

CHAPTER II

GASTRODIPLOMACY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

In this chapter, the writer will explain more about gastrodiplomacy. This chapter will talk about the definition of gastrodiplomacy, the history of diplomacy, and the theories of gastrodiplomacy. Thus it can be easier for the reader to understand the next chapter.

A. The Definition of Gastrodiplomacy

The terminology gastrodiplomacy comes from gastronomy and diplomacy word. The gastronomy word etymologically derived from Ancient Greek γαστήρ, *gastér*, which has meaning "stomach", and νόμος, *nómos*, which means "laws that govern", and as a result, it means "the art or law of regulating the stomach". Gastronomy is the study of food and culture, which emphasizes more on gourmet cuisine (Lilholt, 2015). It encompasses anything that relates to the technique, the substance, the ability to feel, taste, and savor, so do with the application itself.

While the diplomacy word derived from the Greek word "*diploun*" which has meaning "folded" (Roy, 1984, p. 1). There is no fixed definition of the diplomacy word itself. It is because of the difficulty of defining the diplomacy word in such sharp terminology and easily understood. However, in his book, *Diplomacy* (1984, pp. 3-4), S. L. Roy draws some important points from the diplomatic definition of other authors. Those points are negotiations; the interests of a country; peaceful way; techniques which are used to prepare the battle by not having conciliation; foreign policy; state system; and inter-state representation.

Every expert has their definition in defining gastrodiplomacy. Mary Jo Pham in her interview (The Association of Public Diplomacy Scholars (APDS), 2014, p. 56) said that gastrodiplomacy is a part of cultural diplomacy practice which is conducted by the government in exporting its national culinary heritage. Meanwhile, Paul S. Rockower defined gastrodiplomacy as the combination of cultural diplomacy, culinary diplomacy, and nation branding which formed public diplomacy and has a purpose to make the foreign culture tangible to the taste and touch (Rockower P. S., 2012, p. 1).

Gastrodiplomacy is different from food diplomacy and culinary diplomacy. Food diplomacy is diplomacy which uses food in handling the crisis, catastrophe, or disaster while making relation with other countries. They used food as the aid in enhancing the national image, but they do not use that food to transfer their culture (Rockower P. S., 2012, p. 3). Meanwhile, culinary diplomacy is diplomacy which uses food and dining encounter as a means to involve and connect visiting dignitaries. It is also enhancing bilateral relations by strengthening the relationship between the two parties. That is the reason why most of the process is only involving high-level actor (Rockower P. S., 2012, p. 3). It is a part of the diplomatic protocol. Thus it often happens in gala dinner between the representatives of countries or in the visitation agenda.

On the contrary, the practice of gastrodiplomacy is a way broader than those two kinds of diplomacy. It is more extensive public diplomacy with a broader target so they can communicate the culinary culture and influence the foreign public rather than only high-level elites (Rockower P. S., 2012, p. 3). Food is the ultimate means to get the recognition and understanding from

the public. Just like public diplomacy in the globalized era too, it goes beyond “state-to-public relations” but also “people-to-people engagement” (Rockower P. S., 2012, p. 3). So this can be found in the interaction between citizens. Alhinnawi in *Recipes for Gastrodiplomacy* (2012, p. 3) states, “Food is an important tool in building cultural understanding, and in turn, breaking down traditional barriers by providing insight into a culture that might otherwise be unknown to a person.”

Thus from those explanations, it concludes that gastrodiplomacy is the practice of cultural diplomacy in the form of public diplomacy which uses its national food and cuisine to gain their national interest. Gastrodiplomacy is the practice of cultural diplomacy since they used their culture as the primary weapon. Food and cuisine become the primary weapon in gastrodiplomacy because they believe food can represent their nation. It is in the form of public diplomacy because this kind of diplomacy is not only involving the high-level actor but also involving the public people too even the foreign people. Besides, this diplomacy is conducting in a peaceful way with the purpose to influence the other country even the people in other countries. That is why in running gastrodiplomacy, a country usually has a big ambition in rebranding their nation image.

B. The History of Gastrodiplomacy

The use of food as the diplomatic instrument is the oldest diplomatic instrument. They have played such significant role since a long time ago. Costas Constantinou described the relationship between food and diplomacy in his book *On the Way to Diplomacy*. It tells that the relationship between them had emerged since Ancient Greece and in the Bible. In addition,

Aristotle also discussed the importance of food in a community to create family-like bond solidarity in his book entitled Politics (Sokol, 2012, p. 163).

Constantinou says the banquet is especially crucial for ambassadors from opposing towns to discuss loyalty, conclude aggression, or ratify the treaty (Sokol, 2012, p. 163). Food becomes a mediator between the conflicting groups. Through sharing food together, it can decrease the tension, and the conflicting group can discuss rationally so the solution can be achieved together. Through banquet too they might do some trickery to get the benefit as much as possible in such peace situation.

Such kind of diplomacy was persisting alongside the emerging of modern diplomacy in the French tradition. The first minister of Louis XIII, Cardinal Richelieu, was the man who responsible for creating a new diplomatic system. The result was the concept of “continuous negotiation”. It created “new familiarity” which creates intimacy along with the abolition of dishonesty and deception as a means of diplomacy (Sokol, 2012, p. 163). That was the beginning of the modern professional diplomacy concept.

In Sokol (2012, p. 164) through a book *On the Manner of Negotiating with Princes*, a French diplomat, François de Callières are talking about the relationship between power, diplomacy, and food. He underlined the concept of culinary diplomacy as delicacy way in creating intimacy, friendship, and information channels for the high-level actor (Sokol, 2012, p. 164). He goes on to say:

“[The Ambassador] should give frequent entertainments and parties to the chief personages of the Court and even to the Prince Himself. A good table is the best and

easiest way of keeping himself well informed. The natural effect of good eating and drinking is the inauguration of friendship and the creation of familiarity, and when people are a trifle warmed by the wine they of the disclose secrets of importance.” (Sokol, 2012, p. 164)

It suggests utilizing "a good table", a well informed could be gained easily. Through the good table, they will not only serve food but also fruitful conversations which make them closer. Even when the representative started to inebriated, they are an open diplomat who can disclose secrets of importance.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill also popularized the practice of this kind of diplomacy. He named it as tabletop diplomacy. He believed that food in diplomacy makes persuasion and bargaining power can be done smoothly. It continued until the Cold War and then led to the important situation when President Richard Nixon (US) dined with Prime Minister Zhou Enlai (China) in China (A. Pham, 2013, p. 4).

The use of food and culinary as diplomacy means is continuing until today. However, the name is more known as culinary diplomacy. It is part of the diplomatic protocol. That is why they will arrange the details of the banquet including the meals, schedule, and the objectives also following the strict protocol for elites. Years later, the terminology gastrodiploamacy made its first appearance in 2002, when the government of Thailand prefers to use Thai restaurants around the world as “nonformal centers” for their public diplomacy (A. Pham, 2013, p. 5).

Here we can see there is a shifting of the target. If back then the diplomacy using food and cuisine only involves the elites, now it is engaging the public too. If back then the diplomacy only has objective to persuade the high-level actor now the

diplomacy try to persuade the citizen too, which they believe it can give effect toward the high level even more significant than it.

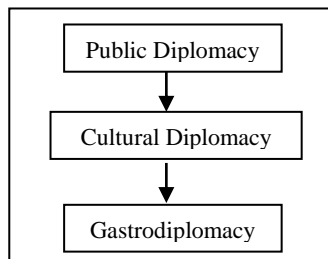
C. The Theory of Gastrodiplomacy

Even though the use of food in diplomacy have been practicing since a long time ago, but the terminology gastrodiplomacy itself is relatively new. That is why the theory which undergirds the gastrodiplomacy is still not well researched. Here we will see how several elements in gastrodiplomacy are relating to and supporting each other.

1. Public Diplomacy, Cultural Diplomacy, Soft Power

Gastrodiplomacy is the practice of cultural diplomacy in the form of public diplomacy which uses its national food and cuisine to gain their national interest. Here public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, and gastrodiplomacy are interrelated and inseparable from one another. That is because cultural diplomacy is the subset of public diplomacy and gastrodiplomacy itself is the subset of cultural diplomacy. If we make it into the diagram we can get this kind of image:

Diagram 2.1 Relationship between public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, and gastrodiplomacy



In general, public diplomacy is an act of exchange of communication and interaction that occurs between the government and the foreign public in order to inform and influence. “It is a two-way street, it tries to persuade people what to think, but in another side, it will listen to what people have to say” (Melissen, 2005, p. 18). It is getting narrow through the cultural diplomacy by engineering the national power into cultural strategies to attract foreign countries' people (Sokol, 2012, p. 168). Public diplomacy is trying to persuade and influence opinions directly, while cultural diplomacy utilizes the culture as the national power to create more emotional relationships. Then gastrodiploamacy makes it more specific by using food and cuisine as the medium in cultural strategies.

Food and cuisine become the nation's soft power that they rely on in doing diplomacy. Just like what Joseph Nye (2008, p. 94) states, “Soft power is the ability of a country to attract the attention of others to get the desired results through an attraction rather than coercion.” Food and cuisine become the ideal example as a nation's soft power since it will and always draw people to come. Nothing can beat this “universal effect” since food is the essential matter for everyone everywhere. Some people might not care about what they eat and do not even care to know why they eat, but still, they will always eat in order to survive and alive. That is the reason why food is an ideal example of a nation's soft power if we compare to other cultural stuff like art, music, movie, and others (Sokol, 2012, p. 168).

"As the famous food critic James Beard stated, food is our common ground, a

universal experience, then gastrodiploamacy seeks to build on the universality of that experience by deepening understanding of foreign cultures through the enticing audience to experience cultural diplomacy at the taste bud." (Rockower P. S., 2012, p. 2)

Food goes beyond that survival thing. It encompasses all other aspects of our life. There are memoirs, narration, and history inside the food itself. It is a means of communication, a conveyor of culture. It conveys the culture through the ritual that involves its preparation and serving (Rockower P., 2014). As a result, it can create an emotional connection with audiences.

2. Nation Branding and National Identity

Based on Gudjonsson in Szondi (2008, p. 5), "Nation branding uses the tools of branding to alter or change the behavior, attitudes, identity, or image of a nation in a positive way." National branding attempts to enhance the image of a country in international relation as the image and reputation of a nation can dramatically influence its role at the international level. The nation branding is the sum of people's perceptions of a country.

"The aim is to create a clear, simple, differentiating idea built around emotional qualities which can be symbolized both verbally and visually and understood by diverse audiences in a variety of situations. In order to make nation branding works effectively, it must embrace political, cultural, business and

sports activities.” (Jaffe & Nebenzahl, 2006)

Nation branding cannot be separated from national identity and public diplomacy. That is because it needs a strong national identity to make a sturdy nation branding and it needs public diplomacy to practice it. Food covers almost all of the aspect of a country, namely the history, culture, society, and economy (A. Pham, 2013, p. 2). Just like what A.D. Smith says, in Hongsik (2006, p. 209), inside national identity, there are several fundamental features. They are “historic territory or homeland; common myths and historical memories; a common, mass public culture; common legal rights and duties for all members; the last is a common economy with territorial mobility for members.” It reaffirms that food with all of its effect and influence is capable enough to communicate national identity.

A research made by Braden Ruddy in *Gastrodiplomacy* (2014, p. 32) also showed how national cuisine could change public perception of national images. It supports the opinion that the gastrodiplomacy program is an effective way for countries to take advantage of their national heritage and uniquely promote themselves on the global stage while simultaneously improving their national image.