

## MEANING OF MANADO TRADITIONAL FOOD IN MANADO-CHRISTIAN RELIGION PARTY

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### ABSTRAK

*Charles Sanders Peirce mengkonsepkan bahwa semiotika bukan hanya meneliti bahasa, tetapi tentang sistem dari tanda yang digunakan untuk menyampaikan makna, dari penelitian ini terdapat makna sosial di makanan tradisi masyarakat Kristen-Manado. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui makanan tradisi Kristen-Manado untuk pesta agama Kristen dan menganalisis representamen, objek, dan interpretant dalam penamaan makanan tradisional Kristen-Manado. Jenis penelitian yang digunakan adalah metode deskriptif-kualitatif yang mana hasilnya disalurkan dan dibawakan secara deskriptif. Data yang peneliti gunakan berasal dari berbagai publikasi sebagai teks budaya Manado, serta semiotika dari beberapa narasumber Kristen-Manado baik yang masih menetap di Manado maupun yang menetap di Jakarta. Representasi budaya Manado dalam penamaan makanan-makanan Manado dianalisis dengan menggunakan model semiotika Peirce. Teori semiotika dari Charles Sanders Peirce yang mengklasifikasikan macam makna ke dalam tiga aspek: representasi, objek, dan interpretasi. Peneliti mengumpulkan informasi melalui wawancara secara langsung dengan narasumber dari kelompok etnis Kristen-Manado, serta mengumpulkan data dari literatur yang mendukung. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa makanan di Manado memiliki makna sosial dan representasi budaya yang terkait dengan sejarah, alam, dan hewan, yang semuanya merupakan makanan khas agama Kristen. Makanan tradisional ini memiliki simbol-simbol yang dalam terkait persatuan dan kebersamaan dalam kehidupan masyarakat Manado. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa konotasi sosial dari nama makanan-makanan di Manado memiliki fungsi penting dalam konteks budaya dan agama Kristen. Beberapa dari makanan tersebut memiliki keunikan seperti dalam hal persiapan, bahan, tradisi, serta rasa. maka dari itu, diharapkan penelitian dapat mempertahankan dan melestarikan makanan tradisi budaya agama Kristen-Manado.*

**Kata Kunci:** Semiotika, Kristen Manado, Makanan Tradisi, Makna, Teori Pierce

### ABSTRACT

*Charles Sanders Peirce conceptualized semiotics as not just about language, but about any system of signs used to convey meaning, and the Christian-Manado traditional food has also conveyed social meaning. The goal of this study is to find out the Christian-Manado traditional food for Christian religion party and to analyse the representment, object, and interpretant in naming of Christian-Manado traditional food. The type of this research used is a descriptive-qualitative method in which the results are transmitted and delivered descriptively. The data that the researcher used came from various publications as a cultural text of Manado and semiotics from several Christian-Manado sources both who still live in Manado and who live in Jakarta. The representation of Manado culture in these foods is analyzed using Peirce's semiotic model. Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory classifies meanings into three aspects: representment, object, and interpretant. The researcher collected information through direct interviews with resource people from the Christian-Manado ethnic group, as well as collecting data from relevant literature. This research found that food in Manado has social meanings and cultural representations related to history, nature and animals, all of which are typical of Christianity. This traditional food has deep symbols related to unity and togetherness in Manado society's life. This research demonstrates that the social connotation of food names in Manado plays an essential function in the context of Christian culture and religion. Some of this food is unique such*

*as in preparation, ingredients, traditional, and also flavors. Therefore, with this research, hopefully, it can help the sustainability of traditional food in Kristen-Manado in cultural and religious terms.*

**Keywords:** *Semiotics, Christian Manado, Traditional food, Meaning, Pierce's Theory*

## INTRODUCTION

Semiotics is a discipline of study that investigates signs and their meaning. One of the important figures in semiotic theory is Charles Sanders Peirce. He is an American philosopher who pioneered a semiotic theory centred on the interaction between representation, object, and interpretant. Semiotics seeks to make people aware of how signs form reality. (Chandler, 2007) in his theory, a sign can be an icon (a direct resemblance to an object), an index (a cause-and-effect relationship or linkage), and a symbol (a meaning based on agreement or convention). Semiotics can provide useful analytical tools for comprehending food-related customs, rituals, and beliefs because it studies meaning and communication processes. Food has served as a medium for cross-cultural exchange (Mayer-Heft & Samuel-Azran, 2017) cited in (Wulan et al., 2023). This semiotic approach is relevant to analyzing how a particular object or culture, such as traditional food, can represent certain values and identities within a community.

People remember traditional food based on the ingredients, colors or visuals, and flavors. Traditional food function as a symbol sign, with the picture representing the three aspects, as stated by Peirce's theory (Lubis, 2023) representment (a sign that represents another thing in some way, or just the appearance of the sign), object (a sign symbolizes or depicts), and interpretant (an object in an individual's mind that is referred to as a sign, or simply stated, it is the meaning of the sign) (Lubis, 2023). In order to understand the meaning of traditional food, people have their own intuition about traditional food based on their names, forms, or recipes.

Traditional food is distinctive to each region. Traditional food is a regional wealth that is passed down from generation to generation. Similarly, the mention of the names of these foods are part of the preservation of local languages. Traditional food from a specific place is an intriguing topic to explore. Food goods frequently have unusual names that are fascinating to research in terms of their significance. Traditional food demonstrates the qualities or identity of a communal group that is easily recognised or located. For example, one of

the cities in Indonesia, Manado, it is the capital city of North Sulawesi province, which is located in the north of Sulawesi Island. The city, recognised for its people's warmth, is a popular tourist destination in northern Indonesia, particularly for maritime tourism and culinary flavours. Not only is the area endowed with breathtaking natural beauty, but it also has an intriguing cultural diversity. Manado, a Minahasa Christian city, is located in eastern Indonesia. Manado is one of Indonesia's few cities with a predominantly Christian population. Over 60% of persons identify as Christians (BPS, 2021:181) cited in (Dendeng, 2023). Nonetheless, unlike most other Indonesian regions, Manado is Christian. In Manado, the Minahasa culture and traditions evolved into a Christian traditional religious party. Minahasa culture and traditions evolved into a Christian traditional religious party in Manado.

Therefore, it is important to understand how traditional Christian food in Manado functions as a sign from a semiotic perspective. As a result, this research aims to examine and analyze types of meaning occurring in Manado-Christian traditional food. Hence the research focused on and limited the Semiotic field as the research problems, there are: What are Christian-Manado traditional food for Christian religion party? And how the representment, object, and interpretant in naming of Christian-Manado traditional food. Thus, the aims of this research are: To find out the Christian-Manado traditional food for Christian religion party. To analyse the representment, object, and interpretant in naming of Christian-Manado traditional food. And to add references in the field of Semiotic regarding the meaning types in traditional food. By using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory, this research seeks to explain how this traditional food has symbolic meanings in Manado's Christian traditional. In addition, this research also aims to contribute to a broader understanding of the role of food in building people's cultural and religious identities.

There have been many previous researchers regarding to the meanings in traditional food such as the research, to begin with the research entitled Language Semiotics: the Symbolic Meaning of

Traditional Minangkabau Food in Custom Ceremonies which was researched by (Syamsurizal et al., 2023) which aimed to describing the types and symbolic meanings of traditional Minangkabau food at traditional ceremonies in tanah darek. The result showed that the alek marapulai traditional food in traditional ceremony included the main course and kawa drinking food. The main courses consisted of rice, beef rendang, chicken rendang, omelet, keripik tunjuk ikan teri, cubadak kicuah, gulai lobak putih. Kawa drinking food consisted of galamai, batiah, dakak-dakak, wajik, leman, pinyaram, bareh randang, and sikunyik. Rendang has symbols that include endurance, discernment, and patience. Beef rendang, chicken rendang, omelet, and keripik tunjuk ikan teri have symbols of justice; batiah has symbols of the solidarity of individuals, particularly between two married families; and pinyarams have symbols of the solidarity of individuals, particularly between two married families. The second research was analysed by (Wulandari, 2020), entitled Pecel, A Political Communication Semiotic Analysis of Javanese Traditional Food As a Dish for Indonesian Politicians, it was aim to find out and analysis the meaning of Pecel as Indonesian culinary. The object of the research was political activities there were Joko Widodo, Hatta Rajasa, Sandiaga Uno, Ganjar Pranowo, Khofifah Indar Parawansa and Sukarwo. The result concluded that Pecel has symbol simplicity, close to the society, that make Indonesian politicians considered humble, and also symbolise spirituality. The last one research was created by (Calista & Aswati, 2020) with the title A Semiotic Analysis of The Message Behind The Indigenous Foods In The Traditional Toba Batak Marriage Procession: The Indigenous Meat of Pork and The Gold Fish, which aimed to find out what meaning is contained in the customary food ritual of Pork and Gold Fish in the Toba Batak of traditional marriage procession, the result of the research was conclude that several meanings are contained the customary food of pork and goldfish based on the sign, objects, interpretation analysis, and sign categories in the form of icons, indices, and symbols.

## RESEARCH METHOD

We used the method in this research, which was the descriptive qualitative method. Sugiyono (2013) said that the qualitative method is because it is undertaken in non-experimental environments and includes qualitative data collection and analysis, qualitative technique is also known as the naturalistic method. We used to analyse the data regarding various types of meaning found in Christian-Manado traditional food names. The subject of this research was Christian-Manado people who consume. The research was conducted and started on Mei- June 2024.

The object we chose for analysis was food names from the Manado-Christian traditional food which we collected through some of steps, those are: (1) finding out and approaching to the Christian-Manado people who live in Jakarta and Manado (2) Interviewing by calling those people and note-taking regarding the information source of the meaning in Manado-Christian traditional food. (3) Adding a piece of additional information relating to the Christian-Manado traditional food via online websites such as: Tribun News, Kompas, and journals. (4) Understanding and reading comprehensively to obtain the meaning of Christian-Manado traditional food that contains types of meaning in those food names.

Meanwhile, the researchers analyze the data of meaning types in Manado-Christian traditional food which had been obtained through some steps above. We analyzed the data through some steps: (1) identifying the Manado-Christian traditional food data, (2) finding the meaning and each food name datum according to the speaker and other literature such as journals and websites (3) classifying datum including traditional food name with the semiotic meaning model, and classified into 3 aspects. The types are representment, object, and interpretant, (4) describing each meaning that had been classified using Charles Sanders Peirce's (1931) theory. Furthermore, theory of semiotic meaning model by Peirce (1931) was used by the researchers to identify the data based on the reviewer and interviewee and to analyze how the semiotic meaning model of the Manado-Christian

traditional food that he said there are various types of meaning, including representment, object, and interpretant.

The researchers used the theory where it had been conducted before by research done by (Sijabat & Harahap, 2024) which used Peirce's theory which focused on analysing the meanings and symbols in the Traditional Food from Simalungun. He said that the types of meanings that have the function of the Simalungun traditional food, were the focus of the theory. Representment, object, and interpretant, the traditional food in Simalungun has many deep meanings, such as guidance and hopes for its recipient. It is important regarding the traditional events in Simalungun.

## RESULT

From the result of findings and analysis in Manado-Christian traditional food, the researchers had found 6 data as the total number that had been obtained, which the data are exactly Manado traditional food that is served in Mando-Chrisitan. The data were all identified and analyzed component meanings by Peirce (1931). There were 3 components of meanings as the result of this research, they were: Representment, Object, and Interpretant. Each component of meanings will be explained clearly in the discussion part.

## DISCUSSION

### Datum 1: Klappertaart



The first datum is Klappertaart, according to (Peirce, 1940) cited in (Lubis, 2023) types of meaning is classified into 3 aspects, the first aspect is representment, it is a sign that might signify something else or just be its form. In traditional food it is related to the name,

visualization, and flavor taste of the food. "Klappertaart" comes from the Dutch words 'klapper' means coconut and 'taart' comes for cake (Kompas). klappertaart has a sweet and savory taste with a touch of cinnamon aroma (Indonesia Kaya). The second aspect is the object, it is what the sign symbolises or signifies. In traditional food it is related to the culture, tradition, ingredients, circumstances, and social function. This reflects the Minahasa people's rich cultural background, klappertaart reflects the influence of Dutch culture brought during the colonial period, especially in culinary. The basic ingredients are coconut and milk. The use of coconut as the main ingredient shows the availability of local resources in Manado. Klappertaart is usually served in Christmas parties reflecting the value of togetherness and excitement. The third aspect is interpretant, it is the meaning of a sign, or simply a thing in someone's mind that is referred to as a sign. In traditional food it is related to the society's perspective, cultural identity symbols, and food representation. In the view of the Manado people, the people of Manado see klappertaart as a symbol of cultural acculturation and culinary creativity. Despite its Dutch origins, klappertaart has been adopted and modified by the Manado people, making it part of the local culinary identity. During Christmas celebrations, klappertaart becomes a special dessert that enriches Manado's culinary traditions. Initially, klappertaart was served on special occasions among the Dutch elite and only the upper-middle class were able to enjoy it, but over time, in the modern era klappertaart is not only enjoyed by certain groups, but has become a popular dish that can be enjoyed by various people, reflecting wide cultural adaptation and acceptance. Through this analysis, klappertaart is not only seen as a sweet dish, but also as a symbol of the fusion of Indonesian and Dutch cultures and a traditional Manado food.

### Datum 2: Paniki



The second datum is Paniki, according to (Peirce, 1940) cited in (Lubis, 2023) types of meaning is classified into 3 aspects, the first aspect is representment, it is a sign that might signify something else or just be its form. In traditional food it is related to the name, visualization, and flavor taste of the food. Paniki comes from the Minahasan language which means fruit bat. Paniki meat is luscious, sweet, and softer than chicken. It is commonly served as woku. The sweet flavour of paniki meat stems from their practice of eating fruit for their main meal. The second aspect is object, it is what the sign symbolises or signifies. In traditional food it is related to the culture, tradition, ingredients, circumstances, and social function. This reflects the Minahasa people's rich cultural background, which has been influenced by Chinese, Portuguese, and Dutch civilisations throughout history. Paniki is not merely a meal, but an important component of local identity, frequently served during memorable events such as Christianity events. The ingredient to make Paniki is often as woku, a Manado curry with strong tastes of lemongrass, lime leaves, and basil. The Minahasan people, an indigenous group from North Sulawesi, have long been known for their strange food choices, including bat and dog. This is because, prior to their conversion to Christianity (North Sulawesi was conquered by the Portuguese), the Minahasans held animist beliefs and lived in the wild, becoming accustomed to eating whatever came their way in order to survive. Paniki is more than just food in Minahasa. because it represents communal bonds and local traditions. It is frequently consumed at Christian celebrations, it symbolises the Manado people's courage and so strengthens social bonds among community members. The third aspect is

interpretant, it is the meaning of a sign, or simply a thing in someone's mind that is referred to as a sign. In traditional food it is related to the society's perspective, cultural identity symbols, and food representation. In the view of the Manado people, Paniki food is a form of adaptation of the Minahasa people to the environment of the Minahasa people who live side by side with nature. They utilise existing natural resources, including bats. This shows the ability of humans to adapt to the environment and utilise all available potential. This food is usually served during Christmas parties and is considered special because Paniki is currently difficult to find due to the decreasing number of fruit bats. This is due to the increasingly narrow natural habitat of fruit bats, with fewer fruit trees and massive hunting activities.

### Datum 3: Sup Brenebon



The third datum is Sup Brenebon, there is also other culinary data that has adapted from the Dutch due to 350 years of colonization, namely "Sup Brenebon". In Pierce's theory (1940) elaborates on the existence of representations to explain the signs we see, or experience. In this study, the representment found in Brenebon Soup is a local Manado soup that comes from the Dutch language, "Bruin Bonen" because of the color and basic ingredients of red beans and then adapted to the pronunciation of local Manado people. The flavors combine the richness of Indonesian spices and the originality of Brenebon Soup from its country of origin (the Netherlands). The soup of Brenebon itself has a clear color but has a slightly noticeable red color, depending on the ingredients used. There are two main

variations of Sup Brenebon, which can use red beans or pork as the base. If you put pork in the Sup Brenebon itself, it will bring a more savory taste, but for red bean soup, it can produce a sweet taste. (Website: Indonesia Kaya). The second explanation is about the object contained in this data. According to Pierce (1940), the object can be anything related to the representational reference. Objects that researchers get are ingredients used in dishes such as pork, carrots, and kidney beans as well as Indonesian spices (onions, celery, bay leaf, salt, pepper, nutmeg, cloves, green onions, and olive oil). It is usually served on important occasions, by families or the Christian-Manado community itself. Therefore, this food illustrates the tradition of family and mutual cooperation in serving this special food. (Website: Kelung.id) Interpretant, this research must describe the meaning or understanding of the Representment and Object. In this study, Brenebon Soup became a dessert especially in December to celebrate Christmas and people recall it as evidence of Dutch heritage during the colonial period that has been localized. In traditional Christian-Manado events, this food is served to express gratitude for God's blessings. Looking at the ingredients used, people think the ingredients symbolize prosperity and well-being.

#### Datum 4: Babi Putar



The fourth datum is Babi Putar, in accordance with (Peirce, 1940) cited in (Lubis, 2023) types of meaning is classified into 3 aspects, the first aspect is representment, it is a sign that might signify something else or just be its form. In traditional food it is related to the name, visualization, and flavor taste of the food. In North Sulawesi, Babi Putar, or roast pork, is a

traditional meal that is frequently offered during holidays like Christmas and Easter. It has a delicious flavour and the crispy skin gives it a savoury taste. It is served with a variety of side dishes. This Manado food has a strong flavour and abundant use of spices. The second aspect is the object, it is what the sign symbolises or signifies. In traditional food it is related to the culture, tradition, ingredients, circumstances, and social function. It emphasises its role as a dish saved for special occasions by symbolising festivity and community, with family and relatives gathering together. Babi Putar is the main dish on special occasions such as Christmas and Easter, Babi Putar is usually eaten with a variety of ingredients, such as minced meat, boiled eggs, potatoes, carrots and peas. These ingredients can be customised according to the family's taste and tradition. Babi Putar is made using not only pork, but also fat and skin, then skewered with a large bamboo skewer and grilled. This dish is served during family get-togethers or communal festivities in the community. Families engage with one another as they prepare and cook together, demonstrating the community values of the Minahasan people. More than just a dish, Babi Putar is an important symbol of Manado's social bonds and cultural identity. Its presence during Christmas celebrations strengthens the bonds of the Manado community. Babi Putar is also considered a symbol of hospitality and generosity in Minahasan society. The third aspect is interpretant, it is the meaning of a sign, or simply a thing in someone's mind that is referred to as a sign. In traditional food, it is related to people's perspectives, symbols of cultural identity, and representations of food. Minahasan people believe that this traditional food has been consumed since the 16th century. Babi Putar represents cultural identity as a symbol of middle to upper social class status because it requires a lot of cost and preparation. It is an important cultural icon that represents the ideals, customs, and social mores of the people. Babi Putar is a cuisine that represents the values of life and sustenance of the Minahasan people, and they see it as a symbol of their cultural identity. Today, Babi Putar itself represents part of festive feasts such as Christmas, when food is used as a way to

express appreciation and cultural heritage. Social bonds and cultural identity are strengthened during the raging preparation phase. Babi Putar as one of Manado's traditional dishes, and is one of the staple foods of any large gathering.

#### Datum 5: Biawak Rica-rica



The fifth datum is Biawak Rica-Rica, this part will explain the representment of the implementation of Pierce's theory (1940), in this food "Biawak rica-rica" its origin is due to the city of Manado which is famous for the use of spicy seasonings which are typical of every traditional food dish. This food is labeled as an exotic food because of the meat of lizards used in the ingredients, and the meat itself is quite tender and has more fat than chicken or sea fish. Lizard meat is also believed to have high nutrition for Manado people. According to Pierce, the second explanation is to explain the object according to the data obtained. Objects can include an explanation of how the culture or tradition of Biawak rica-rica is according to the community. The tradition commonly practiced by indigenous people is to make this dish part of the community's culinary tradition at special events or family gatherings. The main ingredient is lizards because from the time of the ancestors, it has natural resources that last until today as well as a blend of Manado regional spices. The interpretant that can be elaborated is that the community responds that they feel proud because this food represents the diversity of natural resources in their area and can utilize natural ingredients that are around. In addition, the community considers that this is a way to preserve the culinary traditions of the Christian-Manado ancestors.

#### Datum 6: Woku Belanga



The sixth datum is Woku Belanga, according to (Peirce, 1940) cited in (Lubis, 2023) types of meaning are classified into 3 aspects, the first aspect is representation, it is a sign that might signify something else or just be its form. In traditional food it is related to the name, visualization, and flavor taste of the food. The name "Woku Belanga" comes from two words in the Manado language. the word "Woku" is a type of basic spice used to cook various ingredients. Belanga is a traditional cooking vessel in the form of a clay pot used to give a distinctive aroma to dishes. Woku Belanga has a spicy and savory taste. The second aspect is the object, which is what the sign symbolizes or signifies. In traditional food, this relates to culture, tradition, ingredients, circumstances, and social functions. Woku Belanga is a traditional food from Manado, North Sulawesi, that incorporates the strong flavors of local spices, reflecting the Minahasan people's familiarity with natural ingredients and traditional cooking techniques. Woku Belanga is often served at traditional events, religious celebrations, and holidays such as Christmas. The use of the distinctive woku spice is a symbol of warmth and gratitude in the local tradition. Fish or chicken is the main ingredient (usually skipjack or tuna). The ingredients to make woku are chili peppers, lime leaves, and lemongrass, plus basil leaves, turmeric leaves and coconut milk that give the dish its flavor. All ingredients are processed in a

belanga to retain the traditional flavor. Woku Belanga is more commonly found in rural or seafood-rich areas as the main ingredient is fresh fish. However, it is also available in Manado specialty restaurants in big cities. Served at family gatherings, traditional parties, or religious celebrations, Woku Belanga serves as a symbol of warmth and togetherness. The third aspect is the interpretant which is the meaning of a sign, or simply, something that exists in someone's mind that is referred to as a sign. In traditional food, this relates to people's perspectives, symbols of cultural identity, and representations of food. People see this dish as a manifestation of their passion for the strong and fresh flavors of spices. It also reflects the value of mutual cooperation as it is often prepared together for large or traditional events and is also considered part of a culinary tradition that has been passed down from generation to generation and is a cultural heritage that must be preserved. It symbolizes pride in local wisdom, which people use to introduce Manado culture to outsiders. In modern life, Woku Belanga has also become part of the culinary archipelago that is often sought after by tourists, strengthening Manado's role as a center of Indonesian specialties.

## CONCLUSION & SUGGESTION

At the conclusion of this research, the researchers conclude that there are 6 data were analysed based on Manado-Christian traditional food in the christian religion party, especially Christmas. There are 3 components of meaning analysed in Christian-Manado traditional food based on the theory of Charles Sander Peirce. Manado-Christian traditional food is not just food that has a large portion and a lot of food that is usually eaten. This traditional food contains many meanings in the life of Manado society that can be used as new knowledge by everyone who knows it. Manado-Christian traditional food means unity, togetherness and cooperation in Manado society because this food is served during Christian celebrations or family events. These traditional food shows that they contain cultural representations, as a result, large quantities of Manado-Christian traditional food, often using natural ingredients, and wild animal

meat. Every implied meaning has positive and good values. The people of Manado make this traditional food a hallmark of a culture because it is closely related to history, nature, and animals. This traditional food has a very deep meaning and is attached to the cultural context of Christianity because of its uniqueness in terms of preparation, ingredients, traditions, and flavours. Through this writing, the researcher has examined the meanings of Christian-Manado traditional food in a simple and easy-to-understand manner.

Many young people started to abandon the culture as the time went on, and many generations Z are ignorant and even unaware of the regional cuisine. The researchers suggest guidance to the younger generation on how to learn and understand culture, particularly Christian-Manado traditional food. In the end, we hope that this research will contribute to the field of semiotics and be helpful to future scholars who wish to study this subject. Furthermore, the researcher acknowledges in this work that there are still a lot of knowledge and skill gaps. As a result, the researcher expects that other scholars will be able to use various theories and data sources to assess the meaning of traditional food. Additionally, the researcher recommends that readers examine this subject in order to learn more about the significance of traditional foods.

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