

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Gastrodiplomacy is how to invite foreigner to get interest with other country's food and then those food become their life (Nurwandy & A. Awang, 2014). Food is a universally vital part of our lives, representing history, traditions, and culture. Each of us relies on food not only to survive but to comfort ourselves, communicate with others, and connect us to our forebearers. As Brillat-Savarin said, food is an important way in which nations define-themselves (Sokol, Culinary Diplomacy: Breaking Bread to Win Hearts and Minds, 2013). Gastronomy can easily be expressed as an art of eat manner, it is about everything related to the pleasure of food and drink. According to Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, a French food connoisseur in 18th century and author of book 'Physiology of Taste', gastronomy is the science of food and culture, pattern of life, whether it is a simple menu in the family or a full meal in the restaurant. Gastronomy cannot escape from history, local wisdom, tradition, technology, nutrition, philosophy, cooking and politics.

Gastrodiplomacy is categorized as a new technique of diplomacy in the international relations, in the past, food was used a part of country's culture often overlooked and still considered as complementary instrument in the country's relations. Because of that, this gastrodiplomacy is deserved to be observed. Food also has big roles in increasing the country's relations, not only as the culture identity of a country, until the researcher takes Thailand as a tourism country which has many kinds of food, and become the object of gastrodiplomacy research in international world.

The first gastrodiplomacy is used by Thailand as their part of first public diplomacy, which started the first program named “Global Thai” in 2002. Thailand government has discovered a lot of thing, including focus on spreading the influence of Thai food.

In 1970’s, Thailand did not have a power as a significant actor in the international agribusiness trade, there are rice, pineapple, and palm sugar in that time, but nowadays Thailand has become a big food exporter in Asia and has the capacity to produce far more than what their population consumes. Besides that, the government wants to erase the bad image that sex is a place for tourism. Over three decades, Thailand has been successful in making use of technology and building innovation in agricultural research to develop the industrial sector (Murray, 2007). Thailand’s culinary traditions and cuisine have been influenced by neighboring countries that also share same cultural background and ethnicity on both sides of the border, so government wants to declare the original authentic of Thai foods. The first government program was “Global Thai” program in 2002, which focused on expanding the number of Thai restaurant around the world and to influence people worldwide to eat Thai cuisine, there were about 5500 Thai restaurants oversea and the target had reach to 20.000 restaurants in 2008 (Sunanta, *The Globalization of Thai Cuisine*, 2005).

In 2003, an e-book entitled “Thailand: Kitchen of The World” published by Foreign Office of the Government Public Relations Department under the Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, it is to promote the campaign, to explain the agricultural highlights of Thailand, teach about the diet of Thailand, and share recipe for favorite dishes (Foreign Office, 2011). The main strategies of “Thai Kitchen of the World include, expanding agriculture and food business, adding value to agricultural produce with

high-technology production processes, supporting cooperation at regional and international levels, and supporting Thai investment abroad especially in building a network of Thai restaurants and food markets overseas (Varayanond, *Fostering Food CULTure With Innovation: OTOp and Thai Kitchen to the World*, 2013).

In 2004, government held a seminar to encourage people who interested to invest in Thai restaurants overseas. The support can in the form of providing support, training and information, and giving financial loans (Sunanta, *The Globalization of Thai Cuisine*, 2005). In order to promote Thai cuisine internationally, government focuses its attention to prioritize standardization and quality. The “Thai Select” label is given by Thailand government for qualified Restaurants with similar cooking methods and the ingredients are directly imported from Thailand. These are the procedure to control the standards of Thai Restaurants. The strategy aims to set presence outside Thailand as a way to reach the people around the world, strengthen the position with other countries, and boost and build the economic condition. Thai Airways International and the Tourism Authority of Thailand will be the government agents in process of selecting qualified restaurants around the world (Si Qian Ng, 2015).

The agricultural industry is an important sector for Thailand's economy. Thailand is one of the most important food exporters in Asia with revenues of approximately USD \$10 million per year. With abundant water and land resources, Thailand has good production opportunities. The potential of good agriculture certainly has a positive impact for the development of food and beverage industry. In addition, the geographical location of Thailand in the middle of Southeast Asia, making it a potential country as a potential exporter. This great potential must be utilized by the Thai government itself. Increasingly global market

competition must be faced with strategy and utilization of maximum potential and resources, so the national interest of a State can be achieved with a high awareness (Murray, 2007).

Thailand is known as the food basket of Asia, since rice is grown abundantly in all parts of the country. Thailand or Siam is located in the strategic location, making it an essential link in international trade, especially the traditional maritime trade in past, government maintained active and diverse relations with various countries, near and far, covering diplomacy, religion, and even war. Such ties led to the acceptance of other food cultures, which the people then blended with their own. Thai culinary art was transformed from simple dishes based on food items available in the immediate surroundings emerged sophisticated recipes that resulted from adoption (Foreign Office, 2015).

In other hand, soft power realized with gastrodiplomacy efforts influence economic sector by potential spike in tourism, people know traditional food then they will come to Thailand to enjoy the real traditional food like the street food. Gastrodiplomacy influence policy and international relations., it is to achieve the goals, to develop nation branding. Nation branding is the application of public relations and corporate branding techniques to nations in hopes of facilitating trade, luring foreign investment, and securing geopolitical influence (Wisdom, 2015). The countries like Malaysia, South Korea, Taiwan and Peru have moved to cultural diplomacy and gastrodiplomacy as a means to improve their soft power. Stronger national branding in a country it will lead increased money, power, and influence, and improve a country's culinary profile is a way to increase nation branding recognition, National branding is becoming important issue of interest, because it has effect to domestic

and external markets, nowadays countries have to face with global competition that will more and more develop to big competition, if a country cannot survive and is stuck in their own condition, it will make it left behind. Nations and companies today seek to distinguish themselves through branding in order to compete for export, human capital, tourism, and foreign direct investment and focus their attention on 'countries as brands' to make country equity issue of central interest in business and government alike (Kotler, 2002). Thailand has long adopted the tourism campaign since October 2003, the government initiate 'Kitchen of The World' campaign in order to promote Thai agri-export sector. The plan has affected that Thailand becoming one of the world leading in food exporting countries (Delforge, 2004). Therefore, national branding of Thailand has been presented through its product like food, cuisine, fruit and another tool, and it is aimed to create good image and promote for tourism to come to Thailand also to improve the economy growth.

By promoting Thailand traditional food by building restaurants in many countries that are aided with export ingredients, Thailand government is hoping for a proactive response from people around the world in welcoming the Thailand culture. Besides that, the government Started the campaign program of Thailand traditional food and exporting product overseas since 2002 until now with maximum quality and standards. Thailand tried to promote its country through food, because today food becomes the tool of diplomacy and promotes country's image in order to reach its national branding.

B. Research Question

From the explanations above regarding the background of the case, then the question emerged as *“What are the factors that made Thailand Gastro-diplomacy implementation have been successful?”*

C. Theoretical Framework

1. Cultural Diplomacy

Cultural diplomacy has the potential power to rest on its intersection with national culture, national values, national identity, and national pride. But, Cummings agrees if:

“The exchange of ideas, information, art and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding which can also be more of a one-way street than a two-way exchange, as when one nation concentrates its efforts on promoting the national language, explaining its policies and point of view, or “telling its story” to rest of the world.” (Mark, 2008)

As stated Cummings by explains diplomacy is in cultural activities that nation’s idea of itself is best represented so as to inspire people the world over despite political differences and cross borders (Mark, 2008). Another opinion about cultural diplomacy come from Richard T. Arndt proved that proved cultural diplomacy helps create a foundation of trust with other people, which policy makers can build on to reach political, economic, and military agreements.

Conceptually, the cultural diplomacy of its origin come from two words of diplomacy and culture. The word diplomacy itself is conventionally conceived as a nation-state effort to fight for the sake of the interests of the nation-state among the international community.

Culture itself has a general sense of "all the results and efforts of human cultivation in the environment" (Bakker SJ., 1984). While the macro understanding of culture is the whole system, ideas, actions and the work of human beings in the framework of community life that belongs to the people themselves in the learning process (Kuntjoroningrat, 1979).

It can be said that Culture Diplomacy is an effort of a State to fight for its national interest through the scope of culture. Not so different from what was suggested by Tulus Warsito and Wahyuni Kartikasari:

"Cultural diplomacy is the efforts of a State in the effort to fight for the interests through the cultural dimension, including the utilization of ideological, technological, political, economic, military, social, art and other fields in the international community". (Wasrsito & Kartikasari, 2007)

Collectively and individually, this type of diplomacy is carried out by governmental and non-governmental organization, where inter-national relationships are conducted by all actors whose main objectives can be persuasively influenced by the general public. The cultural element is the most important in the art of negotiation, where it becomes the main issue in maximizing its usefulness (both micro and macro) to support its main purpose (Melissen, 2005). Utilization of cultural element in practice is usually run through means of communication tools. All sorts of communication tools are useful for conveying messages containing certain foreign policy missions to affect public opinion internationally. The agenda that is often run in this mission is usually to show off the quality of the country's best culture, with the target country's target has a positive general opinion on the image of the country of origin.

Thailand is a state which uses cultural diplomacy as their diplomatic practice and the culture used by Thailand is the use of food. In this case, Thailand food as the tool of cultural diplomacy or a usage of food as a cultural asset of a country to conduct diplomacy to the rest of the world and is called as gastrodiploamacy. Thailand is targeting countries around the world in order to promote its traditional food so nation branding in Thailand will affected. Therefore, gastrodiploamacy is seen from perspective of cultural diplomacy that is implicated in the characteristics and functions attribution of cultural diplomacy onto gastrodiploamacy.

2. Gastrodiploamacy

Gastrodiploamacy is a communication practice from state to public which uses food as the main tool to give understanding about culinary culture of a state to foreign public. This is actually new way in the diplomacy world and gastro-diploamacy itself is a combination between gastronomy and diplomacy (Rockower P. S., 2011). Food and its symbolic representation can be used to communicate ideas, values, identity, and attitudes. Different social standings are expressed not only through differences in quantities and varieties of food served at the tables of different social strata but more subtly through styles of serving and cooking (Mennel, 1996). This is why cuisine has been an essential part of traditional diplomacy since ancient times, when imperial courts provided lavish feasts for diplomats (De Vooght, 2011).

In contrast to the use of cuisine for improving formal state relations, the recent frenzy for gastrodiploamacy has broader dimensions. The term of gastrodiploamacy was first used in an economist article on Thailand's public diplomacy campaign to promote its

food and culinary to the world (Anonim, 2002). In gastrodiplomacy, nation uses food as a part of their efforts to promote their culture, build their images, globalize their food industries, attract foreign tourist, and build relations with foreign public (Pham M. J., 2013). There is no limitation from nations that actor have to be diplomat or state politicians and chef, but food corporation, celebrity chef, tourist agency, TV cooking show, and social media will help to promote the gastrodiplomacy to the world. The strategy seeks to export traditional food there into the wider world in the form of national food. The role of food in diplomacy world has already been recognized by some scholars, one of them is Mary Jo A. Pham that stated:

“Throughout history, food has played a poignant purpose in molding a world, figure ancient trade routes and awarding mercantile and domestic energy to those who rubbed cardamom, sugar, and coffee. These pathways speedy discovery-weaving an informative fabric of contemporary societies, tempering large palates, and eventually origination proceed for globalization of ambience and food culture” (Pham M. J., 2013)

Pham agreed that gastordiplomacy is an important persuasive vehicle for countries with middle powers that seek the distinguish ourselves with other countries, to set a positive image for the middle-class people. This action involves a wider public audience overseas, so gastrodiplomacy is now related to cultural diplomacy because people will understand the food identity and also the history.

For Thailand, gastrodiplomacy is a new way to start promoting their country overseas and tries to reach people’s heart with the use of food. Now, Thailand government intensively promotes the traditional food

worldwide and also introduce the unique of Thailand traditional food, and softly communicates about taste, history, culture, and value.

The analysis of undergraduate thesis will use those two concepts. At first, it will use cultural diplomacy as the foundation of the analysis. The concept of cultural diplomacy will be analyzed more specific by using gastrodiplomacy and national branding concept. The concept of gastrodiplomacy is used to explain the role of Thai food as a part of Thailand's national branding.

D. Hypothesis

Based on theories which are used in this paper, the factors Thailand implement gastro-diplomacy as follow:

1. Thailand has a plenty agricultural production
2. Gastrodiplomacy as a tool to promote and globalize Thailand food industries.

E. Research Purpose

The main objective of this research is to find out how the implementation of gastrodiplomacy strategy toward the national branding of a country is. Furthermore, this research is beneficial to put gastrodiplomacy as a part of the art of diplomacy and cultural diplomacy, as important as other disciplines in the development of international science.

F. Method of Research

1. Type of Data

This research uses secondary data which come from books, journals, magazines, articles, internet websites, and written sources. The method of research is qualitative research as a procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written words. This approach is directed at the background intact.

2. Type of research

This research uses qualitative descriptive with uses technique inductive in analyzing data. The use of inductive analysis has some reason, inductive analysis more finds facts contained in data and shows the effects that sharpen the collective relationships between variables (Lexy, 1995).

3. Data collecting method

Data collecting method is used to compile this paper is use a Library Research where the data obtained to complete the research come from books, journals, magazines, articles, internet websites, and other written sources.

G. Scope of Research

The undergraduate thesis would like to research Thailand gastrodiplomacy based on the “Global Thai” program, established in 2002. Thailand government started the programs that aimed to introduce Thailand abroad, especially in developing a one-stop service to products and export Thai food. In 2002, government launched “*Global Thai*” program where their local entrepreneurs who given a loan for establishing traditional Thailand restaurant worldwide. This research focuses on the steps of Thailand government in expanding their strategy until 2015 when they launched complement program. However, the history of the relations will be explained.

H. Systematic of Writing

Chapter I Consists of background, the purpose of research, theoretical framework, hypothesis, research method and system of writing.

Chapter II, History of Gastrodiplomacy. Explains about the History of Gastrodiplomacy.

- Chapter III**, The overview of Thailand Gastrodiplomacy. Explain about the history of Thailand Gastrodiplomacy, then brief explanation about programs that issued by the Thailand government to branding their nation, there will be an explanation of the first program of Thailand government in 2002, “*Global Thai*”, government gave loan to people who wanted to open restaurant in another country. Then in 2015, “*Thailand: Kitchen of the World*” was the second program to complement the previous program that more focused more on developing a one-stop service to produce and export Thai food and produce to the rest of the world.
- Chapter IV**, Analysis of the factors that made Thailand Gastro-diplomacy implementation successful. Analysis of the strategy of Thailand to build their national branding through the Gastrodiplomacy strategy also Gastrodiplomacy as tools to build national-branding, there will be an explanation about the ability of food as a tool of diplomacy. The food value of past and present, trading and the impact to another market in international arena. There will be two main aspects to analyze, which are economics and politics.
- Chapter V** is the Conclusion. There will be the result of the analysis.