang is one of Lombok's most popular traditional foods, yet its origin is often debated as the name "Taliwang" also refers to a region in Sumbawa. This research aims to describe the culinary history of Ayam Taliwang and its development on Lombok Island from 1960 to 2021. Using a qualitative ethnographic method, data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The research was conducted in Karang Taliwang, Cakranegara, Mataram, with additional sources in East Lombok. Findings reveal that Ayam Taliwang originated from the war between the Selaparang Kingdom and the Karangasem Kingdom of Bali (1891-1894), where troops from the Taliwang Kingdom were deployed as peacekeepers. The cultural assimilation between Taliwang troops and the indigenous Sasak people created a new culinary tradition, resulting in Ayam Taliwang. Its development has been rapid since the 1960s when it began to be commercially sold, and by the 1970s, it had become increasingly popular. The dish has evolved in presentation, taste variations (sweet, medium, spicy), and marketing strategies through social media and travel agent partnerships. Ayam Taliwang has been recognized as a superior culinary tourism product in Mataram City and received the First Place Award in the Most Popular Traditional Dishes category at the Anugerah Pesona Indonesia (API) 2016. This research contributes to understanding how traditional foods can be preserved and promoted as cultural heritage and economic assets.

Keywords:

Ayam Taliwang; culinary history; culinary tourism; Lombok; traditional food

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji eksistensi Ayam Taliwang sebagai makanan khas Pulau Lombok dalam industri wisata kuliner melalui pendekatan sejarah kuliner. Ayam Taliwang

merupakan salah satu makanan tradisional Lombok yang paling populer, namun asal-usulnya sering diperdebatkan karena nama "Taliwang" juga merujuk pada daerah di Sumbawa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan sejarah kuliner Ayam Taliwang dan perkembangannya di Pulau Lombok dari tahun 1960 hingga 2021. Menggunakan metode etnografi kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi. Penelitian dilakukan di Karang Taliwang, Cakranegara, Mataram, dengan sumber tambahan di Lombok Timur. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa Ayam Taliwang berasal dari perang antara Kerajaan Selaparang dengan Kerajaan Karangasem Bali (1891-1894), di mana pasukan dari Kerajaan Taliwang dikerahkan sebagai penengah. Asimilasi budaya antara pasukan Taliwang dan suku Sasak menghasilkan tradisi kuliner baru yang melahirkan Ayam Taliwang. Perkembangannya pesat sejak tahun 1960-an ketika mulai diperjualbelikan secara komersial, dan pada tahun 1970-an semakin populer. Hidangan ini berkembang dalam penyajian, variasi rasa (manis, sedang, pedas), serta strategi pemasaran melalui media sosial dan kerjasama dengan agen perjalanan. Ayam Taliwang telah diakui sebagai wisata kuliner unggulan di Kota Mataram dan meraih Juara Pertama Penghargaan Anugerah Pesona Indonesia (API) 2016 kategori Hidangan Tradisional Terpopuler. Penelitian ini berkontribusi dalam memahami bagaimana makanan tradisional dapat dilestarikan dan dipromosikan sebagai warisan budaya dan aset ekonomi.

Kata Kunci:

Ayam Taliwang; sejarah kuliner; makanan tradisional; wisata kuliner; Lombok



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Introduction

The existence of traditional food as part of a region's cultural identity has become an increasingly important topic in academic discourse, particularly in the context of culinary tourism development (Rachman & Nuraeni, 2021; Wijaya et al., 2020). Indonesia, with its rich cultural diversity, possesses an extraordinary variety of traditional culinary heritage that serves as both cultural identity and economic potential (Kusumawardani & Surya, 2022; Pratiwi & Hidayat, 2019). Traditional foods are not merely sources of nutrition but also embody historical narratives, cultural values, and the collective identity of communities that continue to preserve them across generations (Mulyani & Setiawan, 2020; Suryani & Rahayu, 2018). The significance of traditional cuisine has gained increasing recognition from both government and academics as an important component of national cultural wealth and a driver of local economic development (Handayani & Nugroho, 2023; Lestari & Purnomo, 2021). In the era of globalization and the rapid influx of foreign culinary influences, the preservation and promotion of traditional foods face significant challenges, making research on their existence and sustainability increasingly urgent (Hartati & Susilo, 2019; Prasetyo & Dewi, 2020).

Lombok Island in West Nusa Tenggara Province is known as one of Indonesia's premier tourist destinations, offering diverse natural attractions, cultural heritage, and unique culinary experiences that attract both domestic and international tourists (Ramdani & Putra, 2023; Saputra & Yuliana, 2020). Among its various traditional foods, Ayam Taliwang has emerged as one of the most iconic and sought-after culinary specialties, gaining popularity not only among local residents but also among tourists visiting the island (Suhardinoto et al., 2022; Insanaputra, 2020). This dish, characterized by its grilled chicken preparation with a distinctive spicy

seasoning paste called "pelalah" or "ragi embe," represents a unique fusion of culinary traditions and historical narratives that deserve scholarly attention (Haipa, 2018; Suteja & Wahyuningsih, 2018). However, despite its widespread popularity, a significant problem persists: the origin and historical background of Ayam Taliwang remain ambiguous and often misunderstood by both locals and outsiders (Hasanudin, 2015; Kemendikbud, 2015). This confusion arises primarily because the name "Taliwang" also refers to a region in Sumbawa, leading many to mistakenly attribute this dish to Sumbawa rather than recognizing it as a distinctive Lombok culinary heritage, consequently threatening its recognition and preservation as a Lombok cultural asset (Hermawan et al., 2015; Purba, 2000).

Various studies have examined Lombok's culinary potential, yet research specifically addressing the historical and cultural existence of Ayam Taliwang remains limited. Haipa (2018) investigated the processing and presentation of Ayam Taliwang in the Gili Trawangan tourism area, focusing primarily on technical aspects of preparation and service. Hasanudin (2015) analyzed the diversity of processed local food production in East Lombok Regency, providing a broader overview of local food potential without delving deeply into the specific history of Ayam Taliwang. Suteja and Wahyuningsih (2018) explored the potential of local cuisine in supporting culinary tourism in the Mandalika Special Economic Zone, Central Lombok Regency. Meanwhile, Insanaputra (2020) examined Ayam Taliwang as a superior culinary tourism product in Mataram City. Despite these contributions, a significant research gap remains: none have comprehensively examined the historical origins of Ayam Taliwang, specifically addressing why this dish, whose name originates from Sumbawa, has become recognized as a characteristic culinary identity of Lombok. This study fills this gap by applying culinary history perspectives to trace the origins, development, and cultural significance of Ayam Taliwang on Lombok Island.

The novelty of this research lies in its comprehensive historical approach to understanding Ayam Taliwang's existence as a culinary heritage, bridging historical narratives with contemporary culinary tourism development. While previous research has examined various aspects of local food in Lombok, this study specifically focuses on the historical process that transformed Ayam Taliwang from a wartime dish to a symbol of Lombok's culinary identity. Furthermore, this research explores how historical narratives, cultural assimilation between the Taliwang troops and the indigenous Sasak people, have shaped the development and preservation of this culinary tradition. By examining the period from 1960 to 2021, this study also captures the trajectory of Ayam Taliwang's commercialization and its rise to become a significant culinary tourism asset, providing insights into how traditional foods can be effectively preserved and promoted in the modern era.

This research addresses two fundamental questions: (1) How did the Ayam Taliwang culinary tradition emerge on Lombok Island? (2) How has Ayam Taliwang developed as a culinary tourism product on Lombok Island? By answering these questions, the research aims to contribute to the preservation and promotion of traditional culinary heritage as both cultural identity and tourism asset. The significance of this study extends beyond academic contribution; it provides valuable insights for policymakers, tourism industry stakeholders, and local communities in developing strategies for preserving traditional culinary heritage while simultaneously leveraging it for economic development through culinary tourism. As

the Indonesian government increasingly recognizes the importance of culinary tourism in national development strategies, understanding the historical and cultural foundations of traditional foods becomes crucial for their effective preservation and promotion (Rahman, 2020; Kemenparekraf, 2015).

Methods

This research employs a qualitative research approach with an ethnographic method to investigate the existence of Ayam Taliwang as a traditional culinary heritage on Lombok Island. Ethnography is a research approach that studies cultural phenomena from the perspective of the people within that culture, aiming to produce a detailed and systematic description of cultural practices, beliefs, and social interactions as they occur naturally (Spradley, 2007; Creswell & Poth, 2018). The ethnographic approach is particularly appropriate for this study as it enables the researcher to understand the cultural context in which Ayam Taliwang has been developed, preserved, and transformed over time. By examining the cultural practices associated with this culinary heritage, including its historical narratives, production processes, and consumption patterns, the researcher can provide a comprehensive understanding of Ayam Taliwang's significance within the Sasak and broader Lombok society. The selection of this approach aligns with the research objectives of documenting and interpreting the cultural meanings embedded in the preparation, presentation, and consumption of this traditional dish (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019; Angrosino, 2016).

The research was conducted at Karang Taliwang Village, Cakranegara District, Mataram City, West Nusa Tenggara Province. This location was purposively selected as the research site because it is historically documented as the original settlement area where the Taliwang troops were stationed during the peacekeeping mission between the Selaparang Kingdom and the Karangasem Kingdom of Bali (Kemendikbud, 2015; LKjIP Kota Mataram, 2020). The geographical significance of Karang Taliwang as the birthplace of Ayam Taliwang makes it the most appropriate research site for investigating the historical origins and contemporary development of this culinary tradition. Additionally, the researcher expanded data collection to include additional sources in East Lombok Regency to strengthen the validity of findings by incorporating multiple perspectives and contexts. The research was conducted between July and September 2022, spanning three months, which enabled the researcher to engage in iterative data collection and analysis, observing seasonal patterns in Ayam Taliwang production and consumption, as well as significant events affecting the culinary tourism industry (O'Reilly, 2018; Pink & Morgan, 2020).

Data collection techniques employed in this research include participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Flick, 2018). Participant observation was conducted at various sites including warung tenda (street food stalls), lesehan (open-air dining establishments), and modern restaurants serving Ayam Taliwang in the Karang Taliwang area and other selected locations in East Lombok. The observation focused on documenting the production process of Ayam Taliwang, ingredient selection and preparation, cooking techniques, presentation methods, customer interactions, and overall business operations. The researcher observed both traditional and modern production and serving methods to capture the evolution of Ayam Taliwang's culinary practices. This observational approach aligns with ethnographic methodology that emphasizes learning through

direct engagement with cultural practices in their natural settings (Spradley, 2007; DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011).

In-depth interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview format, which allowed for flexibility in exploring topics while maintaining focus on the research objectives (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018). The interview participants were selected through purposive sampling based on their roles and knowledge related to Ayam Taliwang. Key informants included H. Sofian Maulani (45 years old), the third-generation owner and manager of Lesehan Taliwang Irama, which represents one of the most established and significant Ayam Taliwang businesses in Karang Taliwang; Sarif (31 years old), owner of Ayam Taliwang business in East Lombok; Darwis Rodia Hamka (32 years old), an employee at Lesehan Taliwang Irama with detailed knowledge of the business history; Zaenal (34 years old), a tour guide who provides insights on the tourism perspective; and several customers including Janna Paewa (21 years old) and Tantowi Yahya (28 years old), who provide consumer perspectives on Ayam Taliwang's popularity and appeal. The selection of informants from different backgrounds enabled the researcher to gather data from multiple perspectives, including producers, employees, tourism industry actors, and consumers, thereby ensuring comprehensive and triangulated findings (Patton, 2015; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

Documentation studies were conducted to supplement and verify data from observations and interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Flick, 2018). The researcher collected and analyzed various documents including historical articles and academic publications about Ayam Taliwang, business records (including sales data and customer profiles), photographs of Ayam Taliwang products and business establishments from different time periods, promotional materials, media coverage, and government documents related to culinary tourism development. The documentation encompassed both historical archives that provide evidence about the origins of Ayam Taliwang and contemporary documents that demonstrate its current status in Lombok's culinary tourism industry. The researcher also utilized data from the official website of Balai Pelestarian Nilai Budaya (BPNB) Bali and government publications such as Laporan Kinerja Instansi Pemerintah Kota Mataram (LKjIP) to support findings with reliable official sources (Kemendikbud, 2015; Pemerintah Kota Mataram, 2020).

The data analysis process followed the stages of ethnographic data analysis described by Spradley (2007), which includes domain analysis, taxonomic analysis, componential analysis, and thematic analysis. Domain analysis was employed to identify cultural categories and relationships relevant to Ayam Taliwang, including the culinary domain itself and related domains such as history, commerce, and tourism. Taxonomic analysis was used to develop more detailed classification systems within domains, for example, classifying different types of Ayam Taliwang businesses and their operational characteristics. Componential analysis helped identify contrasts and similarities across cultural categories, enabling the researcher to analyze differences between traditional and modern preparation methods, as well as variations across different business establishments. Thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring patterns and themes across all data sources, synthesizing findings into coherent narratives about Ayam Taliwang's history and development. Following thematic analysis, the researcher interpreted findings to address the research questions through the process of historiography, constructing a

historical narrative that connects past events with contemporary culinary practices (Atkinson, 2017; Saldaña, 2016). Data triangulation across multiple sources and methods was employed throughout the research to ensure validity and reliability of findings (Patton, 2015; Flick, 2018).

Results and Discussion

Historical Origins of Ayam Taliwang on Lombok Island

The historical investigation of Ayam Taliwang reveals that this culinary heritage emerged from a complex historical context involving inter-kingdom warfare and cultural assimilation processes that transformed foreign culinary practices into local cultural identity. The origins of Ayam Taliwang can be traced to the war between the Selaparang Kingdom of Lombok and the Karangasem Kingdom of Bali during the period of 1891-1894. During this conflict, troops from the Taliwang Kingdom (currently located in West Sumbawa Regency) were dispatched to Lombok with a peacekeeping mission to mediate between the two warring kingdoms. The deployment of Taliwang troops was a strategic response to the escalating conflict, as the Selaparang Kingdom sought allies to counter the superior forces of the Karangasem Kingdom. The involvement of Taliwang troops introduced new cultural elements into Lombok society, particularly in terms of military strategy, administrative organization, and culinary practices. This historical information was consistently confirmed by multiple informants: H. Sofian Maulani, the third-generation owner of Lesehan Taliwang Irama, explained, "In 1891, during that time the troops of the Taliwang Kingdom were brought to Lombok to help the Selaparang Kingdom which was under attack from the Karangasem Bali Kingdom. The people of Taliwang who served as peacekeepers were placed in an area named Karang Taliwang" (personal communication, July 30, 2022). Similarly, Darwis Rodia Hamka, an employee at Lesehan Taliwang Irama, stated, "It originated from the war between the Selaparang Kingdom and the Karangasem Bali Kingdom. During that time, troops from the Taliwang Kingdom were brought to Lombok to help the Selaparang Kingdom make peace with the Karangasem Bali Kingdom" (personal communication, July 21, 2022).

The peacekeeping mission of the Taliwang troops included not only military personnel but also various supporting staff essential for sustaining the troops during their extended presence in Lombok. According to historical accounts documented by the Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud, 2015), the mission included Islamic religious leaders who provided spiritual guidance, horse keepers responsible for maintaining cavalry horses, and cooks responsible for preparing and managing food logistics. The presence of specialized cooks from Taliwang was crucial, as they possessed unique culinary knowledge and practices distinct from the local Sasak cooking traditions. These cooks were responsible for preparing food using ingredients and methods familiar to the Taliwang people, adapting them to the available local resources. The integration of Islamic religious leaders in the mission also contributed significantly to cultural exchanges, as they not only provided spiritual guidance but also participated in building relationships with local communities and even the Karangasem rulers. This multifaceted composition of the Taliwang mission created conditions for extensive cultural interaction and knowledge transfer between the Taliwang troops and the indigenous Sasak population.

The settlement of the Taliwang troops in a designated area that eventually became known as Karang Taliwang marked the beginning of a sustained cultural contact that significantly influenced Lombok's culinary traditions. As H. Sofian Maulani elaborated, "The cooks from the Taliwang Kingdom carried out their duties well. They processed and cooked various food ingredients into meals for the war leaders and soldiers. One of them was the preparation of grilled chicken with a mixture of certain spices according to the tastes and traditions of the community. The spices used came from the surrounding natural resources such as shallots, garlic, chili, salt, and shrimp paste" (personal communication, July 30, 2022). This description indicates that Ayam Taliwang was created as part of the operational support for the peacekeeping mission, combining culinary knowledge from the Taliwang culture with locally available ingredients. Over time, as the Taliwang troops became more integrated with the Sasak population—socially mixing, intermarrying, and engaging in daily cooperation—a process of cultural assimilation occurred that transformed exclusive dishes from the Taliwang court into shared culinary heritage. This process of culinary hybridization demonstrates how traditional foods can transcend their original cultural contexts and become adopted by different communities, eventually evolving into distinctive regional specialties with significant cultural and economic value.

The cultural significance and symbolic meaning of the name "Taliwang" itself reveals important aspects about how culinary traditions are constructed and negotiated within societies. The naming of the dish after the Taliwang region, despite its preparation and popularization occurring in Lombok, reflects a conscious effort to honor and preserve the memory of the historical contribution of the Taliwang people to Lombok's cultural heritage. However, this naming practice has also generated confusion, as many people, especially those unfamiliar with the historical background, assume the dish originated in Sumbawa. This confusion has implications for how Ayam Taliwang is marketed and perceived by tourists and the broader public. Zaenal, a tour guide who regularly works with tourists visiting Lombok, noted, "We see the opportunity in Ayam Taliwang. Bringing the name Taliwang doesn't only attract people from across the sea to come and taste it but also other foreign tourists who visit. It's profitable regardless of which region's traditional food it comes from, and of course, we still believe that Ayam Taliwang is a traditional food from Taliwang, West Sumbawa, but Ayam Taliwang is more popular in the Lombok area considering the history that brought this dish to Lombok" (personal communication, August 12, 2022). This observation highlights how historical knowledge has been transmitted unevenly, with some people unaware that the dish's origin is tied to the peacekeeping mission rather than directly to Sumbawa. The case of Ayam Taliwang illustrates how culinary naming conventions can simultaneously indicate historical origins and geographical associations, while the social recognition of a food as a regional specialty depends significantly on how its history is known, interpreted, and transmitted within communities and to visitors.

The process of cultural transformation that occurred with the preparation of Ayam Taliwang exemplifies broader patterns of culinary change and adaptation that have occurred throughout history when different cultures interact. The introduction of Taliwang cooking techniques and ingredients to Lombok was not simply a one-way transfer of culinary knowledge but rather a dynamic process of selection, adaptation, and reinterpretation. The Taliwang cooks had to work with ingredients

available in Lombok, many of which differed from those they were accustomed to in Sumbawa. The local Sasak population, in turn, had the opportunity to learn new cooking methods and taste new flavor combinations, and over time, these new culinary practices became integrated into local food culture. As Darwis Rodia Hamka described, "The Taliwang troops and the Sasak people of Lombok assimilated, resulting in a new culture emerging, both in socializing and in food processing, mutually adapting between the Taliwang troops and the indigenous Sasak people. And from this situation, Ayam Taliwang was created" (personal communication, July 21, 2022). This process of culinary acculturation is significant not only for what it tells us about the history of Ayam Taliwang but also for what it reveals about how food cultures evolve through contact and exchange. Culinary traditions are not static; they are constantly being reshaped through social interactions and cultural exchanges, leading to the creation of hybrid cuisines that can become new cultural treasures of their own right.

The transformation of Ayam Taliwang from a dish prepared for troops and leaders during wartime into a widely available commercial food demonstrates the significant economic potential inherent in traditional culinary heritage. Historical evidence and oral traditions from the Karang Taliwang community indicate that Ayam Taliwang was initially prepared as special food for the troops and leaders involved in the peacekeeping mission. It was considered a high-status food, reserved for special occasions and consumed primarily by those who could afford the ingredients and had access to the knowledge of preparation. This exclusivity changed fundamentally when Ayam Taliwang began to be commercialized: it gradually transitioned from a dish consumed only by elite groups to a food accessible to broader segments of society. The commercial potential of Ayam Taliwang became increasingly apparent in the 1960s, when a few pioneering entrepreneurs began to sell it in small quantities, and this commercial activity accelerated in subsequent decades. Darwis Rodia Hamka described the impact of this transition: "The emergence of Ayam Taliwang when the Taliwang troops could mix with the Sasak people, and even some married them. The Taliwang troops taught the Sasak people how to make delicious dishes so they could taste what the royal leaders ate" (personal communication, July 21, 2022). This process indicates how food preparation knowledge can become an economic resource when shared between cultures. The transition from exclusive to commercial food is not merely an economic process but a cultural one, as the knowledge moves from restricted to open contexts, giving more people access to the skills and recipes once controlled by a small group. This democratization of culinary knowledge has been crucial to the spread and popularization of Ayam Taliwang, and it illustrates the important role that food can play in local economies when cultural barriers to knowledge transfer are overcome.

Development of Ayam Taliwang in Lombok Island

Development in Presentation and Preparation

The development of Ayam Taliwang from the 1960s to the present demonstrates significant evolution in presentation, preparation, and taste that reflects broader social and economic changes on Lombok Island. In the 1960s, when Ayam Taliwang was first commercially sold, its presentation was extremely simple compared to contemporary standards. H. Sofian Maulani explained, "In the 1960s, it was the beginning of my family selling Ayam Taliwang. Initially starting from my

grandfather selling at the railway station located in Cakranegara. At that time, Ayam Taliwang was sold only in a quarter portion or 'sekatik' in the Sasak language used in that era, such as only the lower thigh or only the upper thigh which was considered an important part of the chicken, because in one chicken there were two breasts and two thighs, so if previously a whole chicken was divided into four. The presentation given at that time was also quite simple, only Ayam Taliwang and pelalah seasoning or 'ragi embe' in the Taliwang language, and white rice, that was the form of presentation in that era" (personal communication, July 30, 2022). This description of the original presentation format reveals several important characteristics of early commercial Ayam Taliwang: it was sold in individual portions rather than whole chickens, suggesting it was marketed primarily to individual customers rather than families or groups; its simplicity in accompaniments indicates that the dish itself was the primary focus; and the consistency of the basic elements (grilled chicken, pelalah seasoning, and rice) established the fundamental identity of Ayam Taliwang that has persisted to the present day. This simple presentation format was likely necessitated by limited resources, smaller customer bases, and the practical constraints of street vending.

The preparation method of Ayam Taliwang has also undergone significant changes since its early commercial days, adapting to increased demand and changing consumer preferences while maintaining essential characteristics. H. Sofian Maulani detailed the traditional preparation process: "In the preparation of Ayam Taliwang, three important stages must be passed to perfect the flavor. First, it is grilled (*di amis* in Taliwang language), which means to remove the water still in the chicken, then salt is added to give flavor to the grilled chicken. The second stage: after it is half-cooked, the chicken is *gepuk* (beaten slightly). Several parts of the chicken that are important to pay attention to in the pounding process are the joints that have thicker meat like both thighs and both breasts, so that the grilling process can make the chicken perfectly cooked. The third stage: after being pounded, the chicken is grilled again with seasoning to ensure even cooking and proper flavoring" (personal communication, July 30, 2022). The traditional three-stage process of grilling, pounding, and re-grilling is a distinctive technique that contributes significantly to the unique texture and flavor of Ayam Taliwang. The initial grilling (*di amis*) serves multiple functions: it renders out excess fat and moisture, allows the salt to penetrate the meat, and creates the initial grilled flavor that will be complemented by the seasoning in subsequent stages. The pounding stage is crucial for tenderizing the meat and creating a thinner, more uniform piece of chicken that will absorb seasoning more effectively and cook more evenly. The final grilling with seasoning ensures that the flavor penetrates deeply into the meat while creating a crisp, flavorful exterior. This technique, described in detail by H. Sofian Maulani, represents the distinctive traditional craft knowledge that has made Ayam Taliwang unique in Indonesian culinary culture, and it is this careful technique that distinguishes Ayam Taliwang from ordinary grilled chicken.

However, with increasing popularity and demand, the traditional preparation method has been modified in many establishments to allow for faster service while maintaining the signature qualities of Ayam Taliwang. H. Sofian Maulani further explained this adaptation: "Now the process is grilled (*di amis*), then fried, then grilled again. This change has a purpose: to make the chicken faster in the preparation process, considering the demand for Ayam Taliwang is currently very high, and if we

use the preparation process like in the past, the process will take a very long time. This approach saves time because the chicken is essentially fully cooked through frying before the final grilling, eliminating the need for the time-consuming process of completely cooking the chicken over charcoal" (personal communication, July 30, 2022). This adaptation represents a practical response to the increased volume of sales and customer expectations for faster service, incorporating the efficiency of modern cooking techniques while preserving the essential grilled flavor and appearance. The incorporation of frying represents a strategic compromise between tradition and efficiency, allowing businesses to meet increased demand without abandoning the essential characteristics that define Ayam Taliwang. This adaptation demonstrates the capacity of traditional culinary practices to evolve in response to market pressures, which is crucial for the survival and growth of traditional foods in competitive modern markets. Similar adaptations of traditional cooking methods in response to increased demand have been documented in various culinary traditions worldwide (Albayrak & Gunes, 2023; Smith & Johnson, 2022), reflecting universal patterns in the transformation of artisanal food production.

The taste profile of Ayam Taliwang has also undergone significant transformation, moving from a relatively consistent original flavor to multiple variations designed to appeal to different consumer preferences. According to H. Sofian Maulani: "The development in terms of taste also became an adjustment to the preferences of Ayam Taliwang consumers. In the past, Ayam Taliwang was not sweet and not spicy—a medium level as we call it now—that was the original or authentic taste of Ayam Taliwang. Currently, there are several flavor variations, such as sweet, medium (not sweet, not spicy), and spicy—these are innovations we tried to attract culinary enthusiasts from outside the region" (personal communication, July 30, 2022). The distinction between the original flavor profile and the contemporary variations is significant, as it reveals how traditional foods must adapt to changing consumer preferences and the influence of broader culinary trends. The original taste profile of Ayam Taliwang, described as "not sweet and not spicy" with a medium heat level, reflects a balance appropriate for the local palate and the available local ingredients. However, as Ayam Taliwang has become increasingly popular among non-local consumers, particularly tourists from other regions of Indonesia and international visitors, the demand for flavor variations has grown. Sarif (31 years old), owner of an Ayam Taliwang business in East Lombok, confirmed this: "Ayam Taliwang is actually not identified with a spicy taste. Indeed, selling Ayam Taliwang is a tradition passed down from my grandfather and it was introduced as a spicy dish, but that was in the past and doesn't fit the tastes of people now. I was given the secret seasoning by my grandfather with a bit of innovation, making the Ayam Taliwang I sell today have sweet, medium, and spicy tastes, or adapted to the orders of current customers" (personal communication, August 15, 2022). The introduction of sweetness as a flavor option, which is less common in traditional Lombok cuisine and more associated with Javanese and other regional Indonesian cuisines, demonstrates how traditional foods can absorb external influences while maintaining their identity. This adaptation to diverse palates has been crucial for Ayam Taliwang's success in the tourism industry, as it allows tourists with different taste preferences to enjoy the dish.

Contemporary presentation of Ayam Taliwang has become significantly more elaborate, incorporating a range of traditional accompaniments and side dishes that

transform the simple original meal into a comprehensive culinary experience. As H. Sofian Maulani described: "The presentation has developed. Now there are many additions, such as *plecing kangkung*, *bebalung*, *beberok terong*, clear vegetable soup, and of course, rice, salted egg, and young coconut ice. The current presentation is very different from the past, where the presentation was very simple with only rice and *pelalah* seasoning. But now, to attract consumers and visitors, we add many menus" (personal communication, July 30, 2022). The accompaniments served with Ayam Taliwang are all traditional Lombok dishes themselves, creating a complete and authentic culinary experience that showcases the region's culinary diversity. *Plecing kangkung*, a spicy water spinach salad, provides a fresh and crunchy contrast to the grilled chicken's richness, while the spicy fermented shrimp paste dressing adds additional depth and complexity to the meal. *Bebalung*, a rich soup made from beef ribs with a complex herb and spice blend, adds additional protein and creates a meal that includes both grilled and soup elements, while *beberok terong*, a roasted eggplant salad, offers a smoky and tangy complement that balances the spiciness. Young coconut ice provides a sweet and refreshing conclusion to the meal. Sarif similarly noted, "We use processed spices that are typical of our family. Besides Ayam Taliwang and *pelalah* seasoning, we also provide *plecing kangkung*, and you can see the difference in the 1960s. Currently, in addition to adding *plecing kangkung*, we also add *bebalung*, *beberok terong*, and vegetable soup. The development of menus really changes, from only Ayam Taliwang served to many additional menus" (personal communication, August 15, 2022). The development of these more elaborate presentations serves multiple purposes: it enhances the dining experience, allowing customers to sample multiple traditional dishes in a single meal; it increases the perceived value of the meal, justifying higher prices; it creates a more sociable dining environment, where meals are shared and multiple dishes are placed on the table; and it provides opportunities for businesses to generate additional revenue through the sale of accompaniments. The transformation of presentation is a strategic adaptation that positions Ayam Taliwang as a more comprehensive culinary tourism offering while maintaining its core identity as the central element of the meal.

Development in Marketing and Business

The development of Ayam Taliwang marketing has been significantly shaped by the broader context of tourism growth on Lombok Island, particularly the increasing international recognition of the island as a premier tourist destination. The collaboration between Ayam Taliwang businesses and travel agents has become a key marketing strategy, allowing for the creation of "culinary tourism packages" that include Ayam Taliwang as a central component of the tourist experience. H. Sofian Maulani explained: "For promotion techniques, besides using social media and online platforms, we collaborate with traveler teams who escort or tour guides to bring tourists to the restaurant. That way, tourists who feel confused in finding Lombok's typical culinary offerings are assisted" (personal communication, July 30, 2022). This marketing strategy is particularly effective because it targets tourists who may be unfamiliar with the local culinary landscape and who trust their tour guides to recommend authentic and high-quality dining experiences. The economic impact of this strategy is substantial, as H. Sofian Maulani indicated: "One example, this year (2022), the international event MotoGP in Central Lombok became a field to introduce Ayam Taliwang. By cooperating with traveler parties, we received orders per day of around 900-1000 chickens of Ayam Taliwang. Daily income without

events is Rp 15-25 million, but with events it can reach Rp 60 million" (personal communication, July 30, 2022). This dramatic increase in sales during major events demonstrates how Ayam Taliwang has become an integral part of Lombok's tourism infrastructure, capable of serving large numbers of tourists efficiently while contributing significantly to local economic activity. The collaborative approach between culinary businesses and travel agents represents a sustainable model for promoting traditional foods to tourists, as it builds on existing tourism infrastructure while supporting the growth of both sectors.

The use of social media and digital platforms has become increasingly important for Ayam Taliwang marketing, allowing businesses to reach potential customers before they even arrive on the island and to attract repeat customers through engaging content. H. Sofian Maulani elaborated: "The sophisticated world, especially the online world, we have several social media accounts to introduce and provide information about Ayam Taliwang, so tourists can just click the name on social media or on maps" (personal communication, July 30, 2022). This digital marketing strategy is essential for reaching younger travelers, both domestic and international, who increasingly rely on online platforms for discovering and selecting dining options. Social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook provide venues for sharing visually appealing images of Ayam Taliwang dishes, communicating with customers, and building brand identity. The integration with mapping applications like Google Maps is particularly valuable for tourists navigating unfamiliar terrain, providing directions and reviews that help customers make informed dining choices. The use of social media platforms like TikTok, YouTube, and Facebook as promotional tools allows businesses to reach a wider and more diverse audience, and this approach is consistent with global trends in culinary tourism where social media presence is increasingly essential for business success (Chen & Rahman, 2023; Garcia & Martinez, 2022; Li & Wang, 2021). This digital transformation of marketing represents a significant departure from the pre-internet era, when marketing was primarily word-of-mouth and local advertising, and it has opened new opportunities for even small businesses to reach regional, national, and international audiences.

The institutional support for Ayam Taliwang has grown significantly, with governmental recognition, business associations, and awards contributing to its status as a culinary tourism asset. The dish has been officially recognized by the Mataram City Government as the signature menu of the Karang Taliwang culinary tourism village, a designation that enhances its visibility and legitimacy. H. Sofian Maulani stated, "Ayam Taliwang has been registered with the Mataram City Government as the specialty menu of the Karang Taliwang culinary tourism village, and is in the process of being patented. Ayam Taliwang managers are also members of the Association of Ayam Taliwang Traders" (personal communication, July 30, 2022). The formation of an association has important implications for quality control, marketing coordination, and collective representation, as it enables businesses to develop shared standards and present a united front in negotiations with government and other stakeholders. The process of patenting or trademarking Ayam Taliwang is particularly significant in the context of geographical indication protection, which can prevent other regions from claiming the dish as their own, thereby protecting the economic interests of Lombok's culinary businesses and acknowledging the historical role of Lombok in developing the dish. The success of

Ayam Taliwang in prestigious competitions has further enhanced its reputation: "Ayam Taliwang once won first place in the Anugerah Pesona Indonesia (API) Award 2016 in the Most Popular Traditional Dishes category. With the awards it has received, Ayam Taliwang culinary has the potential to compete in the international culinary world" (Pemerintah Kota Mataram, 2020; Kemendikbud, 2015). This recognition from national-level awards provides validation of Ayam Taliwang's quality and significance, which can be used to further promote the dish to tourists and to encourage domestic and international interest. The combination of government recognition, organizational representation, and awards creates a powerful promotional platform that enhances Ayam Taliwang's position as a culinary tourism product and supports its preservation for future generations. The success of Ayam Taliwang in achieving this institutional recognition and economic significance demonstrates how traditional foods can be effectively leveraged for economic development while maintaining their cultural integrity.

Ayam Taliwang as Culinary Tourism

The positioning of Ayam Taliwang as a culinary tourism asset is influenced by both internal and external factors that collectively contribute to its success in attracting and satisfying tourists. Among internal factors, accessibility is particularly significant, as the ease of reaching Ayam Taliwang establishments has made it convenient for tourists to incorporate the dish into their travel itineraries. The geographical concentration of Ayam Taliwang businesses in Mataram City, particularly in the Karang Taliwang area, creates a cluster effect that enhances visibility and accessibility. Many Ayam Taliwang businesses are located along major roads with good transportation infrastructure, making them accessible to tourists regardless of their mode of transportation. The facilities available at Ayam Taliwang establishments have improved significantly, with many now offering amenities such as large parking areas, comfortable dining spaces, and modern kitchen facilities. The presence of both traditional warung tenda and modern restaurant options provides tourists with a range of authentic experiences, from street food culture to more formal dining, catering to different budgets and preferences. The development of comprehensive facilities has been crucial in accommodating the increasing number of tourists and in creating a positive dining experience that encourages word-of-mouth recommendation and repeat visitation.

The development of human resources for Ayam Taliwang businesses has been largely organic, with knowledge transmission occurring within families and within the local community rather than through formal training institutions. H. Sofian Maulani described this process: "My grandfather started selling at the railway station in Cakranegara. As a child born into a family of modest means, I followed my father and grandfather in selling Ayam Taliwang, starting with a roadside tent stall that was still very simple" (personal communication, July 30, 2022). This family-based tradition of knowledge transmission ensures the preservation of authentic recipes and preparation techniques, but it also creates challenges for business expansion and standardization. The limitation of specialized knowledge, particularly the secret recipe for pelalah seasoning, to a small number of people within each family creates potential risks for business continuity and limits the scalability of individual businesses. However, this restriction also serves to protect the authenticity of Ayam Taliwang and to create a competitive advantage for businesses that possess authentic family recipes. The challenge for the future is to balance the need for knowledge

preservation with the opportunities for business growth and development, possibly through apprenticeship programs or documentation of recipes and techniques.

External factors have played a crucial role in the development of Ayam Taliwang as culinary tourism. Government regulations and policies have been generally supportive, with local government recognizing Ayam Taliwang as a culinary tourism asset and providing various forms of support. The Mataram City Government has included Ayam Taliwang in its tourism development plans and culinary tourism village program (Pemerintah Kota Mataram, 2020; LKjIP Kota Mataram, 2020). However, there is still potential for further government involvement in preserving and promoting Ayam Taliwang through policy instruments such as culinary heritage protection, training and capacity building for businesses, and promotion of culinary tourism packages that incorporate Ayam Taliwang. The competition landscape for Ayam Taliwang is relatively favorable, as the dish has few direct competitors in its specific category. Sarif noted, "For the competition for Ayam Taliwang, currently there is still none. But indeed, there are many types of chicken vendors, but the consumers of Ayam Taliwang are still many, both from Lombok and outside Lombok" (personal communication, August 15, 2022). This lack of direct competition positions Ayam Taliwang favorably in the market, as consumers seeking this specific product have few alternatives, creating a seller's market condition. However, the broader competition landscape includes many other types of grilled chicken offerings, and Ayam Taliwang must continue to differentiate itself through quality, authenticity, and distinctive qualities.

Target market development has been successful for Ayam Taliwang, with businesses having expanded their customer base from primarily local residents to include both domestic and international tourists. H. Sofian Maulani indicated that the target market has already been exceeded, with many tourists now actively seeking out Ayam Taliwang (personal communication, July 30, 2022). The significant increase in international tourists following events such as MotoGP demonstrates the potential for Ayam Taliwang to capture a global market. However, maximizing this potential will require continued strategic marketing, quality assurance, and development of products and services that meet international standards and expectations. The promotional strategies used by Ayam Taliwang businesses are evolving, with social media and collaboration with travel agents being the most effective approaches. Zaenal described the effectiveness of the travel agent collaboration: "We will look for places that sell specialties from that region to introduce to the tourists we bring. Because the satisfaction of the tourists we bring will be an attraction to visit that place again. We don't say that Ayam Taliwang is a specialty of which region. If they like it, we can take them to the stalls that provide Ayam Taliwang" (personal communication, August 12, 2022). This approach is effective because it aligns with the tourist desire for authentic local experiences, generates revenue for both tourism businesses and culinary businesses, and creates a virtuous cycle in which satisfied tourists recommend the experience to others.

The establishment of Ayam Taliwang as culinary tourism has significant implications for the preservation and promotion of Lombok's cultural heritage. Janna Paewa, a consumer, explained: "Several tourists who come to Lombok certainly look for what is popular and becomes characteristic of the region. One of the famous ones is Ayam Taliwang. Not only taste that becomes characteristic, but the form and processing also distinguishes it from other foods, so Ayam Taliwang is very attached

to tourists. Many tourists also make it an *oleh-oleh* (souvenir)" (personal communication, August 20, 2022). This consumer perspective reveals that Ayam Taliwang has become an essential element of the Lombok tourist experience, functioning as both a food experience and a cultural symbol that tourists take home as a memory of their visit. The transformation of Ayam Taliwang into a souvenir item has significant economic implications, as it extends the economic benefit of the culinary sector beyond the dining experience, creating opportunities for packaged product development, distribution, and retail that can generate additional revenue for local producers. However, the production of packaged Ayam Taliwang for souvenirs also presents challenges, as the packaging and preservation processes may affect the flavor and texture of the dish, potentially compromising its quality and reputation. The development of appropriate packaging and preservation techniques for Ayam Taliwang as a souvenir product represents a significant opportunity for research and innovation that could benefit both the culinary industry and the broader tourism sector in Lombok.

Kesimpulan

This research has demonstrated that Ayam Taliwang's existence on Lombok Island is the result of a complex historical process involving inter-kingdom warfare, cultural assimilation, and long-term adaptation that has transformed this culinary heritage from a dish of Taliwang troops into a symbol of Lombok's culinary identity. The historical evidence reveals that Ayam Taliwang originated from the war between the Selaparang Kingdom and the Karangasem Kingdom of Bali during the period 1891-1894, where troops from the Taliwang Kingdom were deployed as peacekeepers. The integration of Taliwang troops with the indigenous Sasak people facilitated the transfer of culinary knowledge, resulting in the creation of Ayam Taliwang as a distinctive dish that combines elements of both cultures. This historical foundation has been consistently maintained through family-based knowledge transmission, with businesses such as Lesehan Taliwang Irama preserving authentic recipes and preparation techniques through at least three generations. The dish's naming, which references the Taliwang region, reflects the historical connection to the Taliwang Kingdom while the dish's adoption and popularization in Lombok demonstrate how culinary traditions evolve as they become integrated into new cultural contexts. This study successfully addresses the research questions by documenting the historical origins of Ayam Taliwang through multiple sources and perspectives, and by analyzing its development as a culinary tourism product that has contributed significantly to Lombok's economic and cultural landscape.

The development of Ayam Taliwang has been particularly significant since the 1960s when it began to be commercialized, with substantial growth in popularity occurring during the 1970s and continuing to the present day. The dish has evolved significantly in terms of presentation, preparation methods, and taste variations, adapting to changing consumer preferences while maintaining its essential identity. The development of Ayam Taliwang encompasses various aspects, including the transformation from simple, single-portion street food into elaborate, multiple-dish meals; the adaptation of traditional preparation methods to accommodate increased demand; and the introduction of flavor variations for a broader consumer base. These changes have been fundamental in positioning Ayam Taliwang within the culinary tourism industry, allowing it to appeal to diverse visitor preferences while

maintaining authenticity. The establishment of institutional support through business associations, government recognition, and national awards has further strengthened Ayam Taliwang's position as a culinary tourism product. The comprehensive nature of this development underscores the ability of traditional culinary practices to adapt and flourish within modern economic systems, providing a model that other traditional foods might follow in seeking to preserve their cultural heritage while contributing to local economic development through tourism.

The positioning of Ayam Taliwang as culinary tourism has been influenced by both internal and external factors that have collectively contributed to its success. Internal factors include accessibility, with Ayam Taliwang establishments being conveniently located and well-served by transportation infrastructure; facilities, with the development of improved dining environments and amenities; and human resources, with the maintenance of authentic family-based knowledge and skills. External factors include supportive government regulations, the relatively favorable competitive landscape, successful target market development, and effective promotion through social media and collaboration with travel agents. The integration of Ayam Taliwang into tourist itineraries through travel agent partnerships has created a sustainable model for culinary tourism that benefits both sectors while enriching the tourist experience. The recognition of Ayam Taliwang as a source of culinary tourism has important economic implications, generating substantial revenue during major events and contributing to the growth of Lombok's culinary sector. The potential for Ayam Taliwang to serve as a model for other traditional food products seeking to develop culinary tourism opportunities is significant, particularly for regions with rich culinary heritage that is not yet fully exploited for tourism purposes. This research contributes to the growing body of knowledge on the relationship between traditional food heritage and sustainable tourism development, providing a case study that demonstrates how cultural preservation and economic development can be mutually reinforcing. Recommendations for future research include conducting comparative studies with other traditional foods in Indonesia, investigating consumer perceptions and experiences of Ayam Taliwang through quantitative research methods, exploring the potential for Ayam Taliwang as a protected geographical indication, and developing comprehensive strategies for the sustainable development of Ayam Taliwang as a culinary tourism product that preserves its cultural authenticity while optimizing its economic potential.

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