**"Kapampangan Cuisine Conflicts: A Scoping Review of Divergent Perspectives on the Use of Mayonnaise and Egg as Sisig Ingredients"**

***Cristian Jay M. Trinidad
2023***

***Abstract***

Sisig has become one of our most popular exports and the greatest pork dish on Earth, There are many variations of Sisig as innovation goes on and these variations are disrespectful for Kapampangans. The review encompasses a wide range of sources, including academic articles, culinary literature, online forums, and social media content. The researcher examine the divergent perspective of the adoption of mayonnaise and egg in Sisig and safeguarding the authentic sisig in Angeles City, as well as the impact on the dish's taste, texture, and cultural significance.

*Keywords:* safeguarding, intangible cultural heritage, ordinance

***Introduction***

The province of Pampanga is known as the “Culinary Capital of the Philippines” (DOT, 2018). The province is well known for continuously sustaining its culinary values and heritage in the Philippines. It is also called the Kapampangan cuisine (Tayag and Quioc, 2014). [Kapampangan Cuisine](http://www.willexplorephilippines.com/pampanga-culinary-capital-philippines/) is deeply rooted to Spanish Cuisine but has many similarities with Malay and even Mexican Cuisine. Kapampangan added a twist by using the available and abundant ingredients in their area which is also the birth of exotic food. The diverse and rich flavors of the food is evident in every kapampangan dishes as they put the best ingredients to produce quality and palatable food (Garcia, 2018)

The Kapampangans received cooking instruction from Spanish friars and seamen during the Spanish Colonial era. Although Mexican and Malay food also have an effect, Spanish cuisine is the main inspiration for Kapampangan cuisines. The techniques and local ingredients that the Kapampangans learned from the Spaniards served as inspiration for their cuisine.

According to Camella, Spanish friars were astounded by the Kapampangans' ability to create a special blend. As a result, whenever they had house guests, friars and government officials used Kapampangans. In Malolos, Bulacan, Kapampangans were likewise entrusted with creating the food for the First Philippine Republic's proclamation. From that point on, the Kapampangans adopted the Spanish cooking techniques and never looked back. The generations that came after us left behind these recipes.

Kapampangan cuisine has distinct style when it comes to their cooking process, which is called *“sangkutsa”* where in you partially cook or parboiling the meat until soft, the *“sangkutsa”* method objective is to cook the meat halfway instead of cooking it thoroughly.

Pampanga has actively promoted food tourism, drawing visitors from all over the Philippines and beyond to savor its delectable offerings. Restaurants, carinderias (local eateries), and street food stalls in the province serve authentic Pampanga dishes. The province is blessed with fertile lands and abundant natural resources, which contribute to the availability of high-quality ingredients and produce. Pampanga is known for its rice fields, sugar plantations, and an array of fruits and vegetables, making it a haven for fresh and locally sourced ingredients.

Sisig is a popular Filipino dish made by boiling, chopping, and grilling parts of pig's head such as ears, cheeks, and jowls, which are then seasoned with salt, pepper, and vinegar.

The process of making a sisig does take a bit of work, According to Kawaling Pinoy, to make authentic sisig recipe, First combine the pig face, vinegar, soy sauce, garlic, peppercorns, bay leaves and about 1 tablespoon of salt and enough water to completely cover the pork. Bring to a boil, skimming scum that floats on top. Lower heat, cover, and simmer for about 50 minutes to 1 hour or until meat is tender. Remove from heat and drain well, discarding liquid. Over a hot grill, grill pork for about 7 to 10 minutes on each side or until crisp and slightly charred. Or arrange in a single layer on a baking sheet and broil in a 450 F oven for about 4 to 5 minutes or until nicely charred. Remove from heat, allow to cool to touch, and chop meat. In a large bowl, combine chopped meat, onions, chili peppers, calamansi juice, and liquid seasoning. And liver spread and gently stir to combine. Season with salt and pepper to taste. To serve, transfer to sizzling hot plates.

Its existence was first recorded in a Kapampangan dictionary back in 1732 by Diego Bergaño, a Spanish missionary who served as the parish priest for Mexico, Pampanga at the time. The Augustinian friar defined sisig as “a salad including green papaya or green guava eaten with a dressing of salt, pepper, garlic, and vinegar.” The dish’s inherent sourness was thought to suppress the urge to vomit, and was thus frequently administered to those suffering from dizziness.

Sisig in Kapampangan language means ‘sour’. Sisig is an original kapampangan dish more than 2 centuries before the sizzling sisig version was accidentally invented by Lucia “Aling Lucing” Cunanan (Sisig Queen) from Angeles City. Based from Aling Lucing during her interview in Kapuso Mo, Jessica Soho, her invention of sisig was an accident. She burned a pig’s ear accidentally while grilling it and she did not want it to be a waste, so she chopped the pig’s ear and put other ingredients on it. Sisig is composed mainly of grilled pig’s ears or head, with a lot of calamondin (also known as calamansi), onions, hot peppers and soy sauce. It happened that people who eats in her carinderia loved it, thus the birth of the dish sisig. (Kapampangan Media, 2019)

In December each year, Angeles, Pampanga, hosts the "Sisig Festival" (Sadsaran Qng Angeles), a celebration of the popular Kapampangan meal. To highlight the city's culinary skills, Mayor Carmelo Lazatin declared it an annual event in December 2004 after it had begun in 2003. In addition to the festival, there is a cooking competition where chefs compete to make meals, notably sisig.

Since the city hosted its first Sadsaran Qng Angeles (Sisig Festival) in 2003, Angeles City has established itself as the nation's Sisig Capital. There was a huge sizzling plate at the celebration, and HRM students used it to cook hundreds of sisig for thousands of people, including those from the Guinness Book of World Records.

Mayonnaise is a thick, creamy sauce or dressing that is made of oil, egg yolks, lemon juice or vinegar, and seasonings. It's not the same as [salad dressing](https://recipes.howstuffworks.com/food-facts/question515.htm), which doesn't contain egg yolks and is generally sweeter than mayonnaise. Mayonnaise is an emulsion, which is a mixture of two liquids that normally can't be combined. Combining oil and water is the classic example. Emulsifying is done by slowly adding one ingredient to another while simultaneously mixing rapidly. This disperses and suspends tiny droplets of one liquid through another.

The Angeles City government had proclaimed sisig as “Intangible Cultural Heritage” by the Sangguniang Panglungsod through Ordinance No. 405, Series of 2017 of Angeles City, officially claiming it as an original Kapampangan creation in order to protect it from further cultural appropriation (Banal, 2018)

The specific research question designed was: Why Kapampangans preserve their intangible cultural heritage when it comes to culinary, what are the perspectives of Kapampangans on authentic sisig recipe? Analyze the “Sisig Babi as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Angeles” (Ordinance No. 405, Series of 2017 of Angeles City)

***Methodology***

A scoping review approach was used to achieve several objectives including clarify the misconception about authentic sisig, and examine the Ordinance No. 405, Series of 2017 of Angeles City. A scoping review is a distinct type of evidence synthesis methodology, often used alongside other methods such as systematic reviews, meta‑analyses, and qualitative evidence synthesis. A scoping review is a method of review in which a systematic approach is used to identify and synthesize existing or emerging literature on a given topic. (Sharma & Goyal, 2023)

The existing literature about using mayonnaise and egg as sisig ingredients and a literature about authentic sisig or not using mayonnaise and egg as ingredients of said recipe. Reviewing and evaluating the electronic materials or internet-transmitted documents from different authors and news platform.

***Results***

In the 1970s that Aling Lucing Cunanan adopted this plate and transformed it into something else entirely. Her recipe included grilling the cheeks and adding vinegar, calamansi juice, onions and liver, turning it into the *pulutan*we know today. Cunanan became the Sisig Queen and started a revolution. (Unilever Food Solutions Philippines)

According to Section 5 Ordinance No. 405, Series of 2017 of Angeles City also known as “Sisig Babi as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Angeles”, it states that the original recipe of authentic sizzling sisig is the basic original formula and method that conforms to standard Kapampangan taste as the best representation of the community and recognized as part of the Angeleno’s cultural heritage it is made from boiled then grilled chopped pig’s ears or cheeks, together with chopped onions or shallots, red hot chili peppers, vinegar and or *“kalamunding”* juice, salt and pepper, minced grilled chicken liver is optional. Based on the said ordinance, the authentic sisig has no mayonnaise and egg as part of the sisig’s ingredients, It's a total disrespect because perfecting the sisig to have its authentic taste and chewy texture is something you earn from experience and acknowledging the history of how it evolved from the Kapampangan sensibilities as a heirloom recipe (Cruz, 2018)

Angeles City officially claiming the sisig as an original Kapampangan creation in order to protect it from further cultural appropriation, Cultural Appropriation is “the act of taking or using things from a culture that is not your own, especially without showing that you understand or respect this culture. (School of the Art Institute of Chicago). There is 13 sisig recipes variations in the Philippines including fish sisig, pusit sisig, beef sisig, tofu sisig, sisig matua etc. The ordinance

It is believed that the introduction of egg and mayonnaise into sisig started when it was introduced in Manila alongside with the silog meals offered by fast food restaurants. The preparation of the original sisig makes it impossible to simulate in a fast-paced city, where restaurants resorted to using an alternative to the savory effect of a chicken liver, thus using an egg or a mayonnaise. (Banal, 2018)

Locals of Pampanga said that if the sisig has egg on it, it’s already called as “torta” or omelette while if sisig has mayonnaise, it’s called as dinakdakan, dinakdakan is an Ilocano dish which the ingredients are the same with sisig except pig’s brain but it has mayonnaise but according to Unilevel Food Solutions Philippines, Traditional sisig gets its creamy texture and flavor primarily from the chicken liver some even mash it until paste-like. However, unconventional versions lean on other pantry staples for the same effect. Among these creative additions, mayonnaise is the most reliable choice.

***Conclusions***

The Kapampangans are very for preserving their intangible cultural heritage, most especially in authentic sisig recipe. It also stated that the authentic sisig has no mayonnaise and egg because it makes their culture disrespected and other provinces must not create variations of sisig to avoid any confusion. Article XIV of the Philippine Constitution mentioned that the state shall foster the preservation, enrichment and dynamic evolution of Filipino national culture based on the principle of unity in diversity in a climate of free artistic and intellectual expression.

The ordinance “Sisig Babi as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Angeles” (Ordinance No. 405, Series of 2017 of Angeles City) established the systems and policies for conserving the genuine sizzling sisig of Angeles entails conserving not only a dish but also a vibrant culinary custom and rich cultural legacy. The traditional ingredients and cooking methods that give this sizzling pleasure its unique flavor must be preserved to guarantee its continued authenticity. It is important to support local chefs and food aficionados in passing on the traditional recipes and cooking techniques to coming generations. In addition, encouraging sustainable food preparation methods and ethical ingredient procurement can help preserve the nutritional value of this well-known dish while also protecting the environment.

Learning the meaning, background, and context of the cultural aspects one wants to interact with is essential. To obtain a deeper understanding, actively seek out information from reliable sources and have meaningful conversations with members of the relevant culture. It's crucial to abstain from using ceremonial or sacred items and customs from other cultures for selfish ends. Furthermore, collaboration rather than appropriation can promote diversity and inclusivity and create a more interconnected society. We may appreciate our worldwide diversity without causing further harm if we respect cultural boundaries and interact with people from different cultures in a sincere and polite way.

According to Mike Pangilinan, “For us Kapampángans, cooking is not a mere hobby or a past time. It is an essential part of our identity. It is an expression of who we are as a people. It is our soul. Therefore we get hurt and angry whenever somebody steals our soul and identity and calls it simply Filipino food rather than Kapampangan dish. Worse is when you twist it and play around with it to the point that we can no longer recognise ourselves in it.” Sisig has its significances in different aspects or degrees. As a Kapampangan original traditional dish, it is continuously preserved and sustained, which could provide comments on the other people’s version of Sisig. (Cadiogan, D.J et.al. 2021)

Overall, people need to understand the cultural influences on food throughout history, in my opinion. It's shocking to learn how many dishes we consider "Filipino food" aren't really representative of their culture; this only goes to demonstrate how colonization can actually take over and eradicate indigenous customs.

***References***

Banal, R. (2017) “Pampanga aims for UNESCO recognition for its gastronomic star, sisig” Retrieved from <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/lifestyle/food/609370/pampanga-aims-for-unesco-recognition-for-its-gastronomic-star-sisig/story/>

Banal, R. (2018) “Sisig with egg and mayo? Thanks, but Kapampangans aren't having any of that” Retrieved from <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/lifestyle/food/651699/sisig-with-egg-and-mayo-thanks-but-kapampangans-aren-t-having-any-of-that/story/>

Camella, 2022 “How Did Pampanga Become The Philippines Culinary Capital?” Retrieved from <https://www.camella.com.ph/how-did-pampanga-become-the-philippines-culinary-capital/#:~:text=During%20the%20Spanish%20Colonial%20period%2C%20Spanish%20friars%20and%20sailors%20trained,from%20Spaniards%20and%20local%20ingredients>.

Course Hero, University of Hawaii (2023) “Filipino Dish” Retrieved from <https://www.coursehero.com/file/196516672/IP364-FilipinoDishdocx/>

Darren Jesley Cadiogan, Shienelle Crystal H. Dy, Christine Joy Lauren T. Opaco, Rachel D. Rodriguez, Jan Timothy T. Tan, Kenneth A. Villanueva, Jame Monren T. Mercado, Manyisig: The culinary heritage significance of Sisig in Angeles City, Pampanga, Philippines,International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science,Volume 24,2021,100347,ISSN 1878-450X,https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijgfs.2021.100347. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1878450X21000469>

Estrella, S. (2013) “Sisig: The Tragic History Behind Our Favorite Pulutan” Retrieved from <https://pepper.ph/blog/sisig-history>

HowStuffWorks (2021) “What is Mayonnaise?” Retrieved from <https://recipes.howstuffworks.com/food-facts/question617.htm>

Juan, A.F. (2022) “HERE’S WHY YOU SHOULDN’T PUT MAYO AND EGG ON YOUR SISIG” Retrieved from <https://thepost.net.ph/the-feed/food/heres-why-you-shouldnt-put-mayo-and-egg-on-your-sisig/>

Kapampangan Media (2019) “Sisig History” Retrieved from <https://kapampangan.org/sisig-history/>

Manglinong, D. (2018) “How to distinguish ‘real’ sisig from adapted versions” Retrieved from

<https://interaksyon.philstar.com/breaking-news/2018/05/24/127382/how-to-distinguish-real-sisig-from-adapted-versions/>

Sharma, P. & Goyal, N. (2023) “How to write a scoping review” Retrieved from <https://journals.lww.com/iamr/fulltext/2023/10010/how_to_write_a_scoping_review_.12.aspx>

Tasteatlas, “Sisig” Retrieved from <https://www.tasteatlas.com/sisig>