

Learning from Cireundeu:

A Prototype of Local Wisdom-based Cultural Traditional Village and Food Security

Y. Achdiani, I. Widiaty, F. Rahmafitria, E. E. Nikmawati

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia

Bandung, Indonesia

E-mail: yaniachdiani@yahoo.com

Abstract— The purpose of this study was to explore the potentials of local wisdom as a prototype of vocational local wisdom-based Cireundeu traditional village with food security. Cireundeu traditional village can be used as a learning resource related to the processing of *rasi* as staple food that is unique to the village. *Rasi* becomes the main source of raw material for the process of diversification of food products in the region. The approach used in this study was qualitative. The research methods were survey data collection techniques, such as literature study, in-depth interviews, and observation. The results showed that Cireundeu traditional village is included as vocational village in the category of food security based on local wisdom that is unique and inspiring. Cireundeu traditional village is also a prototype of vocational village that develops creative industries on culinary field. The potential of the creative economy in Cireundeu is included in the category of 14 types of creative industries based on local cultural richness.

Keywords— *Cireundeu, Cultural Traditional Village, Local Wisdom*

I. INTRODUCTION

Cireundeu Village is a region declared by the Government of Cimahi City, West Java, as a traditional village. Cireundeu people living in Subdistrict of Leuwigajah, District of South Cimahi, Cimahi City, West Java, have the habit of eating *rasi* (cassava rice) as the staple food.

The area of Cireundeu traditional village has unique potential as a prototype of area that possesses a value of local wisdom that can be used as learning media for the wider community. The characteristics of Cireundeu people as traditional village can be seen from the fact that they have tradition of customs passed down from generation to generation in a relatively long period, they have cultures and beliefs that are different from wider society in general [1][2][3], and they still have the feeling of togetherness in their group, they have traditional government institutions, traditional treasure/objects and traditional law norms [4].

Cireundeu people who adhere to the belief system based in Kuningan-Cirebon oblige its followers to consume *rasi* as the staple food, and this have been done for generations. They believe that, if it is violated, there will be disaster in their region. This characteristic is closely related to the natural history of food they experienced. This history is then used as the basic philosophy of life of the people at Cireundeu Village.

Furthermore, the habit of consuming *rasi* (made from cassava) as staple food becomes a unique phenomenon in the midst of intensive effort by the government, who launched a movement to seek alternative staple foods besides rice. For this achievement, Cireundeu people in 2009 received a national award from President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono as a village pioneering national food security.

Two main uniquenesses of the Cireundeu people are on the aspects of culture and food security, which relies on the habit of eating *rasi*, and can certainly be used as a potential for tourism/ecotourism education on how Cireundeu people manage to maintain their habit of consuming *rasi* in the midst of the intense flow of modernization. In addition, the potential of *rasi* as an alternative staple food besides rice needs to be developed further and more serious, and this condition can be used as an alternative educational process for the wider community.

II. METHOD

This study was conducted at Cireundeu Traditional Village in the Subdistrict of Leuwi Gajah, District of South Cimahi, Cimahi City, West Java, Indonesia. Cireundeu Traditional Village is a tourism destination with natural charms and the culture of consuming *rasi* as a staple food.

The method used was descriptive analysis with qualitative approach (paradigm phenomenology) because the values of local wisdom in Cireundeu are the experiences that occur naturally (natural setting). The data or information was obtained from a number of informants. The informants were purposively selected. The informants in this study are people related to the practice of the inheritance of local wisdom values in family unit at Cireundeu Village. The study was started by determining key informants, who understood the prevailing tradition in their lives, then extended to appoint informants who can provide more in-depth information about the process of inheritance of local wisdom values, causing rolling snowball [5].

The data used in this study consist of primary or research data and secondary data. The primary or research data was obtained from the informants, the community and families at Cireundeu village as the doers of the inheritance of local wisdom values. The secondary data was obtained through literature data and documentation as well as existing report materials at related institutions. Research techniques or the

ways of doing research used were participative observation, in-depth interviews and documentation study. Data analysis was performed starting from collecting data in the field until the end, when the data was deemed sufficient, then all data gathered was analyzed inductively using qualitative approach.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Development of Cireundeu Traditional Village

The development of Cireundeu traditional villages from time to time experienced a very long journey beginning in 1918. Cireundeu Village was initially a small settlement founded by a prince, that is, Prince Madrais from Cigugur, Kuningan. Prince Madrais stopped at Cireundeu in 1918 to seek refuge because at that time there was a war when the Government of the Netherlands East Indies attacked Kasultanan in Kuningan. After living for several years at Cireundeu, he met H. Nur Ali, and, with him, founded a village called Cireundeu Village.

Originally, Cireundeu Village was a hilly area in which there were numerous Rendeu trees, as "Ciciren" or "Tanggara," which are the trees that grow vines and are efficacious as medicine and can be eaten as fresh vegetables. The trees grew close to source of water, and the water is called "ci" in Sundanese. So, eventually this area is known as Cireundeu.

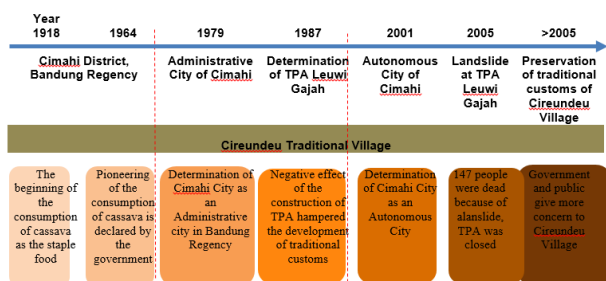


Fig. 1. Depeloment of Cimahi City and Cireundeu Village

Because of the pioneering of Cireundeu Traditional Village on the consumption of cassava as alternative staple food besides rice, Cireundeu Village often received awards from the government regarding food security. The awards received, among others, include food hero award in 1964 to Mrs. Omah Asnamah and the award of Food Security on National Level from the President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in 2008.

B. The existence of Cireundeu as Traditional Village region

The existence of Cireundeu as a traditional village can be used as a media to learn local wisdom values-based community [6]. The criteria of Cireundeu region as Traditional Village can be viewed from the following aspects:

C. Administrative borders

Based on the information and rules which the villagers follow, the area of Cireundeu Village is bounded by Mount Gajah Langu and Mount Jambul (North), Mount Puncak Salam (East), Mount Cimenteng (South) and Mount Kunci (West). Up to the back of the mountain/hill is Cireundeu region, and this border is different from the administrative borders according to regional governments.

D. Lineage

Historically, people at Cireundeu Traditional Village came from a common ancestor, namely H. Ali, who brought the belief of Sunda Wiwitan into this area. Traditional people who hold the belief of *Sunda wiwitan* currently amount to about 60 families. They came from the same lineage (H. Ali). However, due to the effect of marriage, there are many original descendants who no longer adhere to the same beliefs and traditions as their ancestors.

E. Unique culture of the Society

Other traditions that are still held include the traditions of Sundanese people in general such as language, clothing, way of life and tools. They embrace the motto: "*Ngaindung ka waktu, mibapa ka zaman*". So, they do not isolate themselves from the development of time (the structures of houses, household appliances and clothing), and today still maintain the tradition of Sundanese culture.

The customs that are still held today are the belief of *Sunda Wiwitan* and the tradition of consuming *rasi* as the staple food. The other traditions are not limited to the people at Cireundeu traditional Village, but rather the Sundanese culture and traditions in general.

F. Openness to Outside Culture

The characteristic of traditional people is that they usually live separated from other communities and reject or are cautious about new things coming from outside of their community. However, this condition is different on people at Cireundeu Traditional Village.

People at Cireundeu Traditional Village is a type of traditional people who have open attitude to the entry of new culture while holding firmly to the belief of "*Gusti nu asih, alam nu ngaasih, manusia nu ngasuh*", which means that God is loving, providing nature with all its contents, and humans have responsibility to maintain and manage it wisely. Consequently Cireundeu people are not antipathetic to technology and modern age development, as long as they protect nature well. Cireundeu traditional people blend with other communities in the area of Cireundeu Village and have high tolerance for other cultures and beliefs.

The result of the analysis indicates that Cireundeu Village can be categorized as traditional village because it still possesses distinctive and unique value of customs and traditions, different from the general population, ie the habit of consuming *rasi* (rice made from cassava) as staple food. Cireundeu traditional people are the descendants of the original adherents of *Sunda Wiwitan* (Sundanese Javanese Religion) a long time ago, which were the descendants of Prince of Cirebon, which is Prince Ali Basyah Sadewa Kusumadiningrat, and they still live in the land which is a heritage from their predecessors. In addition, these people with the orientation of the traditional life pattern live in rural areas.

As the source of staple food at Cireundeu Village, cassavas are cultivated by most people on farms not far from their homes. Although currently cassava farms are not owned exclusively as traditional land, but they are still sufficient to meet the needs of internal consumption, even for external needs too. Cassavas grown by traditional peoples are different from cassavas widely found in the market. The types of

cassava planted are *krikil* cassava or the so-called pomegranate cassava. *Krikil* or pomegranate cassava contains high levels of HCl so that when eaten directly, they will taste bitter and can cause poisoning, so the process of evaporation, drying and washing multiple times are required to remove the toxic substances.

TABLE I. CHARACTERISTICS AND EXISTENCE OF CIREUNDEU TRADITIONAL VILLAGE

Criteria	Existence	Actual condition in 2015
Inhabiting ancestral land partially or completely	√	Area they call Cireunde Village never undergoes significant changes.
Having the same lineage	√	The same lineage from H. Ali.
Having unique belief system, culture, customs, and life habits.	√	Customs that are still held are the belief of <i>Sunda Wiwitan</i> and the custom of eating <i>rasi</i> as the staple food.
Having their own language	×	There is no specific local language. People at Cireunde Village speak Sundanese and Indonesian.
Isolating themselves from the community in general	×	Living with other communities in the region of Cireunde Village. Having high tolerance on other cultures and beliefs.
Living in rural areas	√	Settlement patterns is the type of Indonesian rural areas, with hilly land morphology.

In addition to processing cassavas into *rasi* (cassava rice), there are now home industries processing cassavas into various snack materials, such as *aci* cakes, pastries, and chips. In

principle, traditional people try to cultivate cassavas with environmentally friendly principles, nothing is wasted. This values of local wisdom in food processing can be used as a source of information on value education for tourists, about how local people are wise and environmentally friendly in managing their food, and this is a strong attraction in local creativity-based tourism development [6][7].

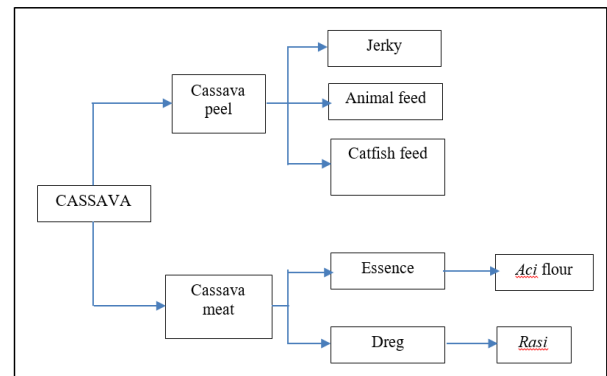


Fig. 2. Process of the use of cassavas as the food source at Cireunde Village

G. Taboo food

Taboo food is a characteristic of the existence of socio-cultural live in various regions in Indonesia and even the nations of the world (It can be said that the issue of abstinence from consuming certain foods are universal around the world) [8]. Abstinence or taboo is a prohibition to consume certain types of food because there is threat or punishment against anyone who does it.

The types of foods considered taboo by the people at Cireunde Traditional Village is rice and its processed products. If a member of a family is going eat rice for health reasons, because of marriage to someone outside the group or other reasons, then the family is required to hold *selamatan* event attended by community elders or leaders as the figures of cultural inheritances, neighbors and close relatives. The event conducted includes an explanation by the family who will switch to consume rice, called "*Buka*," to all those who are present, then the family or the person who is going to eat rice is required to bathe in flowers water that has been given prayer (*jampe*) by the elders. Only after that, he/she is allowed to consume rice without being afraid of any obstacles that that would happen.

The adherents of local beliefs firmly follow the rules established by the beliefs they hold, so that when someone is away from their family or residence for a particular purpose, for example going to other cities where their usual staple food is not there, then they consume other foods such as; instant noodles, bread, or other foods that are filling. Other abstinence or taboo can still be changed or removed if necessary. Abstinence or taboo is something inherited from the ancestral parents to the next generation.

Other types of food forbidden to be consumed by all people are *mas* banana, although there is no "punishment" of *selamatan* if one consumes it. People do not consume it

because *mas* banana are considered the food for "ancestors" or "gods". The types of foods considered taboo and is still forbidden today is cowhide sautéed with turmeric and lemon basil. This type of food is not related to beliefs people adhere to, but these are greatly feared by those who are pregnant. The reason why they must not consume cowhide is because cowhide can cause *uncaleun* blood, that is, bleeding before they give birth. As with the lemon basil (*surawung*), the reason is because it can cause umbilical cord fragile so as to endanger the safety of the pregnant women.

TABLE II. TYPES OF TABOO FOOD FOR CIREUNDEU PEOPLE

The Types of Taboo Food	People who are forbidden to consume		
	Girl	Pregnant women	All people
Still forbidden:			
Cowhide		X	
Lemon basil		X	
<i>Mas</i> Banana			X (*)
Rice			X(*)
No longer forbidden:			
Young coconut	X		
Pineapple	X	X	
Ambon banana	X		
Dog fruit	X		
Fried onions	X		
<i>Brutu (tunggir)</i>		X	
Snake fruit			

The types of foods considered taboo but in general are no longer forbidden are young coconut, pineapple, *ambon* banana, jackfruit, and fried onions.. These foods are forbidden to be consumed by teenage girls. Most of taboo food is mainly forbidden for women or children who are still under the protection and care of their parents. This taboo is generally applicable in the area of West Java, because the taboo is not a religious prohibition. The progress of science and technology as well as the success of the *Posyandu* program specially in education programs on health and nutrition make taboo food no longer prohibited, even the foods are recommended to be consumed, especially pineapple and *ambon* banana because these foods is very rich in vitamin C, which is needed by the body.

Cireundeu Traditional Village, with its uniqueness, is an important piece of tourist destinations and has become a destination of education tourism concerning the prototype of tourism village with food security. The tourist destination which has uniqueness in the consumption of unique food or culinary has a promising potential in the future [9][10].

IV. CONCLUSION

Cireundeu traditional village located in Cimahi region, West Java, is a region which has a uniqueness, especially in the aspect of the consumption of staple food, representing the aspect of its people' independence, sovereignty and food security in the region.

The area of Cireundeu traditional village can be a region of edu-tourism on the aspect of food security. Public can learn the aspects of culture and tradition of eating *rasi*, which represents high local wisdom. Cultural traditions of consuming *rasi* describes the culture of confidence with local products, togetherness, mutual cooperation, and not isolating themselves from the outside development of science and technology as long as this development is positive and not destructive to the culture of people at Cireundeu Traditional Village.

Follow-up to this study can be directed to research on whether *rasi* can be used as an alternative to rice, which at this point becomes a big issue in the Indonesia because the import of rice is extremely high.

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