

## CHAPTER III

### SOUTH KOREA CONDUCTED GASTRODIPLOMACY THROUGH GLOBAL HANSIK CAMPAIGN

In this chapter, the writer will describe the gastrodiploamacy in South Korea. Specifically, it will talk about the practice of gastrodiploamacy in South Korea, what Global Hansik campaign is, and how the Global Hansik campaign is implemented.

#### A. Kimchi Dispute

Some South Korean foods are processed into fermented form. Younger generation obtains the way it has been done for a long time and the recipe from the ancestors of their community. One of the examples is *kimchi*<sup>1</sup>.

For South Korea, *kimchi* is not only about cabbage salad. It is like the air for Korean people. There are more than hundreds of varieties of *kimchi* in Korea and the people consume it about 1.5 million tons each year (Young-joon, 2016). They cannot live without *kimchi*. Every day they eat it. One of the writer's friends from South Korea said that it feels so weird eating without *kimchi*. He even packed *kimchi* when he went to another country.

*Kimchi* is full of history and culture of South Korea. It represents the national identity of South Korea. No wonder if South Korea take action seriously when it comes to *kimchi*. One dispute that involves *kimchi* and state is the war of international recognition and standardization. It was the dispute

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<sup>1</sup> A dish made of fermented cabbage, chili paste and radish is a staple of the Korean diet and is served with *every* meal in most households.

between South Korea and Japan. This happened when Japan submitted their Japanese *kimchi* to the Atlanta Olympic in 1996 (Cwierka, Duke University Press, p. 373). South Korea issued a protest against the release of Japanese commercial products called "*kimuchi*" (Japanese pronunciation for *kimchi*) which is different from the *kimchi* made by South Korea, but it does have similarity with *kimchi*. *Kimchi* Japanese version is made to suit the taste of Japan, not too spicy and it through the fermentation process which is different from the Korean version, so it has a less strong odor (Armadani, 2014).

This is actually a normal consequence of food adjustment to be acceptable to local people, but Korea itself cannot accept it because 1) Japan once colonized Korea, 2) Japanese *kimuchi* recipes completely violate authentic *kimchi*-making methods from Korea, and 3) Japan *kimuchi* market has great potential to grow also Japanese manufacturers are potential competitors in the market *kimchi* world (Hongsik, 2006, p. 222).

The South Korean government submitted a formal proposal for an international standard application for *kimchi* to the Codex Alimentarius Committee (CAC)<sup>2</sup> and argued that it should be fermented according to the Korean tradition in order to acquire name *kimchi*. After submitting the proposal in 1996, CAC responded to the proposal in 2001 and then published the *kimchi* standardization (CODEX STAN 223-2001).

The draft does not only contain the description and definition, but it also contains scope; styles of the way *kimchi* is cutting; composition like basic ingredients, other permitted ingredients, and other

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<sup>2</sup> A body set up by the Food and Agricultural Organization and the World Health Organization to provide food recommendation, regulation, and standards with regards to labeling, hygiene, health, and ethics among others

composition; quality criteria regarding the color, taste, texture; food additives; contaminant; hygiene; even the weights and measure (CODEX STAN 223-2001).

The draft might not make both of South Korea and Japan content since it does not define the origin of *kimchi*, but actually, it gives more benefit for South Korea. Since the draft itself more represents the *kimchi* from South Korea. Another reason is by bringing the cases into the international organization it will automatically make international communities are recognizing *kimchi*. However, the case had not finished. There is another problem which is coming. It is the trade dispute between South Korea and China.

China started exporting *kimchi* to Korea in 2002 on a small scale, and it is only 1,041 tons. At that time it was less than 1% of the *kimchi* production. However, the low cost of production and the result of the international division of labor led to the increase of China's *kimchi* export. It increased sharply to 28,701 tons in 2003 (Hongsik, 2006). China's *kimchi* exports to South Korea reached nearly \$50 million in 2005, about 6% of the South Korean market (Lee D., 2005).

At this stage, the 'war' was triggered by the statements from the opposition politician Ko Kyeonghwa, a member of the National Assembly. As the Chief of the Food Security Task Force for the opposition Grand National Party, and based on the results of the Research Institute of Public Health and Environment of the City of Seoul, she stated that there is a dangerous level of lead in the imported *kimchi* from China (Hongsik, 2006, pp. 223-224).

However, the Korean Food and Drug Administration (KFDA) responded that the percentage of lead in imported *kimchi* is not harmful to the human body according to WHO criteria. The central government administration then went on to analyze further. They found that some *kimchi* contained lead,

but were much lower than those expressed by opposition politicians. On October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2005, the KFDA announced further investigation that showed some Chinese imported *kimchi* had parasitic insect eggs. It brought big scandals and the increasing of attention to food security. There is a drastic decline in Chinese *kimchi* imports, and this automatically makes Korean customs blocked the import for the health inspection (Hongsik, 2006, p. 224).

For Chinese producers, they see that the banning of *kimchi* imports from China and declaration that *kimchi* from China is contaminated with parasites as the move of protectionism of South Korean government (Lee D., 2005). Those are becoming the bridge where the gastrodiplomacy in South Korea are starting to uphold.

South Korea then has successfully lobbied UN CAC to change the English name from 'Chinese cabbage' to '*Kimchi* cabbage' in 2012 (Korean Culture and Information Service (KCIS), 2018). As written in the previous draft, it mentioned that the main ingredient is Chinese cabbage. By applying the name of *kimchi* cabbage, it will reaffirm that Korea is the country where *kimchi* originated. It also makes Korea build sovereignty over *kimchi* because international naming organization decided to call it *kimchi* cabbage (Chung, 2012).

In 2013, UNESCO included *Kimjang* or how to make *kimchi* in South Korea as a human cultural heritage. South Korea made a movie about *kimchi* Le Grand Chef - Kimchi War that aired in the United States. In those years, South Korea has been striving to promote *kimchi* as a global food. Companies and governments sponsor each of these agendas. In Seoul, there is the Kimchi Farm Museum. The community has developed research facilities to develop more knowledge about *kimchi* and the study of *kimchi* too in

order to globalize *kimchi* as Korean food (Armadani, 2014).

## **B. Global Hansik Campaign**

The Global Hansik campaign is a gastrodiploamacy which is held by South Korea since President Lee Myung Bak era. It comes from the terminology global and *hansik* (한식), the abbreviation of *hankook eumsik* (한국 음식) which has meaning Korean cuisine. Global Hansik means that they want to globalize the Korean cuisine or in the simple word make the Korean cuisine famous in the world.

At first, it was announced by the South Korean Minister of Food, Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, Chang Tae Pyong in the Korea Food Expo 2008. He announced about the Global Promotion of Korean Cuisine Campaign (Cwiertka, Duke University Press, p. 363). The goal of the campaign is to boost job opportunities and Korean culinary expert in the food industry, increase exports of Korean food and agricultural products, and enhance Korean national brands. The immediate impact of the program is to multiply the Korean eatery outside South Korea up to 40,000 and make *hansik* one of the top five world cuisines by 2017 (Ongkowitzjojo & Hikam, 2015, p. 1332).

Korean government was enacting the government-funded Hansik Foundation Act in May 2009. They also inaugurated the Hansik Globalization Development Agency. It comprises of 36 members from relevant government departments, academic institutions, and CEOs from the food industry. A lot of people involve in the project to make sure that the project can go well. Some of them are the Korean Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Forest and Fisheries

(MIFAFF), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and the Ministry of Knowledge and Economy, as well as local government's nationwide (Jeon, 2012, p. 36).

In 2009, the Korean government formed a foundation specifically for this purpose. The name of the foundation is the Korea Food Foundation (KFF). It was established under the MIFAFF. According to their website, "The Korean Food Foundation is an official, the government registered, the civil institution that is created for the sole purpose of the promotion and expansion of Korean food." The foundation was officially launched in 2010. The Foundation is funded by donations of 700 million won (about \$ 620,000) from the Korean Tourism Organization, The Korea Agro-Fisheries Trade Corporation, the Korea Foundation, the National Federation of Fisheries Cooperatives, the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation, the Korean Food Research Institute, the Korean Racing Authority (Cwierka, Duke University Press, p. 364). "The government has spent over 87 billion won (\$77 million) since 2009 to boost the awareness of *hansik* among foreigners" (Hyo-sik, 2012). Since 2017, Korea Food Foundation (KFF) has changed the name into Korean Food Promotion Institute (KFPI).

### **C. Roadmap of Global Hansik Campaign**

To achieve the best result and to make sure that the Global Hansik campaign will not stray from the right line, KFPI then made the roadmap from 2008 until the unspecified time. It is an overview of the extended terminology project goals along with the timeline (KFPI (Korean Food Promotion Institute), 2018).

## **1. Initial Starting Phase (2008-2010)**

This is the beginning where Global Hansik campaign will be conducted. It happened from 2008 until 2010. The focus is on escalating the recognition toward Korean food. Several goals which they have planned are developing the brand identity for Korean food, creating more attractive and exciting advertising to attract foreigner, promoting Korean food through international events such as G20 Summit in Seoul, ROK Summit-ROK at Jeju Island and other international events (KFPI (Korean Food Promotion Institute), 2018). In the G20 Summit Seoul for example, that event is believed as “the World Cup of the franchise industry”. In there the franchise expert, business people, discussed together to advance the international cooperation on franchise industry. As the starting point, it is a good occasion for South Korea to promote more their Korean food (OECD, 2012, p. 129).

## **2. Main Execution phase (2011-2012)**

The next phase is the main executive phase. It lasted only one year, from 2011 until 2012. It emphasized developing foreign marketing (KFPI (Korean Food Promotion Institute), 2018). As it can be seen from the focus, South Korea planned to give more support to the Korean restaurant in overseas also the Korean food specialist. The support can be any forms. It could be funding or training. They also planned to give more attention to the research of the health-beneficial from Korean food (KFPI (Korean Food Promotion Institute), 2018). In this phase too, South Korea will make the promotion of Korean

food regional menu as well as the technique and cooking methods (KFPI (Korean Food Promotion Institute), 2018).

### **3. Result Phase (2013-2015)**

The third phase was starting from 2013-2015. They call it as result phase with the focus on localize Korean food globalization business (KFPI (Korean Food Promotion Institute), 2018). They planned several projects in this phase. First is playing more roles in the circulation and exportation of Korean food supplies. It is relating to the ingredients and cooking tools too. It can be one of the efforts in increasing the export of Korean agriculture products. Second is pointing out and manage the logo and ambassador of Korean food. The third is holding several Korean food days, and Korean food towns also prepare for a complete Korean food exhibition. The last is increasing the number of foreign Korean food cooking schools around the world as well as enlarging the area to spread the Korean restaurant franchise (KFPI (Korean Food Promotion Institute), 2018).

### **4. Mature Phase (2016- ~)**

The final phase of the roadmap still has the same focus to localize Korean food globalization business (KFPI (Korean Food Promotion Institute), 2018). It started in 2016 and had an open deadline. They call this phase a mature phase since most of the plans are reinforcing the result from the previous phase. In this phase, it supposed to have the good connection, interaction, the relation between



Korean food industries with the tourism industry. It also supposed to support and participate more in events related to Korean food culture. Besides that, they should increase the production and commercialization of souvenirs and items that relate to Korean food, dramas, and cartoons. They also plan to make information about Korean food which can be accessed in real-time and provided by trained commentators and translators. The last, they prepare and manage for the realization of Korean food complete exhibition again (KFPI (Korean Food Promotion Institute), 2018).

#### **D. Strategies and Implementation of Global Hansik Campaign**

In 2017, Korea sought to make *hansik* into five of the world's best food. In 2012, Korea planned to reach export of food agribusiness as much as USD 10 billion. They want to increase the number of Korean restaurant overseas from 9,000 in 2006 to 18,000 in 2012 and goes to 40,000 by 2017. Meanwhile, to strengthen national competitiveness through Global Hansik campaign, the government planned to promote “the inbound industry” as well (OECD, 2012, p. 128). Based on this vision, South Korea undertook several implementations in their goals (KFPI (Korean Food Promotion Institute), 2018).

##### **1. The Sophistication of the Korean Food Infrastructure**

The first thing the South Korean government has to do is building the industrial base for Korean food. Korean government needs to create several legal and institutional systems. At first is government enacted the Eating Life

Education Act in May 2009 and imposed the Korea Alcohol Industry Promotion in August 2009. Then the government established the Korean Food Foundation in March 2010 which became Korean Food Promotion Institute in 2017 and after that the Food Service Industry Promotion in March 2011. In 2013, they expanded and reorganized the General Food Fund, and the government also will develop the Food Industry Fund. Beside that Hansik's Comprehensive Information Service has increased and expanded its activities. Also, the Korean government also established the Small Business Act and increased the funding scale. The last but not least, the government was expanding the foreign language portal service (OECD, 2012, p. 128).

## **2. Strengthening of Competitiveness of Korean Restaurant**

In supporting Korean restaurant in abroad and culinary business, the Korean government is providing several kinds of funding. They also provide several loans and grants (A. Pham, 2013, p. 14). They encourage overseas restaurant owners to renovate by providing low-interest loans to restaurant owners and paying consultant fees (Shim, 2011, p. 29).

One of the examples is the Bibigo Korean restaurant. Bibigo is one of the recipients of the loans to expand their restaurant (A. Pham, 2013, p. 14). It was founded in 2010, created by CJ Foodville Corp., a food service unit of Korean conglomerate CJ Group, one of top grossing food service company in South Korea. Bibigo has eagerly expanded its restaurant to the world. With

three stores in South Korea, nine stores throughout the Greater Los Angeles and San Diego areas and nine stores throughout Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou they claim that Bibigo offers traditional Korean cuisine by reinterpreting into modern terminology to the world so people can taste the culture of Korea in Bibigo (Bibigo, 2018).

CJ has a place of research related to the combination of traditional recipes and modern sensibilities in Bibigo known as CJ Blossom Park. CJ Blossom Park is home to Korea's first and largest bio-fusion food laboratory equipped with an open laboratory system to maximize the creativity of researchers. With an investment of over KRW 480 billion, the CJ Blossom Park complex has a size of 110,000m<sup>2</sup>, or it is equivalent to the size of 15 football field (Bibigo, 2018). In 2016, "Bibigo Rice," was selected as the winner of the 2016 Korean Culture of Excellence by the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism (Bibigo, 2018).

The Korean government also makes such kind of operation of an overseas Korean restaurant consulting group. On the official website, it shows that KFPI had successfully managed the Korean restaurant consulting group. Hundreds of Korean restaurant are well managing in every country. In every country, they have an official office and structure (KFPI (Korean Food Promotion Institute), 2018).

### **3. Cultivation of Specialist**

The Korean government realized the need to create and train the expertise of Korean cuisine. The Korean government selected and

supported two universities specializing in *hansik*. The universities are Woosong University and Soongsil University. Ministry for Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MIFAFF) and the Korean Food Promotion and Institution (KFPI) has designated Department of Global Korean Culinary Arts, Woosong University as the Educational Institution for the Korean Star Chef Program for four consecutive years. While Soongsil University, opened a specialized MBA course designed to foster global restaurant business leaders with support from the MIFAFF, the Ministry of Employment and Labor (MOEL), and Korea Agro-Fisheries & Food Trade Corporation (aT) (KFPI (Korean Food Promotion Institute), 2012). There was a report from the New York Times that \$10 million had spent on scholarships for South Korean (A. Pham, 2013, p. 13).

There is also a local professional food course and Hansik Star Chef in order to foster talented chefs. Creative Culinary Institute of Korea (CCIK), an institution to foster and train cooks specializing in Korean food opened in 2012 (KFPI (Korean Food Promotion Institute), 2012). It is going to train cooks, hotel managers, and chefs who will be cooking Korean food overseas. Besides, they have signed some Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to open *hansik* classes at some famous international cooking schools (OECD, 2012, p. 128). One of them is Drexel University in Philadelphia, the institution which offers Korean culinary course in the US for the first time. The Korean government is also hosting training for the Korean restaurant in the foreign country. Since 2010, they set up pieces of training

for over 2600 participant in at least ten cities across five countries (A. Pham, 2013, p. 13).

#### **4. Spreading of Korean Food Domestically and Internationally**

To globalize the Korean food, KFPI introduced “The Global Korean Restaurant scheme.” It comprises introduction of Korean food, national qualification for overseas restaurant, more investment also development on research and food industry, and enhance the quality of cooks in Korean cuisine (A. Pham, 2013, p. 12). KFPI and MIFAFF also published “International Korean Menu Guide” in April 2012. It contains 154 Korean dishes which have translated into several languages (A. Pham, 2013, p. 12).

The foundation also looks for escalating the research on Korean cuisine, certifying Korean cuisine ingredients, and funding in the development of Korean cuisine in order the cuisine can be suitable in foreign palates (A. Pham, 2013, p. 12). One of research is regarding the effectiveness of Korean food in dieting. In 2012 there was a journal of Obesity Research and Clinical Practice about the role traditional Korean foods in helping losing weight after a prolonged period (KFPI (Korean Food Promotion Institute), 2012). As we know there is rising popularity in health-conscious eating trends, that research will bring benefit for globalizing the Korean food. Foreigner will think that Korean cuisine is full of its healthful benefit and it will increase the selling power of Korean dishes and ingredients (A. Pham, 2013, p. 13).

Also, the KFPI and the Korea Food and Drug Administration (KFDA) worked together in registering to Codex Alimentarius Commission (Codex) regarding several traditional Korean ingredients. In 2009 they had *kimchi*, *doenjang* (Korean soybean paste), registered *gochujang* (Korean chili paste), and ginseng (A. Pham, 2013, p. 13). As the writer had written before regarding the *kimchi* dispute, it shows how important to assert the originality of cuisine and ingredients since it matters for a nation's brand and image.

Another thing that they do is appointing several celebrities or focal people as brand ambassador in introducing Korean food to the world. Such as Kim Yoon-ok, the First Lady of Korea, became the honorary chairwoman of the campaign's Globalization of the Korean Cuisine Committee (A. Pham, 2013, p. 15). Then Wonder Girls and Super Junior which have significant responsibilities in spreading Korean food through the interview, tour, and commercial film (CF). Besides that, the KFPI also made Korean Food (K-FOOD) collaboration music album which starring several idols (KFPI (Korean Food Promotion Institute), 2018).

Nevertheless, they also appointed five Korean non-celebrities people to be the ambassador. That group is called Bibimbab Backpackers. "A group of five passionate people introduced and promoted Bimbimbap to the world. In 2011, they had traveled to 20 different countries for nine months and served more 10,000 people across the globe under the project name 100<sup>th</sup> Korean Table. (Bibimbab Backpackers, 2012)" They are getting funded from MIFAFF and CJ Foodville (A. Pham, 2013, p. 16).