

THE CUISINE OF THE EDE PEOPLE IN KMRONG PRÔNG VILLAGE, BUON MA THUOT (DAK LAK PROVINCE)

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Abstract

The Ede are a Malayo-Polynesian language-speaking ethnic group residing primarily in Dak Lak, Dak Nong, Phu Yen, and Khanh Hoa provinces. They have a rich and unique tangible and intangible culture. From 2017 to 2020, the authors carried out many field trips to Kmrong Prông A and Kmrong Prông B villages (Ea Tu Commune, Buon Ma Thuot) to research, collect, and inventory the material and spiritual cultural heritage of the Ede for conservation and exhibition at the Dak Lak provincial museum. In this article, we introduce some traditional dishes of the Ede in Krmong Prông village, research and evaluate traditional aspects of their cuisine, and propose some recommendations and solutions to preserve and promote the unique Ede cuisine in the current period of development and integration.

Keywords: Changes in cuisine; Ede people; Traditional cuisine.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The language that the Ede people speak belongs to the Malayo-Polynesian language group and bears characteristics of Indonesian. The Ede live mainly in Dak Lak and the neighboring provinces of Dak Nong, Phu Yen, and Khanh Hoa. Their main economic activity is upland farming with crop rotation to restore soil fertility. Other groups of the Ede work in lowland farming and use buffalo to step on the ground instead of plowing and harrowing. In addition to farming, other economic activities are animal husbandry, hunting, gathering, fishing, knitting and weaving. The Central Highlands and Dak Lak Province, in particular, are the gathering place of many ethnic groups that migrated from all over the country. With the government's policy since 1975 of setting up new economic zones, the characteristic economic activities of the local ethnic groups have gradually changed. The focus is now on industrial crops, such as coffee, rubber, and black pepper.

The Ede live under the matrilineal system, with many generations living in a single house on stilts (with a length of 15 m to more than 100 m). They have a rich and diverse tangible and intangible cultural heritage, including oral literature with fairy tales, proverbs, epics, and epic poetry (*Khan Dăm Săn, Khan Dăm Kteh Mlan*). Traditional musical instruments include gongs, *H'gor* drums, *kni*, and two types of flute: *đing năm* and *đinh tut*. Traditional costumes of women are dresses and skirts; those for men are loincloths and shirts. Jewelry is made of silver, copper, and beads. Other traditional customs include *tục cà răng* (tooth grinding) and ear stretching. (Bé et al., 1982).

Ea Tu is a commune located northeast of the city of Buon Ma Thuot. The natural land area is 2,862 hectares, with 4,242 households and 16,773 residents (UBND xã Ea Tu, 2019). National highways 14 and 26 run pass Ea Tu Commune, creating favorable conditions for the Ede to access and exchange socio-economic activities. The 18 ethnic groups living together in the commune are the Viet, Ede, Muong, Tay, Thai, Hoa, Nung, Gia Rai, Mông, Khmer, Dao, Xo Dang, Cham, Tho, Co Ho, San, Ba Na, and H'rê. The Ede ethnic group has the most residents (7,217 people), accounting for 43.68% of the total population of the commune.

The traditional cuisine of the Ede in Kmrong Prông village of Ea Tu Commune is closely associated with the natural environment and upland cultivation practices. Compared with other cultural products, the Ede cuisine retains many traditional features in terms of ingredients, preparation, food decoration, local dishes, etc. However, the cuisine of the Ede has undergone changes due to acculturation and changes in economic activities, the natural environment, places and forms of residence, and the effects of the market economy, etc.

This article introduces some outstanding traditional dishes in the cuisine of the Ede that need to be preserved. It discusses factors causing the traditional Ede cuisine to change and proposes solutions to preserve it in the current context of integration.

2. INGREDIENTS AND COOKING METHODS USED IN TRADITIONAL EDE DISHES

2.1. Ingredients

The ingredients used in traditional dishes of the Ede in Kmrông Prông village are mainly from nature and upland cultivation, including rice, corn, potatoes, cassava, vegetables, and tubers from the forest (Figure 1). The Ede live close to mountains and forests, so the forests play a vital role as a food source for daily life. The components of Ede meals include vegetables and tubers gathered from the forest; typical forest vegetables are *Ktônñ*, *kthih*, *djam kbäl*, *boh êpang*, bamboo shoots, mushrooms, a type of taro leaf that makes the throat itchy, sweet taro leaves, *môn thục* (also called *A Neng* – a type of taro leaf). Protein in the diet comes from the meat of birds, wild animals, reptiles, crabs, snails, and fish taken from forests, rivers, streams, lakes, and swamps. In their fields and gardens, the Ede often practice intercropping with many kinds of crops, such as black bean, hyacinth bean, dragon bean, ginger, galangal, lemongrass, chili, chive bulb, katuk leaf, bitter gourd, bitter melon, gai choy, and banana. Most Ede households raise livestock to serve in worship (religious activities), funerals, weddings, or holidays. Livestock are rarely used as daily food.



Figure 1. Preparing ingredients for Ede dishes in Kmrông Prông village (Buon Ma Thuot)

Source: Phạm et al. (2020).

The Ede have a communal way of living. On important occasions of the village or family, such as weddings or funerals, the indispensable traditional dish is *êyao* leaf powder soup. Preparing ingredients and cooking *êyao* are quite elaborate; it is cooked in

large copper pots to serve hundreds of villagers and neighbors. It is common for women in a family to cook food, but during big public occasions, the dishes are prepared by men due to the heavy workload. The Ede in Ea Tu Commune (Dak Lak) have a taste for spicy food, so in most dishes, chili is an indispensable condiment. They eat rice with salt and chili, steamed food with salt and chili, and soup with chili. In addition to chili, the Ede use many other pungent spices, such as ginger, galangal, and chive bulb.

2.2. Cooking methods

The Ede in Kmrông Prông village cook dishes in many different ways. However, they commonly follow the traditional ways: cooking over a fire, preparation without fire, or a combination of these two methods. Cooking over a fire is the most popular way to prepare food and occurs in the widest variety of forms, such as heating, boiling, drying, grilling, braising, and burning in the fire. Details are as follows.

- The first method is heating ingredients in a pot over a fire. This method is used when cooking many ingredients together, such as bitter eggplant cooked with grilled chicken, and edible wild plants served with white rice.
- The boiling method depends on the processing requirements of each dish. Food can be added when the water is still cold (mainly meat and tubers) or after the water has boiled (green vegetables).
- The method of drying ingredients with heat is performed in two ways: drying under the sun and drying on the stove. The types of fish to be dried are those caught in rivers, streams, lakes, and swamps. After cleaning, the Ede cut open the fish, remove the gut, and then skewer them on sticks to dry. Meat is cut into large pieces to dry under the sun or by the fire. The Ede use meat and fish for making soup. After harvesting rice, corn, or beans, the Ede often preserve them by roasting or hanging them on kitchen racks to dry for long-term storage if the weather is not sunny.
- Grilling is a method of cooking food using direct heat, commonly from charcoal. The Ede often bake potatoes and corn by burying them in hot coal ashes. Meat and fish are skewered on sharpened bamboo or neohouzeaua (a genus of Asian bamboo in the grass family) and then grilled over embers.
- Braising with banana leaves is a unique method of cooking Ede dishes. This technique is mainly used to make shrimp, fish, and meat dishes. After being cleaned, the ingredients are mixed with chive bulbs, chive leaves, chili, cherry tomatoes, ginger, lemongrass, salt, and monosodium glutamate (MSG). The food is wrapped in many layers of forest banana leaves dried by the fire, blocked at two ends, and then grilled on embers. Therefore, after being braised, the dish retains the aroma of the ingredients and spices with the additional flavor of the forest banana leaf.

- Burning is a method of preparing beef, pork, and chicken. Before burning, the Ede clean the animals by washing them with water and perform the sticking and bleeding technique without shaving off the coat. Then, the animals are directly burned on the fire; the flame burns off the fur or feathers and cooks the inside. For pork and beef, the burning method is used to make the meat medium rare, then a portion is cut into small pieces to mix with spices or is dipped directly in salt and pepper mixed with minced lemongrass and lemon leaves. The rest will be used to prepare other dishes.

The technique of preparing food without fire is mainly used for making salads with vegetables and tubers. The typical processing method is to pound bitter eggplant and papaya and mix them with spices. In addition, the Ede people have fermented dishes, with the main ingredient being bamboo shoots. Bamboo shoots are stuffed in a jar with a bit of salt and covered for about 7 to 10 days; the dish is ready when the food starts to smell sour.

The combination of cooking with and without fire is to mix pre-cooked or cooked foods with spices to make dishes with high nutritional value. The main ingredients for salads are fruit and vegetables, such as pumpkin buds, chayote buds, and dragon beans that are cooked in boiling water and then squeezed dry. Pumpkin seeds or peanuts are roasted and ground, then mixed well with herbs, salt, green chili, powdered starch, chive bulbs, and cherry tomatoes. Besides salads, local cooks often make blood pudding and medium-rare meat dishes for important ceremonies. In the past, the Ede dried leftover food on kitchen racks for long-term storage.

2.3. Kitchenware

When going to the fields, the Ede often bring rice and salt. They use bamboo to make soup ladles and rice spoons, and banana leaves are used to wrap vegetables and to braise fish and meat. They also use female bamboo (a tropical clumping bamboo originating from Northeast India) for cooking food, grinding spices, and making *com lam* – rice in a bamboo tube. Ede families use clay pots or small cast iron pots for cooking and place cooked food in porcelain crockery or terracotta bowls. They eat with spoons.

During funerals, weddings, or other special occasions, the Ede tend to use large copper pots and pans to cook food for many people. Usually, the Ede serve food on banana leaves and eat with their hands. Leftover food from each meal is wrapped in forest leaves and divided equally among participants attending the community meal.

3. SOME TRADITIONAL DISHES OF THE EDE IN KMRÔNG PRONG

3.1. Êyao leaf powder soup (*djam pŭng êyao*)

Ingredients for making *êyao* leaf powder soup (*djam pŭng êyao*) (Figure 2) are pork bones, *mdok* (a vegetable belonging to the taro family but growing along streams, and in swamps and valleys), green papaya, green chili, chive bulbs, *djam kbăl* and *djam djač* (two kinds of wild greens), rice, fresh *êyao* leaves (a forest leaf with a sweet, aromatic flavor), and various spices. The method of preparation is to wash the pork bones,

mdok, and *êyao* leaves, peel off the green papaya skin and scrape it into small pieces. Next, they soak the rice till soft and then pour it into a mortar and grind it into powder. They add *êyao* leaves and pound until the leaves are finely crushed.

To make *êyao* leaf powder soup delicious, they stir-fry pork, pour water into the pot to boil, and add green papaya and *mdok* to cook together. After the ingredients are cooked, they pour rice flour, *êyao* leaves, and spices into the soup pot. They use a bamboo spoon to stir often so that the rice flour does not thicken and to avoid sticky stains at the bottom and a burning smell. Finally, they add seasoning to taste. In this way of cooking, the rice flour thickens. The Ede add *djam kbāl* and *djam djač* and stew for a few more minutes before serving to make the soup look tastier.

In addition to the mentioned ingredients, *êyao* leaf powder soup is cooked with beef or cow *wêč* (the first part of the small intestine), wild taro, bitter eggplant, dried bitter tomato, green papaya, young jackfruit, forest banana core, wild vegetables, chili, and chive bulb. *Êyao* leaf powder soup is served with rice and crushed bitter eggplants.

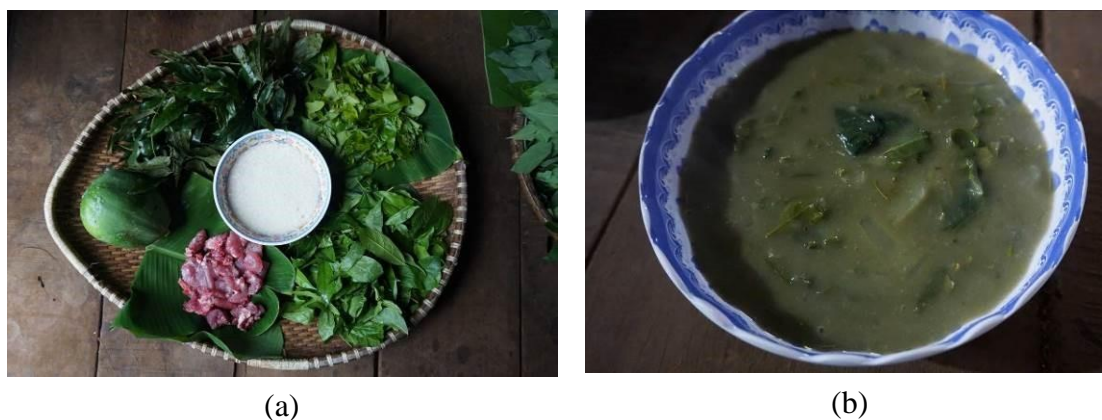


Figure 2. Ede *êyao* leaf powder soup

Notes: (a) Ingredients; (b) Powder soup.

Source: Phạm et al. (2020).

3.2. Bitter eggplant cooked with *wêč* (the first part of a cow's small intestine)

The ingredients of this dish are bitter eggplant, sweet eggplant, *wêč*, green chili, chive bulb, *djam kbāl*, lemon basil, salt, and monosodium glutamate (Figure 3). For this dish, the *wêč* must be cooked, and the bitter eggplants should not be too old or raw. First, the *wêč* is cleaned and the bitter eggplants are cut into halves or quarters. The next step is to boil water, put *wêč*, bitter eggplant, green chili, chive bulb, and spices into the pot, and heat until the eggplants are cooked. After all the ingredients are cooked, *djam kbāl* is added to the pot. When everything is cooked evenly, the broth is separated and a ladle is used to puree the ingredients. The final step is to pour the separated broth back into the pot. The amount of broth depends on each family's style. Typically, the Ede use little water in bitter eggplant soup to create a depth of flavor. Lemon basil, chive bulbs, and spices are added to the soup as a finishing touch.



Figure 3. Ingredients of bitter eggplant dish

Source: Phạm et al. (2020).

It can be said that this dish is tasty thanks to the bitterness of eggplant and *wêč*, the spiciness of the chili, and the aroma of lemon basil and chive bulbs. Besides being cooked with *wêč*, bitter eggplant is cooked with grilled chicken, smoked meat, dried fish, and buffalo meat. Pork is cooked with pumpkin buds, dragon beans, hyacinth beans, black beans, wood ear mushrooms, banana blossoms, etc. Bitter eggplant is often eaten with white rice and dried fish grilled over a fire.

3.3. Stir-fried cassava leaves with anchovies (*djam hla hbei blang*)



Figure 4. Stir-fried cassava leaves with anchovies

Source: Phạm et al. (2020).

Ingredients for this dish are cassava leaves, anchovies, lemongrass, chive bulbs, green chili, *trống bhang* (wild eggplant), salt, monosodium glutamate, and cooking oil

(Figure 4). Cassava leaves must have pinkish-red stems and small thin leaves. After being washed, the young leaves are crushed and pounded with green chili, lemongrass, chive bulbs, *trống bhang*, salt, and monosodium glutamate before cooking. The first step is to boil cooking oil and stir-fry anchovies. When the anchovies are cooked, the mixture of pounded cassava leaves is poured into the pan and stirred using bamboo chopsticks until the mixture is cooked evenly. The cooking process is complete when the lemongrass and chili smell pleasant.

Besides anchovies, cassava leaves can be cooked with steamed fish and pork fat mixed with male papaya flowers, bitter eggplant, green chili, chive bulbs, and lemongrass. Cassava leaves stir-fried with anchovies is an indispensable traditional dish of the Ede, cooked as a daily dish or at festivals, funerals, weddings, etc.

3.4. Grilled chicken with chili salt

The ingredients are a chicken weighing 1 to 2 kg, chive bulbs, lemongrass, lime leaves, coriander, coarse salt, and green chili (Figure 5). The chicken is cleaned, gutted, and a few slits are made on the body using a knife. Then, a mixture of spices, including chive bulbs, lemongrass, coriander, green chili, coarse salt, lemon basil, lime leaves, and pounded monosodium glutamate, is applied to the chicken. The chicken is left to sit for about 30 minutes to allow the spices to infuse into the chicken. After that, the chicken is clamped between two fresh bamboo sticks, tied in place with forest vines, and grilled on a charcoal stove. It takes about two hours to cook the chicken. Grilled chicken with chili salt is dipped into crushed spices, including chive bulbs, green chili, salt, monosodium glutamate, lemon basil, lime leaves, lemongrass, and coriander.



Figure 5. Ingredients for grilled chicken with chili salt

Source: Phạm et al. (2020).

3.5. Crushed bitter eggplant with steamed fish

Ingredients for this dish are bitter eggplant, sweet eggplant, steamed fish, green chili, chive bulbs, lemon basil, salt, and monosodium glutamate (Figure 6). The bitter and sweet eggplants should not be too ripe or raw to ensure the dish's taste.

The method to prepare this dish is to remove the stem from the eggplant and bury it in a charcoal stove for about 10 to 15 minutes. The dried fish is a type of steamed scad (this dish is usually made with dried fish caught in rivers and streams), which is grilled over embers and filleted. Finally, all ingredients, including chili, salt, monosodium glutamate, bitter eggplant, steamed fish, lemon basil, and chive bulbs, are put into a small mortar and pounded. Crushed bitter eggplant with steamed fish is usually prepared for breakfast at home or in the field to eat with new or leftover rice.

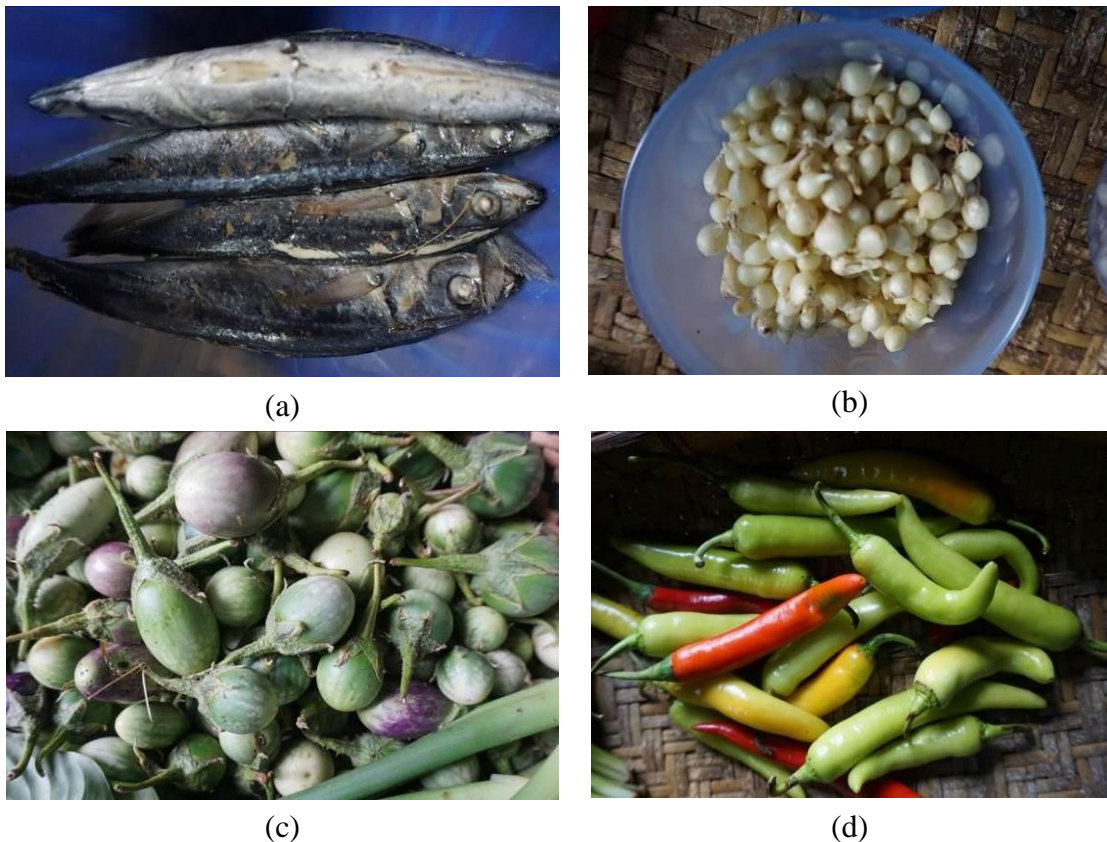


Figure 6. Ingredients for crushed bitter eggplant with steamed fish

Notes: (a) Steamed scad; (b) Chive bulbs (fresh chive); (c) Bitter eggplant; (d) Green chili.

Source: Pham et al. (2020).

3.6. Crushed bitter eggplant with spices

Ingredients are ripe or old bitter eggplants, green chili, chive bulbs, lemon basil, coriander, salt, monosodium glutamate, cherry tomatoes, or a slice of lemon (Figure 7). First, the bitter eggplants are cut into small pieces, soaked in dilute salt water, and the seeds

are removed. All of the ingredients are washed and put into a mortar and ground. Crushed bitter eggplant with spices is a simple, quick dish often eaten with new or leftover rice.



Figure 7. Ingredients for crushed bitter eggplants with spices

Source: Phạm et al. (2020).

In addition to the traditional dishes presented above, the Ede has rustic dishes associated with the mountains and nature, such as worms on senna alata, pupae, scorpions, crickets, cicadas, diplazium esculentum soups, melinjo leaves, weaver ant eggs, termite mushrooms, termites, iguanas, and rice in a bamboo tube.

4. SOME CHANGES IN THE EDE CUISINE IN KMRÔNG PRONG

4.1. Some changes in cuisine

The Ede in the Kmrông Prông villages in Ea Tu Commune and Dak Lak Province closely relate to the forest. Forests are the origin and source of food in daily life and spiritual culture. Moreover, in the past, ingredients for cooking traditional dishes of the Ede were mainly collected from nature (Bê et al., 1982). Nowadays, food is supplied by the market. Most meal ingredients are purchased from grocery stores, markets, or supermarkets. Most purchased foods are meat, fish, and vegetables, such as cabbage, brassica integrifolia, pumpkin, and zucchini. Ingredients for traditional dishes collected from the wild or vegetables grown in upland fields, such as *Ktôn*, *kthih*, *djam tang*, *djam kbăl*, *djam djač*, *mdok*, and rattan buds, are hard to find. Research shows that these foods are only available and used in remote areas or restaurants in urban areas.

The Ede are one of the ethnic groups in the Central Highlands with traditional stilt houses and many nuclear families and family members living together. Each nuclear family has a separate kitchen, where the family eats and does activities by the fire. The racks by the stove store food. By the 1980s, the Central Highlands, and particularly Dak

Lak, implemented a program of sedentary cultivation, separation of households, and abandonment of stilt houses (Nguyễn, 2013). Therefore, the traditional nuclear families have changed their house style from stilt houses to houses on the ground to suit the needs and trends of the times. Accordingly, living habits, earning activities, and traditional meal habits have changed. The most obvious change is that traditional dishes are less likely to be served in daily meals and have been replaced by Vietnamese-like dishes.

The impacts of acculturation and socio-economic changes have created better conditions for the Ede. Many people and families have had their needs for food, clothing, drink, and other physical and mental needs met. Therefore, they do not need to go to the forest to find wild ingredients to prepare traditional dishes. The food sources in the market are increasingly diverse enough to meet today's needs and tastes. Therefore, in Ede kitchens, ingredients such as sugar, milk, cooking oil, seasoning seeds, and soy sauce are no longer considered uncommon.

Traditional customs of worshiping in the family and village and manners in greeting guests or organizing weddings, funerals, and other community activities are no longer as rigidly applied as before. For example, offerings in worship, funerals, and weddings, are no longer animals that were carefully raised to show gratitude and respect to the gods, as was customary in traditional rituals (Buôn Krông, 2009). This change is understandable since the Ede are adapting to development and integration, so their material and spiritual life are changing accordingly. They can go to the market to buy all the ingredients to prepare for funerals, family rituals, or the ritual of worshiping the river wharf (an agricultural belief). In addition to traditional dishes, such as *êyao* leaf powder soup and bitter eggplant soup cooked with *wêc*, they can cook more types of dishes and offerings to the gods are not necessarily animals as was traditionally the case. In the past, wedding parties were prepared by the villagers, themselves, to treat guests and family members. Today, they often use restaurants, and even traditional dishes are not served at funerals. They purchase prepared lunch boxes and offer them to every visitor. Over time, the Ede have switched from serving food with banana leaves, forest leaves, clay bowls, cups, pots, and copper pots to porcelain cups and bowls. Using spoons and chopsticks and drinking water from a glass are now the norm.

We think a discussion is needed about how to evaluate the unique cultural heritage of the Ede and other local ethnic groups in Dak Lak to preserve and promote values for the current integration trend. Accurate and logical research and assessments will help in cultural management, ethnic identification, and community-based tourism for sustainable socio-economic development. Its mission aligns with the “National Program Targetting Socio-Economic Development in Ethnic Minority and Mountainous Areas in 2021–2030” (Thủ tướng Chính phủ, 2021).

4.2. Causes of changes in cuisine

The changes in the Ede culture, particularly in cuisine, are due to many causes. The leading causes are changes in the living environment, living space, natural conditions,

changes in socio-economic life, the process of acculturation, learning, and cultural influence among ethnic groups.

4.2.1. Changes in natural and environmental conditions

The mountainous area has been the living environment of the Ede and their natural food source. However, in the past two decades, deforestation has reduced the forest area considerably, and wild animals and forest vegetables are increasingly scarce. The natural forest area has fallen in the last five years, especially between 2015 and 2020. The forest area in 2015 was 507,489 ha, and the coverage was 38.7%, of which the natural forest area was 475,908 ha. However, by the end of 2020, the forest area was 508,564 ha, with 38.7% coverage. Although the area and coverage in 2020 are similar to those of 2015, the natural forest area in 2020 was 437,734 ha, a decrease of nearly 38,174 ha compared to five years ago (Minh Thông – Vạn Tiệp, 2021). This makes the Ede custom of foraging in the forest difficult. In addition, the local rivers and streams are polluted with domestic wastewater and harmful chemicals from farming, so people cannot access clean water, and aquatic resources are gradually diminishing.

The governmental policy of limiting access to forests to reduce indiscriminate exploitation is appropriate. However, the forest closure has led to many changes in the traditional economic activities (hunting and gathering) and the upland farming of ethnic minorities. It can be seen that natural environmental changes and governmental policies (forest closure or sedentary cultivation) are one of the causes reducing the use of natural food sources in the cuisine of the Ede and other local ethnic groups in the Central Highlands.

The problem is how to raise people's awareness of sustainably exploiting natural resources. Self-cultivation of traditional ingredients on upland fields to preserve unique cultural values in cuisine and to serve the development of community-based tourism is a riddle that needs to be thoroughly resolved by the government and the tourism industry.

4.2.2. Changes in socio-economic life

After 1975, other ethnic groups from many regions of the country migrated to the Central Highlands to work, build new economic zones, exploit the land, and live with the Ede people (Decision No. 33, 2007; Decision No. 1342, 2009; Decision No. 33, 2013) (Thủ tướng Chính phủ, 2007, 2009, 2013). During the settlement process, some features of the material and spiritual culture of the newly arrived ethnic groups influenced the traditional culture of the Ede.

To stabilize and develop sustainable residential communities, the government has implemented a policy of sedentary cultivation. For the Ede, this policy has significantly impacted their traditional lifestyle. The most obvious impact is the transformation of farming methods from depending on nature to applying advances in science and technology. Technology in production has improved the Ede's material life. On the other

hand, the policy has somehow impacted and changed their customs, lifestyles, beliefs, etc., including cuisine.

Changes in cropping methods, such as shifting from planting crops for self-sufficiency to planting industrial crops (coffee, black pepper), replacing red cassava with white cassava, and planting waxy corn (old corn varieties) instead of hybrid corn, have changed the material life of the ethnic people. Some households are typical members of efficient local production groups. Changes in economic structure have boosted the demand for exchange, purchase, and sale. The Ede have access to vehicles, household appliances, and food sources from the market. Their meals are supplemented with new ingredients, such as cooking oil, fish sauce, onions, and garlic. Dishes served in religious ceremonies and at festivals and funerals are no longer the same as they were traditionally; they are now cooked with purchased ingredients.

4.2.3. Acculturation

After 1975, the process of communal living and production of the Ede and other ethnic groups who migrated from various places became a natural acculturation process. Acculturation is the exchange of cultural characteristics, arising when communities are in direct and continuous contact. The original cultural patterns of one community or both can be altered through this exposure process.

The acculturation process is associated with widening roads and stabilizing the political situation. In the past, the unstable political situation hindered exchanges between ethnic groups. The political condition has been more stable since 2004, resulting in the ethnic groups living in harmony, and exchanging and learning from each other. Regarding cuisine, the Ede people now have access to diverse sources because they have the conditions to exchange, purchase ingredients, learn how to cook new dishes, etc. With all these factors, Ede cuisine has gradually changed in terms of ingredients, preparation, and eating methods. We believe that ethnic cultural exchange is one of the reasons that the traditional cuisine of the Ede has changed profoundly.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The cuisine of the Ede is not only a characteristic expression of their ethnic culture; it also plays a vital role in socio-economic development, serving tourism development and promoting the image of the Ede community. Therefore, continuing to collect and exploit the beauty in the cuisine of the Ede people and developing plans to preserve and disseminate the cultural values in their cuisine is a must. To preserve traditional cuisine sustainably, we believe that the following recommendations should be implemented.

- Promote education and training, especially the training of cultural officers and teachers who are Ede people. This is an effective way for ethnic people to perceive and distinguish between good cultural values that need to be preserved and outdated cultural values that need to be eliminated. The activity will help people to voluntarily adjust their thoughts and behavior toward

customs, rituals, religions, and customary laws. From this, they can decide for themselves to preserve their culture's beauty. It is necessary to orient local cultural agencies in organized culinary festivals to maintain the good features and eliminate customs in culinary activities.

It is necessary to raise the national pride of each person, especially the younger generation, about traditional cuisine. We should help ethnic people generate income by using local cuisine in cultural tourism and homestays and assist ethnic people in preserving and promoting the traditional dishes of their communities. This is one of the most sustainable conservation methods and has efficient applications. The promotion of cultural values by creating culinary publications or culinary tourism guidebooks is highly recommended. This will pass on and educate future generations so that visitors can easily become acquainted with and consider trying traditional dishes when visiting Ede villages.

- Enhance the role and position of villages, while preserving traditional cultural values, by considering each traditional village as a model for stability and development. In addition, it is necessary to improve the legal corridors and promote the management role of the state over traditional villages. We believe that it is necessary to uphold the role of the community in preserving traditional cultural values and cuisine. This is an essential task of the local cultural management departments and sectors.
- For culture tourism, it is necessary to have thorough research, to understand the tastes of tourists, and to simultaneously explore and exploit traditional culinary elements to introduce the principle of respecting the traditional cuisine of each ethnic group to tourists. The introduction of traditional Ede dishes, such as *êyao* leaf powder soup, bitter eggplant with *wêc̣*, and stir-fried cassava leaves, should be encouraged at tourist attractions, as Mr. Y Bay Kbuôr, Kmrong Prông A village, Ea Tu Commune, Buon Ma Thuot recommended (Phạm et al., 2020).
- Activities such as the traditional culinary festivals of the Central Highland ethnic groups (e.g., the Buon Ma Thuot Coffee Festival held every two years) should be replicated and further developed. In particular, the organizers must pay more attention to dishes and drinks with unique ethnic features and introduce them to tourists as a practical way to preserve traditional cuisine. Doing so contributes to the attractiveness of the Buon Ma Thuot Coffee Festival as well.
- Implement favorable policies to encourage and support ethnic people in organizing the cooking of traditional dishes at festivals, funerals, weddings, etc. Support people in growing scarce ingredients, such as *êyao* leaves, *djam bāl* (astringent vegetables), and *êbua ktāl* (forest taro), in gardens and fields to maintain the unique taste of traditional dishes, as suggested by Mr. Y Thai Eban, Kmrong Prông B, Ea Tu Commune, Buon Ma Thuot (Phạm et al.,

2020). Create conditions for the Ede to produce traditional ingredients by themselves. Connect with tourist agencies to introduce the traditional cuisine of the Ede to tourists. This is a sustainable way to preserve the traditional dishes of the Ede and other ethnic groups.

- Have remuneration for artisans, individuals, and families who have contributed to preserving the traditional cultural heritage. Remuneration for people who prepare traditional Ede dishes at festivals and fairs at Dak Lak Museum, travel companies, resorts, etc., will help them love their jobs, fully appreciate the unique cultural values of their community, and contribute to preserving and developing the unique values of their traditional cuisine. At the same time, experiential activities to recreate scenes of eating, drinking, and cooking traditional Ede dishes increase educational effectiveness since vividness creates excitement and makes it easier for visitors to remember.

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