

## THE GASTRODIPLOMACY: INDONESIA'S CULINAIRY PUBLICITY IN THE NETHERLANDS

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### ABSTRACT

Indonesia has a different diplomatic relationship with the Netherlands, based on post-colonialism resulting in thick cultural acculturation and close bilateral relations. The various events have become an accumulation of ties between the two countries, thus harming the Dutch people's perception of Indonesia and vice versa. Therefore, Indonesia launched a public diplomacy program through gastro diplomacy. Gastro diplomacy was chosen as the object of research because of Indonesian cuisine's progressive potential, which has been selected as a positive impact on bilateral relations and as a medium for promoting Indonesia in the Netherlands. The researcher will use the qualitative method in this study. The research procedure carried out gave descriptive data results whose results were examined through speech or writing from the behavior of the observed person. The purpose of this research analysis is to describe the implementation of Indonesian gastro diplomacy in the Netherlands through the embassy program, explain gastro diplomacy in general, and identify opportunities for Indonesia to take advantage of culinary arts as an instrument of public diplomacy.

**Keywords:** Gastrodiplomacy, Postcolonial Relations, Public Diplomacy.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background

Diplomacy is an essential aspect of a country in promoting harmonious relations with the rest of the world. Harmonious relations create mutually beneficial cooperation for the countries involved. Diplomacy practices in all countries, including Indonesia, and Indonesia is actively engaged in diplomatic activities to promote its interests. Diplomacy plays a significant role in various aspects of government activities, whether political, economic, or socio-cultural. Indonesia also carries out public diplomacy activities in carrying out diplomacy for its interests. Indonesia is engaged in public diplomacy, including in aspects of cultural and culinary diplomacy.

The Diplomacy involves not only the role of the Indonesian government but also the role of the community. Society plays a vital role in today's public diplomacy because globalization in this era opens opportunities for everyone to engage in diplomatic activities. The community helps introduce local culture and provides a good overview from one country to another. Public diplomacy, of course, adapts the use of instruments to the socio-economic and socio-cultural conditions of the community and government of the destination country. In this case, the selection of gastro diplomacy (culinary diplomacy) as a form of public diplomacy contrives on several primary factors, namely the choice of culinary aspects. Indonesia has the advantage of having a rich and distinctive race with people from diverse backgrounds. As reported by CNN media (The Cable News Network) in 2011, a typical Indonesian food originating from the West Sumatra area, namely rendang, was ranked first in the "World's Most Delicious Food" category. Evidence through international media has opened the door to vast opportunities for Indonesia to utilize and promote culinary riches.

In examining the gastro diplomacy studies that Indonesia has carried out against the Netherlands, it is necessary to review how Indonesia cannot separate the background of colonialism from the conditions of this bilateral relationship. Colonialism carried out by the Dutch since 1800 left a negative perception between the two sides of post-colonialism (Khoo, 1976). The Hague Agreement, ratified on November 2, 1949, has not yet become a benchmark for the end of the tense relationship between the two parties (Wirayudha, 2015). The tension that affects the relationship between the two countries has resulted in a bad stigma after colonialism. Then, in 2010 the visit of President of the Republic of Indonesia, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, was canceled due to a demonstration by the Republic of South Maluku (RMS) group in the Netherlands. The

RMS leader, John Wattilete, filed a swift trial at the Hague court on charges against President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in the case of human rights violations in Maluku (Lumanauw, 2016). However, this event changed the relationship between the two countries and became the main reason for continuing diplomatic relations in the public sector (Lumanauw, 2016).

### **1.2. Identification**

Harmonious relations between the two countries establish through diplomatic aspects that are structured and wisely organized. Harmonious relations can give birth to mutually beneficial cooperation for each related country. Thus, diplomacy is one of the influential aspects of state activities politically, economically, and socioculturally (Szondi, 2008). The implementation of diplomacy is carried out by the state and is also known as public diplomacy. Public diplomacy was first introduced in the mid-19th century when Edmund Gullion referred to the term public diplomacy to describe general influence in the formation and execution of foreign policy (Szondi, 2008). Public diplomacy is directed at foreign publics, and strategies in dealing with foreign publics must be distinguished from domestic socialization. However, separating domestic public interests from foreign public diplomacy is difficult to complain about because it increases global relations that are increasingly interconnected (Melissen, 2015). Therefore, the public has a significant role in diplomatic activities for a country to other countries seeing the relationship between them (Millatina, 2018).

### **1.3. Formulation**

This research formulates, "How is the implementation of the gastro diplomacy program in the Netherlands?". Then, it explains derivative questions, namely the meaning of gastro diplomacy in general and the identification of Indonesia's opportunities to take advantage of culinary arts as an instrument of public diplomacy.

### **1.4. Research Method**

The research method that the researcher will use in this study is qualitative. The research procedure carried out gave descriptive data results whose results were examined through speech or writing from the behavior of the observed person. This study aims to explain the phenomenon through data collection (Kriyantono, 2006). Then, through a case study, the research seeks to examine a particular case or phenomenon in society, which carries out an in-depth analysis of the background, circumstances, and interactions. This method is considered the most appropriate for conducting research on Indonesian gastro diplomacy to the Netherlands in explaining the gastro diplomacy efforts by Indonesia.

### **1.5. Data Collection Techniques**

The data collection technique in this research derives from a review of literature studies from books, journals, and digital articles whose validity legitimize through press release articles. The data will be processed and curated in the work of this research.

## **2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **2.1. Gastrodiplomacy as a Form of Public Diplomacy**

In essence, all countries must engage in diplomacy to maintain harmonious relationships and build cooperation that benefits all parties. However, state government diplomacy cannot solve all state problems. Non-political and non-state actors play an essential role in international affairs. This factor leads to the diplomatic process evolving with the methods and means used. The use of diplomatic methods is becoming more diverse, and the introduction of multifaceted diplomacy is why countries open opportunities to practice diplomacy by coordinating the conditions and stakeholders involved in the diplomatic process. The harmonious relationship between the two countries designates through a structured and well-organized diplomatic aspect. Cooperative relationships can bring mutually beneficial cooperation to each connected country. Therefore, diplomacy is one of the influential aspects of national activity politically, economically, and socioculturally (Szondi, 2008). Public diplomacy operates by the state government. This form of diplomacy was first introduced in the mid-19th century when Edmund Galion coined the term public diplomacy to describe public diplomacy in the formation and implementation of foreign policy (Szondi, 2008).

Public diplomacy is aimed at foreigners, and strategies for dealing with foreigners should be distinguished from domestic socialization. However, the dissociation between the domestic public interest and foreign public diplomacy is difficult to challenge as it strengthens the increasingly intertwined global relations (Melissen, 2015). Therefore, the public plays a critical role in the country's diplomatic activities toward other nations, given their relations with other countries (Millatina, 2018)

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Gastro Diplomacy is a practice and strategy established based on the means and guidelines of national public diplomacy efforts to promote culinary culture and influence internationally (Jora, 2017). Essen has become a cultural and communication tool and a symbol of diplomacy that has lived for many years. When conducting gastric diplomacy, more attention should be paid to the local culture of the country, which is the goal of gastric diplomacy, to introduce the culture of the country of origin familiarly, that is, by cooking more effectively (Rockower, 2012). Through the introduction of food, foreign audiences will have the opportunity to experience different cultures. Disclosure of gastric diplomatic studies means that someone wins the mind and mind through indirect emotional connections rather than rational information (Rockower, 2012). Community connections are interactions aimed at implementing a more implicit public diplomacy through soft power. Cultural connections can shape the perception of public diplomacy in the long run. The positive perceptions of the outside world that result from this gastric diplomatic process profoundly affect relations between the countries concerned. This process opens opportunities for cooperation between countries in different areas such as economics, politics, and socio-cultural (Rockower, 2012). Gastric diplomacy efforts categorize as public policy projects aimed at disseminating information, especially national cuisine, to promote a positive image of the country. Therefore, the Gastrodiplomacy program strives to improve the adequate notion of the country's food culture through public events, festivals, and social media campaigns.

## **2.2. Gastric diplomacy and Indonesian diaspora**

Public diplomacy has made great strides since its inception in Indonesia. Other efforts have taken place dedicated to the culinary side. Cooking is a cultural component with the diversity of all cultures. Especially in Indonesia, a variety of dishes attract foreign tourists. Indonesia sees the potential to make food another tool of public diplomacy that can reach a wider audience worldwide. When first introduced, Indonesian gastric diplomacy was not yet the government's focus in conducting public diplomacy. Indonesia does not yet have a dedicated gastric diplomacy program run by the government nationwide. However, Indonesia seeks to use its unique culinary diversity as an opportunity to enhance the country's positive image and help promote culinary wealth that can lead to economic and tourism opportunities. The 2011 Department of State Forum Group Discussion (FGD) discussed the first Gastro diplomacy policy, and this topic became one of the references in actions to improve the national economy. The gastric diplomacy program through culinary advertising is part of broader public diplomacy that involves other stakeholders such as the diaspora community and the culinary industry. The public covers a more expansive area by involving different stakeholders such as the Diaspora community and the culinary industry. As shown in the Ministry of State's Strategic Plan 2010-2014 document, gastric diplomacy was not explicitly stated in the public diplomacy plan. However, this topic is the Ministry of State's vision of "promoting national interests through total diplomacy". It is consistent with the total diplomacy that comprises the components of all interest groups and harnesses all power through multifaceted diplomacy (Pujayanti, 2018). This vision follows the discussion of gastric diplomatic programs that require the role of non-governmental parties in their implementation. Based on the results of the FGD conducted in 2011, Indonesia has launched a plan to implement a gastrointestinal diplomacy program as part of a series of public diplomacy aimed at the mission of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Strategic Plan 2010-2014.

As already explained, when conducting gastric diplomatic activities, the participation of non-state actors plays a substantial role in the promotion of the dishes carried out. These stakeholders include the community, especially the Indonesian diaspora community, which lives in various countries abroad, and the culinary industry, both corporate and individual, involved in the culinary sector. The activities of these parties in the gastric diplomatic process can be carried out with or without state support. Often, these parties have the initiative to promote food to the international community. Gastro diplomacy helps governments implement public diplomacy without being directly tied to government programs. However, in some cases, the government may work with these gastrointestinal diplomats to ensure that the culinary promotion results are more optimal and in line with the government's objectives.

As reported by the IDN website (Indonesia's Diaspora Network-Society and Culture), the role of a community also plays a vital role in conducting gastric diplomatic activities. The Dutch IDN community has a particular cooking task force program called Indonesia Satu. The establishment of this program is based on the chef's interest in developing Indonesian culinary culture in the Netherlands. Indonesia Satu aims to promote Indonesian cuisine structurally and qualitatively. In conducting gastric diplomacy, she receives state support and includes the role of community and gastronomy. Most of the activities carried out by Indonesia Satu work with the Indonesian Embassy in The Hague, including diplomatic receptions and other events such as Amsterdam's tastes and ethnic food events. Different stakeholders have also participated in several events, including a workshop to promote healthy foods in Indonesia in collaboration with the Health Academy of The Hague University of Applied Sciences. The gastronomic activities carried out by Satu Indonesia are

proliferating with the active cooperation of the government and other stakeholders, which can also promote culinary promotion to the broader social circle.

Indonesian cuisine in the Netherlands began to develop in 1942. The cuisine development characterizes by a large influx of Indian-Dutch immigrants from Indonesia. The arrival of these immigrants brought them new cultures, which integrate into Dutch culture to this day. During this period, there was a big difference between the Dutch culinary culture at that time and the Indonesian culinary culture brought about by the Dutch East Indies. Post-WWII Dutch food culture tended to be very simple, repetitive, and cheap due to the lack of resources at the time, especially food sources. The food at that time was in stark contrast to Indonesian food, which was very diverse and rich in spices. Postwar Dutch society saw food as a necessity, not a particular pleasure. As Indonesian cuisine is after by consumers, it has been established since 2000 that 1,600 registered restaurants have served Rijsttafel in various cities in the Netherlands. This directory is distributed in PDF format from the official website of the Indonesian Embassy in The Hague and can be accessed on social media. It supports restaurant owners and the popularity of Indonesian cuisine in the Netherlands, which has long been known to the local community.

On social media, information about Indonesian food is in the form of several forums, Facebook accounts, B. Holland-Indonesian kitchens, recipes, and more. In addition, many blogs explain Indian and Dutch recipes, especially for the Dutch community. Among them is Jeff Keasberry, a Dutch Indian-Dutch chef. He actively writes food and cultural content published through the website keasberry.com. In addition, Jeff Keasberry has published three cookbooks entitled *Indian Keukengeheimen* (Dutch Indies Kitchen Secrets), *Denieuwe Indien keuken van Jeff Keasberry* (Jeff Keasberry's new Dutch East Indies), and *Indo Dutch Kitchen Secrets*. Website content and book writing dedicate to protecting the culture of the Indies and the Netherlands, not only in the Netherlands but internationally.

### **2.3. Implementation of Indonesian gastronomic diplomacy in the Netherlands**

One of the most influential gastronomic activities for the Dutch people is holding events such as festivals and cultural exhibitions, especially in the field of cooking. Therefore, more Dutch will benefit as the festival can reach more visitors. The largest Indonesian cultural promotion event started by the Indonesian Embassy in The Hague is the Indonesian Night Market (PMI). The original PMI was initiated by the Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia (Ambassador), Junus Effendi Habibi, between 2006 and 2010. The hosting of this event was motivated by the idea that Indonesia has great potential to carry out promotional and investment activities in the Netherlands that can support cooperation between other Western European countries. Previously, the Indonesian Embassy in The Hague held an exhibition at the Indonesian Pavilion at the 2008-2009 Tonton Fair. Then, when he retained the PMI in 2013 and served as Indonesian Ambassador from 2012 to 2014, Retno Marsudi refocused and developed the aspects of cooking supported by Indonesia's gastronomic foreign policy. Therefore, one-third of the PMI area of the food hall area is used primarily for food exhibitions.

The number of stall participants has increased to 50, offering a wider variety of menus, from pempek Palembang, Lundanjirin Mame, and Sundanese cuisine. They also provide traditional cakes such as pastel, spring rolls, rissole, martabak, layer cakes, and fried bananas. In addition to the Food Platform, chef William Wongso demonstrated Three Heart Cooking. The cooking demonstration also presented a wider variety of menus than the previous year. Menus featured in the culinary demo include Jakarta Pickles, Kampong Fried Rice, Gado-Gado Jakarta, Ayam Goreng, and karedok Bandung.

In addition, the Indonesian Embassy in The Hague participates in the Annual Taste of Amsterdam Culinary Festival, which takes place four days each year. The festival is attended by various groups, including restaurant owners, traders, culinary experts, and the Dutch media. When Indonesia first joined the Amsterdam taste in 2014, the Indonesian embassy in The Hague focused its strategy on a flavor and visit Indonesia program that combines the purpose of a stomach diploma with tourism promotion. Especially in gastronomic diplomacy, the Indonesian platform of Taste of Amsterdam promotes light meals and various types of light meals and drinks. Through the Taste and Visit Indonesia program, the Indonesian Embassy in The Hague focuses on promotions aimed at the younger generation of the Netherlands. As a result, new culinary images appear, and various menus are offered with more contemporary and creative presentations to attract the younger generation's interest. The new image development strategy aims to show that Indonesian cuisine is dynamic and has evolved. Therefore, it's time to follow the Dutch community's changing tastes and culinary trends. As part of the Gastro Diplomacy Taste and Visit Indonesia program, the Indonesian Embassy in The Hague worked with young Indonesian chefs such as Genthur Respati, Eduard Roesdi, Agus Hermawan, Walsarie Wolff, Renu Lubis, and Didi Han. This event is the first time this collaboration has occurred. The Indonesian embassy in The Hague usually works with chefs and culinary experts with experience in Dutch Indonesian gastronomy, such as Vindex Tengker and William Wongso. This partnership establishes because the focus is to collaborate with young chefs proficiently presenting Indonesian creative culinary creations

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that can adapt to trends in society but remain authentic. The aspect of creativity and adjustment to culinary trends in society is an essential thing to be developed as a strategy. This adjustment is also suitable for Indonesian cuisine to compete more with other countries' culinary delights that have been more comprehensive in implementing their gastro diplomacy tactics.

### 3. CONCLUSION

Research refers to the research question, "How is the implementation of the gastro diplomacy program in the Netherlands?". Various aspects that the study has found can conclude that Indonesian gastro diplomacy in the Netherlands carries out by the government through the Indonesian Embassy in The Hague as the leading actor but includes non-Indonesian actors. The Indonesian Embassy in The Hague also collaborates with the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy in various gastro diplomacy activities that positively impact tourism and trade. The diplomatic endeavors carry out based on a statement submitted by Ambassador Retno Marsudi on January 26, 2012, that Indonesia would implement a gastro diplomacy program and the Netherlands would become the center of Indonesian culinary promotion. Based on the gastro diplomacy plan by the Indonesian Embassy, encouraging diaspora community initiatives such as the Indonesia Satu organization to form a special division called the Culinary Task Force. Establishing this division is one of the community's efforts to support government programs through the Indonesian Embassy in The Hague.

Indonesian cuisine has evolved popularly in the Netherlands since the acculturation of culture stemming from the immigration process of the Indo-Dutch people in 1945. Since its introduction, Indonesian cuisine has continued to develop and adapt to culinary conditions and trends in the Netherlands. As a result, restaurants serving Indonesian food menus continue to grow and develop. Reviewing the culinary popularity and the number of Indonesian restaurants opens opportunities for the gastro-diplomacy process to be implemented effectively and developed more widely.

Indonesia has a different gastro diplomacy strategy compared to other countries. The government's gastro diplomacy strategy usually seeks to increase the number of Indonesian restaurants in various countries, such as the United States. It is different in the Netherlands, where Indonesian restaurants reached 1,600 in 2015. The Indonesian Embassy in The Hague launched the Indonesian restaurant directory in 2012. The implementation of Indonesian gastro diplomacy in the Netherlands includes the role of non-governmental actors. -countries that support the government's efforts as the first line in multi-track diplomacy. Other actors support Indonesia's gastro diplomacy activities through the third channel, namely business groups, the fourth route, the community, and the media as the inner circle that binds related tracks on the ninth path.

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