



Culinary Tradition of Cassava Rice in Indigenous Villages Cireundeu, Cimahi, Indonesia as Food Security Heritage in The Era of Gastro Colonialism

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ABSTRACT

This study described the culinary tradition of cassava rice in Kampung Adat Cireundeu Cimahi Indonesia as a legacy of sustainable food security in the era of gastro colonialism. This is a qualitative study during community service using ethnographic methods with data collection techniques through interviews, observations, documentation studies, and literature studies. In the results, Kampung Adat Cireundeu Cimahi is a Food Self-Sufficiency Village, managing land to meet food needs while still implementing sustainable customary rules. Cassava rice as a sustainable food security heritage is a culinary tradition, born from the food limitations of the Traditional Village community during the colonial period. Thus, innovation in utilizing cassava as an alternative food made cassava a staple food for the Cireundeu community. Efforts to preserve the culinary tradition of cassava rice are carried out by the entire community through inheritance in the family environment, the seren taun tradition ceremony as a symbol of local food wisdom, collaboration with the government, and innovation of processing cassava products to improve the food welfare and food security of the community.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Food security is the most important part of sustainable living. Food as a primary human need is the driving sector for the birth of human civilization (Kearney, 2010). Along with human needs and changing times, the dynamic development of food is faced with food security problems, such as natural conditions to local food which is faced with food colonization. Food colonization or gastro colonialism is a term first coined by Craig Santos (Anderson, 2013). was first coined by Craig Santos Perez, a researcher and activist from Guam. and activist from Guam. The term gastro colonialism or food colonization coined by Craig Santos Perez in his book *Facing Hawaii's Future* describes the condition of the Hawaiian community's dependence on imported food products made with low-quality ingredients produced by multinational companies, thus triggering a reduction in the nutritional conditions of the local community.

Apart from Hawaii, food colonization is happening in Merauke, Papua, Indonesia. Papua has abundant and nutritious food sources such as cassava, sago, yams, and various types of vegetables, as well as the use of forests to obtain animal protein sources. However, this changed when foreigners arrived and converted Papuan lands into large-scale plantations. This phenomenon in Papua is a form of food colonization.

Papuans have a habit of consuming food sources that depend on the forest. This tradition is a form of expression of identity and identity and local culture of the Papuan people. However, this food habit is often labeled as a backward tradition both in terms of culture and nutritional fulfillment. Then through the national food security agenda, Papuans have lost their right to access their food sources.

The condition of food colonization in Papua was exposed to social media in October 2022 after a viral video on Tiktok of Papuans exchanging vegetables for rice and instant noodles with a moving narrative, "This mama came from the next village with her four children to exchange tomatoes for instant noodles". The problem of food security in Papua is one example of the many problems of local food security that clash with food from outside that threatens the environment, the existence of local food, and the agrarian traditions of the community (Imbun *et al.*, 2015). local food and the agrarian traditions of the community, especially indigenous peoples.

Indonesia is a country that has a diversity of cultures, and traditions, to the diversity of local foods has become the identity of its people (Wijaya, 2019). In the life of the community, especially indigenous peoples, food is not only a part of primary needs but becomes an identity of food security that continues to be inherited. continues to be inherited. The agrarian culture of indigenous peoples in Indonesia places food as the most important part that is expressed in the traditions of indigenous peoples, such as the rituals of rice planting ceremonies, harvesting processes, to the rituals of traditions, such as the rituals of rice planting ceremonies, the harvesting process, to the rituals of storing rice in barns. storage of rice in the granary. The rice barn of the Baduy tribe, which is still preserved as an effort of food security of the Baduy community is still preserved as an effort of community food security in facing the food crisis.

In addition to the Baduy community in Banten, food security efforts are carried out through food self-sufficiency, one of which is by indigenous people in the Cireundeu Traditional Village in Cimahi, West Java. The Cireundeu community is unique in making cassava a staple food known as cassava rice (rasi). This effort is carried out as part of the ancestral heritage in overcoming food problems. Food problems that occurred in the past in the Cireundeu community can be overcome through the rules of customs and traditions that apply and

continue to be preserved now. Community innovation efforts Cireundeu community's innovation efforts through cassava rice are a solution and potential that can be emulated in overcoming hunger and food security. in overcoming hunger and food security. End hunger, achieving food security and good nutrition, and improving sustainable agriculture are the second goals of SDGS 2023. is the second goal in SDGS 2023. This goal is in line with Indonesia's development priorities under the food security priority. food security priority. Based on this background, this research aims to to describe the culinary tradition of cassava rice in Cireundeu Traditional Village, Cimahi as a legacy of sustainable food security in the era of gastro colonialism.

The research on the culinary tradition of cassava rice and gastro colonialism is revealed in previous research. The local food-based culinary traditions are a form of local wisdom as a picture of community life patterns that can present collectivity identity and socio-cultural representations in conceptualizing food, the social function of food amid the crush and influence of food modernization from outside cultures. Another research on the cassava rice tradition was revealed by [Sumaludin \(2022\)](#) regarding the culinary tradition of cassava rice in Kampung Adat Cireundeu Cimahi which has the potential as an Ethno pedagogy-based learning resource in High School. While previous research on gastro colonialism is found in Sophie Chao's writing in 2021 entitled *Gastrocolonialism: the intersections of race, food, and development in West Papua* the phenomenon that occurs in Papua is a form of food colonization. Although the article was published in 2021, it uses facts that occurred in 2010. This research aims to describe the culinary tradition of cassava rice in Kampung Adat Cireundeu Cimahi as a legacy of sustainable food security in the era of gastro colonialism.

2. METHODS

This research is a qualitative study using the ethnography method during community service. Qualitative research intends to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by research subjects, such as behavior, perceptions, motivations, actions, etc., holistically and employing descriptions in the form of words and language. etc., in a special natural context by utilizing various methods. in a special natural context by utilizing various natural methods. Ethnography is one of the methods that use a qualitative approach. According to Spradley, ethnography is the work of describing culture and understanding a way of life from the point of view of the natives. The object of the research is all aspects of indigenous life as seen from gastronomy. The subject of the research is the indigenous people of Cireundeu Village who act as informants, such as elders, elders, and informants. Housewives who process cassava rice, and the younger generation of Kampung Adat Cireundeu. To obtain data, researchers went directly to Cireundeu Traditional Village in Leuwigajah Village, South Cimahi District, Cimahi City to obtain in-depth data about the food security of Cireundeu Village through the culinary tradition of cassava rice. In addition to interviews, data collection techniques through observation, field notes, and documentation studies and strengthened by literature studies. The data analysis techniques used are data reduction (data reduction), data presentation (data display), and verification (conclusion drawing).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Kampung Adat Cireundeu Cimahi as a Food Self-Sufficiency Village

The people of Cireundeu Village are one of the indigenous communities of community in West Java that still maintain and preserve ancestral customs for generations amid the globalization and modernization of Cimahi, Indonesia ([Sumaludin, 2022](#)). Administratively, Cireundeu Traditional Village is located in Leuwigajah Village, South Cimahi Subdistrict,

Cimahi City. Cireundeu Traditional Village, which is inhabited by mostly cassava farmers, has an area of 64 ha consisting of 60 ha for agricultural land and 4 ha for settlements. Geographically, this traditional village, where some of the people still uphold Sunda Wiwitan, is located between the valleys of Mount Gajah to the East, Mount Cimenteng to the South, and Pasir Panji and Mount Kunci to the West. The mountains that surround the Cireundeu Traditional Village have maintained sustainability because of the existence of customary rules that contribute to the preservation of the environment, which is characterized by the division of the area into three parts. environment which is characterized by the division of the area into three parts based on its function, namely Leuweung Larangan (forbidden forest), Leuweung Tutupan (reforestation forest), and Leuweung Baladahan (agricultural forest). Agricultural forest area This agricultural forest area is used by the Cireundeu community for gardening, one of which is cassava (**Figure 1**).



Figure 1. Cassava plantation in the Leuweung Baladah Cireundeu area.

In terms of socio-culture, the indigenous people in Cireundeu Traditional village still maintain and maintain local wisdom and other cultural values for generations during changing times. The life of the indigenous people in Cireundeu Village is open to the progress of the times based on the principles that are firmly held by the indigenous people. Abah Widia (61 years old) as the elder of Kampung Adat Cireundeu said that the Cireundeu community has the principle of "*Ngindung Ka Waktu, Mibapa Ka Jaman*" which means that indigenous people continue to carry out and maintain existing traditions, customs and local wisdom but do not avoid the times. One of the cultural products that is the culinary identity of the Cireundeu community with all its wisdom is cassava rice (Sumaludin, 2022).

The existence of cassava utilization fulfills the needs of the Cireundeu community which are food-independent and in line with local wisdom that is still maintained. Thus, Cireundeu is dubbed the Food Self-Sufficient Village. The predicate or nickname obtained by Kampung Adat Cireundeu is Desa Swasembada Pangan or Desa Mandiri Pangan (Demapan) because the Cireundeu village area can regulate and maintain village land to meet its local food needs, by having strict procedures and rules in controlling space utilization, arranged to be able to provide cassava raw materials for staple foods which are obtained sustainably. This is based on the Cireundeu community which considers that the ancestral teachings adopted are a blessing because by consuming rasi, Cireundeu villagers get physical and mental freedom.

In addition to adherence to ancestral traditions, preserving the environment strengthens Kampung Adat Cireundeu as a food-self-sufficient village towards a food-independent village. The impact is that residents are no longer haunted by price increases or even scarcity of rice. Food self-sufficiency for the Cireundeu community will continue to be maintained by continuing to consume rasi. Thus, Kampung Adat Cireundeu Cimahi is a food-self-sufficient

village that can manage land to meet food needs while still implementing sustainable customary rules.

3.2. Cassava Rice as a Legacy of Sustainable Food Security

Cassava rice as a legacy of sustainable food security is a culinary tradition born from the limited food (rice) of the Cireundeu Traditional Village community during the colonial era (Dutch East Indies). Thus, these conditions gave birth to innovations in the use of cassava as an alternative food which is now the staple food of the Cireundeu community. Cassava rice is a typical staple food of the Cireundeu Cimahi Traditional Village community which has become the identity and culinary tradition of the community for generations, with cassava innovated by the previous Cireundeu community to meet food needs, as a response to the historical experience of the community in facing famine due to colonization and drought (Sumaludin, 2022). The existence of this historical background is also motivated by the role of the previous Elders of Kampung Adat Cireundeu. According to Abah Widi (Interview), who is the current Customary Elder (2023), the tradition of consuming cassava rice began in 1918 when the Cireundeu Traditional Village experienced a famine, the rice fields that had been planted with rice dried up and died, while the supply of rice from the Dutch government was very difficult, so during the famine, Cireundeu Elder Aki Haji Ali looked for a solution by leaving Cireundeu looking for people who could help with the problem. Until one day, Aki Haji Ali met an expected figure in the Cirebon area. In the meeting, what was obtained was not the knowledge of planting rice, but petatah-petitih (advice) which is well known by the Sundanese community.

The advice in question is "*Teu nanaon teu boga huma ge asal boga pare. Teu nanaon teu boga pare ge asal boga beas. Teu nanaon teu boga beas ge asal bisa ngejo. Teu nanaon teu can ngejo ge asal bisa nyatu. Teu nanaon teu can nyatu ge asal bisa hiririr*"

It means that "*It is okay not to have huma (fields), as long as you have rice, it is okay not to have rice, as long as you have rice, it is okay not to have rice, as long as you can cook rice, it is okay not to be able to cook rice, as long as you can eat, it is okay not to eat, as long as you can survive.*"

From this advice, the Cireundeu Elders at that time found strength and thought, that the essence of life is to be able to survive any situation. Based on this advice, there was an intention to change the function of rice fields into cassava gardens, so that people were able to live independently of rice which was difficult to obtain at that time. Aki Haji Ali intended to liberate his community from food difficulties. According to Abah Widi (interview), independence, in this case, is Aki Haji Ali's premise that independence is not only independence from the Dutch colonizers but also independence from the difficulties of life. Aki Haji Ali advised Cireundeu residents to delay consuming rice and switch to cassava and tubers. In 1924, the Cireundeu community finally succeeded in processing the cassava they planted into rasi perfectly and they called it the term *sangueun* (material for making rice). The advice of the ancestors is adhered to today. By changing their staple food consumption from rice to cassava rice, the residents of Kampung Adat Cireundeu no longer depend on rice.

The success of this cassava planting program is influenced by the natural factors of Cireundeu which are suitable for cassava plants. Highlights aspects of the consumption patterns and socio-culture of the Cirendeu community, the geographical contours of Kampung Cireundeu are hilly, overgrown with reeds, and especially in fertile parts are planted with cassava. Cassava farmers in Cireundeu Village, work on cassava plants from planting to collecting the harvest which is done traditionally and is still very simple. Most farmers in this village do not market their cassava directly to the market, but they first process the cassava

into powder and the processed products are sold to the market. Cassava has the advantage of being a non-seasonal crop, which can be harvested at any time, however, there are still harvest times that involve the entire community to pick the results which are carried out together in cooperation. After the harvest process, cassava enters the processing stage into cassava rice using simple tools and utilizing sunlight for the drying process (**Figure 2**).



Figure 2. The process of drying cassava rice.

To meet food needs, each resident's house processes cassava rice independently or can be done in cooperation among residents. One of the Cireundeu residents who have experience in making cassava rice, Mrs. Dariani (60 years old), said that the process of making cassava rice starts from the harvesting process, cleaning cassava, mashing cassava (manually/machine), separating the pulp and essence, drying the cassava pulp for three days, then the cassava that has been dried in the sun until dry is ready to be cooked by first stirring with a little water. Cassava rice is one of the by-products of cassava tapioca processing, so the protein and fat content is lower. The low nutritional content makes cassava rice must be consumed with other foods to balance the nutritional content, such as side dishes and vegetables.

3.3. Efforts to Preserve Cassava Rice Culinary Traditions in the Era of Gastro Colonialism

Local food-based culinary traditions are a form of local wisdom as a picture of community life patterns that can present collectivity identity and socio-cultural representations in conceptualizing food, and the social function of food amid the crush and influence of food modernization from outside cultures. The local wisdom of the Cireundeu community is realized in its distinctive culinary tradition, namely cassava rice (*rasi*). The existence of Cireundeu *rasi* is still sustainable amid globalization, which gave birth to the phenomenon of colonization of local food (gastro colonialism). Gastro colonialism or food colonization is a condition of local people's dependence on imported food products made with low-quality ingredients produced by multinational companies, thus triggering a reduction in the nutritional conditions of local communities (Fresno-Calleja, 2017). During the gastro-colonialism era, the people of Kampung Adat Cireundeu Cimahi tried to preserve the culinary tradition of cassava rice in various ways. Efforts to preserve the culinary tradition of cassava rice are carried out by the entire community of Kampung Adat Cireundeu through inheritance in the family environment, the *seren taun* tradition ceremony as a symbol of local food wisdom, collaborating with the government, and innovating processed cassava products that can improve food welfare and food security of the Cireundeu community in the era of gastro colonialism.

Efforts to preserve the culinary tradition of cassava rice start from the family environment. The family environment as the first school for a child becomes a place to inherit values,

traditions, and customs. Parents in Kampung Cireundeu introduce food diversity including typical Cireundeu cassava rice to children as a form of preserving the culinary traditions of Cireundeu ancestors (Interview) **(Figure 3)**.



Figure 3. The tradition of eating cassava rice among the younger generation of Cireundeu.

In addition to the family environment, efforts to preserve the culinary tradition of rasi were introduced to the Cireundeu community and the general public through the seren taun traditional ceremony or Satu Sura ceremony. The Satu Sura ceremony ritual is a manifestation of the gratitude of the Cireundeu indigenous people for the blessings given by the Creator, and a means of control in actions or interactions between people (Widyaputra, 2019). This annual traditional ceremony of the Cireundeu community is known as the Sundanese Tutup Taun Ngemban Taun Satu Sura Saka Ceremony which makes rasi a symbol of the local food wisdom of the Cireundeu community through rasi dishes and other snacks from cassava served during the activity (Interview) **(Figure 4)**.



Figure 4. Ngemban Taun Closing Ceremony of Cireundeu Traditional Village.

The next effort is to collaborate with the local government of both Cimahi City and West Java in various creative economic activities such as exhibitions that introduce typical Cireundeu cassava rice products (Interview). Other productive activities organized by the government are through workshops or training for the Cireundeu community to improve human resources and improve the quality of cassava rice and innovative products from cassava. The innovation of processed cassava products is an effort of food independence through food diversification which has an impact on the economy of the Cireundeu community through MSMEs. Efforts to preserve the culinary traditions of cassava rice and various processed cassava are an effort of the Cireundeu indigenous people in preserving traditions and ancestral heritage in line with efforts for food security and national food self-sufficiency.

4. CONCLUSION

Cireundeu Traditional Village in Cimahi City is a successful example of managing land to achieve food self-sufficiency. The culinary tradition of cassava rice, which dates back to the Dutch East Indies colonial period, symbolizes sustainable food security. Although cassava rice initially emerged as an alternative to food limitations, it has now become the staple food of the Cireundeu community. Efforts to preserve this tradition are carried out through inheritance in the family, seren taun traditional ceremonies, collaboration with the government, and innovation of processed cassava products. This success is an asset in facing globalization and gastro colonialism that can threaten local wisdom. Cassava rice, with its potential as a source of local food innovation, not only improves the welfare of the Cireundeu community but also strengthens national food security based on sustainable food self-sufficient villages.

5. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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