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Original Article

klappertaart: an Indonesian–Dutch influenced traditional food[☆]

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ABSTRACT

As one of the most ethnically diverse societies, Indonesia is well known for its cultural diversity such as traditional practices and customs. Some of them are historically affected by colonization. Indonesia experienced a colonial history under the Dutch rule for a long time. It is considered as a long colonial period that has left huge influences on various aspects of Indonesian people's lives and Indonesian cuisine. As a result of colonization, many Dutch tribes set foot in many regions of Indonesia. At that time, the Dutch traders who came to Manado, North Celebes, introduced a recipe of a dish that has later been combined with Indonesian ingredients, such as coconut and spices. This study aims to analyze the influence of the Dutch culture on Indonesian dish, *klappertaart*. *Klappertaart* in Indonesian literally means "kue kelapa" or coconut cake that is usually served during special events. The cake is made from local ingredients such as coconut, flour, butter, eggs, milk, cinnamon, and raisins. That is what makes *klappertaart* associated with Manado. The cake can be either baked or steamed. Nowadays, *klappertaart* is not only found in Manado but is also widely spread in major cities in Indonesia.

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Introduction

Q8 Indonesia is an archipelago country that consists of more than 1,300 ethnic tribes showing cultural diversity such as languages, food, and arts [1]. Its cultural diversity also includes local dishes spread in every region. Traditional dishes are a legacy of a tribe in a specific region [2]. It may be original Indonesian cuisine or the ones that have been influenced by or adopted from other countries.

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Every region or tribe definitely has distinct dishes to whet people's appetite. (Figs. 1–4)

Indonesian diversity is not fully due to original indigenous cultures. Many of the cultures have been influenced by the Western world, especially Europe. Before independence, Indonesia was under the Dutch rule. In the early 20th century, many Dutch people settled in some regions in Indonesia such as Java, Sumatra, and other islands [3]. The impacts of colonization were always seen as disastrous ones, but they rather left positive influence on various aspects such as dances and traditional dishes.

Indonesian traditional dishes that have been influenced by the Dutch are croquet, *nastar* (pineapple tart), *klappertaart* (coconut cake), and *kastengel* (cheese stick). One example of the acculturation of Dutch and Indonesian dishes is *klappertaart*. It is originated from North Celebes. *Klappertaart* is derived from words "klapper" and "tart", which are Indonesian and Dutch, respectively. "Klapper" was originally taken from the word "kelapa" or coconut that was spelled as klapper by the Dutch people at that time, whereas "taart" is a Dutch word that refers to a cake. *Klappertaart*, which means coconut cake that is originated from Manado, becomes a favorite dessert because it tastes sweet and savory. In the colonialism period, the Dutch realized that Indonesians had a very large number of coconut farms. The Dutch women experimented with young coconut meat in their tart recipe. *Klappertaart* is usually consumed by the upper middle class Dutch families in the East Indies. This



Fig. 1. (A) *Rijsttafel* or rice table. The word is given by the Dutch to Indonesian eating habit. All the dishes are served all at once in a table. In *rijsttafel*, there are appetizers, main course, and desserts. In Indonesia, all the dishes can be eaten anytime not following the order of full course dinner. (B) The cover of the food recipes book made by the Dutch women. (C) Inside the book of food recipes.

recipe was recognized in Manado because of the native Indonesian maids who worked for the Dutch families learned the tart recipe, the Indonesian educated aristocrats who become friends with the Dutch people, and its massive sales in the market which lead to people's curiosity on how to make it.

Klappertaart

Klappertaart is one of the local dishes originated from North Celebes, Manado. The dish is made from coconut, walnuts, and raisins, and it tastes sweet and savory. *Klappertaart* was created experimentally by elite Dutch women of that time. They realized that Indonesia had a very large number of coconut farms. According to the Directorate of History and Traditional Values, in 1984–1985, the most productive commodities were coconut, coffee, and clove. According to the data, coconut crops reached the highest

productivity around 91 tons in a year (65%). At that time, coconuts were used for copra, oil, coconut milk, and others [4].

The Dutch women engaged in daily activities such as cooking and tailoring. They also liked to write books on food recipes. They were aware that coconut is one of the most productive commodities in Manado. Relating to that, they had intention to create a dish out of coconut. After some attempts, they finally created a proper dish called "*klappertaart*" or coconut cake [5]. This recipe spread in some ways, as the Dutch women did not do all cooking. If they had to make cakes for their husbands, native Indonesian maids usually were asked to do that. In addition, some of the natives classified as upper class had the chance to get around and act like the Dutch did. They eventually were curious about the cake and got the recipe from the Dutch right away. The spread of the recipe also happened through its sales in Indonesia, so the natives were intrigued to learn and make it at home.

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