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## **Embodying nation in food consumption : changing boundaries of "Taiwanese cuisine" (1895-2008)**

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**Embodying Nation in Food  
Consumption:**

**Changing Boundaries of “Taiwanese Cuisine”**

**(1895-2008)**

**Yu-Jen Chen**

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**Embodying Nation in Food  
Consumption:  
Changing Boundaries of “Taiwanese Cuisine”  
(1895-2008)**

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***To My Parents***

***Chen Wen-Liang and Chiang Shu-Kuei***



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## **Note on Romanization**

For consistency, I have used pinyin system of romanization for Chinese words throughout the dissertation except for the Aboriginal tribal names (Chapter Three) and a few names which have been conventional usages in English works, such as Chiang Kai-shek.



# **Introduction:**

## **Nation, Cuisine, and Embodiment**

### **1. RESEARCH QUESTION: HOW IS “NATION” EMBODIED IN FOOD CONSUMPTION?**

Taiwanese cuisine has become a main attraction for international tourists and has been used as a national symbol by political elites since the early 1990s. This can be seen in the frequency of local food festivals, the popularity of “state banquets,” and the proliferation of cookbooks, guidebooks, and literature on “Taiwanese cuisine.”<sup>1</sup> The writers of these publications tend to emphasize that Taiwanese cuisine, despite the fact that it originates from Chinese cuisine, has become a distinct tradition after years of adaptation and indigenization (Liang, 1999; Lin, 2004; Zhang & Yang, 2004). In addition to these and related assertions in cookbooks and tourist guides, consumers have manifested the symbolic importance of Taiwanese cuisine. For example, in an official vote open to the whole population in 2006, “Taiwanese cuisine” was voted as one of the most representative “Images of Taiwan”;<sup>2</sup> and the official website of the Taipei City Government referred to “beef noodles” as “national noodle” after the “Taipei Beef Noodle Festival” started in 2005, the business volume of which reached nearly 100 million NT dollars in that year.<sup>3</sup>

The proliferation of national cuisine is not a peculiar phenomenon in Taiwan and, indeed, can be seen in many countries or regions in the world. Previous scholarship<sup>4</sup> mainly interpreted the emergence of national cuisine as the product of intense exchanges between local and global influences, or viewed it as an

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Tourism Bureau of Taiwan, “Taiwanese cuisine” has been a top tourist attraction since 2000, superseding “historical sites” and “scenery.” Furthermore, almost 80 books on Taiwanese cuisine were published between 2000 and 2006.

<sup>2</sup> In the voting held by the Government Information Office, “Taiwanese cuisine” was the fourth most representative image of Taiwan, falling behind puppet theater, Mt. Jade, and Taipei 101. See: <http://info.gio.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=28281&ctNode=4525&mp=1> (retrieved 10/22/2008).

<sup>3</sup> The term “national noodles” is used on the official website of the Taipei City Government. See:

[http://www.taipei.gov.tw/cgi-bin/Message/MM\\_msg\\_control?mode=viewnews&ts=4848b34b:7350](http://www.taipei.gov.tw/cgi-bin/Message/MM_msg_control?mode=viewnews&ts=4848b34b:7350). The business volume it created in 2005 was announced by City Mayor Ma Ying-jiu.

See:

[http://www.taipei.gov.tw/cgi-bin/Message/MM\\_msg\\_control?mode=viewnews&ts=4636349d:6ca2](http://www.taipei.gov.tw/cgi-bin/Message/MM_msg_control?mode=viewnews&ts=4636349d:6ca2) (both retrieved 10/11/2008).

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Wilk, 1999, 2002; Caldwell, 2002; Billiard, 2006; Yiakoumaki, 2006.

articulation of the nation-building process.<sup>5</sup> This research refers to these two conclusions as the “global-local” perspective and the “nation-building” perspective. The two perspectives do not contradict each other; instead, their differences result from the different conditions in which the “nation” in question is situated. Studies from the first perspective often derive from experiences of mature states, underlining the interplay between native and foreign cultures in a global context. By contrast, the second perspective is based on the cases of newly established countries, particularly the post-colonial ones, highlighting the formation of the cultural characteristics of the nation.

The first perspective discusses national cuisine in the global-local framework, examining how national cuisine is shaped in light of political and global marketplace transformations. For example, Wilk (1999, 2002) explored the formation of Belizean cuisine, arguing that national culture is a new form of cultural production that is generated in the tension between the local and the global. Although focusing on “national” cuisine, Wilk did not put emphasis on the characteristics of nation or the debate on nationalism, but viewed nation-states as “the products of global political and cultural processes that began centuries ago” (Wilk, 2002, p. 68). In the case of Belizean cuisine, the first “Belizean restaurant” in Belize was established in 1990, when there had been increasing imports of foreign foods in the markets of Belize, and this emergence was facilitated by the development of a global food market. By exploring the production of Belizean food, Wilk concluded that “global and local” are intimate partners, and that the development of local identity is closely related to the process of globalization.

The emphasis on globalization in analyzing the phenomenon of national cuisine can also be seen in Caldwell’s research on the passion for Russian food in post-socialist Moscow. Locating the emergence of “food nationalism” in the relationship between the local and the global, Caldwell suggested that nationalist sentiments were growing in globalizing Russia during the 1990s. Showing how consumers carefully calculated what food to buy to express specific Russian values, Caldwell argued that food choices functioned as a means by which Muscovites could express their uneasiness with the transition to the new regime of democratic capitalism (Caldwell, 2002).

In the global-local framework, regional organizations such as the European Union (EU) also influence the framing and positioning of national culture. Billiard (2006) and Yiakoumaki (2006) examined the emergence of local cuisine in Malta and Greece respectively, both arguing that these local or ethnic cuisines were shaped by a need for self-repositioning within the EU. Billiard demonstrated how Maltese

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<sup>5</sup> Research from this perspective, see, for example, Appadurai, 1988; Pilcher, 1998; Cusack, 2000, 2003.

elites rebuilt traditional Maltese food as healthy “Mediterranean food” to correspond to the new trend in Europe. He argued that the revival of “traditional” Maltese food represents the desired identity of the Maltese elite to situate themselves in the global system after their entry into the EU. Yiakoumaki suggested that the flourishing publications on food in Greece throughout the 1990s became the sites where discourses of cultural diversity and multiculturalism were articulated, and that such a change reflected the political and economic agendas pertaining to the process of EU integration. In sum, studies from the perspective of “global-local” interaction tend to treat the nation and national culture as given concepts, identifying national cuisine as a form of local cuisine in the context of globalization. The cultivation of national cuisine is thus understood as the construction or strengthening of a locality against the foreign power of dominant entrepreneurs, chain stores, and large importers of food.

While the “global-local” perspective helps us to understand how marketplaces can be terrains of contested local cultures and discourses of identity in a global context, studies from the “nation-building” perspective underline the role of cuisine in the crafting of nationhood, which is particularly significant for understanding those nations that were colonized. For example, Appadurai (1988) asserted that Indian cuisine is the “colonial version” of national cuisine in which print media and the new middle class play the key roles, and he further applied this model to the national cuisine of Mexico, Nigeria, and Indonesia. Following this line, Pilcher (1998) argued that cuisine gave Mexicans a ready way of asserting identity and thus of distinguishing themselves from others, all in order to maintain Mexico’s collective boundary, self-recognition, and legitimacy. Both Appadurai and Pilcher focused on the process of nation-building, underlining that the nation is an imagined community (Anderson, 1991) and a cultural construct. Pilcher argued that national cuisine as well as other mundane aspects of daily life is crucial in binding people into a national community (1998, p. 2), and that the expansion of the middle class and the distribution of cookbooks are important mechanisms contributing to the making of a unified nation. Cusack (2000, 2003) took a similar approach to exploring the newly emerged “national cuisine” in Africa. He viewed cuisine as an increasingly significant part of national culture along with national anthems and flags. For those African countries with weak governments and tenuous links between the state and multi-ethnic societies, the emerging national cuisine is a vehicle that the ruling elites articulate to foster a “sense of national unity” and to achieve legitimate authority when the nation is still in the process of construction (Cusack, 2003, p. 277).

The difference between the “global-local” perspective and the “nation-building” perspective shows that the way in which a “national cuisine”

forms depends largely on the particularities of each nation-state's nation-formation. However, the two perspectives are thus restricted by these conditions of nation-formation. For a newly shaped national cuisine, an explanation from the "global-local" perspective will run the risk of neglecting the impact of competing nationalisms or ethnic complexities. By contrast, the "nation-building" perspective not only overlooks market mechanisms, but also seems to cast consumers either as a passive population following political elites or as active members participating in the nation-building, neither of which is fully convincing. It is problematic to assume that most consumers will consciously participate in the articulation of national cuisine by choosing food to express their nationalistic emotion or national identity.

The weakness of the above two perspectives can be seen from their inability to explain the changing notions of "Taiwanese cuisine" under different political regimes. Beginning in 1684, the Qing Dynasty governed Taiwan, which imperial Japan later colonized (from 1895 to 1945). In 1949, the Chinese Nationalist government fled the Chinese mainland, where the Chinese communists established power, to Taiwan, where the Nationalist Party claimed that its government was the only legitimate power representing all of China. Nowadays although the political and legal systems of Taiwan differ from those of Mainland China, Taiwan's "nationhood" remains controversial. The uncertainty of nationhood throughout much of modern Taiwanese history has resulted in changing notions of "Taiwanese cuisine." During the Japanese colonial period, Taiwanese cuisine was referred to as haute cuisine and enjoyed by Japanese and Taiwanese elites, but its meaning under the post-1949 Nationalist authoritarian rule evolved into one reflective of a "marginalized Chinese local cuisine." The meaning changed again particularly since the 1990s, when democratization and indigenization policies began strongly asserting themselves, Taiwanese cuisine has been articulated as a "distinctive national cuisine" and has become very popular.

These changing meanings highlight the parallelism of developments in political ideology and dietary culture in Taiwan. Nevertheless, on the one hand, because many symbolic local dishes or ethnic cuisines presented in state banquets are the product of official promotion through subsidies and exhibitions,<sup>6</sup> and because many local and ethnic cuisines lack a long traceable history, the global-local perspective cannot explain the changing meanings as a reactive "defensive localism" that has developed with the support of local farming businesses and local farmers (Winter, 2003). On the other hand, as the status of Taiwan's nationhood remains controversial throughout the island, and as some "Taiwanese restaurants" have opened up for business in Mainland China, can one justify the hasty conclusions that

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<sup>6</sup> Please see Chapter Three of this dissertation for details.

the emergence of Taiwanese cuisine is an invention of national culture, and that the cuisine's popularity is an expression of Taiwanese identity?

As the features of national cuisine vary with the meanings of nation, the exploration of national cuisine should be based on an understanding of the characteristics of "nation" and their changing meanings in history. In the next section, therefore, the following will conceptualize "nation" and "nationhood" and then revisit the notion of national cuisine.

### **Nation, nationhood, and national cuisine**

Nation is often viewed as a community that differentiates itself from others and seeks to acquire or maintain its political autonomy on the basis of a shared history and a common culture (Smith, 1991, p. 14; Townsend, 1992, pp. 103-104). Despite statist' and ethnicists' different definitions and emphases regarding nation,<sup>7</sup> the importance of political and cultural elements therein generally take center stage in corresponding explanations of a nation's development. On the one hand, a nation is a political and legal unit because it rests on a common territory and a common political system and because, for these reasons, a nation can acquire and maintain its autonomy and sovereignty. On the other hand, cultural elements such as a common language, shared traditions, and a shared history are crucial for the establishment of a nation because they greatly facilitate efforts to maintain or strengthen both the distinctiveness of a nation and the citizens' sentimental bonds to this nation. Emphasizing both the political and the cultural dimensions of nations, Townsend (1992) suggests that a nation is "a cultural community that is or seeks to become a political community as well" (p. 104). Brass puts it clearly: "whether or not the culture of the group is ancient or is newly-fashioned, the study of ethnicity and nationality is in large part the study of politically induced cultural change" (Hutchinson & Smith, 1994, p. 87). Along with political institutions and autonomy, important components of a national culture include shared traditions, languages, myths, and histories, all of which can arouse a sense of belonging among the nation's members.

In addition to political and cultural domains, subjective identification is decisive in the formation of a nation. Many scholars have highlighted subjective identification in their definitions of "nation." Gellner (1983) argues that a nation can be defined only when a political unit, a unified culture, and the will of its population converge (p. 55). Renan (1994) highlights the subjective aspect of nation along with

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<sup>7</sup> The distinction was made by Anthony Smith. He suggests that the statist define the nation as a "territorial-political unit" and that the ethnicists see the nation as a "large, politicised ethnic group defined by common culture and alleged descent." See: Smith, 1971, p. 176.

the objective public culture, arguing that the nation comprises a population's common possession of a rich legacy of remembrances, a desire to live together, and a high valuation of their perceived common heritage (pp. 17-18). Citizens' subjective recognition, sense of belonging, and emotional bond relative to their nation are components necessary for the establishment of a nation. Without these components, a population would be unable to identify with and experience a sense of belonging to their community-as-a-nation (Gellner, 1983, p. 55; Smith, 1991, p. 9). In this regard, a nation is an emotional community. On the grounds of a common political system and culture, the members of a nation share with one another a familiar set of memories and sentiments for the nation.

As a nation is characterized by its political and cultural elements as well as its subjective-identification elements, they are important in the maintenance of nationhood. Nationhood is what makes a nation recognizable and identifiable. It is a state of being-a-nation and a form of belonging. The sense of belonging to a nation is not only a feeling binding people to a community but also a mental mechanism of inclusion and exclusion. By means of the mechanism, people can separate "national others" from "us," the group whose members have the same nationality. By bolstering political demands by reference to nationhood, groups can demarcate boundaries to maintain the distinctiveness of a nation.

The concept of "national cuisine" refers to dishes that have been endowed with national significance. By inscribing national significance, specific dishes become symbols characterizing nationhood and serving as a boundary dividing others from us. It is evident that food often functions as a mark of "others." Murcott (1996), in this regard, noted that many North Americans make metaphorical reference to the supposed eating habits of the French in speaking of "Frogs," and similarly, many French term English people "rosbif" based on their consumption of roast beef (p. 50). A national cuisine can, therefore, generate perceptions of not only dishes but a nation and its people, as well. For example, when talking about Korean cuisine, many non-Koreans draw a connection between kimchi and their conventional impressions of Koreans: citing anthropologist Han Kyong-ku (1994), Walraven (2002) noted that "...kimchi is particularly suited to projections of national character. The aggressive red colour and the spiciness of kimchi (both due to the adding of red pepper powder) stand for energy and masculinity" (p. 99). In short, national cuisine can serve as a national symbol that helps a nation's members distinguish themselves from non-members.

In the formation of such a "national cuisine," political and cultural elements of a nation, as well as the subjective identification with the national cuisine are all influential. In the political domain, the government can influence the culinary scene of a state by establishing policies that regulate the production, distribution, and

consumption of food and that include regulations on trade, nutrition, and the food industry (Bentley, 1998; Clark, 2007; Nestle, 2002). For example, Cwiertka's (2006) research demonstrates that the key transformation shaping a nation-wide modern Japanese cuisine was a combination of militarism and various political and social forces that first converged in the late nineteenth century and that include military catering, home cooking, and wartime food management. These forces resulted in the nationalizing and homogenizing of food tastes in Japan, in the process, largely erasing a variety of regional dishes.

In the cultural domain, the distinction of national cuisine derives largely from cultural elements such as common language, tradition, and history. Dishes often have their local names, whose subtle meanings usually escape the understanding of foreigners. Food culture, including dining manners, taboos, and rituals, are constitutive of a part of tradition in a historical process. As Appadurai (1988) argues, the emergence of a national cuisine in contemporary India is "part of the larger process of the construction of complex public cultures" (p. 22). The formation of national cuisine reflects various cultural elements of a nation, and national cuisine itself constitutes a part of national culture.

Concerning the subjective identification, studies of national food have demonstrated the positive relationship between food preferences and identities. Pilcher (1998) suggested that, in Mexico, consumption of native corn tortillas and Western wheat bread helped to define the ethnic boundaries there under Spanish rule. The formation of a unique Mexican national cuisine in the nineteenth century marked the region's newly forged national identity. In the process, cookbooks helped create not only a national repertoire of dishes but also a sense of community. Similarly, Helstosky (2003) examined the nationalistic rhetoric of an 1891 cookbook and a 1932 cookbook, arguing that although the two cookbooks differed from each other regarding their advocacy of Italian food habits, both of them attempted to strengthen Italian identity through everyday practices of preparing and consuming food. She thus suggested that the two books reflected conscious efforts to "make" Italians (p. 114). In a case from East Asia, Cheng (2002) argued that the development of herbal-tea shops has reflected the search for Hong Kong identity since the late 1960s. Furthermore, studies of migrants and diaspora place a particularly prominent stress on the positive relationship between identity and food consumption. For example, focusing on the connection between diaspora and food, Naguib (2006) showed how recipes of a homeland can be an important way in which exiles remember and understand historical moments. Roy (2002) argued that gastrophilic histories are saturated with the idioms of national belonging and national purity. These studies demonstrate that food is often viewed as "an expression of identity" (Murcott, 1996), or in the words of Palmer (1998), food is one of the "flags of identity," which not

only symbolizes national belonging, but also constitutes a reference system within which people can experience the material world (p. 175).<sup>8</sup>

Focusing on the association between national cuisine and identity, Mintz (2003) has suggested that national cuisine is in certain important senses a political artifact and is on its way to becoming a touristic artifact:

...a national cuisine primarily possesses a textual reality; produced textually, it can help to achieve a desired touristic and political effect. But there is no doubt not only that particular foods or food habits may be chosen either for national self-definition or to stereotype others, but that they may emerge as strikingly convenient condensed symbols of identity conflict or division. (p. 32)

However, the assertion that national cuisine is a political and touristic artifact begs the questions of whose identity the cuisine expresses and whether or not such an expressed identity is a manufactured notion. When arguing that national cuisine can be a “political and touristic artifact” that contributes to make a nation recognizable and identifiable, that is, to create or maintain the nationhood, it should be clarified how members of a nation, who are also consumers of the dining market, conceive of and participate in the process of shaping the national cuisine. As the subjective identification of a population is also crucial in the maintenance of nationhood, it might be deceptive to suggest that national cuisine is a political symbol which was articulated by political and cultural actors and followed by consumers. Rather, it is important to scrutinize how subjective identification of individuals interacts with political and cultural elements of a nation so as to create or maintain nationhood. Regarding people who prefer these “articulated national cuisines” and take them as an expression of their national identity, it should be clarified how a linkage between identity and food preference is established.

In other words, research on national cuisine is highly significant as it addresses the interaction among individual identifications and politico-cultural elements of a nation. Such interactions are the main concern of this research. As the formation and consumption of national cuisine is a process involving political and cultural elements of a nation, it is thus a ground hosting interactions among various social actors, including politicians, market agents, cultural mediators, and consumers. To explore the ground where nationhood is embodied, this research adopts the approach of embodiment, viewing the emergence of national cuisine as a process of “embodying nationhood in food consumption.” In other words, the research question

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<sup>8</sup> Palmer drew the metaphor of “flag” from Billig (1995). The other two “flags of identity” suggested by Palmer in this article are landscape and body.



focuses on how nationhood is embodied in food consumption. The following will explain the approach of “embodiment” and how it helps examine the research question.

## **2. EMBODIMENT AS A PERSPECTIVE: BODY, OBJECT, AND SYMBOL**

The notion of “embodiment” starts from the theoretical implications of “body,” which have been studied by some anthropologists and philosophers. Merleau-Ponty (1962) suggested that body is the source of our experiences and where perception begins. Mauss (2006 [1935]) raised the idea of “body techniques” to indicate “the ways in which from society to society men know how to use their bodies” (p. 78). Mauss emphasized that bodily behaviors like walking, swimming, and marching are encoded with cultural and social differences. As the embodiment of these cultural differences, the “habitus” varies “especially between societies, educations, properties and fashions, prestige” (Mauss, 2006 [1935], p. 80). O’Neill (1985) argued that bodies are “the permeable ground of all social behavior,” which serves as the incarnate bond between self and society (pp. 22-23). Highlighting body as the instrument by which people communicate with society, he developed five dimensions of the “communicative body”: the world’s body, social bodies, the body politic, consumer bodies, and medical bodies.

The common ground of the above studies is their challenge to the dualism of mind and body, wherein humanists prize mind over body. The mind-body dualism tends to treat body and object as a couple of concepts in contrast to mind and subject, and tends to treat body as an object that is subject to mind and that is not an active agent. The above studies generally pose questions to the neglect of body, criticizing the focus of humanist research on intellect, reason, discourse, and imagination, and treating them as activities in the mind. In contrast, body is depreciated as just a part of the physical world, as the “servants of the moral and intellectual order” (O’Neill, 1985, p. 18). And as Turner (1992) argued, because body is seldom considered a way in which individuals engage with the world, the individual-as-actor becomes fundamentally a thinking and choosing agent but not a feeling and being agent (p. 87). Sociologists Shilling and Mellor (1996) noted with dissatisfaction that the mind-body dualism restricts our ability to understand “how people’s experiences of, and responses to, social structures are shaped by their *sensory* and *sensual* selves” (p. 2, italics original). According to Shilling (1993), a more rigorous conception would treat the body as an “unfinished project” that constructs social relationships on the one hand but is constructed on the other hand.

Calling for more attention to body, a growing number of researchers consider body a sphere where discourses, practices, images, and institutional arrangements encounter one another, pointing to new ways to reconsider the relationships between body and mind (Lock & Farquhar, 2007). For example, Scheper-Hughes and Lock (1987) proposes the concept of “mindful body” to reexamine body as an experienced individual that is influenced by social and political control. Csordas (1990, 1994) further suggests that “embodiment,” as a new approach, “begins from the methodological postulate that the body is not an *object* to be studied in relation to culture, but is to be considered as the *subject* of culture, or in other words as the existential ground of culture” (1990, p. 5, italics original). From the perspective of embodiment, one’s examination focuses on perception and practice, treating body as a field where perception and social practices meet. On the one hand, body is socially informed (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 124; Csordas, 1990, p. 7) insofar as body learns the values, tastes, and manners of a specific society. Thus, one bodily gesture may have various meanings in different societies. On the other hand, bodily practices have the potential to reverse these values and cultural meanings. In short, bodies are socially conditioned but can be another source of meaning-making as well. The process of meaning-making continues through both sensual experiences and bodily practices, although one may not be conscious of this process.

Strathern (1996) explains how embodiment can serve as an analytical concept. He views it as a transformer mediating noun-based and verb-based concepts. The emphasis hence moves from society to action, person to practice, individual to experience, self to enactment, consciousness to representation (Strathern, 1996, p. 202). Strathern claims that “...the stress is thus on action and performance, on doing rather than being, or on the being that resides in doing, that issues from and is expressed only in doing” (p. 202). This claim, rather than meaning that consciousness is unimportant, suggests a more dynamic analysis for the exploration of consciousness. From this perspective, the exploration of nationhood and national consciousness shifts its focus from the static concept of nation to the practice and perception of it.

Reconsidering nation and national cuisine from the perspective of embodiment, “nation” is not merely a political and cultural community but the practical world where people live and experience. There are many vessels that can objectify and put into practice the concept of “nationhood,” and some such vessels are monuments, textbooks and ceremonies, as well as national cuisine. In other words, various objectified forms of nationhood can put into practice and reproduce the concept of “nation” in daily life. These objectified forms of nationhood, that is, the embodiment of nationhood, also constitute the grounds where people can perceive and experience the “nation.”

By contrast with other objectified forms of nationhood, the significance of national cuisine lies in the cuisine's practical-use value. As an edible object, national cuisine has at least three types of use: one can eat the cuisine to sustain life, one can use the cuisine as a cultural symbol, and one can sell the cuisine as a commodity. The proliferation and popularity of national cuisine depends heavily on the market mechanics and subjective choices of consumers. National cuisine is a consumption choice of a much wider population in daily life, a fact that renders national cuisine different from those national symbols or cultural activities taught in class or appreciated by a select few. Thus, the exploration of food can shed light on a broader segment of society, examining how nationhood is put into practice and is experienced.

In sum, criticizing the division between mind and body, between perception and practice, the approach of "embodiment" proposes a way to unify these dual concepts and to understand how people perceive and act within given social conditions. The core idea of embodiment is to regard "body and mind" as a holistic domain. Body and mind are implicated in each other and the placement of them into two categories is for the purpose of analysis. The following thus turns to the theme of "sense of body," which focuses on the process of perception relative to bodily experiences and which is important in research adopting, as this thesis does, the approach of embodiment.

### **Sense of body and material culture**

"Sense of body" refers to the categories of bodily experience, such as cold and hot, soft and hard, dirty and clean, delicious and disgusting (Yu, 2006, p. 23).<sup>9</sup> Studies on this topic have shown that "sense of body" is the consequence of internalized knowledge or norms that are historically and socially conditioned (Herzfeld, 2001). Because the process of internalization takes place in living experiences of daily life, the sense of body is often the consequence of routine practices. For example, we may experience disgust when seeing someone spitting; or when abroad, we may take comfort in eating familiar foods, even if those foods are prepared or served in sub-standard ways. Never purely biological responses, such senses of disgust and comfort result from the sensing person's internalization of norms and from the person's emotional connections to places or people. After this internalization in individuals, norms and related knowledge are stored in memory; many times, a person who recalls such senses takes them for granted as natural responses to

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<sup>9</sup> Yu (2006) suggested that Japanese scholar Shigehisa Kuriyama (1997, 1999) had raised the concept of "sense of body" in his discussion on body in the history of medicine. See: Yu, 2006, pp. 15-16.

stimuli. Thus, most people neither render serious judgments nor enter into rigorous contemplation regarding whether a sensed thing is disgusting or appealing.

Whereas the “sense of body” is socially conditioned, it is related to a system of knowledge and cultural metaphors. For example, a “sense of the occult” can result from burning incense in temples (Zhang, 2008); a “sense of the astringent” can be identified in Chinese medical science (Hsu, 2008). A person who has a sense of the occult in temples does not make rational judgments to select a feeling that he or she will subsequently experience; however, a sense of the mysterious and sacred can emerge on the basis of both a person’s understanding of religion and the person’s memory of religion.

Sense of body can be internalized as a kind of bodily technique, like the ability to identify subtle qualities in wine and tea. It is in this sense that we can train our “sense of taste” to be that of a gourmet. Through eating and learning, bodies can develop a gustatory ability to judge the values of food, and the ability can evolve into a bodily technique even though the value of food is largely socially determined. From the perspective of embodiment, a sense derives from both mind (knowledge) and body (sensual experiences), but evolves into a body (corporeal) message so that the individual can feel it as if “naturally.”

As a sense of the comfortable can be induced by a piece of furniture, or a sense of the occult can be induced by incense, specific objects can be a medium for senses of the body. Constituting the infrastructure of human societies, corporeal objects constrain human behavior and experience, but can be changed by humans according to their various needs. Focusing on the changing meanings, values, and social significance of objects, studies of the social life of objects (Appadurai, 1986) have presented a way to scrutinize the ways in which people use, consume, or symbolize objects. As Appadurai argues, “even though from a *theoretical* point of view human actors encode things with significance, from a *methodological* point of view it is the things-in-motion that illuminate their human and social context” (p. 5, italics original). The meanings of objects are inscribed in their forms, uses, and trajectories; thus, the analysis of the trajectories of objects can shed light on the linkage between objects consumed and social contexts. The exploration of objects on a micro-level can serve as a way to understand, from the bottom up, how macro-level changes in social contexts influence individuals’ everyday life.

Among other objects, food is an important theme whose multiple dimensions facilitate micro-to-macro explorations. For example, Mintz’s research investigates the historical process in which sugar was transformed from a luxury of the upper class to a daily necessity of the masses in the United Kingdom from 1750 to 1850. His work reveals the bi-directional influences between dietary culture and world economy in line with the history of sugar consumption. On the one hand, his

analysis highlights how the development of capitalism and industrial production can affect family meals and workers' life conditions; on the other hand, he also shows how food preference and consumption patterns can affect industry and economy. In other words, an understanding of material daily-life culture illuminates the concrete mechanics by which economic systems have macro-level operations that influence micro-level daily life. As the meanings and values of "national cuisine" change with the transformation of the political and cultural dimensions of a nation, the trajectories of these changes constitute a window through which we can explore the transformation of a society's political and cultural dimensions.

Therefore, the study of national cuisine can serve as a way to analyze how Taiwan's changing "national" status relates to the varying meanings and values of Taiwanese cuisine. Both "sense of body" studies and material-culture studies provide new perspectives from which to examine this topic. Applying these two perspectives in her research on Greek modernity, Seremetakis (1994) argues that the different meanings and values endowed in objects may well embody a profound political and historical divergence. And she further argues that a rigorous analysis of senses is necessary to clarify how the power of objects comes into being (Seremetakis, 1994, pp. 135-137).

Revisiting "national cuisine" from the perspectives of "sense of body" and material culture, national cuisine is a specific "object" in which nationality is embedded. This nationality can endow culinary dishes with the symbolic significance of a nation, thereby transforming these dishes into a national symbol. As a national symbol, a "national cuisine" has the potential to induce specific senses like the senses of belonging, pride, or homesickness. As a food for eating, national cuisine can also induce the senses of pleasant tastes and unpleasant tastes. This dissertation aims to find out how certain dishes can evolve into a national symbol and can induce specific "senses of body," as well as how the connection between dishes and national pride is made. In other words, rephrased from the perspective of embodiment, the research seeks to explore: how can objects evolve into a national symbol and how can the symbolized object induce a sense of belonging, a sense of home, or a sense of pleasant?

Treating national cuisine as an embodiment of nationhood that can generate specific "senses of body," this research aims to clarify the relationships among objects, symbols, and senses of body. On the one hand, it will explore the social history of objects, examining how nationality has been embedded in objects and how objects have become a symbol of nationhood. On the other hand, it will investigate the "senses of body" that this object can generate, analyzing how specific cuisines can be identified as "tastes of home" and become a preferred national cuisine.

Above questions will be explored by examining the historical transformation of Taiwanese cuisine. This exploration of Taiwanese cuisine focuses on the following three ingredients and their relationships:

- **Object:** dishes that are labeled as “Taiwanese cuisine” and related dining manners
- **Symbol:** “Taiwanese cuisine” that is presented as a national symbol
- **Sense of body and perception:** taste of home, national consciousness and perception of “Taiwanese cuisine”

As shown, the imagination of Taiwan as a “nation” has changed substantially during the periods of Japanese colonial rule, authoritarian Nationalist Party rule, and fledgling democratization. This complexity, as reflected in and by Taiwanese cuisine, enables the researcher, first, to explore how the changing meanings of “nation” are produced in different political regimes, subsequently, to clarify the formation of a “national cuisine.” Focusing on the changing meanings of “Taiwanese cuisine,” the concrete questions are the following. Of these questions, the first and second concern how objects are symbolized, and the third question deals with bodily senses and symbolized objects.

**(1) What are the definitions of “Taiwanese cuisine” under different political regimes?**

The question concerns how the scope and content of Taiwanese cuisine, as signified objects, have changed during the colonial, authoritarian, and democratic periods. I shall explore the relationship between these definitions and different political contexts. As the process of “defining” always involves juxtapositions of multiple definitions, it is necessary to clarify these changing definitions and to investigate how “Taiwanese cuisine” has fallen into a distinctive category.

“Taiwanese cuisine” in this research refers to a culinary category whose definition may change. Since one main intention of the research is to investigate the changing definitions of this culinary category through different historical periods, the research does not define the meaning of “Taiwanese cuisine” at the outset.

**(2) Who planned and enacted these changes? That is, how do the actors—political elites, market agents, and cultural mediators—draw the boundary of Taiwanese cuisine?**

This research treats the shaping of Taiwanese cuisine as a process where arrays of political, economic, and cultural forces interact. The analysis thus centers on how political actors articulate food as a national symbol, how market agents produce the “authentic Taiwanese taste” in restaurants and exhibitions, and how cultural mediators represent Taiwanese cuisine in cookbooks and other types of food literature.

**(3) How do consumers conceive of Taiwanese cuisine? What is the relationship between their national consciousness and food preferences? To which extent can consumers participate in the process of drawing the boundary of Taiwanese cuisine?**

“Consumer” in this research refers to individuals who have access to, and can afford to order food in stalls and shops, or to dine in restaurants. Consumers’ preferences are crucial to the proliferation of Taiwanese cuisine. This research will analyze the relationship between consumers’ national consciousness and culinary preferences, exploring the influences of one’s own ethnic background, social network, and social hierarchy (cf. Bourdieu, 1984; Warde & Martens, 2000).

In summary, the main focus of this thesis is on the interaction between individuals and politico-cultural elements of a nation. This thesis explores national cuisine as an experiential ground where individuals and various social actors encounter the notion of nationhood. Focusing on the experiential ground, it adopts “embodiment” as its approach to examine “how nationhood is embodied in food consumption” by clarifying the relationship between objects, symbol, and sense of body. Taking the formation of Taiwanese cuisine as the concrete case for analysis, there are three levels of questions in this thesis.

<b>Concrete focus:</b> The formation of “Taiwanese cuisine”
<b>Research question:</b> How is nationhood embodied in food consumption?
<b>Research concern:</b> How does the subjective identification of individuals interact with the political and cultural elements of a nation so as to create or maintain nationhood in everyday life?

In addition to the structural changes that have enabled the idea of a national cuisine to emerge, including the political and cultural elements, the other focus is on how individuals have become aware of national cuisine, that is, how a sense of nationality emerges so as to link individuals to a particular set of dishes. Furthermore,

by exploring the changing nationhood of Taiwan and its association with the changing “Taiwanese cuisine” from the approach of embodiment, this project expand analysis from discourse to practice, seeking to propose a new perspective to interpret the emergence of national cuisine.

### **3. THESIS STRUCTURE**

The thesis is divided into two parts, exploring the history of symbolized objects first and then investigating the “senses of body” generated by the objects. The first part (Chapters One through Three) responds to questions (1) and (2), just proposed above, while the second part (Chapters Four and Five) responds to question (3). After putting together substantive responses to these questions, I can return to consider the research question by, first, revealing the changing political regimes and social structure in Taiwan and, second, focusing on individuals within the structure—their perceptions and bodily practices.

Chapter’s One to Three will focus on the colonial, authoritarian, and fledgling democratic periods, examining the history of Taiwanese cuisine under these three different political regimes and analyzing how Taiwanese cuisine was presented and articulated. I will show how Taiwanese cuisine emerged as elite food during the colonial period, how culinary transplantation and hybridity took place under the rule of the Nationalist Party, and how Taiwanese cuisine has been evolving into a national symbol beginning in about 1990. Viewing national cuisine as an embodied form of nationhood reproduced in daily life, this research focuses on the producers of Taiwanese cuisine— political elites, restaurant owners, chefs, cookbook writers, and exhibition designers—to examine how these actors participated in the boundary-drawing of Taiwanese cuisine.

In the second part, the focus shifts from objects as historical material to the “senses of body,” including perceptions of these senses. The task here is to scrutinize how individuals experience a nation through their bodily practices. Chapter Four analyzes the changing identification of “tastes of home” revealed in culinary writings. Addressing the various definitions that consumers assign to “Taiwanese cuisine,” Chapter Five explores their culinary preferences and the relations between culinary preference and national consciousness.

### **4. METHODOLOGY**

Exploring the history of Taiwanese cuisine across one century from a sociological and anthropological perspective, it is an interdisciplinary project. It combines historical approaches and ethnographic methods as the main methodology, including



historical literature review, in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and case studies. Furthermore, textual analysis serves as a means for interpreting political discourses (Chapter Three) and various exponents of culinary literature (Chapter Four). I also conducted a questionnaire survey with a broad swath of consumers in the early phase of the research to detect people's general understanding of "Taiwanese cuisine." However, although I received 155 completed questionnaires, two points should be noted: first, the number of samples is limited, and second, neither the validity nor the reliability of the collected data is sufficient for generalizing the survey results; in short, the survey is a pilot one. Therefore, I do not interpret and discuss this pilot survey's results in the dissertation. These data have still improved my understanding of both consumers' perceptions of Taiwanese cuisine and consumers' related dining habits. In addition, the survey afforded me an opportunity to collect basic consumer-related information with which I could contact a wider range of consumers for in-depth interviews.

The interdisciplinary framework of this study is in line with my approach of embodiment, paying particular attention to the relationships among objects, symbols of nationhood, and perceptions. To explore the symbolized objects (i.e., the history of the presented "Taiwanese cuisine"), I conducted a thorough historical literature review first by examining various archival materials. The primary sources cover historical archives and culinary texts since 1895, including (1) official archives and surveys such as state banquet menus; (2) folk magazines and ethnography records of Japanese anthropologists; (3) early newspapers and reports of exhibitions, particularly those in the Japanese newspaper *Taiwan nichinichi shimpô* (Taiwan Daily News) published from 1898 to 1944; and (4) other popular texts and private archives, such as travel guides, oral-history materials, and private diaries. The secondary sources include related academic works and textbooks. In addition, I conducted interviews with "key actors" (Fetterman, 1998) such as officials, a head of a tourism association, a manager of a grand hotel, and senior chefs who could provide detailed historical data and personal experiences pertinent to this study's subject. In this same vein, I conducted my own comparison between the content of these oral interviews and the content of archival materials relating to the same period or phenomenon. These approaches, when put together, constitute a formidable lens through which a sound understanding of the history of Taiwanese cuisine can be gained.

To investigate the roles of various social actors in the formation of Taiwanese cuisine and the perceptual process of consumers, I carried out fieldwork in multiple locales, and I did so according to the above historical literature review. The locales of my fieldwork were in the following types of sites:

## **(1) Taiwanese restaurants and ethnic restaurants**

There are no official statistics about Taiwanese restaurants; therefore, there is neither an available “correct number” nor an available “standard list” of Taiwanese restaurants. I identify “Taiwanese restaurant” in this dissertation according to their restaurant names, their advertisements, or the assertions of their owners. To undertake this stage of the research, I collected a list of Taiwan-based Taiwanese-food restaurants deriving from Internet searches and media reports. Afterward, I selected 16 restaurants from the list to conduct participant observation and in-depth interviews. These restaurants typically serve one type of the following cuisines: “congee and side dishes” (widely viewed as authentic Taiwanese cuisine nowadays), “seafood and other common Taiwanese dishes,” ethnic (Hakka and Aboriginal) dishes, and outdoor-banquet dishes (*bando*, see Chapter One). I used “maximum variation” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) as my sampling strategy to select restaurants for in-depth interviews, taking their historical significance and popularity into account on the basis of both my literature review and my interviews with key actors. Furthermore, the prices and the geographical diversity are also considered.

I interviewed 24 restaurant owners and chefs in total. In addition to the interviews, I conducted participant observation in one restaurant’s kitchen for several afternoons and evenings. Such observation is important for understanding both the ways in which professional kitchen staff prepare Taiwanese cuisine and the characteristics of regular Taiwanese-restaurant consumers regarding, for example, social-hierarchy status, language use, and interaction with restaurant owners.

“Ethnic restaurants” in this research refers to Hakka restaurants and Aboriginal restaurants, which have proliferated with the political discourse of the “four major ethnic groups” (see Chapter Three). Therefore, I also conducted interviews with staff and with customers at Hakka and Aboriginal restaurants in Taipei, Miaoli, and Taidong.<sup>10</sup>

## **(2) The outdoor banquet—*bando***

Alongside indoor restaurants, the outdoor banquet, or *bando*, is a kind of traditional Taiwanese feast that is particularly popular in the countryside. I interviewed four chefs who were specializing in this field in Taipei, Taizhong, and Kaohsiung. For the purpose of observation, I participated in the day-long preparation of a banquet in Taipei to observe the cooking and dining processes in detail. Before the

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<sup>10</sup> Please see Appendix for the list of restaurant owners and chefs whom I interviewed.

establishment of modern cooking schools, the training process of cooks specializing in *bando* was very different from that of restaurant chefs. Therefore, the informal interviews and semi-structured interviews with senior *bando* cooks are crucial to understanding the custom of folk banquets and the dishes served at these functions. And again, these cooks' understandings of Taiwanese cuisine could be explored in greater depth as I participated in *bando*.

### **(3) Official festivals, exhibitions, and certification**

To investigate the role of the government in the formation of Taiwanese cuisine, I participated in official activities concerning food promotion. Many such activities rested on the government's cooperation with agents from tourist businesses, like grand hotels and travel agencies. Thus, these activities are important sites where the interaction between government and market agents is accessible to outside examination. Some representative activities have been the Taiwan Culinary Exhibition (2006), the Hakka Food Festival (2006), and the Taipei Beef Noodle Festival (2006). In a similar vein, I participated in the "Hakka restaurant certification" that the Miaoli County Government held in 2008, and that was refereed by visiting Hakka restaurants.

### **(4) Fieldwork in Fujian Province**

Most inhabitants of Taiwan descend from people in Fujian and Guangdong Provinces, and the literature review shows that Fujian cuisines had been popular among elites during the Japanese colonial period.<sup>11</sup> To examine the "distinctiveness" of Taiwanese cuisine that is highlighted in cookbooks and textbooks, I paid a ten-day visit in July 2008 to the Fujian cities of Xiamen, Zhangzhou, Quanzhou, and Fuzhou—the cities to which most Taiwanese can trace their descendants. At numerous markets and stalls, I conducted interviews with older residents of the cities about the changes that have characterized local food over the decades. I observed many similarities and differences between Fujian snacks and Taiwanese snacks. Because the focus of this research is on the development of Taiwan-based Taiwanese cuisine, this thesis presents few of my Fujian-based observations and findings; nevertheless, this part of my fieldwork has strengthened my interpretation of the Japanese colonial-era historical literature and has clarified the origins attributable to some dishes that are regarded as representative Taiwanese cuisine nowadays.

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<sup>11</sup> See Chapter One.

### **Consumers: Food-centered life history**

To investigate the processes underlying consumers' perceptions and consumers' bodily practices, I focused my interviews on the process whereby consumers acquired cultivated tastes concerning—but not limited to—food preferences. Concretely, I conducted “food-centered life history” interviews with consumers. That is, I asked my informants to tell about their experiences of food, eating, and cooking from their childhood to the present. The interviews were kept to focus on details related to cooking methods, ways of seasoning, and descriptions of taste in order to capture the linkage between “senses of body” and actual foods. While centering on food, the topic of the interviews could easily expand into such useful topics as interviewees' family background, education, and consumption habits. Interviews also touched on interviewees' personal networks and political opinions, which would help understand the relationship between interviewees' food preferences and their perceptions of nationhood, whether in terms of China or Taiwan.

To locate consumers with whom I could conduct interviews, I first contacted my pilot-survey respondents. By means of the pilot survey and personal networks that I had established in the above fieldwork sites, I was able to identify consumers of food with whom I conducted, in total, 24 in-depth interviews regarding their food-centered history. My selection of these consumers ensured that the interviewees cover diverse socio-economic status, generational status, ethnic background, and beliefs about Taiwanese cuisine.

I spent in total 17 months of intensive fieldwork: from August 2006 to February 2007 and from November 2007 to August 2008. During the first period of the fieldwork, I collected and studied historical literature widely and interviewed “key actors” to understand the culinary map of Taiwan comprehensively. Drawing from this knowledge, I selected my fieldwork sites and sampling strategy for restaurants and consumers. I also conducted a general-consumer questionnaire survey during this period through various channels, including restaurants, college classrooms, and random acquaintanceships. In the last two months of this period, I started to contact chefs of Taiwanese restaurants, either through introductions from key actors or through my unmediated visits to the restaurants.

During the second phase of the fieldwork, I spent ten months in Taiwan to conduct interviews and participant observation with restaurant owners, chefs, and consumers. Most of this fieldwork took place during 2007 and 2008, and while

staying in Taiwan, I conducted some follow-up fieldwork during the period from December 2008 to February 2009.



# Chapter One

## Presentation of an Elite Culture:

### The Emergence of “Taiwanese Cuisine” in Japanese Colonial Era

On April 24, 1923, the Crown Prince of Japan, Hirohito, had a “Taiwanese lunch banquet” during his visit to Taiwan.<sup>1</sup> All dishes served at the banquet were prepared by the chefs from *Jiangshan Lou* and *Donghuiifang* restaurants, while the dishes for the Crown Prince were specially made by Wu Jiang-shan, the proprietor of *Jiangshan Lou*, which was at that time the most prestigious “Taiwanese restaurant” in Taipei. The banquet menu was as follows:

#### MENU

Snow-white bird’s nest (雪白官燕)  
Coin-shaped turkey and pork<sup>2</sup> (金錢火雞)  
Crystal pigeon eggs (水晶鴿蛋)  
Shark fin stewed with soy sauce (紅燒火翅)  
Grilled eight-treasure crab<sup>3</sup> (八寶焗蟬)  
Snow-white tree-fungus (雪白木耳)  
Fried spring rolls (炸春餅)

Braised soft-shelled turtle (紅燒水魚)  
Sea cucumber with fungus (海參竹茹)  
Steamed fish fillet with ham (如意戾魚)  
Soup of ham with white gourd (火腿冬瓜)  
Eight-treasure rice (八寶飯)  
Almond Tea (杏仁茶)

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<sup>1</sup> Crown Prince Hirohito (April 29, 1901 – January 7, 1989) was the future Emperor *Shōwa* (*Shōwa tennō*) reigning Japan from December 25, 1926, until his death on January 7, 1989.

<sup>2</sup> It is a deep-fried dish made with turkey, spring onion, and pork that is cut in the shape of coin.

<sup>3</sup> “Eight treasure” (八寶) means to cook with eight ingredients which are all carefully processed and finely cut. Some frequently used ingredients are black mushrooms, bamboo shoots, ham, pork, chestnuts, and peanuts.

To prepare this important imperial event, the eight chefs responsible for cooking the dishes had secluded themselves a week before the banquet, and the outcome seemed satisfactory. It was reported that the Crown Prince appreciated much the Taiwanese cuisine (*Taiwan ryôri*),<sup>4</sup> and he “particularly preferred the Eight-treasure rice, devouring almost all of it.”<sup>5</sup>

The banquet brought great reputation to “Taiwanese cuisine” as well as to the restaurant *Jiangshan Lou*. In the following years, other members of the imperial family such as Prince Chichibu Yasuhito, Prince Asaka Yasuhiko, and Prince Kuni Asakira, also had their “Taiwanese cuisine” banquets served by *Jiangshan Lou* in 1925, 1927, and 1928 respectively.<sup>6</sup> The proprietor of *Jiangshan Lou* even wrote a series of articles on Taiwanese cuisine, which were published in the official newspaper *Taiwan nichinichi shinpô* [*Taiwan Daily News*] in 1927, as if Taiwanese cuisine had been an authentic and traditional cuisine with a long history.

Nevertheless, the term “Taiwanese cuisine” was quite novel not only for the Japanese, but also for the Taiwanese. No related terms exclusively referring to “the cuisine of Taiwan” could be found in the literature of the Qing Dynasty and before.<sup>7</sup> Under the Qing rule, dining out in Taiwan was limited to simple eateries offering rice, noodles, and snacks, and the food was so plain that it could not be considered a formal dish.<sup>8</sup> As for dining in, rich households had private cooks for preparing daily family meals, and hired chefs for banquets on special occasions such as weddings and birthdays. However, cuisines served at these banquets were not specially termed “Taiwanese cuisine” (Zeng, 2006a, pp. 194-198). In other words, “Taiwanese cuisine” as a new culinary category developed during the Japanese colonial era.

This chapter will trace the emergence of “Taiwanese cuisine,” examining why and how it developed into a new culinary category. The chapter also seeks to answer the following questions: How was Taiwanese cuisine shaped as a new and distinctive category, particularly different from Chinese cuisine? Who drew the boundary of Taiwanese cuisine in this process of differentiation? By investigating how Taiwanese cuisine was defined and presented in the very beginning, this chapter aims to analyze the origin of Taiwanese cuisine during the Japanese colonial era, exploring how the cuisine characterized as “Taiwanese” emerged in the dining-out market at that time.

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<sup>4</sup> *Taiwan ryôri* is a Japanese term referring to “Taiwanese cuisine,” its equivalent Mandarin term is *Taiwan liaoli*.

<sup>5</sup> *Taiwan nichinichi shinpô* [*Taiwan Daily News*] (abbreviation *TNSP*), 4/27/1923(8). *Taiwan nichinichi shinpô* is an official newspaper published from 1898 to 1944 in Taiwan.

<sup>6</sup> *TNSP*, 5/30/1925(7); *TNSP*, 10/23/1927(5); *TNSP*, 4/5/1928(5).

<sup>7</sup> Qing Dynasty (1644-1911 A.D.) is the last dynasty of Imperial China. Taiwan was officially ruled by the Qing Dynasty from 1683 to 1895.

<sup>8</sup> For discussion on eateries during the Qing Dynasty in Taiwan, see Zeng, 2006a, pp. 176-177.



## 1. “TAIWANESE CUISINE” IN BANQUETS AND EXHIBITIONS

### 1.1 “Taiwanese cuisine” served at banquets of Japanese officials

It was in January 1898 when the term *Taiwan ryōri* first appeared in print media, shortly after the Japanese began its colonial rule in Taiwan in 1895. In the news about an official New Year Banquet of the local administration in Tainan (*Tainan Benmusho*), it was reported that there were many Taiwanese officials of junior level attending this banquet; therefore, some local Taiwanese dishes were served, and these dishes earned great praise at this banquet.<sup>9</sup> In the same year, in a festival hosted by the officials of Jiayi County, a shop offering “Taiwanese cuisine” was set up along with other eateries providing Japanese snacks and dishes.<sup>10</sup> In addition to these feasts, private parties of Japanese colonial officials serving Taiwanese food were recorded in *Taiwan kanshū kiji* [*Records of Taiwanese Customs*] published in the early 1900s,<sup>11</sup> revealing the interests of the Japanese officers and folk scholars in Taiwanese dishes. For example, an author of *Taiwan kanshū kiji* has recorded a banquet menu of Taiwanese cuisine, shown in Table 1.1, which was enclosed with an invitation letter.

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<sup>9</sup> *TNSP*, 1/18/1898(3).

<sup>10</sup> *TNSP*, 5/6/1898(5).

<sup>11</sup> *Taiwan kanshū kiji* [*Records of Taiwanese Customs*] was published by the *Taiwan kanshū kenkūkai* (Association of Taiwanese Customs Research), which was set up by Japanese officials of the Government-General and researchers on folk customs. The association was established on October 30, 1900 and headed by the Governor-General Gentaro Kodama. It published *Taiwan kanshū kiji* every month from January 1901 to August 1907, and its main contents were customs and rituals of the Taiwanese society at that time.

**Table 1.1 Banquet menu of Taiwanese cuisine (*Taiwan ryôri*) (1906)**

<b>(Half Banquet )<sup>12</sup></b>	
1. Shark fin stewed with soy sauce	(紅燒魚翅)
2. Western bean with wild chicken	(洋豆山雞片)
3. Stir-fried fish fillet	(生炒魚片)
4. Whole duck soup	(清湯全鴨)
5. Stir-fried pigeon	(炒白鴿片)
6. Shrimp rolls	(生丸蝦捲)
(Mid-banquet Snack) <i>Shaomai</i> <sup>13</sup>	
(燒賣)	
<b>(Complete Banquet)</b>	
1. Turtle stewed with soy sauce	(紅燒鱉魚)
2. Eight-treasure crab	(八寶蟬盒)
3. Stir-fried eight-treasure	(炒八寶菜)
4. Whelk soup	(清湯香螺)
5. Whole duck	(生拉全鴨)
6. Almond tofu	(杏仁豆腐)
Cakes, coffee and tea	
Four fruits, four dried fruits, four nuts and Japanese liquor will be served.	

Source: Taiwan kanshû kenkûkai (Association of Taiwanese Customs Research), *Taiwan kanshû kiji*, 6 (5), May 1906, p. 81.

Consisting of 12 dishes served in sequence, the banquet was divided into two parts with a snack served at mid meal and ended with Western confectionaries, coffee, and tea. In banquet cuisine, seafood and meat played the main roles. They included precious ingredients such as bird's nest, shark fin, pigeon, crab, and duck, which were all traditional Chinese delicacies (Simoons, 1991, pp. 427-432). These highly priced ingredients were cooked with specific recipes such as "eight treasure" and labor-intensive procedures. Enclosing a menu in the invitation was meant to alert

<sup>12</sup> Half banquet (*banxi*) and complete banquet (*quanxi*) were specific terms used during the Japanese colonial era and post-war period denoting the "first half" and "second half" respectively of a banquet. But a banquet does not necessarily have the second half. If a banquet only served six courses and one snack, it was called "half banquet." "Half banquet" was common at informal occasions and private feasts, while the "complete banquet" was mostly adopted for official or formal occasions. On "complete banquet" and "half banquet," see "Sekai ni bimi wo hokoru Taiwan no ryôri [Taiwanese cuisine, boasting its delicacy to the world]," *TNSP*, 11/6/1922(5); Kataoka Iwao, 1981 [1921], pp. 206-207, 212; Suzuki Seichirô, 1989 [1934], p. 213.

<sup>13</sup> *Shaomai* is a kind of Chinese dumpling.

the guests that what was provided at the banquet was “haute cuisine” in terms of the utilization of expensive items, complicated cooking methods, and exquisite service, all denoting the high social status of the host. Furthermore, fruits, nuts, and Japanese liquor were also served, presenting a combination of Chinese, Western, and Japanese components, and offering an exotic and unusual taste.

It is important to note that this haute cuisine served at banquets was not exclusively identified as Taiwanese cuisine; rather, it was also referred to as Chinese cuisine (*Shina ryôri* in Japanese or *Zhina liaoli* in Mandarin) at the same time. Although the term *Taiwan ryôri* had been used since the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, what it referred to was often overlapping with the meaning of Chinese cuisine. For example, *Pingleyou* was one of the earliest restaurants in Taipei in the Japanese era, but the cuisines served there were termed differently in the newspaper, including Chinese cuisine (*Shina ryôri*),<sup>14</sup> Taiwanese cuisine (*Taiwan ryôri*),<sup>15</sup> and native island cuisine (*Hontô ryôri* in Japanese or *bendao liaoli* in Mandarin).<sup>16</sup>

However, this overlapping did not mean that the Japanese were familiar with Chinese cuisine or had much understanding of it. Although Chinese food had long been an essential element of Japanese cuisine, it was after the victory of Japan in the Russo-Japanese War in 1905 that the Japanese started to change their attitude towards Chinese cuisine from negative to curious and interested (Cwierka, 2006, pp. 118-125, 144). In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the image of Chinese cuisine in Japan manifested itself in two extremes. It was either esteemed as exclusive and exquisite or disdained as dirty and bad taste, which was coherent with the negative impression the Japanese had of the Chinese people at that time. Until the early 1900s, the Japanese shifted their interest partly from Western food to Chinese food, and restaurants serving Chinese cuisine mushroomed in Japan during the 1920s and 1930s (Cwierka, 2006, pp. 139-144). In other words, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, enjoying Chinese cuisine was also a new experience for the Japanese in general. For the Japanese officials in Taiwan, there existed no clear boundary between Chinese cuisine and Taiwanese cuisine at all.

Because Chinese cuisine and Taiwanese cuisine were both new to the Japanese in Taiwan, some authors of *Taiwan kanshû kiji* attempted to introduce and describe in detail these cuisines. For example, an author listed two menus of Chinese restaurants for readers to compare, stating:<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> *TNSP*, 4/11/1901(5).

<sup>15</sup> *TNSP*, 11/10/1907(5). In this report, *Pingleyou* was identified as “an old restaurant serving Taiwanese cuisine.”

<sup>16</sup> *TNSP*, 12/8/1907(5). In *Taiwan nichinichi shinpô*, the term *Hontô ryôri* was used 13 times, much less than the frequency of *Taiwan ryôri* (153 times) and *Shina ryôri* (113 times).

<sup>17</sup> For a comparison of menus of the two restaurants *Ruichengchun* and *Juyinglou*, see: *Taiwan kanshû kiji*, 5(5), 1905, pp. 63-68.

There has been the consensus that Chinese cuisine is more delicious and cheaper than Japanese cuisine...Therefore, Chinese cuisine has increasingly been added to Japanese family meals and banquet meals recently...However, people were not familiar with the names of Chinese cuisine, and the price difference resulted in some confusion. (*Taiwan kanshû kiji*, 5(5), 1905, pp. 63-64)

Another author recorded his discussion with Taiwanese friends concerning Taiwanese banquet, focusing on the food, entertainment, and dining etiquettes at Taiwanese banquets. He highlighted the vivid differences between Taiwanese and Japanese dining style as follows:

Dining of inland style<sup>18</sup> puts emphasis on drinking instead of eating, appreciating dance and song instead of talking. On the contrary, Taiwanese style emphasizes eating instead of drinking; they prefer chatting to appreciating dance and song when enjoying food. As for the way of serving, the inland style uses individual trays, while the Taiwanese style serves dishes in one plate for all to share. Many inland dishes are raw, but Taiwanese dishes rarely feature uncooked items. Inlanders are used to cold dishes but Taiwanese prefer hot ones. Most inland dishes taste mild while Taiwanese ones have stronger flavor. (Shinju, 1902, pp. 61-62)

As seen in the above comparison, Taiwanese-style banquets were different from Japanese ones not only in the ingredients used but also in the eating utensils, atmosphere, and entertainment. As claimed by the author of the above article, he compared and contrasted the two styles of banquets to help the Japanese understand better the food served and dining manners at Taiwanese banquets. It was a kind of knowledge worth learning for the Japanese who were having more and more chances of participating in banquets or parties serving Taiwanese cuisine, which was a new culinary category for the Japanese in Taiwan. On these occasions, Taiwanese cuisine was highlighted as an exotic local fare, and the experience of participating in Taiwanese banquets also allowed the Japanese to understand the local customs. Although Japanese administrators tended to have banquets in Japanese restaurants when the guests are all Japanese, they participated actively in Taiwanese banquets attended by Taiwanese gentries (*shishen*), such as farewell parties and welcome celebrations of Japanese administrators, or birthday banquets of prestigious

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<sup>18</sup> Here, inland style (*naichi* in Japanese or *neidi* in Mandarin) refers to the Japanese style.

Taiwanese gentries. For Japanese administrators, such Taiwanese banquets were chances for them not only to expand their knowledge of Taiwanese food and culture, but also to build their social networks.

In sum, Taiwanese banquets were occasions for social intercourse and novel experience for the Japanese in Taiwan. However, when Taiwanese cuisine was presented at official exhibitions, it entered the public sphere and acquired new significance. The following section will show how Taiwanese cuisine was presented at National Exhibitions of Japan during the colonial era, and what social implications it entailed.

## 1.2 “Taiwanese cuisine” at Japanese Exhibitions

The first encounter of Japanese officials with international exhibitions was the London International Exhibition of 1862. Surprised at the success of exhibition as a tool for political and cultural propaganda as well as promoting economic interests, the Japanese government took it as a strategy to demonstrate their ability to become a modern and advanced power in the world.<sup>19</sup> In 1877, the First National Exhibition for Promotion of Trade and Industry (*Naikoku Kangyo Hakurankai*) was held in Tokyo, and its success brought a series of exhibitions under the same theme in 1881, 1890, and 1895.<sup>20</sup> Among the subsequent ones, the Fifth National Exhibition at Osaka in 1903 was the largest in terms of scale, number of visitors, and amount of displays. Compared with the Fourth National Exhibition held in Kyoto, the number of pavilions expanded from six to fourteen, the number of visitors grew 4.7 times, and the quantity of displays increased 1.6 times (Lu, 2005, p. 114). The Fifth National Exhibition attracted 4,350,000 visitors within five months, including the groups composed of Taiwanese gentries, which accounted for more than 500 people in total (Lu, 2002, p. 105).

As the first National Exhibition held after the Japanese took over Taiwan in 1895, the Fifth National Exhibition was an important occasion for Japanese officials to demonstrate their achievement in colonial Taiwan as the “imperial pride” of Japan (Lu, 2005, pp. 113-114). Therefore, the establishment of a Taiwan Pavilion was emphasized as the hallmark of integrating Taiwan into the Japanese empire and the strengthening of Japanese national power (Hu, 2005; Li, 2006; Lu, 2005).

The Taiwan Pavilion was designed as a four-section compound with houses of greybricks and tiles (*siheyuan*) built around a courtyard, merging with the square city wall structure. In order to fill the showcases, 6,028 items were shipped from Taiwan,

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<sup>19</sup> On the history of Japanese exhibitions, see Hu, 2005; Li, 2006; Lu, 2002, 2005.

<sup>20</sup> The first three National Exhibitions for Promotion of Trade and Industry were held at Tokyo in 1877, 1881, and 1890, the fourth one was held at Kyoto in 1895. See Lu, 2002, p. 108.

and 2751 Taiwanese staff participated in the preparation (Lu, 2002, p. 113). Within the exhibition area, in addition to industrial and agricultural products and expositions of “Taiwanese life,” a tea house, souvenir shops, and a Taiwanese restaurant were set up at the northern side of the building.



**Figure 1.1 Taiwan Pavilion at the Fifth National Exhibition, Osaka 1903**

Source: Akira Tsukide, ed. *Taiwan kan [Taiwan Pavilion]* (Taipei: Dai gokai naikoku kangyô hakurankai, 1903), p. 10.

It was the first time a “Taiwanese restaurant” was set up in a Japanese exhibition, and the restaurant was one of the most frequently visited sites at this exhibition. The popularity of Taiwanese cuisine could be seen in the profits the restaurant made. From its opening on March 5<sup>th</sup> to the end of June in 1903, 39,000 consumers visited the Taiwanese restaurant and the business turnover amounted to more than 9,837 yen (Akira Tsukide, 1903, p. 14). These figures evidenced the attraction of Taiwanese food to visitors. Moreover, the Taiwanese tea house and souvenir shops generated a business turnover of 20,000 yen, far more than the forecasted figure of 5,000 yen by the Government-General (Akira Tsukide, 1903, p. 13).

The “Taiwanese restaurant” was presented as an imitation of a typical restaurant in Taiwan. All aspects, from the interior design to cooking utensils and tableware, were replications of those in Taiwan (Akira Tsukide, 1903, p. 14). Furthermore, the dishes served in the shop were cooked by chefs of famous Taiwanese restaurants, and

the waitresses were also young ladies from Taiwan.<sup>21</sup> It should be underlined, as will be shown in Chapter Two, that “the company of young ladies” was a significant characteristic in Taiwanese restaurants during the Japanese colonial era and the post-war period. The tasks of these ladies varied with the consumption level of the eating establishments. In the most exclusive restaurants, they entertained customers by conversing, singing, playing musical instruments, and writing poems, while in most of cheaper restaurants and dining rooms, they mainly poured liquor for customers and engaged into conversation with customers. In some restaurants, they even engaged in sex with customers.<sup>22</sup>

In addition to the exotic interior design and young waitresses, the Taiwanese cuisine featured at the exhibitions was a selection from specialty dishes in Taiwanese restaurants. However, since these dishes were not only for presentation but also for attracting Japanese consumers, as Akira Tsukide explained, they had been modified to suit the Japanese taste (Akira Tsukide, 1903, p. 14). In other words, the Taiwanese cuisine featured at the exhibitions was selected in view of commercial interests, reflecting the preference of Japanese taste.

Some of the dishes offered on the menu are as follows:

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<sup>21</sup> To represent the taste and scene of Taiwanese restaurants, there were Taiwanese chefs of prestigious restaurants working for such restaurants at this and all subsequent Japanese exhibitions. For example, the restaurant *Hujimi* was featured at the Fifth National Exhibition in 1903, *Donghuiifang* was responsible for the Taiwan Industrial Progress Fair (*Taiwan Kangyô Kôsinkai*) in 1916, and *Pingleyou* was involved in the Peace Memorial Exhibition (*Heiwa Kinen Hakurankai*) in 1922. See *TNSP*, 8/28/1903(3); *TNSP*, 4/6/1916(5); *TNSP*, 2/23/1922(7).

<sup>22</sup> Please see the next section of this chapter.

**Table 1.2 Menu of Taiwanese cuisine at Taiwan Pavilion**

<b>Noodle</b>	Chicken noodle (雞絲白麵), Fried shrimp noodle (炒蝦白麵)
<b>Easy-made cuisine</b>	Fish simmered in soy sauce (紅燒魚), Fried fish fillet (炒魚片), Mushroom consomme (清湯毛菰), Eight-treasure vegetables (八寶菜), Fried chicken balls (燒雞丸)
<b>Poultry</b>	Stir-fried chicken (生炒雞), Chicken with onion (洋蔥雞), Chicken with chestnut (栗子雞), Fried chicken (干煎雞), Chicken with mushroom (毛菰雞), Curry chicken (咖哩雞)
<b>Shrimp</b>	Stir-fried shrimp (炒蝦仁), Stir-fried shrimp cakes (炒蝦餅), Soup of shrimp balls (蝦丸湯)
<b>Crab</b>	Boiled crab (白片蟳), Crab soup (清湯蟳)
<b>Special menu</b>	
<b>Shark fin</b>	Three-color shark fin (三絲魚翅), Boiled crab and shark fin (煮蟹魚翅), Shark fin simmered in soy sauce (紅燒魚翅)

Source: Akira Tsukide, ed. *Taiwan kan [Taiwan Pavilion]*, (1903), p. 14.

As seen in the above table, the Taiwanese cuisine presented at the exhibition was mainly seafood and poultry for attracting local consumers. Among these selected items, shark fin was one of the most highly prized seafood specialties in Taiwan and it was listed as a representative cuisine during the colonial period. In south China, a dish of shark fin is almost a must among the affluent on important occasions like weddings and other celebrations, as a show of hospitality and fortune (Anderson, 1988, p. 142), and it was the same in Taiwan. Sakura Magomitsu (1961 [1903]) and Lian Heng (1962 [1918]) both pointed out that shark fin was one of the most precious and preferred dishes in Taiwan, and that shark fin produced locally enjoyed a high reputation. In early Japanese colonial era, Taiwan had been an important production center of shark fin. In *Taiwan shisatsu tebiki [Taiwan Inspection Guideline]* (1916) written for Japanese administrators in Taiwan, it was also indicated that dried bonito and shark fin were the first two important marine products in Taiwan (Sugiura Wasaku, 1916, pp. 72-73).

Not only shark fin but also other seafood was highlighted at the exhibition. It was obvious that seafood dishes always played the main role in banquet menus, reflecting the preference of consumers, who were Japanese officials and Taiwanese



of the upper circles. However, it should be kept in mind that the preference for seafood was only limited to the elite and the wealthy. Marine products were rarely found in everyday diet for the majority of the population in Taiwan. A process of generalization and dissemination of this “elite taste” was only a recent development which took place mainly after the 1960s.

This section has shown that Taiwanese cuisine made its debut at official banquets and private feasts of the Japanese in Taiwan at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and was featured at the Fifth National Exhibition in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Taiwanese restaurant set up at the exhibition was claimed to be a transplant of the restaurants in Taiwan, revealing the existence of a dining-out market in Taiwanese society. The following section will further elaborate on the dining-out market in Taiwan during the Japanese colonial era, exemplifying that there has been a mature banquet culture shared by the upper class, including both Taiwanese and Japanese.

## 2. “TAIWANESE CUISINE” AT DINING-OUT PLACES

Dining-out establishments in Taiwan under the Japanese rule were officially classified into restaurants (*ryôriya*) and dining rooms (*inshokuten*) according to their scale and consumption level.<sup>23</sup> Restaurants were places of larger area, offering delicate cuisine and for hosting luxurious banquets. This category included Japanese-style restaurants (*ryôtei*), Western-style restaurants and local “wine mansions” or “taverns” (*jiulou*). In contrast, dining rooms were smaller eateries without elaborate furnishing, serving relatively unsophisticated food and simple meals at low price.

In both types of dining venues, there were women serving the customers though they were called different names and the services they provided differed. Those ladies working for restaurants were called *yida*, a word adapted from the Japanese term *geisha*, referring to young girls performing classical music, literature, and dance. *Yida*, particularly the famous ones, had their own room called *yidajian*, where customers could hold their private gatherings with fine cuisines delivered for use in the room. However, in most cases, customers enjoyed meals and the performance of *yida* in the separate rooms of the restaurant.<sup>24</sup> Contrary to *yida*, women working in dining rooms were called *zhuofu*, which literally means “women pouring liquor.” As implied by what they were called, the main task of these women was to pour liquor into the cups of customers.

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<sup>23</sup> See the official statistics on trades and occupations superintended by the police: *Taiwan sôtokuho tôkeisho* [Taiwan Government-General Statistics Books], 1899-1944.

<sup>24</sup> For a description of *yida* and *yidajian*, see Ide Kiwata, 1997 [1935], pp. 177-182; Tanaka Kazuji, 1998, pp. 374-379.

Both *yida* and *zhuofu* had significant impact on both the business and the fame of these Taiwanese restaurants. Some travel guides and magazines recommended nice restaurants with beautiful *yida* or *geisha*,<sup>25</sup> as seen in Figure 1.2. In 1923, the most distinguished restaurant of the 1920s, *Jiangshan Lou*, even held a contest of *yida* and invited all customers as adjudicators.<sup>26</sup> Owing to the significant impact of *yida*, some restaurants in southern Taiwan employed famous *yida* from Taipei to boost their business. The significance of young waitresses in Taiwanese restaurants strengthened the connection between young ladies and Taiwanese cuisine. “Enjoying food in the company of young female” was a typical scene in Taiwanese restaurants during the Japanese colonial era.



**Figure 1.2 Yida in Taipei**

Source: *Taiwan geijutsu shinpō* [Taiwan Art Newspaper], 1(1), 1935, p. 70.

As seen in the above, it is obvious that a dining-out place during the Japanese colonial era was different in many aspects from a “restaurant” in its modern sense (cf. Warde & Martens, 2000). In those days, restaurants were where businessmen, officials, and intellectuals, all males, gathered for business, fun, and exchange of thoughts, and where activities like poetry appreciation meetings and mid-autumn festival banquets were held. In restaurants, customers had meals in separate rooms instead of sharing a big public hall. The enclosed space allowed consumers of upper social background to have private meetings and banquets.

<sup>25</sup> See, for example, Taiwan Ryokan Kumiai Rengōkai, 1935; *Taiwan geijutsu shinpō* [Taiwan Art Newspaper], 1(1), 1935, p. 70, 1(2), 1935, p. 48.

<sup>26</sup> TNSP, 7/14/1922(6).

Another feature of restaurants at that time was their legal status. All dining establishments were categorized as a “special trade” which was to be overseen by the police. For example, the premises of restaurants had to be inspected on regular basis by the police and sanitation officials; while the employees, particularly *yida* and *zhuofu*, had to register at the local police station and receive regular health examinations (Zhu, 2003, pp. 118-125). Despite these regulations, the dining-out market expanded rapidly and competition between restaurants intensified accordingly. The following table shows the number of restaurants and dining rooms in major Taiwanese cities and the nationality of their owners during the Japanese colonial era. These numbers recorded in official annual statistics provided a glimpse of the flourishing dining-out market in Taiwan.

**Table 1.3 Numbers of restaurants and dining rooms in major Taiwanese cities<sup>27</sup>**

Year	Type	Nationality*	Taipei	Xinzhu	Tai-zhong	Tainan	Tai-dong	Peng-hu	Total
Meiji 31 (1898)	Restaurant	NA	151	--	106	167	20	23	467
	Dining Room	NA	219	--	101	123	10	19	472
Meiji 38 (1905)	Restaurant	Inlander	51	11	15	49	4	30	160
		Islander	20	4	13	13	--	3	53
		Foreigner	2	1	3	--	--	--	6
		<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>219</b>
	Dining Room	Inlander	60	3	10	27	3	13	116
		Islander	71	94	21	82	8	5	281
		Foreigner	3	--	--	3	--	--	6
		<b>Total</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>403</b>
Taishō 4 (1915)	Restaurant	Inlander	68	16	33	88	4	9	218
		Islander	37	4	46	40	3	2	132
		Foreigner	14	1	5	--	--	--	20
		<b>Total</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>370</b>
	Dining Room	Inlander	113	6	13	47	4	7	190
		Islander	170	150	228	108	5	6	667
		Foreigner	14	1	3	3	--	--	21
		<b>Total</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>878</b>
Taishō 10 (1921)	Restaurant	Inlander	136	14	43	67	6	--	266
		Islander	26	28	98	103	1	--	256
		Foreigner	9	1	22	1	4	--	37
		<b>Total</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>559</b>
	Dining Room	Inlander	77	11	32	37	1	--	158
		Islander	295	247	279	189	9	--	1019
		Foreigner	17	3	2	7	5	--	34
		<b>Total</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>1211</b>
Shōwa 5 (1930)	Restaurant	Inlander	154	18	50	63	8	10	303
		Islander	28	18	105	112	2	5	270
		Korean	--	--	--	--	--	--	0
		Foreigner	12	--	11	--	--	--	23
		<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>596</b>
	Dining Room	Inlander	115	15	26	33	6	4	199
		Islander	355	316	320	303	22	14	1330
		Foreigner	30	5	6	9	7	--	57

<sup>27</sup> I choose statistics of different years to present the development of the dining-out market: the statistics of 1898 shows the dining-out market when the term “Taiwanese cuisine” appeared for the first time; and it was around 1905 that the introductions to “Taiwanese cuisine” were printed in magazines. 1921 was the year when *Jiagshan Lou* opened for business; 1930 witnessed the competition between *Jiagshan Lou* and *Penglai Ge*; and 1940 marked the early phase of the Second World War.

		<b>Total</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1586</b>
Shōwa 15 (1940)	Restaurant	Inlander	157	7	35	46	4	19	268
		Islander	41	25	170	135	10	3	384
		Korean	14	4	11	8	1	--	38
		Foreigner	12	--	4	--	--	--	16
		<b>Total</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>706</b>
	Dining Room	Inlander	190	13	44	67	8	9	331
		Islander	394	488	612	388	34	13	1929
		Korean	2	--	--	--	--	--	2
		Foreigner	47	--	1	5	3	--	56
		<b>Total</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>657</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>2318</b>

Source: *Taiwan sôtokuhu tôkeisho* [Taiwan Government-General Statistics Books], No. 2, 9, 19, 25, 34, 44.

\* “Inlanders” refers to Japanese, “Islanders” refers to Taiwanese, and “Foreigners” refers to Chinese.

NA = Not available

According to the statistics shown in Table 1.3, restaurants were concentrated in Taipei and Tainan, the two major cities during the colonial period, while dining rooms were more widespread in smaller cities. This difference reveals the close relationship between dining-out activities and urbanization. Furthermore, restaurants owned by the Japanese (Inlanders) obviously concentrated in Taipei, where the Government-General resided. For example, there were 266 restaurants run by the Japanese in 1921, and 136 of them were established in Taipei, which had a total of 171 restaurants. By contrast, the islander-owned restaurants in Taizhong and Tainan occupied almost two thirds of the total. In sum, the distribution of restaurants shows that sophisticated “restaurants” were established mainly in big cities, particularly Taipei, and most of these restaurants were owned by the Japanese. By contrast, “dining rooms” offering simpler food and service were more popular in regions inhabited by the Taiwanese.

Despite some differences between cities, Table 1.3 indicates a general expansion of the whole dining-out market. In 1905, the total number of restaurants in the main cities was 219; but in 1921, the year when the *Jiangshan Lou* opened for business, it doubled to 559; and after a slight growth during the 1920s, it climbed from 596 to 706 between 1930 and 1940. In sum, the number of restaurants tripled between 1905 and 1940. These numbers show that the dining-out market continued to expand

during the colonial era, implying an enlarging class of consumers who could afford dining-out as a social activity.

Not only restaurants but also dining rooms catering for consumers of a more general level witnessed a stable increase in major cities. While there were a total of 403 dining rooms in 1905, its number had tripled by 1921 and kept increasing to 1586 in 1930. In other words, the availability of commercial eating places became greater during the Japanese colonial era, and those who had access to eating out were becoming more numerous, mirroring the rising financial standing of parts of the population and the emerging social differentiation (Warde & Martens, 2000, pp. 65-68).

The burgeoning of eating-out settings was reflected not only in the number of restaurants, but also in the variety of eating venues, particularly exclusive restaurants. In the early 1900s, some Japanese restaurants were established, hosting Japanese banquets as well as providing the nostalgic “tastes of home” for those Japanese living in Taiwan. *Umeyashiki*, a Japanese restaurant established in 1905, was the most prestigious one of its kind, with Japanese Governor-Generals and even some Taiwanese celebrities often holding banquets there.<sup>28</sup>

Following the Japanese restaurants, Western restaurants also emerged as an important culinary category and witnessed a rapid growth during the 1910s. Consumer goods from the West had entered Taiwan since 1862, when Jilong, Danshui, Tainan, and Dagou (Kaohsiung) were opened by the Qing Court as treaty ports for foreign trade. These treaty ports were also the gates where Western cuisines were imported. According to the reports written by Western bureaucrats working at the Chinese customs, many Taiwanese rich merchants had enjoyed Western food, such as champagne, candy, condensed milk, and biscuits, during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In some rich Taiwanese families, condensed milk was drunk with tea before going to bed, which was considered good for health (Zeng, 2006a, pp. 214-215, 220-221).

Although Western food had been consumed in Taiwan since the late Qing Dynasty, Western restaurants were not established until the early Japanese colonial era.<sup>29</sup> Soon after the Japanese took over Taiwan, new Western restaurants were opened in some large cities like Taipei, Tainan, and Jiayi.<sup>30</sup> It was reported that Western restaurants mushroomed because Western cuisine was easier to cook and cheaper than Japanese cuisine,<sup>31</sup> indicating that its clientele included not only

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<sup>28</sup> For example, the banquets of the Governor-General Andô Sadami and Taiwanese tycoon Gu Xian-rong, see *TNSP*, 4/15/1916(5); *TNSP*, 2/4/1908(2).

<sup>29</sup> Zeng, 2006a, pp. 221-224; *TNSP*, 7/23/1912(6).

<sup>30</sup> It was reported that some new Western restaurants were opened by the Japanese in Jiayi, and Western cuisine “has become much more popular than before.” See *TNSP*, 12/20/1905(4).

<sup>31</sup> *TNSP*, 7/23/1912(6).

Westerners but also Japanese and Taiwanese. However, people who really enjoyed Western cuisines were few in number, and these restaurants tended to serve also other cuisines to offer a greater variety that appealed to more customers. For example, *Taiwan Lou* opened in 1899 was originally a Western restaurant run by the Japanese. After being sold to a merchant, it was transformed into a restaurant serving Chinese, Japanese, and Western cuisines as well as tea/snack.<sup>32</sup> Another example was *Baomei Lou*, the most famous Chinese restaurant in Tainan. Its owner established a new Western restaurant beside the beach, apparently adopting the business strategy of attracting different consumers by increasing the variety of cuisines served. Such a strategy also exemplified the existence of a dining-out market with sub-divisions.<sup>33</sup>

It was in such a competitive market of haute cuisine restaurants that the most exclusive Taiwanese restaurant, *Jiangshan Lou*, was opened, proclaiming its intention to compete with Japanese and Western restaurants in heralding local taste.<sup>34</sup> However, the “local taste” was not termed “Taiwanese cuisine” at the very beginning. Instead, *Jiangshan Lou* claimed to be a Chinese restaurant when it was first established in November 1921.

### 3. DISCOURSE OF “TAIWANESE CUISINE”: A REPERTOIRE

#### 3.1 A hallmark Taiwanese restaurant: *Jiangshan Lou*

Before the 1920s, the most famous restaurants in Taipei were *Pingleyou*, *Donghuifang*, and *Chunfengdeyi Lou*. The upper class often had banquets and gatherings in these restaurants. For example, when the famous historian Liang Qi-chao visited Taiwan in 1911 (March 28-April 13) during his exile in Japan, some important political figures like Lin Xian-tang, Lian Heng, and other celebrities in Taiwan hosted a welcome banquet at *Donghuifang*.<sup>35</sup> However, *Jiangshan Lou* soon after its establishment took the lead and was viewed as the beacon of Taiwanese restaurants.

The proprietor of *Jiangshan Lou*, Wu Jiang-shan, had been a shareholder of *Donghuifang*. After breaking up with his previous business partner Bai A-Bian, Wu invested hundred thousands of yen to build *Jiangshan Lou*, which was opened for business on November 17, 1921.<sup>36</sup> In the advertisement for publicity, Wu claimed that his ambition was to provide a venue for banquets that could compete with the best

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<sup>32</sup> *TNSP*, 10/25/1923(4).

<sup>33</sup> *TNSP*, 7/1/1909(4).

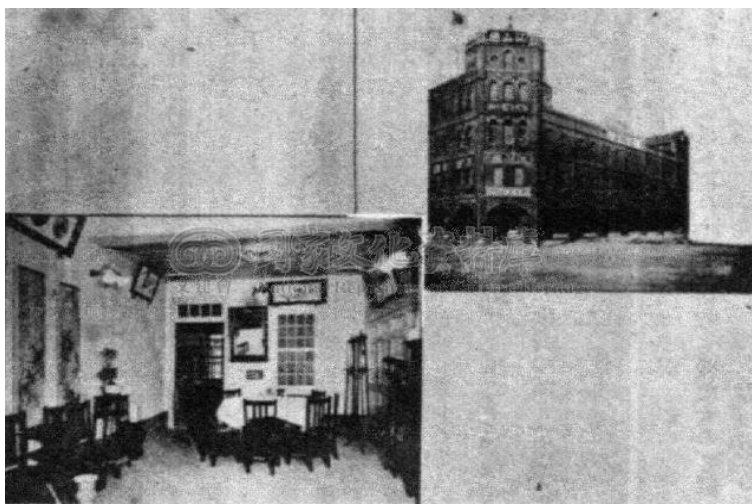
<sup>34</sup> *TNSP*, 11/8/1921(6); advertisement of *Jiangshan Lou*, *TNSP*, 11/15/1921(6).

<sup>35</sup> *Taipei shizhi [Gazetteer of Taipei City]* (8), 1979, p. 32; Ye, 1985, p. 52.

<sup>36</sup> *TNSP*, 3/16/1913(6).

Japanese and Western restaurants in Taipei. However, it should be noted that *Jiangshan Lou* claimed to be a “Chinese restaurant” rather than a Taiwanese one in its advertisement.

As the most exclusive restaurant, *Jiangshan Lou* was particularly distinctive in its scale, equipment, and cuisine. In terms of scale, it was housed in a four-floor building which could seat hundreds of customers at the same time. On the first floor, there were the offices and kitchens; while on the second and third floors, there were seven ballrooms for banquets. Western-style rooms for guests to have a shower and a haircut were on the fourth floor along with a special reception room and a roof garden. In terms of equipment and interior design, all furniture of *Jiangshan Lou* was luxurious and the furnishing was elaborate and artistic. For example, there were giant mirrors along the stairway, and the ballrooms were separated by classical screens, which allowed flexibility in partitioning spaces for banquets. In addition, as was the convention for traditional Chinese-style venues, these rooms were decorated with paintings and calligraphy of artists or celebrities.<sup>37</sup>



**Figure 1.3 Photo of *Jiangshan Lou* on magazine *Taiwan* (1927)**

Source: Database of the National Repository of Cultural Heritage:

<http://nrch.cca.gov.tw/ccahome/index.jsp> (downloaded 10/22/2009)

\* The photo was originally printed in Takeuchi Sadayoshi, ed. *Taiwan* (Taipei: Shinkôdô, 1927), p. 1081.

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<sup>37</sup> On the interior design and equipment of *Jiangshan Lou*, see: the advertisement of *Jiangshan Lou*, *TNSP*, 11/15/1921(6); Wu, 1958.



In addition to all the artistic decorations, cuisine that naturally constituted an integral part of any restaurants was given great emphasis in its opening advertisement. To reach his goal of founding the best Chinese restaurant, which could be on par with, if not surpass, the best Japanese and Western restaurants, Wu claimed in the advertisement that he traveled around China to visit distinguished teashops, restaurants, and wine mansions in order to learn elaborate delicacies, and then adopted these cuisines for his new restaurant. In other words, the dishes served at *Jiangshan Lou* essentially included the specialties of various regional cuisines of China. This claim of “all the best of Chinese cuisine” was also in line with its traditional Chinese interior design and the owner’s claim as a Chinese restaurant.

With its luxurious and artistic aura, this venue soon became a favored location where many gentries, officials, and merchants gathered, held parties, or had fun. Dining here not only signified fame and fortune but also symbolized the upper-class status. There was a popular saying describing one of the best pleasures at that time: “Ascending *Jiangshan Lou*, eating Taiwanese cuisine, in the company of *yida*” (Wu, 1958, p. 91).

The customers of *Jiangshan Lou* were not restricted to upper-class Taiwanese gentries but included Japanese elites as well. Among the banquets held at *Jiangshan Lou*, some frequent occasions or events were the meetings of poet societies, private banquets of Japanese officials, and various commercial assemblies.<sup>38</sup> These customers constituted a web of wealth and power, which was a social network of the highest class in the colonial society. For example, the most important poet society *Yingshe* held regular gatherings and parties (such as Moon Festival Party at mid-Autumn) at *Jiangshan Lou*. The members of this society were rich merchants and gentries in good relations with the Japanese government on the one hand and could influence local public affairs on the other. In this context, these occasions of banquets and meetings were not only opportunities for leisure and enjoyment, but also chances to build, strengthen, and expand their social networks and influence.

Since its opening in 1921, *Jiangshan Lou* had been successfully established as an outstanding restaurant where the top class patronized, and thus, it came as no surprise that *Jiangshan Lou* was chosen to host the royal banquet for the Japanese Crown Prince Hirohito when he visited Taiwan. As the only banquet serving Taiwanese cuisine throughout the royal trip, the lunch banquet caught the attention of the media and was reported in great detail.

As listed at the beginning of this chapter, thirteen elaborate dishes were served at the banquet, which was acclaimed by the media as a great success. This, in turn, strengthened the status of *Jiangshan Lou* as the restaurant representative of

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<sup>38</sup> See, for example, *TNSP*, 10/13/1922(6); *TNSP*, 12/9/1922(6).

Taiwanese cuisine and initiated a convention that Japanese royal members visiting Taiwan should enjoy the Taiwanese dishes of *Jiangshan Lou*. These royal banquets of Taiwanese cuisine brought fame to *Jiangshan Lou*, and its name became a synonym for Taiwanese cuisine. Against this background, the official *Taiwan nichinichi shinpô* published a series of articles titled “*Taiwan ryôri no hanashi*” (The story of Taiwanese cuisine) since December 10, 1927. This series of 23 articles was written by Wu Jiang-shan, the proprietor of *Jiangshan Lou*. By introducing and illustrating the dishes and dining etiquette of Taiwanese banquets, these articles were the earliest and most authoritative narratives on Taiwanese cuisine. On the one hand, they defined Taiwanese cuisine as a new culinary category; on the other hand, they endeavored to distinguish between Taiwanese and Chinese cuisine.

### 3.2 Distinction between Taiwanese and Chinese cuisine

Attempting to address the characteristics and representative dishes of Taiwanese cuisine, Wu highlighted the distinctiveness of Taiwanese cuisine vis-à-vis Chinese cuisine in the first article of this series, arguing:

Although Taiwanese cuisine traced its roots to Chinese cuisine in the very beginning, characteristics of the island had been added to Taiwanese cuisine and it was influenced by local customs, climate, and food resources. Therefore, Taiwanese cuisine has now become fully distinctive from Chinese cuisine.<sup>39</sup>

Wu explained that people can understand the customs and habits of a specific place directly from the dining tables of its inhabitants, because all nations or regions develop peculiar foodways suitable for their own environment. Therefore, in different regions, the same ingredients can be cooked in various ways with diverse condiments, and consequently might lead to contradictory flavors. At this point, Wu compared cuisine to politics: “As someone has suggested, the ways of cooking for chefs are like policy-making of political leaders. I cannot agree more to this comparison.”<sup>40</sup> In other words, the ways of cooking for chefs are as diverse and changing as policies made by political leaders. After establishing the connection between cuisine and politics, Wu further emphasized that Taiwanese cuisine had become completely embedded within the characteristics of Taiwan and was thus distinctive from Chinese cuisine. To clarify his points, Wu introduced what these “Taiwanese characteristics” referred to and illuminated how they were presented at Taiwanese banquets.

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<sup>39</sup> *TNSP*, 12/10/1927(3).

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

Wu first explained the composition of a complete Taiwanese banquet, which consisted of thirteen courses, including a snack in the middle of the banquet.<sup>41</sup> The sequence of dishes should follow the principle of “one dry dish served after one wet dish (i.e. soup or stew),” and the seventh course must be a snack, marking the middle of a banquet, indicating time for a break, during which guests could take a rest to smoke, explore the restaurant, or have a short nap. Sometimes, there were performances before the remaining six courses were served.<sup>42</sup> In the second half, guests continued to enjoy elaborate dishes and conversation until a snack was served again, which marked the end of the banquet. The snacks as the final dish were mostly sweet, including sweet soups and various cakes made of rice. In contrast, the “mid-banquet” snacks were salty in most cases, such as fried spring rolls, fried *shaomai*, and various dumplings, though sometimes sweet snacks were also served in the middle.<sup>43</sup>

Apart from the thirteen courses, a complete Taiwanese banquet menu included diverse side dishes, which had their own conventions.<sup>44</sup> Wu explained that there were usually four plates of flowers, four of nuts or dry fruits, and four of fruits, and all ingredients should be cut into proper size in order to fit the plate. Other items, such as peanuts, watermelon seeds, sweetened ginger, plum cakes, and olives were often served as side dishes at Taiwanese banquets. Some salty side dishes, such as ham, thousand-year egg, and sausage would also be served.<sup>45</sup> Even by today’s standards, the variety, amount, and conventions of these side dishes during the 1920s were surprisingly luxurious and delicate.

After explaining the structure of Taiwanese banquets, Wu attempted to introduce the representative Taiwanese cuisine, which was the main content of his series of articles. Wu classified Taiwanese cuisine into four categories, namely special cuisine (*teshu liaoli*), ordinary cuisine (*yiban liaoli*), seasonal cuisine (*dangji liaoli*), and marker cuisine (*jixi liaoli*), and explained them in sequence. “Marker cuisine” referred to the snacks marking the middle and end of a complete Taiwanese banquet; and “seasonal cuisine” referred to items served only in specific seasons.<sup>46</sup> Besides these two categories, most articles in this series focused on “special cuisine” and “ordinary cuisine.”

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<sup>41</sup> *TNSP*, 12/11/1927(3).

<sup>42</sup> *TNSP*, 11/6/1922(5); Shinju, 1903.

<sup>43</sup> *TNSP*, 12/12/1927(3).

<sup>44</sup> In Shinju (1902), these side dishes were called *shudie* in Mandarin, literally meaning small plates.

<sup>45</sup> *TNSP*, 11/6/1922(5); Shinju, 1903.

<sup>46</sup> What Wu listed in this category were mostly seafood items: frogs (paddy chicken), whelk, squid, and small abalone (*Haliotis diversicolor*).

“Special cuisine” referred to dishes made of precious or extraordinary high-priced items, including roast suckling pig, bird’s nest, shark fin, and white tree fungus. Most of these enjoyed a high reputation in Chinese dietary traditions. For example, the edible bird’s nest was a valuable commodity shipped from Southeast Asia to China as early as in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Bird’s nest was not only a costly delicacy that could boost the social status of consumers, but also viewed as a health supplement that can strengthen the human body (Simoons, 1991, pp. 429-430). Along with bird’s nest, shark fin was another “status-indicating” banquet food, which was enjoyed as haute cuisine in China since the Song Dynasty (960-1279 A.D.) (Chang, 1977, pp. 154-155, 373; Simoons, 1991, pp. 431-434). Owing to its limited domestic supply, China depended largely on import (Cheng, 1954, pp. 73-74). The superior quality and ample quantity of shark fin from Taiwan made it an important specialty particularly during the Japanese era (Sugiura Wasaku, 1916, pp. 72-73).

Wu classified dishes other than “seasonal,” “marker,” and “special” cuisines as “ordinary cuisine.” However, the term might be misleading because “ordinary cuisine” was a far cry from those homemade dishes served on dining tables of common families at that time. The author grouped these dishes by ingredients used and introduced them in the following order: chicken, duck, pigeon, vegetables, shrimp, crab, turtle, eel, abalone, and fish. Not all of these could be afforded by the general public, not even for the better-off city dwellers.<sup>47</sup>

For each ingredient, Wu introduced some dishes and provided their detailed recipes, yielding 74 recipes in total. As selective recipes of the best Taiwanese restaurant during the Japanese colonial era, Wu suggested that these recipes were representative Taiwanese cuisines. However, when looking at the cooking methods of these recipes, they were “fusion cuisine” in today’s term. On the one hand, many of them were adapted from famous dishes of various Chinese provinces, like the roasted duck, widely known as Peking (Beijing) duck; sticky rice with red crab (紅蟹飯), which was from Fujian Province; and sticky rice with chicken (糯米絨雞), a famous Guangdong dish. On the other hand, many dishes were cooked with light soy sauce, and “simmering in soy sauce and sugar” was a popular way of cooking in Japan. A more obvious example was the cold dish of “shrimp salad” (生菜蝦仁), which was seasoned by orange juice and vinegar and served with raw vegetables. Such dish was hardly seen in the category of Chinese cuisine and might have been influenced by Western cooking approach.

In other words, these Taiwanese dishes introduced by Wu were adopted from many famous Chinese regional cuisines, with modifications in cooking methods or seasonings to suit the taste of the Japanese, in particular those of the upper class who

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<sup>47</sup> Regarding food consumed by the majority of the Taiwanese population, see Sections 4.1 and 4.2 of this chapter.

were major consumers of Taiwanese cuisine. The processes of adoption (from Chinese cuisine) and adaptation (to Japanese taste) along with local Taiwanese conditions concerning food resources, such as the preferred use of shark fin and other seafood, created the “Taiwanese characteristics” of cuisine. The cuisine was made of precious ingredients and enjoyed by the upper circles of Taiwanese society. Such a newly forged Taiwanese cuisine was thus “haute cuisine” that implies a complex hierarchical divisions and socio-economic relationships. The development of haute cuisine requires well-off clientele who not only can have access to and afford high-value ingredients and recipes, but also distinguish the tastes and appearances of the dishes (Goody, 1982). Further, banquets are dependent on the frequent occurrence of occasions to hold them, establishing a set of conventions about the consumption of differentiated cuisine, and putting these conventions into practice.

Taiwanese cuisine as haute cuisine in colonial Taiwan could also be observed in another exclusive restaurant: *Penglai Ge* (1927-1955), which opened six years after *Jiangshan Lou*, but in contrast to the latter, survived the Second World War. While *Jiangshan Lou* was the most prestigious Taiwanese restaurant during the 1920s and 1930s, *Penglai Ge* gradually took the lead since the mid-1930s. Since *Penglai Ge* ran its business until the post-war period, its influence lasted for a long time through the group of cooks it cultivated. These cooks not only fanned out in the dining-out market and reproduced Taiwanese cuisine after the war, but also generated and addressed discourses on Taiwanese cuisine particularly after the 1990s.

*Penglai Ge* was born out of the intense competition among exclusive restaurants in Taipei. The building of *Penglai Ge* was initially constructed by the shareholders of *Donghuifang*, who invested in the fancy building in order to compete against *Jiangshan Lou*. However, this plan was aborted because of a conflict among the shareholders.<sup>48</sup> Thus, the owner of this building, Huang Dong-mao, reopened it as *Penglai Ge* and soon afterwards sold it to a merchant named Chen Tian-lai. Chen’s family ran the business until its closure in 1955.<sup>49</sup>

Opening in 1927 with an aim to compete with *Jiangshan Lou*, *Penglai Ge* resembled much *Jiangshan Lou* in terms of its market positioning and cuisine. In *Penglai Ge Menu* published in 1930 (Figure 1.4), the proprietor of *Penglai Ge* claimed that *Penglai Ge* was a Chinese restaurant serving Sichuan, Guangdong, Beijing, and Fujian cuisines. The author explained that although *Penglai Ge* initially served mainly Fujian cuisines, after the owner’s journey throughout China, the other

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<sup>48</sup> *TNSP*, 8/13/1925(4); *TNSP*, 1/22/1927(4).

<sup>49</sup> *Penglai Ge* was used by the Government-General as an office during the Second World War. Although it survived the war and was reopened on October 10, 1945, business ended finally on June 20, 1955. See *Lianhebao [United Daily News]* (abbreviation *UDN*), 6/19/1955(3); *UDN* 8/31/1956(3); *UDN* 10/25/1975(12).

three cuisines were added to the menu in order to enrich the variety and flavor. Such a claim was almost the same as that of *Jiangshan Lou*'s owner; that is, the restaurant was a Chinese one providing the best dishes from all over China. In the 45-page menu, around 1000 dishes were listed according to the main ingredients used and how they were cooked. Furthermore, the style of each cuisine, Sichuan, Guangdong, or Fujian, was also marked on the menu. However, in addition to these regional flavors, the menu actually included many other Chinese regional cuisines, such as Nanjing duck (南京肥鴨) and braised pork of *Dong-po* style (東坡肉).



**Figure 1.4 Penglai Ge Menu (1930)**

Source: This menu was kept by the retired chef Huang De-xing (1936- ). Huang had worked in *Penglai Ge* as an apprentice in the early 1950s.

Although both *Jiangshan Lou* and *Penglai Ge* were initially opened as Chinese restaurants providing various Chinese regional cuisines, they eventually identified themselves as “Taiwanese restaurants,” with the transformation detailed in two

articles on “Taiwanese cuisine” published in 1939, which were written by the proprietors of these two top restaurants.<sup>50</sup>

The two articles emphasized the same theme that Taiwanese cuisine had been a distinctive category and was different from Chinese cuisine. The proprietor of *Jiangshan Lou*, Wu Xi-shui, son of Wu Jiang-shan, classified Chinese cuisine into four sub-categories: Sichuan, Beijing, Guangdong, and Fujian cuisine, which was in concert with the classification in *Penglai Ge Menu*. Wu argued that although Taiwanese cuisine used ingredients from all the four categories, these ingredients had been changed and adapted to suit the local taste of Taiwan, thus making Taiwanese cuisine distinct from Chinese cuisine. Echoing this tone, the proprietor of *Penglai Ge*, Chen Ben-tien, also claimed that although it might not be wrong to regard Taiwanese cuisine as Chinese cuisine, he would rather consider Taiwanese cuisine as superior to Chinese cuisine and closer to the taste of the locals.

From the self-assertion of Chinese restaurant to the claim that Taiwanese cuisine was superior, the two elite restaurants witnessed a transformation from Chinese restaurants to Taiwanese restaurants. Although their proprietors set out to establish Chinese restaurants, they were eventually referred to and esteemed as Taiwanese restaurants by the official newspaper *Taiwan nichinichi shinpô*, which had also published articles of *Jiangshan Lou*’s owner on introduction to Taiwanese cuisine. Through these articles, *Jiangshan Lou* became more well-known and Taiwanese cuisine was further established as a culinary category. Although the customers of such Taiwanese restaurants were only limited to a number of officials, merchants, and intellectuals, the knowledge and recognition of the new Taiwanese cuisine gradually trickled down from the top of the social ladder through the dissemination of such articles in the print media.

This section has shown how Taiwanese cuisine was introduced to and consumed by the upper class during the colonial era. It was defined and presented as haute cuisine with its specific dining conventions and banquet etiquettes. However, how different was it from the food consumed by ordinary Taiwanese at that time? To what extent can “Taiwanese cuisine” featured in the official newspapers reflect the dining tables of most Taiwanese families in real life? To understand the distance between cultural presentations of Taiwanese cuisine and dietary life of the general population, the following section focuses on food consumed by ordinary people at their dining tables.

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<sup>50</sup> Wu Xi-shui, “Hagaki zuihitsu Taiwan ryôri [Notes on Taiwanese cuisine],” *TNSP*, 3/29/1939(3); Chen Ben-tien, “Hagaki zuihitsu Taiwan ryôri [Notes on Taiwanese cuisine],” *TNSP*, 7/6/1939(6).

## 4. NON-PRESENTED DISHES: “FOOD OF TAIWANESE”

### 4.1 Daily food consumption of Taiwanese

Dining out in restaurants was hardly affordable for the general population during the Japanese colonial era. In 1930, an ordinary dish at *Penglai Ge* cost about 1.8 yen, and the price of its cheapest banquet was 18 yen, while the most expensive one could be 100 yen. At that time, the monthly salary of town or village secretaries (*kaishô shoki*) at the most junior level was only 20 yen. Even for high-ranking officials, such as prefectural secretaries (*shû shoki*), their salary ranged between 45 and 95 yen.<sup>51</sup> Therefore, an ordinary banquet at *Penglai Ge* did cost almost a month’s salary of a town secretary, or about one-third that of a middle bureaucrat such as prefectural secretary. Put it in another way, the salary of a town secretary was only equivalent to eleven dishes of *Penglai Ge*. This reveals that dining in restaurants was a huge expense for average families, and banquet cuisine could hardly be afforded by the general Taiwanese, though these cuisines were identified as “Taiwanese cuisine.”

Aware of the difference between “Taiwanese cuisine” served at restaurants and what Taiwanese people really ate in their daily life, Japanese scholars researching on Taiwanese folk customs made a distinction in terminology between these two notions. Cuisines served at restaurants and banquets were called *Taiwan ryôri* in Japanese or *Taiwan liaoli* in Mandarin, while food eaten by the general population was named just “food” or “food of Taiwanese” (*Taiwanjin no shokubutsu* in Japanese or *Taiwanren de shiwu* in Mandarin) (Kajiwara Michiyoshi, 1989 [1941], pp. 101-122; Kataoka Iwao, 1981 [1921], pp. 101-111; Tôhō Takayoshi, 1997 [1942], pp. 18-38). Through analyzing the meal structure, food ingredients, and tastes of “food of Taiwanese,” its distinction from “Taiwanese cuisine” featured at banquets and restaurants can be further understood.

#### Meal structure and ingredients: *fan* and *cai*

An everyday Taiwanese meal comprises mainly *fan* and *cai*, which is common in most Chinese societies (Chang, 1977, pp. 7-8). *Fan*, literally meaning boiled rice, refers to the grains or other staple food providing most of the calories an individual needs. Since *fan* constitutes the main part of a meal, the term *fan* can also mean “a meal.” In contrast, *cai* literally means vegetables, but in its broader sense it refers to the dishes in a meal other than the staple food, which can be vegetables and meat. During the colonial period, a Taiwanese family generally had three meals on a day,

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<sup>51</sup> *Taiwan sôtokuhu tôkeisho [Taiwan Government-General Statistics Books]*, 1915, no. 34, pp. 691-701.



and each meal comprised both *fan* and *cai*. Such *fan-cai* structure of an ordinary meal was different from that of a Taiwanese banquet in two aspects. First, a banquet put great emphasis on *cai* but not on *fan*, as seen in Wu's introduction to Taiwanese cuisine, which was all about *cai* with nothing said on any staple food. Second, *fan* and *cai* were presented on dining tables together in daily meals, but banquet cuisines were presented in a specific sequence according to the convention Wu mentioned in his articles. These two points highlight the fact that Taiwanese cuisine in restaurants and banquets was out of the ordinary and in sharp contrast to the daily meals of ordinary Taiwanese, which were termed "food of Taiwanese." *Fan* was the staple food people needed in daily life, but *cai* was the center of presentation on dining occasions other than the usual. In other words, *cai* played a supplementary or supporting role in an ordinary meal, but was the essence of "Taiwanese cuisine" highlighted and presented at feasts, exhibitions, and banquets.

For the Taiwanese commoners, both *fan* and *cai* consumed were mainly produced in the neighborhood of the families during the colonial era. About 60% of the population was engaged in agriculture at that time (see Table 1.4), and most inhabitants of rural villages led a self-sufficient life (Kataoka Iwao, 1981 [1921], pp. 101-111; Tôhō Takayoshi, 1997 [1942], pp. 18-23). However, although *fan* literally means boiled rice and rice was normally considered as the favorite staple food in southern China, rice was not the only staple consumed. Out of economic necessity, farmers could only keep limited amount of rice for domestic cooking, because spare quantities were to be sold for other living expenses. Accordingly, rice was often cooked with other starch such as sweet potato and grains such as beans (Zeng, 2006a; Ikeda Toshio, 1944; Kataoka Iwao, 1981 [1921]; Tôhō Takayoshi, 1997 [1942]).<sup>52</sup> Among staple foods besides rice, dried sweet potato was the most commonly consumed item.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> The case of Japan is quite similar. Cwitreka pointed out that the rice produced was not sufficient to sustain the entire population. Thus, until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, except for the elite classes, most urban inhabitants and the majority of peasant households, even in certain areas with abundant rice production, relied on other grains as alternative sources of their staple food. See Cwitreka, 2006, pp. 66-67.

<sup>53</sup> It had been common to take sweet potato as a substitution of rice by the Han Chinese in Taiwan since the Qing Dynasty. Zeng explained that the Han immigrants tended to export sugar, rice, and tea for economic benefits and ate food of less economic value in their daily life. See Zeng, 2006a, pp. 185-186.

**Table 1.4 Agricultural population in Taiwan**

Year	Agricultural population	Percentage %
1905	1,961,556	64.19
1910	2,086,955	65.49
1915	NA	NA
1920	NA	NA
1925	2,339,647	59.61
1930	2,534,404	57.59
1935	2,790,331	55.91
1940	2,984,258	52.51

Source: Taiwansheng wushiynianlai tongji tiyao [Summary Statistics of Taiwan Province of 51 Years (1895-1945)], (Taipei: Taiwansheng xingzheng zhanghuan gongshu tongjishi, 1946), pp. 76, 513.

Although originated from South America, sweet potato was widely grown in Taiwan because it could be planted easily and produced large yield. Thus, for peasant households, it was common to grow or buy sweet potato as the supplement of rice. Sweet potato could be cooked with rice or cut into strips to be dried under the sun for later consumption. Dried sweet potato was more popular because it could be preserved for a longer time. For example, in the early 1900s, about 70% of the total annual production of sweet potato in Tainan County was dried as preserved food (Zeng, 2006a, p. 65).

Not only inhabitants in rural regions but also some of the upper-class city dwellers consumed sweet potato as their staple food; but the proportion of dried sweet potato and rice consumed varied with the financial status and occupation. According to the government survey on the staple food consumed in Tainan in 1902, for peasants and laborers, the ratio was eight (dried sweet potato) to two (rice); among the middle class, it was fifty-fifty; and for the upper class, four to six.<sup>54</sup> A later survey conducted throughout Taiwan (Table 1.5) showed a similar trend although the proportion of rice had risen slightly, the proportion of population “eating rice without sweet potato” was still fewer than 10%. The only exception was in Taipei, where the proportion of rice-eaters was 25% while that of sweet potato-eaters was 21%, revealing the concentration of the better-off upper class in Taipei.

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<sup>54</sup> *Daiichiji Taiwan kinyû jikô sankôsho huroku: Taiwan kinyû jijô shisatsu hukumêsho* [Appendix of the First Taiwan Financial Reference: Inspection Report of Taiwan Financial Circumstances], 1902, pp. 101-102, cited from Zeng, 2006a, p. 66.

**Table 1.5 Staple food of farmer households (1922)**

Region	Rice as staple food	Rice as staple food with sweet potato added	Sweet potato as staple food with rice added	Total (%)
Taipei	25	54	21	100
Xinzhu	5	62	33	100
Taizhong	8	64	28	100
Tainan	3	26	71	100
Kaohsiung	6	33	61	100

Source: *Taiwan nôka shokuryô shôhi chôsa* [The Survey of Staple Food in Taiwanese Peasant Household], (Taipei: Taiwan sôtokuhu shokusanakyoku, 1922)

While sweet potato and rice played the main role of *fan*, the common items of *cai* on family tables were soybean products and vegetables planted by each family, and many of the ingredients were salted, pickled, or fermented (Ikeda Toshio, 1944, pp. 31-44; Kataoka Iwao, 1981 [1921], pp. 103-108; Tôhō Takayoshi, 1997 [1942], p. 27). There were complicated methods for fermenting plants.<sup>55</sup> Similar to drying sweet potato for later consumption, farmers turned food into salted, pickled, or fermented forms to preserve food for future use.

In addition to vegetables, meat and fish were also eaten in most rural families, but only on important occasions such as festivals, weddings, and other celebrations. Although most peasants kept pigs and poultry in farmhouses, these animals were reared for sale, rather than their own consumption. Only in families of better financial condition, meat would be served at ordinary meals but only in small quantity along with salted eggs, dried meat, and sausages (Cao, 1958; Wang, 1990 [1943]). In general, meat was limited in its availability and was thus more expensive than vegetables.

As for fresh seafood, it was very rarely seen on dining tables except for those living along the sea. Although Taiwan is an island, it does not mean that seafood is readily available all the time. In the early years of the Japanese era, fishery production was limited due to the lack of fishing and refrigeration equipment and techniques.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>55</sup> For the varieties of pickled and fermented vegetables, see Kawahara Zuigen (Wang Rei-cheng), 1990 [1943].

<sup>56</sup> *TNSP*, 4/29/1906(2); *TNSP*, 5/2/1906(4).

Therefore, Taiwan relied much on imported seafood from Japan and China.<sup>57</sup> For example, official statistics of 1907 showed that the fishery production in Taiwan was only 130,000 *jin* (78,000 kilogram),<sup>58</sup> with 6,178,827 *jin* (3,707,396 kilogram) imported from Japan in the same year.<sup>59</sup> Even in the later period of the colonial era when Taiwan's fishery industry and production had made great advances, the consumption of fresh seafood was still restricted to the seashore regions or where the fish breeding industry was located. For most households living in northern and central Taiwan, the seafood on dining tables was salted fish, dried fish, and dried squid (Zeng, 2006a, pp. 112-113). In sum, sweet potato, rice and pickled vegetables made up the main foods of most people in Taiwan, while meat and seafood were eaten only on special occasions. The scarcity of seafood for the general population showed a far cry from the "Taiwanese cuisine" presented at Japanese banquets, exhibitions, and exclusive restaurants.

### **Making of "taste": condiments and cooking methods**

Besides food ingredients, the characteristics of dishes were also shaped by cooking methods and condiments used, which gave dishes the "taste" that could be cherished and passed down from generation to generation. For cooking methods, boiling, stewing, and stir-frying were the ways most frequently used in Taiwanese families. However, because cooking oil was expensive, stir-frying was not such a common practice as it is today. Vegetables were often boiled and eaten with salt or soy sauce. To save energy and food resources, stewing was popular because stews could be heated repeatedly and eaten over a longer time span. In contrast, deep-frying was rarely used because too much cooking oil was required; but such scarcity also made deep-frying dishes important in Taiwanese feasts, as a show of hospitality and generosity (Kajiwara Michiyoshi, 1989 [1941], pp. 109-111; Kokubu Naoichi, 1991, pp. 75-83; Tōhō Takayoshi, 1997 [1942], pp. 24-27).

These cooking methods and simple condiments made "Taiwanese food" taste generally light and plain, with the original taste of food ingredients more obvious. A Japanese anthropologist once commented, "There were no 'condiments' in Taiwan. They used no more than oil and salt when cooking." (Kajiwara Michiyoshi, 1989 [1941], p. 111). However, it did not mean that the general population in Taiwan did not eat oily and heavily-flavored dishes; on the contrary, some salty and fatty dishes were also eaten, but only on important occasions. These occasions called *bando* (辦

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<sup>57</sup> *TNSP*, 5/4/1906(3).

<sup>58</sup> *Jin* is the unit of weight commonly used in Taiwan, one *Jin* equals 600 gram.

<sup>59</sup> *TNSP*, 4/8/1909(3).

桌) will be discussed in the next section, which can explain why these festival dishes are regarded as symbolic Taiwanese dishes nowadays.

## 4.2 *Bando*: outdoor feasts

Although most Taiwanese people cooked and ate at home, with little exposure to the exquisite dining at “Taiwanese restaurants” like the *Jiangshan Lou*, they did have outdoor feasts called *bando*, which might cost all the savings of a family. Nowadays, *bando* is viewed as a folk culture, and those dishes served at *bando* are often regarded as the “authentic Taiwanese cuisine.”

*Bando* is the Hokkien<sup>60</sup> pronunciation of *banzhou*, which literally means “managing the tables,” and refers to “outdoor feasts” held on important occasions such as weddings, religious feasts, house warming, birthdays of the elderly (more than 60 years old), and the first-month birthday of newborns. The size of the banquet was measured by the number of tables, which might be under 10 or more than 30, depending on the occasion, financial conditions, and social networks of the host families.<sup>61</sup>

*Bando* in Taiwan started in the Qing Dynasty, and the characteristics of the immigration society played a crucial role in shaping *bando* as an important social activity in Taiwan. In the first place, when some Han Chinese migrated to Taiwan from southern coastal China, there was a strong need for them to build a new social network in their new home for survival, and feasting was an easy way to achieve such purpose. Through treating meals at feasts, a host could maintain or create connections with kin, countrymen, and newcomers, seeking collaboration and establishing assistance systems. Secondly, for the immigrants in Taiwan, it was a new society which offered more possibilities than Mainland China to climb up the social ladder, and holding feasts could be a chance for showing generosity in order to enhance social status (Zeng, 2006b). In other words, *bando* had been a means to compete for fame and build reputation since the late Qing, and such custom persisted during the Japanese era (Lin, 1998).

In rural societies, *bando* was regarded as a great local event because not only the host family but all the neighbors were a part of it. When the host decided to have a banquet, a long preparation lasting almost half a year began. Since there were no professional chefs in rural areas at that time, the host family had to invite talented

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<sup>60</sup> Hokkien is a language commonly used in Taiwan and the southern Fujian Province of China, which was the hometown of most Han immigrants to Taiwan during the Qing Dynasty. The language is also known as *Minnan* or Southern Fukienese. See also Chapter Three.

<sup>61</sup> Although *bando* could also be seen in urban areas, it was much more popular in rural areas while urban families often had banquets in private houses or restaurants. On the origin and discussion of *bando*, see Zeng, 2006b.

neighbors to shoulder the task of cooking. An important characteristic of *bando* was that the cuisines served were cooked outdoors rather than in kitchens. Cooks responsible for *bando* had to build stoves under large tents as makeshift kitchens. Dining tables were also set up in open squares or along the street. These tables and chairs, cooking utensils and tableware were all borrowed from neighbors, who also helped in preparing the banquet such as cleaning and cutting foodstuffs, and even serving the dishes. Therefore, *bando* was essentially a communal event in the neighborhood and the success of *bando* relied on a well-organized neighbor-network or a strong social bond of support.<sup>62</sup>

For the host, the greatest challenge of *bando* was money. Such a feast would cost the family their “savings of the entire year”<sup>63</sup> and many peasants had to go into debts for years to afford it. Even so, the peasants would rather borrow for *bando* because it was an important way of presenting hospitality and building social prestige, and the most important principle of *bando* was to make guests feel satisfied.<sup>64</sup> An unsatisfying banquet would mean a loss of face and friendship, which would result in difficulties in the communal life of host families.

The principle of hospitality was also reflected in the food of *bando*. Aiming to fill and satisfy all guests’ stomachs, the dishes of outdoor feasts were characterized by being oily, meaty, and of large portion. Great quantities of meat were particularly indispensable. For example, stewed fatty pork was one of the representative dishes of *bando*, and it is also a symbolic feature of “Taiwanese cuisine” nowadays particularly in nostalgic restaurants.

Another feature of *bando* was “packing food home” (*dabao*), which is still common in Taiwanese banquets today. Because many guests of the host family came from places so far away that they had to spend half a day to go home, the host were expected to prepare sufficient food to be packed for guests as supplies on their way home.<sup>65</sup> To fit such needs, those dishes in the second half of *bando* are usually dry food items such as deep-fried squid balls (炸花枝丸) and deep-fried taro (炸芋頭),<sup>66</sup> which are easy to pack and carry when traveling.

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<sup>62</sup> Interviews with chefs: A-zhong (1/2/2007, Taipei), A-qin (1/3/2007, Taipei), Mr. Xue (4/24/2008, Kaohsiung), Zeng, 2006b. I use shortened names when referring to most of my informants in the thesis to maintain their anonymity in accordance with these informants’ wishes. Information of their background is provided in the Appendix.

<sup>63</sup> The original text is “yifan zhongsui zhixu” (一飯終歲之蓄), see: *Zhuluo xianzhi [Gazetteer of Jiayi County]*, 1962 [1717], p. 138.

<sup>64</sup> Interview: chef A-zhong, A-jia (11/22/2006, Yilan), Mr. Lang (1/16/2008, Taipei).

<sup>65</sup> Interview: chef A-qin, Mr. Xue, A-jia.

<sup>66</sup> Interview: chef A-zhong.



**Figures 1.5 & 1.6 *Bando* nowadays**

Source: Author, taken in Jiayi County (2009)

The importance of *bando* as a feature of “Taiwanese cuisine” lies in its particularity as well as generality. On the one hand, it was a special feast out of the ordinary. On such occasions, the participants could enjoy food far superior to daily meals, such as meat and seafood. The food served at *bando* was not cooked in complicated ways, but there were plenty of meat at the feast, which was usually more than sufficient. Deep-fried meat balls (炸肉丸), goose meat (鵝肉), and braised pork (爌肉) were some typical items served at *bando*, characterized by oily cooking and easy for packing as take-away.

On the other hand, *bando* was an important shared experience and memory of most Taiwanese living in rural regions, and this is where the “generality” originated. The success of *bando* depended much on the cooperation of neighbors and other

social networks of the host. Sort of a labor exchange, *bando* was a community event, through which the connections within a village were strengthened. Furthermore, because *bando* was held during religious feasts, festivals, and ritual celebrations, almost all Taiwanese had the chance to participate in such activities. It thus became an important occasion for communal remembrance. In short, the “particularity” of *bando* made it a significant experience, and the “generality” of this significant experience made it an important collective memory of all Taiwanese people.

## **5. “TAIWANESE CUISINE” DURING JAPANESE COLONIAL ERA: PRESENTATION OF AN ELITE CULTURE**

### **“Taiwanese cuisine”: three layers of meaning**

This chapter has examined the origin of the notion of “Taiwanese cuisine,” investigating how it was named, shaped, and presented as a distinctive culinary category. To sum up, “Taiwanese cuisine” has multiple layers of meaning, and each layer of meaning stems from different social classes and dining occasions. The first layer of meaning was haute cuisine, referring to elaborate dishes made with costly ingredients and specific cooking methods. The contents of haute cuisine were defined by upper class and elites, including cultural mediators and consumers of the highest circles. In short, “Taiwanese cuisine” in this layer of meaning was an “elite food,” which was a well-defined idea, indicating not only refined dishes, but also a set of dining etiquettes, and a group of gentries who could afford and appreciate it. Such “Taiwanese cuisine” was to be enjoyed in specific venues together with intellectual activities, and thus became a symbol of social status and distinction.

The second layer of meaning of “Taiwanese cuisine” was “food of Taiwanese,” referring to the ordinary food consumption of the general population. The main items included rice, sweet potato, pickled and fermented food, while meat and seafood were rarities, which was in sharp contrast to the elite food enjoyed by the upper circles. For everyday meals of commoners, the food was acquired from their own fields or neighborhoods, and there were obvious regional differences in ordinary dishes served on family dining tables.

The third layer of meaning was *bando*, the banquet food of Taiwanese commoners. Its difference from the second layer of meaning lies in the occasion of dining. Compared with the ordinary food of family meals, banquet dishes included meat, seafood, and deep-fried dishes, which were precious items particularly for most peasant households, thus making the dining experience distinct from daily meals.



## Cultural presentation of “Taiwanese cuisine”

However, among these three layers of meaning, only the first layer was presented and identified as “Taiwanese cuisine” during the Japanese colonial era. The Japanese phrase *Taiwan ryôri* was the first term referring to the notion of “Taiwanese cuisine,” which was used much earlier than the Mandarin word *Taiwan cai*, which also refers to “Taiwanese cuisine.” At first, *Taiwan ryôri* was used by the Japanese to refer to the food of their new colony, differentiating it from Japanese and Chinese cuisine. It was featured at official banquets, exhibitions, and royal banquets as “a taste of the new territory of Japan.” The appreciation of the aristocrats contributed to making “Taiwanese cuisine” haute cuisine and to promoting its popularity among the social elite, including both Japanese and Taiwanese.

In other words, “Taiwanese cuisine” referred to “food of the colony” served at banquets, and “fine dishes enjoyed by the upper class” in restaurants. In these two senses, “Taiwanese cuisine” was a cultural presentation on table, which included a sophisticated selection of menu and a set of dining etiquettes. In the first sense, “Taiwanese cuisine” was an exotic cuisine, which was meant to distinguish a new colony by its distinctive taste. In the second sense, these dishes were selected to show the fortune, artistic cultivation, and generosity of the upper-class consumers. The way to demonstrate the appreciation of haute cuisine and familiarity of dining manners thus became not only a convention but also knowledge which was worth learning. In this respect, the owners of restaurants played the role of cultural mediators, disseminating the methods of enjoying “Taiwanese cuisine,” and further establishing it as a distinctive category.

In both senses, such a presented “Taiwanese cuisine” was not rooted in traditional culinary customs. Practically, this presented “Taiwanese cuisine” as a distinctive taste was the selection from various Chinese haute cuisines but modified using local food resources on the one hand, and adapted to suit the tastes and preferences of Japanese and Taiwanese elites on the other. “Taiwanese cuisine” emerged eventually through discursive articulation and repeated exposure at banquets of the upper class.

While the “Taiwanese cuisine” featured at exhibitions and exclusive restaurants was meant to be a demonstration of haute culture, the regional difference of food became blurred and oblivious. The selection of Taiwanese cuisine was made according to the value of food ingredients, and their choice ranges were much wider than that of common food items consumed by peasant households. For example, according to a travel journal of Jiang Kang-hu in 1935,<sup>67</sup> there was no obvious

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<sup>67</sup> Jiang Kang-hu (1883-1954) established the Socialist Party of China in 1911. He visited Taiwan in 1934 in the capacity of a professor of Chinese studies from McGill University of

difference among the banquets the author had in different cities of Taizhong, Tainan, and Kaohsiung (Jiang, 1935, pp. 39-40). Furthermore, neither the introduction given by the Japanese nor the detailed explanation of Wu Jiang-shan had mentioned regional difference of Taiwanese cuisine. Although regional difference of food did exist in Taiwan due to the difference in geography and agricultural production (Zeng, 2006a), such a regional difference in food could only be seen in “food of Taiwanese.” In contrast, the elite cuisines of different regions shared great similarity within the established category of “Taiwanese cuisine.”

However, why did “Taiwanese cuisine” as elite food disappear after the colonial era? What changes had taken place on the culinary scene of Taiwan? These issues will be further explored in the next chapter.

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Canada.

## Chapter Two

### Transplantation and Hybridity:

#### Culinary Remapping by the State and Migration after 1945

Although “Taiwanese cuisine” emerged as elite food and haute cuisine during the Japanese colonial era, its status and significance faced drastic changes during the post-war period. Since the 1970s, the term *Taiwan cai* and its shortened word *Taichai* were widely employed in popular media discourse and official food guides to indicate Taiwanese dishes and describe these dishes as unsophisticated, simple, and plain, showing an obvious difference from its previous image of elite food.<sup>1</sup>

This change did not happen by chance, nor was it an isolated incident. It was part of the culinary remapping taking place alongside the political and social transformation after the end of the colonial era. With the surrender of Japan at the end of the Second World War and the defeat of the Nationalist Party by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the Nationalists lost control over Mainland China and retreated to Taiwan in 1949. The Nationalist government brought over one million<sup>2</sup> soldiers and civilians to the island. For most of them, the relocation to Taiwan was initially nothing more than a temporary retreat. However, what was supposed to be a transient stay turned out to be an accidental “migration” because most people were not able to return to their hometown in Mainland China until the late 1980s.

Such a resettlement in Taiwan was a social reorganization that involved the transplantation of the Nationalist government and a large Chinese population from the Mainland to Taiwan. The new political regime and migrants are the two major forces behind the culinary remapping, which includes the substantial transformation of restaurants as well as discursive change in cookbooks and culinary literature. While the new political regime established by the Nationalist government launched

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<sup>1</sup> Before the 1990s, *Taichai* was widely considered as “difficult to be presented as haute cuisine” in media and official discourses. See, for example, Xiao, 1985, pp. 101-130; Song Mei-dong, “Ruhe kaishe zhongcangting [How to establish a Chinese restaurant],” *UDN*, 12/11/1978(11).

<sup>2</sup> It is difficult to know the exact number of immigrants from the Mainland to Taiwan after the Second World War; previous estimations ranged from 900,000 to 2,000,000. Corcuff’s research on the Mainlanders pointed out that a relatively trustworthy estimation is that a little over one million Mainlanders were present in Taiwan in 1956, with the total population in Taiwan increasing by 1.87 million from 1946 to 1951. See Corcuff, 2002, p. 164. Accordingly, the Mainlanders occupied around 14% of the total population of Taiwan during the 1950s. A similar estimation of the population percentage of Mainlanders can be found in Rudolph, 2004, p. 90; Wang, 2003, pp. 75-76. Huang’s research shows that the percentage of Mainlanders in 1990 was 12.74%. See Huang, 1993, pp. 21-26.

new regulations to change the way restaurants ran their business, the large number of migrants brought various Chinese regional foods into restaurants, markets, and family homes. Focusing on the remapping process and cultural hybridization that occurred during the process, this chapter will consider how the state and migrants brought about the remapping in daily life, reshaping the culinary scene and creating new notions of “Taiwanese cuisine.”

### **State, migration, and food**

The relationship between state and food is multi-faceted and can therefore be studied from various perspectives. Concerning the production and distribution of food, significant attention has been paid to a range of issues such as food safety, agricultural policies, food industries, and social inequality (Mintz & Bois, 2002; Murcott, 1998; Nestle, 2002). Concerning food consumption, previous research has shown that the change in eating habits is related not only to nutrition or personal taste, but also to the agricultural and economic policies created by the state (Beardsworth & Keil, 1997; Belasco & Scranton, 2002; Lien & Nerlich, 2004). In the case of Taiwan, Liu (2005) examined the official promotion of wheat consumption in Taiwan during the 1950s and 1960s, revealing that the dominant economic and political power of the US government was able to change the eating habits of Taiwanese people through financial support, rural education, media propaganda, and knowledge of nutrition.

Migration is another important factor that has the potential to fundamentally change or shape culinary scenes. For migrants and people in exile, food serves not only as a boundary marker, which is closely related to identity-creation (Ben-Ze’ev, 2004; Connerton, 1989; Cwiertka & Walraven, 2001; Kershen, 2002; Lupton, 1994; Lupton, 1996), but also as a way of preserving and recalling the memories of childhood and the homeland (Bahloul, 1996; Lupton, 1996; Sutton, 2001). It is a widely accepted argument that food is crucial in the creation and maintenance of communities (Appadurai, 1988; Mintz, 2003; Murcott, 1996; Pilcher, 1998). Through preservation of and participation in traditional customs and rituals of consumption, migrants can preserve ties to their homeland. Therefore, researchers tend to interpret such preservation of the traditional foodways and dietary habits of migrants in host countries as the representation of identity, particularly when these migrants are ethnic minority groups and positioned on the periphery of the host society (Augustin-Jean, 2002; Pang, 2003; Tate, 2003).

However, the forced migration to Taiwan after the Second World War is a different story. Although representing a minority group of the population after their settlement in Taiwan, the Mainlanders not merely brought diverse Chinese regional

cuisines from their hometowns but even played a dominant role in the process of culinary remapping. While aforementioned studies on food culture underline how food serves as a way of marking and consolidating a marginalized group far from their homelands, what was at stake in the culinary remapping of post-war Taiwan is how the cuisine of a diasporic group was elevated to the status of haute cuisine and how culinary hybridization took place.

I use the terms “hybridization” and “hybridity” more as “a social reality with historical specificity” than as a theoretical concept and political stance;<sup>3</sup> however, its theoretical discussion will help improve the understanding of social reality. The term “hybridity” here refers to the interaction and combination of several cultural forces taking place during a given historical period. The combination is not arbitrary because a hierarchy exists among these cultural forces. In postcolonial studies, “hybridity” is frequently employed to refer to a binary relationship involving two opposite and unequal forces.<sup>4</sup> Hybridity is “the moment in which the discourse of colonial authority loses its univocal grip on meaning” (Young, 1995, p. 22) and can partially shift the balance of power. Considering the theoretical significance of “hybridity” in this chapter, I will discuss the hierarchy in the process of hybridization, examining how hierarchical difference influences cultural hybridity in Taiwan.

Concretely, focusing on the state and migrants, this chapter will examine the actions of the state on a macro level and the practices of the migrants on a micro level, both of which contributed to the culinary remapping in Taiwan. On a macro level, I will explore how the government controlled food resources and the restaurant business through the creation of policies and regulations, which had a profound influence on both dining-out markets and culinary discourse about Taiwanese cuisine. On a micro level, I will examine how the migrants brought various Chinese regional dishes and eating habits to the island, powerfully permeating their dietary culture into Taiwan.

## **1. CONTROL BY THE STATE: FROM “TAIWANESE RESTAURANT” TO “PUBLIC CANTEEN”**

### **1.1 Retreat of the Nationalist government**

Japan formally ceded control of Taiwan to the Nationalist government on October 25, 1945, two months after surrendering. The Taiwan Provincial Administrative Executive Office (*Taiwansheng xingzheng zhangguan gongshu*) was established in

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<sup>3</sup> This distinction is adopted from Prabhu, 2007.

<sup>4</sup> For the genealogy of “hybridity,” see for example, Young, 1995, pp. 1-29.

August 1945 as the highest administrative authority in Taiwan, with Chen Yi, the former Governor of Fujian Province, appointed the administrator with direct control. Under the new political system, the participation of local citizens and other government ministries was undermined, thus centralizing all political power in the hands of the highest administrator, Chen Yi (Copper, 2003, p. 43; Phillips, 2003, pp. 53-54, 66). The provincial administration confiscated all private property of the Japanese, placing colonial-era enterprises under its authority and establishing monopoly businesses.<sup>5</sup> Liu (1992), whose research focusing on the economy during the early years of post-war Taiwan shows that the profits generated by state-owned enterprises during this period were invested in the civil war on the Mainland. In addition, various food resources were also commandeered for military use (Copper, 2003, p. 44). As a result, frugality became an overriding theme in domestic policies, and food regulation was one of those policies that had the most direct and immediate impact on the life of civilians.

The Nationalist government enacted a series of regulations on food retrenchment between 1946 and 1950, including “Regulations Promoting Frugality” (*Tuixing jieyue yundong shishi banfa*) in 1946, “Regulations Retrenching Pork Consumption” (*Jieyue zhurou xiaofei banfa*),<sup>6</sup> “Regulations Retrenching Staple Food Consumption” (*Jieyue liangshi xiaofei banfa*) and “Regulations Retrenching Banquet Consumption” (*Yanxi jieyue xiaofei shishi banfa*) in 1947, and “Regulations Retrenching Rice Consumption” (*Shimi xiaofei jieyue banfa*) in 1950. Among them, the “Regulations Promoting Frugality,” promulgated on May 11, 1946 laid down the guidelines of the food retrenchment policy,<sup>7</sup> including the price and number of dishes on “set menus” (*kecan*). Very clear rules with minute details were set, such as for one person only allowed one dish and one soup; for two to three persons, two dishes and one soup; for four to five persons, three dishes and one soup, and so on. Only when there were more than ten diners could six dishes be served. In addition to the number of dishes, price ceilings were also specified. For example, a Chinese banquet should be less than TW\$30,000 per table,<sup>8</sup> with each set menu at a Western banquet priced at less than TW\$2,000.

<sup>5</sup> On the official decrees regarding the disposition of Japanese enterprises, see He, 1990; on the expansion of state-owned enterprises during the post-war period, see Liu, 1992; Liu, 1996; Wakabayashi Masahiro, 1994, pp. 64-68.

<sup>6</sup> The regulations were enacted in September 1947 but soon abolished in March 1948.

<sup>7</sup> It was comprised of four main parts: (1) increase in the productivity of material resources, (2) institutional frugality, (3) individual frugality, and (4) frugality in social life and entertainment. See *Bulletin of Taiwan Provincial Administrative Executive Office* (*Taiwansheng xingzheng zhangguan gongshu gongbao*), Summer, No. 41 (1946), pp. 654-657.

<sup>8</sup> The currency in this regulation refers to the Old Taiwan Dollar (TW\$) which was issued on May 1946. The New Taiwan Dollar (NT\$) used nowadays was issued on June 15 1949 at the

The above restrictions on restaurant consumption provide an obvious contrast to the proliferation and dainty fashion of restaurants in Taiwan during the 1920s and 1930s. With the demand to lead a frugal life, dining-out was considered a luxury to be avoided. However, the fact that economic conditions kept worsening also made dining-out more difficult. The growing conflict between the Nationalists and Communists on the Mainland created economic chaos that began to influence the Taiwanese economy. Inflation caused a steep rise in prices and there was also an increasing shortage of food (Liu, 1992, pp. 35-57; Liu, 1996, pp. 196-198; Weng, 1998, pp. 170-173).

There were many causes that resulted in the food shortage. Agricultural productivity had sharply decreased to a large extent in late 1945 because of the inadequate supply of fertilizers, with the shortage further aggravated by a large influx of immigrants and hundreds of thousands of Taiwanese repatriated from China, Japan, and Southeast Asia (Phillips, 2003, p. 65). Furthermore, a great quantity of rice, sugar, and salt was transported to Mainland China at a low price by the National Resources Commission of the Nationalist government in an attempt to support the Nationalist armies (Weng, 1998, pp. 170-171). In February 1947, the price of rice was sixty times that of 1945 and the highest throughout China at that time (Chen, 1992, p. 63).

## 1.2 “Patriotic” public canteens: new restaurant regulations

In this context, the new Provincial Government of Taiwan established in April 1947<sup>9</sup> issued “Regulations Retrenching Banquet Consumption” in September 1947, prohibiting the establishment of new restaurants other than “budget canteens” (*jingji shitang*), which only provided a limited service.<sup>10</sup> Then, the new regulation issued in October 1949 further transformed all restaurants and dining rooms into “public canteens” (*gonggong shitang*).<sup>11</sup>

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rate of 40,000 Old Taiwan Dollar to one New Taiwan Dollar.

<sup>9</sup> The Provincial Government of Taiwan was established in April 1947 to replace the Taiwan Provincial Administrative Executive Office.

<sup>10</sup> The definition of “budget canteen” was explicit within the regulation: its capital value should be below TW\$1,500,000, and there could only be five waiters or waitresses in total. Moreover, liquor, coffee, and banquets were all forbidden at budget canteens. See *Bulletin of Taiwan Provincial Government (Taiwan shengzhengfu gongbao)*, Winter No. 39 (1947), p. 580-581; see also the accounts by the police sector in *Bulletin of Taiwan Provincial Government*, Spring No. 63 (1948), p. 995.

<sup>11</sup> See “Regulation for Restaurants and Tearooms to Become Public Canteens and Public Tearooms” (*Jiulou chashi gaishe gonggong shitang gonggong chashi shishi banfa*, abbreviation RRTP) in *Bulletin of Taiwan Provincial Government*, Winter No. 19 (1949), pp. 226-227, 236.

Public canteens, according to the regulation, were simple and clean dining establishments, providing nutritious and inexpensive dishes. In line with the principle of “being frugal,” the dishes served at public canteens were called “public budget meals” (*gonggong jingji can*).<sup>12</sup> It was “public” because it should be affordable by most people; canteens should not provide luxurious or high-valued food that could result in a distinction between individual customers. Furthermore, the meals were “budget” because they could efficiently feed diners by providing a sufficient number of calories at low price. Therefore, public canteens were discouraged from serving haute cuisine, luxurious, or imported foods.<sup>13</sup> Rather than putting emphasis on food tastes, these canteens had to pay more attention to food hygiene and nutrition.<sup>14</sup>

To put the above principles into practice, the regulations for public canteens set concrete limits on the price of meals and the number of dishes, with violators heavily fined. For example, for a group of between four to six persons, their set menu was limited to four dishes and one soup at a price of no more than NT\$30. Public canteens that violated such rules had to pay a fine of NT\$500-2000 as a donation to the army.<sup>15</sup>

However, it is difficult to evaluate how far these regulations were followed. What should be highlighted here are the drastic political changes taking place in 1948 and 1949 with the defeat of the Nationalist Party in the civil war on the Mainland. In May 1948, the Nationalist government issued “Temporary Provisions for the Period of the Suppression of the Communist Rebellion” (*Dongyuan kanluan shiqi linshi tiaokuan*), and representative institutions were frozen under this law. On May 20<sup>th</sup> 1949, the Provincial Government of Taiwan further imposed martial law.<sup>16</sup> The central government of the Republic of China, led by the Nationalist Party, moved from the Mainland to Taiwan in December 1949, and Chiang Kai-shek commenced his presidency in March 1950. In other words, the late 1940s was a period of political turmoil characterized by an unstable legal system.

In the early 1950s, it was frequently reported in newspapers that there were public canteens violating the regulations. For example, an editorial in the *United Daily News* (UDN), one of the major newspapers at that time, criticized that it

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<sup>12</sup> In addition to “public budget meals” for individuals, these canteens could also serve meals for groups. See RRTP, Clause 4.

<sup>13</sup> RRTP, Clauses 5 and 12.

<sup>14</sup> RRTP, Clause 3.

<sup>15</sup> RRTP, Clause 14.

<sup>16</sup> For the announcement of the imposition of martial law, see the front page of *Xinshengbao* [*Xinsheng News*], 5/20/1949. Original official documents and decrees about the enforcement of martial law are collected in: Xue, Zeng and Xu, 2000.



was still common and even fashionable to have banquets; and ironically, the hosts of those banquets were mainly government officials who still enjoyed good wine and fine food. It was reported that:

The current fashion of banqueting is far from the principle of frugality ... fine food is served at a banquet ... whenever a new chief administrator assumes office, there will be two banquets: a farewell banquet for the former administrator and a welcome banquet for the new one, both financed by public money.<sup>17</sup>

In addition to restricting the number and price of dishes, another crucial change from the restaurants during the Japanese era to the public canteens of the post-war period concerned new regulations on waitresses. As shown in Chapter One, eating in the company of waitresses was an essential characteristic of Taiwanese restaurants during the Japanese colonial period. However, the new regulation issued in 1949 put severe restrictions on waitresses in public canteens, demanding that they wear uniforms and behave in an appropriate manner, with their “drinking, singing, artistic performance, flirting, and other unrestrained or immoral behaviors were seriously forbidden.”<sup>18</sup>

Such a rule was an obvious ban on the performance of *yida* and the company provided by waitresses, which had been popular in restaurants during the Japanese colonial era. The performance and company of waitresses during dining involved an additional charge, and was thus viewed as a luxury service.<sup>19</sup> It ran contrary to the principle of frugality during the post-war period and was thus forbidden. Furthermore, the performance of *yida* was an art originating from Japan; hence, it was a legacy of the colonial age that should be eradicated. However, prohibition bore little effect. In 1952, some Provincial Assembly delegates argued that it was impossible to implement the above restrictions on waitresses, thus the ban should be removed.<sup>20</sup> Although many public canteens served nothing but dishes, public canteens providing sex services was not original news. Stories about poor girls being sold to public canteens as prostitutes were often reported in newspapers.<sup>21</sup> In other words, despite the change of name from

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<sup>17</sup> UDN, 8/9/1952(2). Similar criticism on the banqueting habits among officials can be seen in: UDN, 9/17/1954(2); UDN, 9/20/1954(5); UDN, 1/18/1955(6).

<sup>18</sup> RRTP, Clause 13.

<sup>19</sup> As Chen Cheng, the Provincial Governor of Taiwan, claimed, these restaurants such as *Shanglinhua*, *Xin Zhonghua*, and *Xiaochun Yuan* were venues resulting in extravagance and violation of good customs. See *Zhongyang ribao* [Central Daily News], 9/13/1949(5).

<sup>20</sup> UDN, 7/27/1952(2).

<sup>21</sup> See, for example, UDN, 8/27/1956(4); UDN, 2/13-15/1952(6).

restaurants into public canteens, the dishes served and the services offered at the dining establishments remained the same. Rather than transforming the dining habits that developed during the Japanese colonial era, such as fine food and the company of waitress, the new regulations served only to make them illegal, without stopping the practices.

As a result, the image of “dining out in Taiwanese restaurants” became negative, a fundamental image change from being a symbol of wealth and status into a luxurious activity that wasted resources. Dining in restaurants was no longer a means of showing off but a behavior violating the goal of strengthening the state to “recover the Mainland.” In November 1955, the Provincial Government demanded that government officials and teachers should avoid dining in public canteens,<sup>22</sup> and the Ministry of Education also proposed to prohibit students from entering those public canteens with services provided by waitresses, because it might “cause harm to their body and mind.”<sup>23</sup> These regulations revealed that public canteens during the 1950s were notorious and considered a menace to social order.

Ironically, while public canteens were viewed with skepticism, they were also considered “patriotic.” During the 1950s, when the Nationalist government advocated recovering the Mainland, public canteens also actively participated in many patriotic activities, including performing dances, singing for soldiers,<sup>24</sup> and organizing various patriotic donations.<sup>25</sup> Among these activities, the most significant one was the sale of flowers as tribute to the military (*jingjunhua*), which was held in 1956.

The patriotic sale was held by the Cooking Association of Taipei during the Chinese New Year, and its goal was to echo the patriotic movement promoted by the organization “Friends of the Military” (*Junyoushe*).<sup>26</sup> There were 19 public canteens participating in the patriotic sale, which took the form of a competition. Waitresses from the 19 public canteens competed to sell flowers to their guests within the specified twenty-day period.<sup>27</sup> The top three public canteens that sold the most flowers would win awards from the Ministry of National Defense, with the ten

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<sup>22</sup> *Bulletin of Taiwan Provincial Government*, Winter No. 36 (1955), p. 408.

<sup>23</sup> *UDN*, 12/2/1955(3).

<sup>24</sup> For example, the National Women’s League which was established by Madame Chiang Kai-shek co-organized an opera team, whose task was to perform to encourage the army on New Year’s Day of 1951, with the performers selected from waitresses working in public canteens. See *UDN*, 12/18/1951(5).

<sup>25</sup> In 1952, the Cooking Association of Taipei asked its members, who were owners of public canteens, to make donations for an airplane. See *UDN*, 2/26/1952(2).

<sup>26</sup> “Friends of the Military” was an organization established by Chiang Ching-kuo, one of Chiang Kai-shek’s sons, in 1951. Chiang Ching-kuo assumed the presidency in 1978.

<sup>27</sup> *UDN*, 2/8/1956(3); *UDN*, 2/11/1956(3).

waitresses with the top sales receiving prizes from “Friends of the Military.”<sup>28</sup> In contrast to the negative image of “causing harm to the body and mind of young students,” the waitresses working in public canteens were described in the media as enthusiastic patriots with great love for the country.<sup>29</sup> As a result, the patriotic sale achieved its target of raising NT\$200,000 for the military, and some distinguished waitresses were organized as a team to perform music and dance for the frontline soldiers.<sup>30</sup> Following the patriotic sale, similar activities were held at public canteens in various counties. While those public canteens in Yunlin, Taizhong,<sup>31</sup> Hualian,<sup>32</sup> Jiayi,<sup>33</sup> and Yilan<sup>34</sup> organized similar flower sales to raise funds for the military, those public canteens in Tainan sold lottery tickets,<sup>35</sup> and those in Zhanghua sold special coupons for soldiers.<sup>36</sup>

These fund-raising activities for the military reveal the complex relationship between the Nationalist government and the Taiwanese restaurant business. On the one hand, the government restricted dining out by creating various regulations based on patriotic reasons, discouraging and eradicating the dainty dining habits that had developed during the colonial era. On the other hand, the government made use of public canteens as a means to get more financial support, also in the name of patriotism. Nevertheless, despite being discouraged from dining out by the regulations, government officials were the chief customers supporting public canteens. There was a clear gap between government regulations and the actual reality of the dining-out market.

### 1.3 Clandestine “Taiwanese cuisine” at “liquor house” (*jiujia*)

On April 14, 1962, the Provincial Government abolished the regulation transforming restaurants into public canteens (RRTP) and issued “Regulations for Managing Special Businesses” (*Tezhong yingye guanli guize*). According to this new regulation, all public canteens that provided the company of waitresses had to be registered as *jiujia*, literally meaning “liquor house.”<sup>37</sup> Therefore, since the early

<sup>28</sup> UDN, 2/28/1956(3); UDN, 3/5/1956(3).

<sup>29</sup> UDN, 2/8/1956(3).

<sup>30</sup> UDN, 3/11/1956(3).

<sup>31</sup> UDN, 3/13/1956; UDN, 5/11/1956(5).

<sup>32</sup> UDN, 5/4/1956(5).

<sup>33</sup> UDN, 6/24/1956(5).

<sup>34</sup> UDN, 9/1/1956(5).

<sup>35</sup> UDN, 2/10/1956(3).

<sup>36</sup> UDN, 7/14/1956(5).

<sup>37</sup> For the new regulation, see *Bulletin of Taiwan Provincial Government*, Summer No. 549 (1962), pp. 1186-1193. For the regulation on *jiujia*, see Clauses 14-16.

1960s, the term *jiujia* has been generally employed to refer to venues providing liquor, food, and the company of waitresses.

Besides the company of waitresses, such liquor houses were also characterized by their specially cooked and creative dishes. Many of their chefs were cooks and apprentices who had worked in “Taiwanese restaurants” during the colonial era, and the dishes were similar to those that used to be known as “Taiwanese cuisine” at that time. For example, informant chef Huang De-xing worked in the famous Taiwanese restaurant *Penglai Ge* as an apprentice for five years; then in many other liquor houses after *Penglai Ge* closed down, like most of the other chefs at *Penglai Ge* did. He said that many of the dishes that he made at liquor houses were principally what they had cooked at *Penglai Ge*, though with some modifications due to the availability of food resources and the need for creativity. Huang emphasized that those dishes served at liquor houses involved complicated cooking methods and techniques, thus earning the name “hand-working dishes” (in Hokkien: *chulocae*), meaning that these dishes were cooked by using careful and delicate craft. In tune with Huang, another chef illustrated that:

Take shrimp as an example, it is impossible to just boil it and serve. That is too simple. We always chop and mince shrimps, stuff it into other ingredients, then cook them, and arrange them on the plate as a drawing.<sup>38</sup>

Such an emphasis on cooking techniques was influenced by the clientele of liquor houses. Although customers ranged from businessmen to workers,<sup>39</sup> rich businessmen still played a prominent role, with the dishes served at liquor houses having to be adapted to their preferences.

The description of liquor houses in the literature suggest an idea of about what these dishes were. Tang Lu-sun (1908-1985) was the first author specializing on culinary writing in Taiwan. Tang came to Taiwan in 1946 and worked for the National Tobacco Company until his retirement in 1973. He once wrote about his experience of eating “dragon sausage” (龍腸) at a liquor house called *Shanglinhua*:

*Shanglinhua* was a very famous liquor house in Taipei in the early years. I was not good at ordering when I first arrived in Taiwan, and a waitress nicknamed “aircraft carrier”... was good at ordering for guests. Once she ordered a fried “dragon sausage” for me, it looked

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<sup>38</sup> Interview: chef Mr. Tsai (6/19/2008, Miaoli).

<sup>39</sup> The occupations of the clientele are known because they are listed in the guest books kept by liquor houses, see *UDN*, 3/30/1952(5).

like a mini squid, very crispy but also soft. It was said that these sausages were from the bellies of male mullets. The dish was quite precious because it was not only delicious but also gave strength to the body, and not all male mullets have this “sausage”....I only ate it once in *Shanglinhua*. (Tang, 1977, p. 40)

The above narrative shows that those dishes at liquor houses were not so common that everyone could understand them. Instead, ordering appropriate dishes could be a skill because it required knowledge about the ingredients and taste of dishes. Tang’s family was in the “Eight Banners” class, the aristocratic class during the Qing Dynasty. His family and job as a financial officer allowed him opportunities to taste diverse Chinese regional cuisines. Nevertheless, even with these experiences, Tang was not familiar with the dishes served at liquor houses and certain special items such as “dragon sausage,” which was not part of the conventional haute cuisine served at banquets, such as shark fin and bird’s nest soup.

In addition to valuable ingredients and exquisite cooking, the particularity of the food and amusement of dining were further underlined in liquor houses. Therefore, the waitresses at liquor houses had the responsibility of ordering dishes that fit the taste of customers and the dining atmosphere. Popular dishes served at liquor houses shared some common features.<sup>40</sup> Firstly, the texture of the food had to be soft and tender, rather than tough and chewy, because the majority of customers were “men past middle age with bad teeth.”<sup>41</sup> Secondly, these dishes were cooked with a heavier flavor to complement and not be over powered by the strong liquor.

Among all the liquor houses in Taiwan, those located in Beitou enjoyed significant importance in history. The Beitou region of Taipei had been a hub for hotels since the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and continued to be where liquor houses were concentrated after the Second World War. Furthermore, Beitou is often viewed nowadays as an important base where Taiwanese cuisine developed. The following will introduce the liquor houses in Beitou before discussing the notion of *jiujia cai* (dishes served at liquor houses) and its significance in the notion of Taiwanese cuisine.

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<sup>40</sup> Interview: chef A-zhong, A-jia, A-nan (5/22/2008, Taipei).

<sup>41</sup> Interview: chef A-jia, A-nan.

## Liquor houses in Beitou

Located in the suburb of Taipei, Beitou had been a very famous tourist resort since the colonial period, particularly known for its hot springs. Hot spring hotels were introduced and recommended in Japanese travel journals and travel guides. A typical hot spring hotel provided a spa, meals, and accommodation, with the most common package including a spa, two meals, and a one-night stay, costing between 2 to 6 yen in the 1930s (Nakashima Shunho, 1930; Nihon Ryokô Kyôkai Taiwan Shibu, 1940).

During the post-war period, Beitou remained a hot spot for entertainment, even though many hotels were transformed into liquor houses. According to the informants in this research who worked at liquor houses in Beitou during the 1950s and 1960s, their clienteles had meals in an individual room, with the meal being a “complete banquet” or “half banquet.” Such a distinction between complete and half banquets was the same as those used for Taiwanese banquets during the Japanese era, indicating continuity in the dining manner. One informant reported: <sup>42</sup>

Guests held banquets in their own rooms, they could choose a half banquet or a complete one, ...a “complete banquet” comprised of six dishes and a soup, while a “half banquet” included three dishes and one soup. All dishes we made were very delicate. We used very large plates. For all cold dishes, we had to arrange the food on a plate like a drawing. Every banquet had a hot pot. As for other popular dishes, we had abalone, eels, crabs, turtle, and pigeons. ...Well, those dishes we made were not large in quantity, because they were expensive...the dishes we made at that time were quite sophisticated.

Although Beitou was not the only district where liquor houses were situated, two conditions made Beitou a superior base where dining-out culture continued to develop under the new regulations. First, the natural resources of the hot springs provided an attraction for tourists; its fame and the hotels established during the Japanese colonial era paved the way for liquor houses to mushroom. Second, contrary to that of liquor houses located in other areas like *Dadaocheng*, the cost of the liquor houses in Beitou was more expensive and its customers richer. Those patronizing liquor houses in Beitou were mainly businessmen coming for business and entertainment purposes and they generally started to demand more delicate dishes because they could afford expensive and special cuisines.<sup>43</sup> As Beitou district was where liquor houses and cooks were concentrated, their customers could afford

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<sup>42</sup> Interview: chef A-jia.

<sup>43</sup> Interview: chef A-zhong, A-jia, A-nan.

fine dishes, so Beitou became an important region where old Taiwanese haute cuisine recipes were preserved better.

Since the 1990s, dishes served at liquor houses have been regarded as a representative figure of Taiwanese cuisine and particularly been termed *jiujia cai*, literally “liquor house dishes.” Some cookbooks and food critics labeled many prestigious chefs mastering Taiwanese cuisine as being from the “Beitou school” because they had long-term working experience at those liquor houses in Beitou.<sup>44</sup> However, such a perspective is misleading in two aspects. First of all, this view neglects the mature Taiwanese culinary culture that developed during the colonial era, including delicate cuisines and complicated dining manners. Such neglect fails to consider dietary culture as a continuous accumulation and transmission, as if the delicate “hand-working dishes” are a completely new invention after the post-war period. Secondly, not all liquor houses provided creative and extraordinary cuisines because some were mainly engaged in providing sex services; and liquor houses were not highlighted as a venue serving Taiwanese cuisine until the 1990s.<sup>45</sup> During the 1950s, after previous “Taiwanese restaurants” were transformed into “public canteens,” there were no restaurants naming their dishes as “Taiwanese cuisine.” Whilst the Japanese term *Taiwan ryôri* was created to indicate the notion of “Taiwanese cuisine” during the Japanese colonial era, no specific term was commonly used to refer to it during the post-war period.

The absence of a specific term for “Taiwanese cuisine” reflects its changing status. During the Japanese colonial era, Taiwanese restaurants were the places serving haute cuisine in the company of waitresses. Their consumers were Japanese aristocrats, officials, and upper-class Taiwanese, with the dishes served named *Taiwan ryôri* in Japanese or *Taiwan liaoli* in Mandarin to highlight its distinctiveness as haute cuisine. The development of Taiwanese cuisine as haute cuisine reflects a strategy used by the ruling class to show off their distinctive social status. With complicated manners and highly valued foodstuffs, haute cuisine highlights the intellectual and fortune of those who enjoyed it. Nevertheless, after Taiwanese restaurants were transformed into public canteens by the Nationalist government during the 1950s, consumers came from a wider social spectrum and dining-out was stigmatized as an activity wasting resources. These changes made “Taiwanese cuisine” no longer a cultural category worth being presented to highlight the distinction of its diners.

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<sup>44</sup> See, for example, Fu & Cheng, 2003; Li, 1994; Li, Qiang 1993, *Jingji ribao* [Economy Daily News] (abbreviation *EDN*), 1/2/1993(13).

<sup>45</sup> The term “*jiujia cai*” appeared in newspapers and magazines only during the 1990s but not earlier.

However, although dining out and haute cuisine were discouraged during the post-war period and Taiwanese cuisine lost its status as an elite food, the decline of Taiwanese haute cuisine by no means implies that there was no delicate cuisine anymore. Instead, some other cuisines were regarded as haute cuisine and enjoyed by those in the upper circles, showing an obvious gap between regulation and reality. The following section examines the relationship between forced migration and culinary remapping, exploring how those restaurants offering Chinese regional dishes transplanted a new culinary map into Taiwan.

## **2. CULINARY MAP TRANSPLANTED FROM THE MAINLAND TO TAIWAN**

### **2.1 Mainlanders: the forced migrants**

In addition to restaurant regulations, the more profound changes brought by the Nationalist government include the migrants from the Chinese Mainland and overwhelming emphasis on traditional Chinese culture. The immigration of Nationalist troops, officials, and civilians moved from the Mainland to Taiwan in a short period of time. During November 1948, there were more than 31,000 refugees fleeing to Taiwan per week (Phillips, 2007, p. 299); and when Chen Cheng took office of the Provincial Government of Taiwan at the end of 1948, it was estimated that there were about 5,000 people entering Taiwan every day (Kerr, 1966, p. 366). These migrants included army conscripts, officials, and civilians fleeing battle (Kerr, 1966, p. 370). Most of these refugees had little choice and many exacerbated crime and unemployment statistics (Phillips, 2007, p. 299). Few of them expected a long-term new life on this strange frontier island.

Although these forced migrants were only a minority of the total population of Taiwan, accounting for 14%, higher government positions were mostly held by Mainlanders soon after 1945. According to the statistics about the provincial origins of the officials of the Taiwan Provincial Administrative Executive Office in October 1946, Mainlanders held 22.39% of the total positions; however, Mainlanders were concentrated in the middle and higher positions, occupying 75% of these positions.<sup>46</sup> During the colonial period, Japanese people enjoyed a monopoly on high ranking positions in military bureaucracies, government economic enterprises, schools, and the civil sectors, and the Nationalist government replaced these positions with

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<sup>46</sup> There were 3376 senior officers among the 44451 public servants in the Taiwan Provincial Administrative Executive Office in 1946, and 2532 of these senior officers were Mainlanders, accounting for 75%. See *Taiwan yinian lai zhi renshi xingzheng* [Personnel Administration of the Last Year], 1946, pp. 7-8.



Mainlanders and did not promote Taiwanese from lower positions (Gates, 1981, pp. 266-269). The exclusion of Taiwanese in higher government positions shows the distrust of the Nationalist government toward the ex-colony of Japan, as Phillips highlights:

Because of their limited knowledge of Taiwan, well-justified animosity toward all things Japanese, and the pressures of reconstruction and civil war on the Mainland, the Nationalists sought tight control over the economic and political life of the island. (Phillips, 2007, p. 276)

In addition to strengthening political supervision and social control, the Nationalist government made efforts to rebuild Chinese culture in Taiwan after their retreat from the Mainland. Policies aiming at “re-sinicization” were launched in cultural and educational domains to maintain its status as the legitimate government of China. Walker (1959), in his article approving the efforts made by the Nationalist government during the 1950s, stated that “increased emphasis was placed on building Taiwan’s symbolism as a repository of Chinese culture” (p. 122). He suggested that expanding compulsory education from six to nine years had commenced in 1957, with thousands of scholars and teachers from the Mainland bearing an important task of instilling traditional Chinese culture in students (Walker, 1959, p 132). Chinese geography, literature, monuments, history, and its heroes’ achievements were taught in schools. Furthermore, the Nationalist government actively highlighted the property of Chinese civilization, such as its possession of “national treasures” in the National Palace Museum (Chun, 1994, p. 55) and elite cultures like Peking Opera (Guy, 2005). Above all, the “Movement for the Renaissance China’s National Culture” (Chun, 1994, pp. 57-59; Tozer, 1970) since 1966 was promoted as a reaction to the Cultural Revolution on the Mainland. Through education and cultural policies, the Nationalist government developed its role as the guardian of traditional Chinese culture.

Along with the overwhelming emphasis on Chinese culture, Chinese culinary culture was also significant after the culinary remapping as a result of the migration after 1945. The culinary remapping includes both substantial change and symbolic change; that is, changes in restaurants as well as in the representation of cookbooks and culinary literature. The former is the redrawing of practical boundaries and the latter concerns changing symbolic boundaries. Practical boundaries in cuisine are constituted by cooking methods, ingredients, and seasonings that create different tastes, smells, and the appearances of real dishes. In contrast, symbolic boundaries are shaped by descriptive classifications, representations, and narratives. The

following section will examine how culinary remapping was achieved by “Mainland restaurants,”<sup>47</sup> markets, and villages for military dependents (*juancun*).

## 2.2 Food in the diaspora: the transplantation of restaurants and food

### Private chefs and “Mainland restaurants”

The 1950s witnessed the mushrooming of restaurants established by Mainlanders, including restaurants providing various regional dishes. Most of these new restaurants were managed by those who had been private chefs of political leaders and rich families. When these families could not afford private chefs anymore after moving to Taiwan, many chefs started their own businesses running restaurants to make a living. One feature of these new restaurants was that their names often copied the names of famous restaurants on the Mainland, allowing consumers to tell what regional food the restaurant served. For example, *Laozhengxing* was established in Taipei in the late 1940s, using the name of a famous restaurant in Shanghai (Lu, 2001, p. 17) and serving dishes from Zhejiang Province. The restaurant *Yuebin Lou* used the name of a famous restaurant in Beijing, specializing in Beijing and Shandong dishes. Such “Mainland restaurants” increased rapidly during the 1950s, and it was common for migrants from the same province to consume in specific restaurants that served their local dishes.<sup>48</sup> Among these Mainland restaurants, Zhejiang restaurants were quite significant in their number and reputation. Many official banquets or private gatherings of Nationalist officials took place in *Laozhengxing* and *Zhuangyuan Lou*, which both served Zhejiang cuisine.

Taipei is the city where most of the Mainland restaurants were centered. Those Mainlanders holding government positions were the main consumers at these restaurants, and some government institutions even had their own restaurants serving specific Chinese regional cuisines. A typical example was the Hunan restaurants established by Peng Chang-gui, who was regarded as a key person in the development of Hunan cuisine in Taiwan. Coming to Taiwan in 1949, Peng had been the private chef for Tan Yan-kai, who was once the Chairman of the Nationalist government (1927-1928). Tan came from Hunan Province and was known for his mastery of culinary art; therefore his private chefs were specially

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<sup>47</sup> I use the term “Mainland restaurants” to refer to those restaurants established by Mainlanders after 1945.

<sup>48</sup> For example, *Yuebin Lou* frequently hosted the meetings and activities of the Association of Shandong Countrymen.

called “Tan’s chefs” (*Tanchu*), specializing in Hunan cuisine. As one of “Tan’s chefs,” Peng was invited to be the chef at the Central Bank’s restaurant in 1962, but soon he established many Hunan restaurants in Taiwan, such as the *Pengyuan* chain, which is still one of the most famous Hunan restaurants today.<sup>49</sup>

In addition to those restaurants established by Mainlanders, some exclusive restaurants established by the government were important in the new culinary map in Taiwan during the 1950s and 1960s. For example, the Grand Hotel (*Yuanshan Dafandian*) had been a landmark building in Taiwan, with its establishment enjoying strong support from the state. Grand Hotel was built in 1952 when the Taiwan Hotel, which was originally owned by the Taiwan Travel Agency, was transformed into Yuanshan Club under the order of Madam Chiang Kai-shek, to provide accommodation for foreign guests.<sup>50</sup> Under the eye of Madam Chiang, the expansion of the Grand Hotel proceeded with significant support of the government: the land it used was owned by the Provincial Government; its capital fund was ascertained from a loan by the National Taiwan Bank with no interest,<sup>51</sup> and the management was controlled by Miss Kong, an intimate friend and relative of Madam Chiang (Wang, 2002). The ownership of the Grand Hotel belonged to the Dunmu Foundation, which is a non-profit organization, with its initial task being to play host to foreign dignitaries.<sup>52</sup> In sum, it was essentially an official Hotel during its establishment, and its management was controlled by the Nationalist government, particularly by the Chiang family. The specific conditions it enjoyed made it a product of the authoritarian regime during a specific time. In this context, the “Chinese-ness” of the Grand Hotel building is remarkable.

The current building of the Grand Hotel was completed in 1963,<sup>53</sup> which used the architectural design of a traditional Chinese palace with “vermillion pillars, stately archways, and brilliantly tiled roof”; it was described as “an emblem of ancient China”<sup>54</sup> (Figure 2.1). Serving as the venue hosting state banquets and accommodating foreign dignitaries during their stays in Taiwan, the Grand Hotel was deferred to consolidate the characteristics of Chinese-ness emphasized by the Nationalist government.

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<sup>49</sup> For more information about Peng Chang-gui and the development of Hunan cuisine in Taiwan, see *UDN*, 1/14/1967(13); *EDN*, 11/13/1968(5).

<sup>50</sup> Cited from an interview with Zhou Hong-tao, who is one of the founders of the Grand Hotel, see Wang, 2002, p. 25.

<sup>51</sup> *Bulletin of Control Yuan (Jianchayuan gongbao)*, No. 2605 (4/24/2008), pp. 18-19.

<sup>52</sup> Wang, 2002, also see the website for the Grand Hotel:

<http://www.grand-hotel.org/newsite/html/e/cb01.htm> (retrieved 10/11/2008).

<sup>53</sup> The roof of the Grand Hotel and part of the building was rebuilt after a fire accident on June 27, 1995.

<sup>54</sup> The introduction on the Grand Hotel’s website.



**Figure 2.1 The Grand Hotel**

Source: The Grand Hotel's website,

<http://www.grand-hotel.org/newsite/html/c/cb01.htm>. (retrieved 10/11/2008)

### **Chinese Market and villages for military dependents**

Apart from the restaurants managed by professional chefs, there were still many other Mainlanders starting their catering businesses as simple eateries or sidewalk food stalls to make a living. These eateries contributed to the dissemination of regional Chinese foods in Taiwan, showing a process of penetration and hybridization. Their consumers included both Mainlanders and native Taiwanese, with Mainland food gradually becoming part of the culinary map in Taiwan. Among the others, a representative example of the dissemination of Mainland food is the Chinese Market (*Zhonghua shangchang*) built in 1962.

The Chinese Market was located on the east side of Zhonghua Road near Taipei Station. Before its establishment, the location situated some simple cabins where soldiers and refugees lodged. The dirty and noisy environment caused serious criticism when the inhabitants and food stalls increased, so the Taipei City Government decided to rebuild it as a modern market consisting of eight buildings in 1962. In a travel guide published in 1967, the Chinese Market was described as “the largest shopping mall with 1644 shops,” and “everything is sold here” (Huang, 1967, p. 45).<sup>55</sup> Another author depicted the Chinese Market as follows:

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<sup>55</sup> Also see: “Zhonghua shangchang zhuanji [Special issue: Chinese Market],” *Zhongguo shibao* [China Times], 10/31/1992(27).

If you want to have a meal with family and enjoy various regional cuisines from the south to the north, the Chinese Market is the best choice; if you are going to get married, it is no problem finding a Shanghai craftsman to make a nice suit there; if you will study at a university, the Chinese Market is also a good place to buy handsome clothes, new shoes, and fashionable belts.<sup>56</sup>

A prestigious historian and writer of culinary literature, Lu Yao-dong, has written about the food people could find at the Chinese Market in detail:

Snacks from diverse regions were sold in the Chinese Market and its neighboring regions. Iced plum juice (冰鎮酸梅湯) and corn cake (窩窩頭) from Beijing, fried bread sticks (果子) and twist bread (麻花) from Tienjin, spicy dumplings (紅油抄手) and steamed buns (粉蒸小籠) from Sichuan, crossing-bridge rice noodles (過橋米線) and big-slices (大薄片) from Yunnan...and the Shandong “burned bun” (火燒) on which “Against the Communists and Resisting Russia” (*fangongkange*) was printed. All these dishes could be found there. (Lu, Y.-d., 2005, p. 81)

The Chinese Market was not only a place containing more than 1600 small shops and food stalls, but also the apartments of many Mainlander soldiers. For example, the theatre director Li Guo-xiu moved to the Chinese Market aged five with his parents who fled Shandong Province in 1949, and the Chinese Market became an important scene in Li’s theater plays. Li presented the Chinese Market not only as a home full of memories but also as a symbol of Mother, giving him a new root in Taiwan (Chen, 2004, pp. 28-29, 60, 99-100,128). The inhabitants here could meet people from diverse provinces, including many native Taiwanese consumers, get accustomed to different accents and foods from various Chinese regions. Although the Chinese Market was dismantled in 1992 by the government due to an urban development project, the Chinese Market has become an important collective memory of “old Taipei” in theater and literature, with the old food shops still attracting many old consumers.

In addition to the Chinese Market, there were also other markets providing various regional Chinese dishes and specialties, which were often situated in regions where Mainlanders lived. On one hand, these markets served as important channels

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<sup>56</sup> Zheng Yi-yin, “Zhonghua shangchang de xingshuai [The emergence and decline of the Chinese Market], the article is collected in the National Repository of Cultural Heritage: [http://km.cca.gov.tw/myphoto/h\\_main.asp?categoryid=79](http://km.cca.gov.tw/myphoto/h_main.asp?categoryid=79) (retrieved 4/12/2009).

through which the Mainlanders could acquire their home-food. On the other hand, these markets were influential in spreading Chinese dietary culture into family homes, which further contributed to the hybridization of dishes. For example, many shops in South-gate market (*Nanmen shichang*) in Taipei provided Zhejiang dishes, including snacks, raw foods, and ready-made dishes. Consumers from different provinces could easily get “Mainland food” in such markets and adapt them in daily meals.

While the above markets provided opportunities for the hybridization of various regional Chinese cuisines, the “village for military dependents” was a relatively closed space where various Chinese dishes were preserved. After retreating to Taiwan, the Nationalist government started to build villages for military dependents in 1949 in order to settle armies and families of officers. The number of “villages for military dependents” in Taiwan was around 886, and Taipei was the city where most villages were centered (Guo, 2005, p. 385). It was estimated that there were around 470,000 Mainlanders and their families or descendents living in these villages in 1982 (Hu, 1993, p. 296).<sup>57</sup>

These villages were very simple and narrow initially, with many villagers sharing a small space. In addition to officers in higher positions having better conditions, most soldiers living in these villages depended heavily on the care of the Nationalist government. Correspondingly, the government did provide welfare to these villagers, such as subsidies for medical treatment, education, and living expenses, which were not provided to native Taiwanese. The subsidies for military dependents covered fuel, water, electricity, and food rations. A family could get a fixed amount of rice, noodles, oil, and salt every month through “food coupons.”<sup>58</sup> Some villages even had their own kindergartens, clinics, and markets (Huang, 2006). For the villagers and their descendents, such relatively independent living conditions provided a safe environment where they could maintain their languages, customs, and collective memories of Mainland China, as well as their food.

Those who lived in these villages preserved many food habits and customs from their hometowns, including eating habits and festival dishes. Many studies on villages for military dependents mention that it was normal to find shops selling food from various provinces in these villages. For example, Huang (2006), whose research focusing on some villages in Zuoying depicts certain famous “Mainland food” sold in these villages, including salty duck (鹹水鴨) from Nanjing, pickled mustard tuber (榨菜) from Sichuan, knife-cut noodles (刀削麵) from Shanxi, and

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<sup>57</sup> The data from the National Women’s League cited by Hu shows that there were 467,316 people living in 879 villages.

<sup>58</sup> See the virtual museum of villages for military dependents:  
<http://myweb.ntc.edu.tw/ckku/village/work-yu-new/index.htm> (retrieved 4/12/2009).

roasted chicken with sweet osmanthus (桂花燒雞) from Shandong (pp. 161-162). In addition, the cooperative association of the navy sold soy sauce and juice under their own brand in these villages (p. 157). Villagers often exchanged dishes, and shared various festival dishes from their hometowns with each other during Chinese New Year and on other festivals (p. 162). Hence, it was common for villagers to eat food from other provinces.

These villages transplanted Chinese foods into Taiwan and influenced the culinary scene in two ways. First, it brought and preserved a diverse variety of Chinese foods from various provinces and led to the exchange of these regional cuisines. Villagers could taste and learn about dishes from other provinces and further adapt them, resulting in the hybridization of dishes. Second, it dispersed Chinese regional food more widely to other non-Mainlander families in Taiwan. To expand their markets, the Mainlander vendors also sold their hometown specialties outside of their villages, with these “regional specialties from the Mainland” attracting other consumers, whether Mainlanders or not.

In sum, these migrant private chefs, cooks, and stalls changed the culinary map in Taiwan largely by transplanting various Chinese regional cuisines, specialties, and snacks from the Chinese Mainland to Taiwan. Particularly in Taipei, the culinary map was redrawn as a condensed Chinese culinary map. Such a condensed Chinese culinary map can be concretely observed in the cookbooks written by Fu Pei-mei.

### **2.3 Symbolic remapping: Fu Pei-mei's Chinese cookbooks**

Fu Pei-mei (1931-2004) published more than 50 cookbooks during her life, covering more than 4,000 recipes. Her first bilingual (Chinese and English) cookbook *Pei-Mei's Chinese Cook Book* was published in 1969 and has been reprinted more than 20 times so far. In addition to being an important cookbook writer, Fu is also the first and most influential television chef and cooking educator in Taiwan, as well as in overseas Chinese communities. While Mainland restaurants offered various Chinese cuisines, Fu's cookbooks and demonstrations of Chinese cuisine on TV further accelerated the spread of Chinese cuisine in Taiwan through media. Her readers and audiences adapted her Chinese recipes to family meals, bringing new ingredients into local dishes and fostering the mixture of regional dishes, which had a more profound impact on taste preferences and the culinary scene in Taiwan.

Born in a rich merchant family in Fushan County in Shandong Province in 1931, Fu studied in a Japanese high school for girls in Dalian in Manchuria<sup>59</sup> and

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<sup>59</sup> Manchuria region was under the rule of Japan from 1905 to 1945.

the National Girl's Normal University in Beijing before her immigration to Taiwan in 1949 (Fu, 1969, p. 4; Fu, 2000, pp. 52-53). Fu established her Chinese Cooking Institute in Taipei in 1955 and started a cooking program on TV in 1962, as soon as the television service started in Taiwan. Her cooking programs lasted for as long as 39 years,<sup>60</sup> which were also broadcasted in the US, Japan, and the Philippines. Fu claimed that her intention was to provide recipes not only for Chinese people but also for overseas Chinese "to enjoy the cuisines of our motherland" (Fu, 1969, p. 2). To highlight her "contribution to the social education of Chinese traditional culture," the Ministry of Education awarded her a prize in recognition of such influence (Fu, 1969, p. 4).

Thus, Fu's role as an educator of Chinese culinary arts is much more prominent than as a cookbook writer, highlighting Taiwan as an important site where traditional Chinese culture was preserved. In her first cookbook, she traced the history of Chinese cooking back 5000 years and connected it to Daoism and Confucianism:

Chinese cooking is an ancient art which dates from the Emperor Fu Xi who introduced agricultural procedures and domestication of animals about 5000 years ago...The two dominant philosophies of China, Daoism and Confucianism, soon prescribed kitchen customs and table etiquette. Chinese scholars, and indeed their leader Confucius, were gourmets who urged others to perfect this art. (Fu, 1969, p. 5)

Following the tradition from ancient China, she cited the doctrine of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the National Father of modern China, suggesting that food is the basis of a strong nation and therefore an important focus in Dr. Sun's doctrine. From Emperor Fu Xi, Confucius to Dr. Sun Yat-sen, who are all crucial figures in Chinese "cultural tales" (Appadurai, 1988, p. 3), Fu established continuity from ancient to modern China in her cookbooks, underlining the significance of the culinary arts in Chinese history.

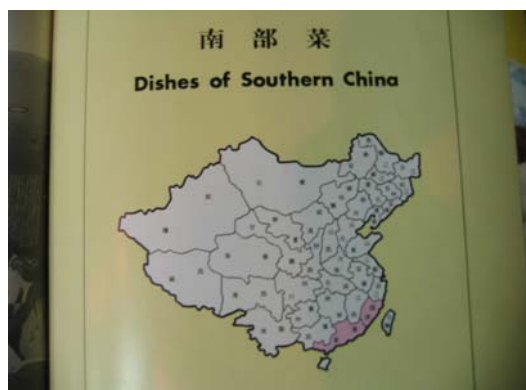
Based on the historical continuity of China's cultural tradition, Fu represented culinary culture in her first cookbook with 100 Chinese regional cuisine recipes. She grouped all the recipes into four principal schools by geographical region and presented these regional cuisines in four maps of China. These four schools and one of the maps are shown in the following (Fu, 1969, p. 6).

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<sup>60</sup> Fu's program was broadcast on the Taiwan Television Company's channel, which was the first TV broadcasting company in Taiwan. The detail of Fu's career can be found in her autobiography: Fu, 2000.



- (1) Shanghai (Eastern Chinese style)
- (2) Canton [Guangdong]<sup>61</sup> (Foochow [Fuzhou] or Southern Chinese style)
- (3) Szechuan [Sichuan] (Hunan and Western Chinese style)
- (4) Peking [Beijing] (Northern Chinese style)



**Figure 2.2 Map of the Chinese dishes in *Pei Mei's Chinese Cook Book* (1969)**

By showing the map of China (Figure 2.2), Fu indicated that the formation of these Chinese regional cuisines was the result of different climates, geographical conditions, and agricultural products. However, the map of China showed in Fu's cookbook is neither the territory ruled by the Nationalist government, nor the Chinese Mainland controlled by the People's Republic of China (PRC). Instead, it is a map of China as claimed by the Nationalist government, although the political control of the Nationalist government could only cover Taiwan and some islets.

On historical continuity and geographic articulation grounds, Fu's cookbooks on Chinese regional cuisines could help the diasporic community maintain their consciousness of "Chinese-ness" and Chinese culinary culture. Furthermore, such continuity of Chinese culture was endorsed by the USA, the most important international power supporting the Nationalist government in Taiwan. The foreword in Fu's first cookbook was written by Dorothy McConaughy, the wife of a former U.S. Ambassador. In the foreword, she admired Fu's Chinese cooking skills as an art, concluding that this book would "further advance the friendship and interests between the Chinese and American people." In this context, the cookbook claimed

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<sup>61</sup> I keep the terms Fu used in her cookbook here, but add their Pinyin behind.

friendship between the US and the Nationalist government, demonstrating diplomatic relations in a cultural sense to the readers.

Before starting her teaching career, Fu took two years to learn cooking by inviting chefs from many famous Mainland restaurants to be her private tutors. In this way, she can learn diverse Chinese regional dishes and introduce them to a wider population. At the beginning, she demonstrated recipes on TV by sequencing Chinese regions, like her early cookbooks did. However, she did not just follow the so-called “authentic” recipes of some famous Chinese dishes; instead, she changed cooking methods to adapt them to modern kitchens and suggested her audiences to use other food as a substitute because some ingredients were unavailable in Taiwan. In this way, her audiences or readers would not only become familiar with Chinese regional cuisines but also adapt them to their daily meals. Although it is difficult to investigate how many families have enjoyed her recipes and how much these recipes were changed again in family kitchens, her influence in bringing various Chinese recipes into Taiwanese families should not be ignored. It is in such a context that her cookbooks and TV shows serve as an agent of transformation, not only bringing various Chinese cuisines into the domestic space in Taiwan, but also fostering their hybridization and indigenization.

While various Chinese regional cuisines spread and penetrated the daily lives of Taiwanese people, the term “Taiwanese cuisine” cannot be used to refer to all these regional cuisines popular in Taiwan. Consequently, the boundary of “Taiwanese cuisine” was redrawn by market agents to highlight the hybridized “local dishes.” In response to the proliferation of Mainland restaurants and Chinese cuisines, self-proclaimed “Taiwanese restaurants” reemerged during the 1960s.

### **3. “TAIWANESE RESTAURANTS” DURING THE 1960s AND 1970s**

#### **3.1 Taiwanese cuisine as a Chinese regional cuisine**

Whereas “Taiwanese cuisine” during the Japanese colonial era was a category distinct from Japanese cuisine, the term *Taichai* that emerged during the 1960s was viewed as a regional variation of Chinese cuisine. For example, in the cooking examination of the Overseas Compatriot Affairs Commission in 1963, which aims to select chefs to work in overseas Chinese restaurants, the chefs were categorized by their specialties, including Guangdong cuisine, Fujian cuisine, Taiwanese cuisine, Sichuan cuisine, and Beijing cuisine.<sup>62</sup> A similar categorization can be found in a

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<sup>62</sup> UDN, 3/14/1963(2); UDN, 5/12/1963(3).

famous cooking school –Weiquan– starting in 1961, which taught Beijing cuisine, Guangdong cuisine, Sichuan cuisine, Taiwanese cuisine, Western cuisine, and Western desserts.<sup>63</sup> This categorization shows that Taiwanese cuisine was considered as a sub-division of Chinese cuisine but not as an equivalent to it, referring to the regional flavors in Taiwan. It is in this context that new restaurants characterizing their dishes as authentic “Taiwanese dishes” emerged in the early 1960s and further proliferated during the 1970s, repositioning Taiwanese cuisine in a new culinary map.

Two different types of Taiwanese restaurants emerged during the 1960s and 1970s. The first one provided sophisticated banquet cuisines as well as performances, which was similar to those served in exclusive restaurants during the colonial era. For example, it was reported that the signature dishes of a famous Taiwanese restaurant during the 1960s were “Sun Moon Shrimp” (日月明蝦) and “Yolk Pomegranate Flower” (蛋黃石榴), which were refined dishes using complicated cooking techniques and delicate decoration.<sup>64</sup> This and other similar Taiwanese restaurants served not only such banquet cuisines, but also entertainment including electronic piano performances, magic shows, and singing of Taiwanese or Japanese songs.<sup>65</sup> Taiwanese songs and Taiwanese cuisine created a quite different atmosphere from that in Mainland restaurants. However, this kind of Taiwanese restaurant gradually went into demise after the 1980s for two possible reasons. First, many chefs argued that such sophisticated dishes took too much energy and time, culminating in too few apprentices being willing to learn.<sup>66</sup> Second, such dishes did not fit the need of modern restaurants where speed and large quantity was emphasized.

The second type of “Taiwanese restaurants” was established during the 1960s and mainly provided simpler dishes such as “porridge and small dishes” (*qingzhou xiaocai*). They also provided some dishes for simpler banquets, particularly on important occasions concerning Taiwanese customs, such as birthday banquets for the elderly people, banquets for employees at the end of a year, and the “sisters’ feast” before a wedding. These “banquets” were quite small and sometimes only for one or two tables, with consumers mostly being native Taiwanese instead of Mainlanders.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> EDN, 8/20/1969(6).

<sup>64</sup> The cooking method of “Sun Moon Shrimp”: chopping salted egg yolk and packing it with vegetable leaves; putting minced shrimp outside of the yolk and packing it with laver; finally deep-frying it and cutting it into pieces to serve. The ingredients and cooking method of “Yolk Pomegranate Flower” is similar to “Sun Moon Shrimp,” but the shape of this dish would be like flowers. See EDN, 1/10/1969(8).

<sup>65</sup> See, for example, EDN, 3/9/1971(9); EDN, 3/19/1972(8); EDN, 8/23/1968(8).

<sup>66</sup> Interview: chef A-zhong, A-jia, Mr. Xue.

<sup>67</sup> In addition, Taiwanese restaurants also appealed to some Japanese tourists. Until now, the

For example, the oldest Taiwanese restaurant among those still in operation today is *Green Leaf*, which opened in 1964. Having been a waitress in a liquor house in Beitou, its Manager Ms. Shen established the restaurant with friends, proclaiming that they served “Taiwanese Cuisine, Porridge and Small Dishes” (*Taiwan liaoli, qingzhou xiaocai*).<sup>68</sup> She said in an interview in 1970 that her intention was to provide some light dishes to refresh customers who had become bored with banquet cuisine.<sup>69</sup> Some popular dishes served in her restaurant included fried-fish with soy sauce (紅燒魚), stewed pork (滷肉), three cup chicken (三杯雞), and oyster with black bean sauce (蔭豉蚵). These dishes were also popular in other Taiwanese restaurants during the same period (Li, 2002). However, it should be made clear here that “porridge and small dishes” was not only served in Taiwanese restaurants. Instead, the development of “porridge and small dishes” marks the proliferation of the dining market at night.

During the 1960s, there were an increasing number of restaurants serving “late-night supper,” including Italian restaurants, Coffee Houses, and restaurants serving various Chinese regional cuisines. These restaurants provided Western or Chinese cuisine for lunch and dinner, but only served “Taiwanese dishes” and “porridge and small dishes” late at night. Different from banquet dishes, “porridge and small dishes” were normal dishes that could be made at home, such as sweet potato porridge (地瓜稀飯), fried eggs with dried radish (菜脯蛋), steamed pork with salted yolk (蛋黃肉), and fried milkfish (煎虱目魚). These simple “porridge and small dishes” were marked as “Taiwanese cuisines” by various restaurants and served at night. In other words, it was a widely accepted idea that the notion of Taiwanese cuisine referred to these simple dishes during the 1960s. It is in this climate that some new “Taiwanese restaurants” were established, highlighting their dishes as “porridge and small dishes.”

The differences between late-night supper and other meals not only lie in the business hour and dishes, but also lie in the occupations of consumers. The clients of late-night supper were mostly those working until late at night, such as taxi drivers, media employees, and women working in dancing clubs.<sup>70</sup> According to the managers of Taiwanese restaurants interviewed in this research, their customers during the 1960s still included certain overseas Chinese and businessmen. Some of them would have just left liquor houses or dancing clubs in the late evening and went to eat simple dishes as refreshment, whilst others came from their workplaces

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Japanese are still important clients for some famous Taiwanese restaurants, occupying about 30%. Interview: Restaurant owner Mr. Jian (11/14/2006, Taipei), Ms. Li (12/26/2006, Taipei).

<sup>68</sup> It was shown in the sign of the restaurant. See *EDN*, 10/3/1970(8). The same information also came from the interview with chef Huang De-xing (1/14/2007, Taipei).

<sup>69</sup> *EDN*, 10/3/1970(8).

<sup>70</sup> *UDN*, 4/17/1978(9).

and needed a quick and warm meal at night. Thus, these managers considered the late-night supper clients as having a lower social status in general.<sup>71</sup> Particularly, those Taiwanese restaurants that emerged during the 1960s were established around Zhong-shan North Road and Lin-sen North Road, and this region was surrounded by liquor houses and dancing clubs at that time. On the one hand, the proliferation of late-night supper revealed a vigorous night life and growing commercial activities, showing a sharp contrast with the post-war period. On the other hand, the relatively lower social class of the consumers positioned Taiwanese cuisine in a lower position in the culinary hierarchy. For example, in an article introducing the Chinese restaurants in Taiwan, the author stated that Zhejiang cuisine was the most popular one because it was “fresh, low fat, and light”; on the contrary, Taiwanese cuisine was “provided in the form of small dishes and thus could not be served in a banquet.”<sup>72</sup> The Manager of a famous Taiwanese restaurant started since 1977 confirmed that their business started with “small dishes:”

My friend laughed at me that Taiwanese cuisine was just small dishes served in side-stalls but not at banquets, ... she said that she would like to eat Zhejiang cuisine because it was better... I was angry ... but what she said was also true. What we made were small dishes. However, it also reminded me that I would turn them into banquet dishes some day.<sup>73</sup>

This contrast shows that a hierarchy did exist among the sub-categories of Chinese cuisine and that Taiwanese cuisine as a Chinese regional cuisine was situated in a lower position in the hierarchy. While these local dishes were considered as simple, normal, and plain food, dishes from the Mainland such as Zhejiang, Guangdong, Beijing, and Hunan cuisine were highlighted as traditional Chinese culinary art in cookbooks and media, with these cuisines preferred by government officials because these were their “tastes of home.”

In sum, Taiwanese cuisine during the 1960s had two main roots. First, as banquet cuisine, it originated from the *Taiwan liaoli* served in Taiwanese restaurants during the Japanese colonial era, which was enjoyed by those in a higher social position, partly preserving Taiwanese haute cuisine and entertaining performance during the colonial era. Second, the “porridge and small dishes” mainly came from

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<sup>71</sup> Interview: Restaurant owner Mr. Jian, Ms. Li, A-ming (10/26/2006, Taipei).

<sup>72</sup> Song Mei-dong, “Ruhe kaishe zhongcanting [How to establish a Chinese restaurant],” *EDN*, 12/11/1978(11).

<sup>73</sup> Interview: Ms. Li.

food eaten by the general population in average families, which originated from “food of Taiwanese” enjoyed by common people during the Japanese era.

This distinction also influences the identification of Taiwanese cuisine nowadays. Among this research’s informants, the chefs working in Taiwanese restaurants serving banquet cuisines during the 1960s tended to define “Taiwanese cuisine” as delicate and sophisticated dishes, emphasizing that these dishes were made using complicated cooking skills. All of them had the experience of cooking in liquor houses, and they generally termed such delicate dishes as “dishes of liquor houses” (*jiujia cai*). They argued that “dishes of liquor houses” was the most authentic Taiwanese cuisine, while “porridge and small dishes” served in restaurants like the *Green Leaf* were just “dishes for late at night” (*xiaoye cai*). The differentiation between these two categories shows that there is also a hierarchy within the notion of “Taiwanese cuisine.”

While sophisticated fine banquet cuisine demised gradually, the simpler dishes proliferated and were considered the mainstream of Taiwanese cuisine. Many famous Taiwanese restaurants nowadays were established during the 1960s and 1970s, highlighting porridges and small dishes as “authentic and representative Taiwanese cuisine.” However, what is worth noting is that these Taiwanese restaurants have adopted ingredients from other Chinese cuisines to produce “authentic Taiwanese cuisine.” In other words, a process of hybridization has taken place. The following will focus on these Taiwanese restaurants by concretely examining how this hybridization happened.

### 3.2 The hybridization of Taiwanese cuisine

The Taiwanese restaurants emerging during the 1960s were mostly situated in Taipei. As mentioned above, because Taiwanese cuisine was viewed as a Chinese regional cuisine, and Taipei was the city where most other Chinese restaurants were located. While there were numerous Beijing, Hunan, and Guangdong restaurants in Taipei, the owners of Taiwanese restaurants found the need to distinguish themselves from other Chinese regional restaurants. In contrast, although those restaurants in cities other than Taipei did serve native local dishes, the owners did not feature their restaurants as “Taiwanese restaurants.”

In these “Taiwanese restaurants,” it is common that owners used to speak Hokkien.<sup>74</sup> Many of their regular guests also use Hokkien as their first language. Some of these chefs entered the catering business as an apprentice in food stalls and restaurants, or followed their father’s occupation, while others established a

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<sup>74</sup> There is no exception in the Taiwanese restaurants interviewed in this research that the owners took Hokkien as their first language.

restaurant by themselves without having previous experience. There are two major ways by which the dishes served in Taiwanese restaurants were taught and learned: transmission and adaptation/borrowing.

### **(1) Transmission**

Before the establishment of modern cooking schools, the transmission of Taiwanese cuisines was dependent upon the tutor-apprentice system. That is, apprentices entered the dining business by finding teachers, working either in food stalls, restaurants, or for outdoor banquets (*bando*). Then the apprentice could learn from daily training and demonstrations given by their teachers. This tutor-apprentices system was an important channel for the transmission of dietary culture. Many of those apprentices who worked in restaurants during the Japanese colonial era became chefs at grand hotels or Taiwanese restaurants during the 1960s.<sup>75</sup> They started training after acquiring kitchen jobs as teenagers and then learned various cooking techniques. Through this system, old recipes and cooking techniques were transmitted, but only when these apprentices learned in Mainland restaurants, could they cook other Chinese regional cuisines such as Beijing and Hunan cuisine.

Not all cooks started their careers as apprentices. Some chefs were born in families engaging in *bando* and established restaurants once they had accumulated sufficient capital.<sup>76</sup> In this case, those dishes served in rural outdoor banquets play an important role in the menus of these Taiwanese restaurants.

### **(2) Adaptation and borrowing**

Adaptation and borrowing happened during the transmission process, with consumer suggestions influential in the development of Taiwanese cuisine. Many owners and chefs at Taiwanese restaurants admitted that they had often modified recipes in accordance with consumers' suggestions and preferences. For example, A-du, the owner of a famous Taiwanese restaurant established in 1977, said that their sautéed fish had changed recipe twice. The first change followed the suggestion of a consumer and made the dish more delicious. However, he learned some secrets from a Guangdong chef and made the second modification to the recipe, which made the dish even more popular. He argued that such changes were allowed in Taiwanese cuisines because Taiwanese people are more open-minded and tolerant:

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<sup>75</sup> Two examples of this case are chef Huang De-xing (see Chapter One) and Lee Xin-fu. Lee was the chef of the Grand Formosa Regent Hotel. See *Minshengbao* [People's Livelihood Newspaper] (abbreviation *PLN*), 4/23/1993(17).

<sup>76</sup> In this research, chef/restaurant owner A-qin is a case representing this condition.

I do not know if my idea is right or wrong, but I do think that we Taiwanese are more open-minded than Mainlanders, therefore we adopted some cooking methods from their cuisines such as Guangdong cuisine and Hunan cuisine. Yes, they have their own recipes, but for Taiwanese people, we just try to find the best way to make food delicious.<sup>77</sup>

In Taiwanese cuisine, it is not extraordinary to adopt cooking methods from other Chinese regional cuisines. However, in contrast, Mainland restaurants and Mainlander consumers placed more emphasis on the “authenticity” of dishes.<sup>78</sup> Such a borrowing took place particularly when cooks changed jobs among various Chinese restaurants. Some informants mentioned that they learned new skills in different restaurants and employed them when they made Taiwanese cuisine.<sup>79</sup> In another Taiwanese restaurant, the owner Ms. Li also pointed out that she borrowed from Sichuan and Guangdong cuisine, emphasizing that “all cuisines influence each other.” During the adaptation process, similarly, Ms. Li highlighted the influence of consumers, stating that they improved banquet cuisines to fit consumers’ needs.

For example, our price for a banquet was NT\$2500 for a table, but a consumer wanted the banquet for NT\$5000 a table, so I had to figure out how to create a banquet worth this value.<sup>80</sup>

Preparing more seafood dishes is an important way to increase the value of a banquet, and seafood is also viewed as a crucial component of Taiwanese cuisine by most cooks and consumers interviewed in this research. Since the 1980s, when the economy was growing and the living standard rising, seafood was marked as a characteristic of Taiwanese restaurants. For example, A-ming’s Taiwanese restaurant is known for its seafood dishes, accounting for almost 80% of their menu. A-ming said that taking seafood as their signature dishes is a strategy of running a Taiwanese restaurant. Seafood is just part of Taiwanese cuisine, and it becomes popular only when people are better off. Characterized by sophisticated seafood dishes, A-ming’s restaurant attracted many entrepreneurs and politicians who could afford the extraordinarily higher price than other Taiwanese restaurants cost. Such a

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<sup>77</sup> Interview: A-du (10/25/2006, Taipei).

<sup>78</sup> For the negative attitudes of Mainland writers towards the hybrid dishes in Taiwanese restaurants, see Chapter Four.

<sup>79</sup> Interview: A-zhong, A-du, Mr. Chen (4/24/2008, Kaohsiung). In addition, A-du admitted that Fu Pei-mei’s cookbooks are important learning materials for them.

<sup>80</sup> Interview: Ms. Li.



particular stress on seafood dishes can also be seen in other Taiwanese restaurants whose prices are higher than average.

Despite these adaptations, many of the interviewed chefs raised the idea that the common characteristic of Taiwanese cuisine is to highlight “the original taste of food.” A-ming emphasized that although it is unavoidable borrowing cooking methods from other Chinese regional cuisines, this essential feature of Taiwanese cuisine is still crucial. Mr. Chen, a chef who mastered Hunan and Guangdong cuisines but established a Hakka restaurant in Kaohsiung also noted this point of view and provided concrete examples. He said that the seasoning in Taiwanese cuisine depends on plants such as garlic, ginger, and spring onion; in contrast, “Mainland cuisines” adopt many spices such as star anise, cassia, clove, and Chinese red pepper as seasoning. These spices create more layers of taste in a dish; on the contrary, the original taste of food is highlighted more in Taiwanese cuisine. Furthermore, he also suggested that cooking oil and chili are used less in Taiwanese cuisine than in other Chinese regional cuisines, and thus Taiwanese cuisine has a relatively light taste.<sup>81</sup>

#### **4. MARGINALIZATION AND HYBRIDIZATION OF TAIWANESE CUISINE**

This chapter shows: (1) the transformation from Taiwanese restaurants to public canteens and liquor houses; (2) the proliferation of Mainland restaurants and the dissemination of Chinese recipes; and (3) the proliferation of new “Taiwanese restaurants” during the 1960s and 1970s. Through these processes, a new culinary map was formed. Transplantation and hybridization are the main characteristics of this culinary remapping process. When a new government and numerous migrants came to Taiwan, a condensed Chinese culinary map was transplanted to Taiwan through substantial change in restaurants and symbolic change in the representation of cookbooks.

This “transplantation” had an influence on two levels. On the first level, some Chinese regional cuisines, particularly Zhejiang cuisine, moved into the position of haute cuisine. While the higher ranks of the new government was composed mainly of Mainlanders during the post-war period, their preference for a home taste saw Mainland restaurants become the venues where senior officials gathered. In contrast, Taiwanese cuisine was marginalized and stigmatized, hiding in public canteens and liquor houses. While the Nationalist government claimed itself the legitimate government of China, Chinese culture was highlighted as legitimate culture,

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<sup>81</sup> Interview: Mr. Chen.

including traditional Chinese culinary art. On the secondary level, with these forced migrants, diverse Chinese restaurants, food stalls, and snacks appearing in daily life in Taiwan, hybridization among regional cuisines took place through cookbooks, markets, and restaurants. In restaurants and family kitchens, cooks learned cooking methods and food from other regional cuisines and applied them to local dishes. During the hybridization process, Chinese regional cuisines became localized and different from their original taste on the Mainland.

In other words, the first level concerns haute cuisine and presentation, with the changing meanings of haute cuisine revealing a close relationship to changes in ruling class and “nationhood.” The state and the ruling class influenced the discourse and presentation of cuisine through policy and regulation at this level. In contrast, the second level concerns the adaptation and borrowing that was taking place in daily life. As is the case of Mexico (Pilcher, 1998), a common foodway can be shaped and disseminated nation-wide through communal cooking and media coverage.

The hybridization of Taiwanese cuisine also shows the changing relationship between Taiwanese cuisine and Chinese cuisine. During the colonial era, the definers differentiated Taiwanese cuisine from Chinese cuisine, with Taiwanese cuisine presented as a selection of various Chinese cuisines. However, after the end of the colonial period, the new ruling class who came from the Mainland did not seek to fashion themselves by enjoying Taiwanese cuisine as the Japanese elites did, resulting in local dishes not being promoted as haute cuisine. Instead, the “national cuisine” obviously referred to Chinese cuisine that consisted of various Chinese regional cuisines during this period. As Taiwanese culture is a regional variation of Chinese culture, Taiwanese cuisine was regarded as a Chinese regional cuisine. The new definers differentiated Taiwanese cuisine from other Chinese regional cuisines such as Zhejiang, Beijing, and Hunan cuisines. The notion of Taiwanese cuisine is thus inside the concept of Chinese cuisine but not outside of it.

This chapter has shown how the notion of “Taiwanese cuisine” was transformed from elite food to “small dishes” that was placed in a much lower position in the culinary hierarchy under the authoritarian regime. The next chapter will further examine how Taiwanese cuisine was shaped as a national symbol during the wave of political democratization.

## Chapter Three

### Taiwanese Cuisine as a National Symbol:

#### State Banquets and the Proliferation of Ethnic Cuisine

##### 1. POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION TOWARD DEMOCRATIZATION AND INDIGENIZATION

The authoritarian regime of the Nationalist government faced serious setbacks in the international community and drastic changes in domestic society during the 1970s. While the Chinese Communist Party had consolidated its power on the Chinese Mainland, the international community recognized the need to make the People's Republic of China (PRC) a legitimate member of that community. In 1971, the delegation of the Republic of China (ROC), which was led by the Nationalist government, withdrew from the United Nations, marking the growing diplomatic isolation of the ROC.<sup>1</sup> When the most important partner of the Nationalist government, the US government, built a diplomatic relationship with the PRC in 1979, the Nationalist government could not rely on international support to maintain its authority and claim of being the legitimate government of China.

Along with these international changes, challenges to the Nationalist government came from domestic society. Increasing numbers of Taiwanese people had organized groups to engage in political activities since the late 1970s, expressing dissenting opinions and challenging the hegemony of the Nationalist government. These activities resulted in several violent encounters between the activists and law enforcement during elections and demonstrations<sup>2</sup>; and these activities ended up strengthening popular support for the activists. The opposition camp outside the Nationalist Party, which was termed *Dangwai* (outside-the-party),

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<sup>1</sup> As one of the founding members of the United Nations (U.N.), the ROC government represented the Chinese seat in the U.N. until 1971, when the representation of China shifted to the PRC authority in Resolution 2758. Regarding the issue of the Chinese delegation in the U.N., see Hickey, 1997.

<sup>2</sup> Among these demonstrations, the Kaohsiung Incident is particularly remarkable. In the summer of 1979, some activists started to publish the magazine *Formosa* (*Meilidao*) and built it up as a platform where the opposition camp could come together. The "Formosa group" organized a demonstration in Kaohsiung on Human Rights Day (December 10), during which violent conflicts erupted between police and demonstrators. Although the publishers of *Formosa* were arrested and sentenced, these publishers and their lawyers became founding members of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) established in 1986, including Chen Shui-bian, the man elected president in 2000.

grew up gradually in line with election campaigns after the mid-1970s and acquired approximately 30% of the popular vote. Through their acquired elected offices and their increasingly popular electoral campaigns, the activists put more pressure on the Nationalist government to drive political reform and, hence, to broaden popular support and legitimacy for the cause.<sup>3</sup>

Diplomatic failure prompted the Nationalist government to seek new bases of legitimacy in domestic society, and domestic challenges required that there be more liberalization (Chu, 1992; Hood, 1997; Wakabayashi Masahiro, 1994; Wang 1989). Consequently, the government led by the new leader Chiang Ching-kuo, the son of Chiang Kai-shek,<sup>4</sup> accelerated political reform in the late 1970s, leading to a shift “from hard to soft authoritarianism,” which refers to more open electoral competition and less repression by security police (Winckler, 1984, pp. 481-482). With increasing deregulation during the early 1980s, important steps toward liberalization were taken in 1986 and 1987. The first opposition party, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) was established on September 28, 1986, while the Nationalist government began adopting an attitude of toleration instead of suppression. On July 15, 1987, President Chiang Ching-kuo lifted martial law, which had effectively operated to maintain the dominance of the Nationalist government over society since 1949. Following the end of martial law, the government lifted the ban on new newspaper and new political parties, passed a law regulating political marches and assemblies of citizens, and ended the ban on visits to the Mainland. All these policies were implemented between 1986 and 1989, showing condensed progress in political transformation and the loosening of legal and institutional control exerted by the authoritarian regime. These steps are also viewed as a turning point that further transformed the political system into a “representative democracy” (Myers, 1987, p. 1003).<sup>5</sup>

During the process of change undertaken by the political regime, indigenization was a crucial political-reform policy. The indigenization or the Taiwanization policy was implemented by Chiang Ching-kuo when he became the Premier in 1972 (Rigger, 1999, pp. 111-112). He widely recruited native Taiwanese into the political system and administrative offices, including his nomination of Lee Teng-hui, a native Taiwanese, as the Vice President in 1984. Indigenization

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<sup>3</sup> Regarding the electoral politics since the late 1970s and its influences on the democratization in Taiwan, see Dickson, 1996; Huang, 1996; Rigger, 1999.

<sup>4</sup> Chiang Ching-kuo became the Chair of the Nationalist Party after the death of his father in 1975 and assumed the presidency in 1978.

<sup>5</sup> The shift from being an authoritarian regime towards democracy is one of the most important issues in political research on Taiwan. Concerning detailed accounts of the institutional changes by the political regime, see, for example, Cheng & Haggard, 1992; Rigger, 1999; Tien, 1989; Wakabayashi Masahiro, 1994.

increasingly became a crucial direction of Taiwan's political development during the presidency of Lee Teng-hui that began in 1988.<sup>6</sup> The members of the political leadership were gradually replaced by native Taiwanese, and the opening of elections was crucial for the advancement of indigenization. The Legislative Yuan elections in December 1992 produced a new parliament wholly elected for the first time ever by the people of Taiwan. Before this election, the legislators were the individuals who had been elected on the Mainland prior to 1949 and who had immigrated to Taiwan with the Nationalist government.<sup>7</sup> Also, indigenization was highlighted as a principle in education, cultural development, and language use during the 1990s. Corcuff (2004) notes that indigenization during the presidency of Lee Teng-hui was reflected in changes regarding at least eight areas: (1) the makeup of politicians, public servants, and high-ranking military officers; (2) political symbols, such as the leader on bank notes; (3) political institutions and the electoral system; (4) official assertions regarding Taiwanese identity and cross-strait relations; (5) political socialization; (6) the emphasis on native language in policy and daily language use; (7) emergence of local culture; and (8) the native content in movies and TV programs (pp. 76-92). The above eight areas were sites where changes highlighted native Taiwanese culture, manifesting a shift from a China-centered paradigm to a Taiwan-centered paradigm (Wang, F-c., 2005, pp. 58-73).

In this context, Taiwan was increasingly considered a "distinctive nation" during the 1990s. While the DPP, the main opposition party, gradually established its grounds in local and national elections and claimed its pursuit of Taiwanese independence, both issues of "independence from or reunification with the Mainland" and "Taiwanese or Chinese national identity" became the main issues entangled with democratic reform and the indigenization policy. It is suggested that Taiwanese identity or Taiwanese nationalism became prominent during the process of democratization, revealing an intimate association between these issues (Tien & Chu, 1996, pp. 1145-1148; Wachman, 1994; Wu, 2004). Political scientist Wu Yu-shan (2004) argues,

Since Taiwan began its democratization in the late 1980s, and particularly since Lee Teng-hui assumed paramount power in 1993, Taiwanese nationalism has been on the rise. The result is a deep identity

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<sup>6</sup> Chiang Ching-kuo died in January 1988, with Vice President Lee Teng-hui succeeding Chiang in the office of the president and winning election to the presidency in 1990. On March 22, 1996, Lee won the first direct presidential election in Taiwan, with his term ending in 2000.

<sup>7</sup> These legislators who were elected before 1949 stayed in the position until 1992. Before the election in 1992, only limited new legislators were elected in the "supplemental elections."

crisis on the island, as the emergent new exclusive Taiwanese identity combats the old Chinese identity. (p. 614)

Although there are different understandings about the origins and foundation of so-called Taiwanese nationalism, that is, when and why Taiwan has been a nation,<sup>8</sup> Taiwanese nationalists generally present an ideology sharply opposed to Chinese nationalism. As Wu states, Chinese nationalism treats the Taiwanese people as a constituent part of the Chinese people and Taiwanese culture as a branch of Chinese culture. In contrast, Taiwanese nationalism rejects this viewpoint and treats China as an alien entity, asserting that Chinese is at most a cultural or ethnic designation (Ibid.). Taiwanese nationalists insist that Taiwan is an independent sovereignty whose distinctive national culture is different from the Han Chinese culture; moreover, the historical memories of the Taiwanese are said to be different from those of the Chinese people on the Mainland.

With the development of Taiwanese nationalism and an increasing emphasis on the distinctive features of Taiwan, some members of the DPP raised the concept of “four major ethnic groups” (*sida zuqun*) in the late 1980s (Wang, 2003, p. 3).<sup>9</sup> It was argued that the “four major ethnic groups” constitute the Taiwanese people and make Taiwan a distinct nation. The four main “ethnic groups” refer to Haklo, Hakka, Mainlanders, and Aborigines.<sup>10</sup> Aborigines are the indigenous people of Taiwan who belong to the Austronesian language family. Mainlanders are those Chinese people who migrated to Taiwan from the Mainland after 1945, as introduced in Chapter Two. The Haklo and Hakka indicate those Han Chinese whose ancestors emigrated from the Chinese Mainland to Taiwan mainly during the period from the early 17<sup>th</sup> to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Haklo concerns those who came from Fujian Province in China, and the Hakka from Guangdong Province. According to an official survey by the Taiwan Government-General in 1926,<sup>11</sup> 88.4% of the total population in Taiwan was Han Chinese. Among those Han, 83.1% were from Fujian and 15.6% from Guangdong. In other words, 70% of the Taiwanese population was Haklo during the Japanese colonial era. In the latest survey conducted by the Council for Hakka Affairs (CHA) in the summer of 2008, 69.2% of the total population in Taiwan chose Haklo as their single “ethnic identity,” with 13.5% choosing Hakka,

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<sup>8</sup> For some representative publications on Taiwanese nationalism, please see Chen, 1993; Shi, 1998; Shi, 1994.

<sup>9</sup> Rudolph (2004) suggests that the concept was proposed in 1989 (p. 98), whilst Chang (1997) suggests that the concept was asserted by 1991 (pp. 60-63).

<sup>10</sup> This thesis capitalizes “Mainlander” and “Aborigines” as well as “Haklo” and “Hakka” when indicating their equivalence in ethnic discourse.

<sup>11</sup> *Taiwan zaiseiki kanminzoku kyōkanbetsu chyōsa* [Survey of the Hometown of the Han People in Taiwan], 1928, pp. 4-5.

1.9% regarding themselves as Aborigines, and 9.3% as Mainlanders (CHA, 2008, p. 77).<sup>12</sup>

The definition of the “four main ethnic groups” reveals that the term “ethnic group” in this concept is used more as a political classification than an anthropological classification. Haklo, Hakka, and Mainlanders are mainly Han Chinese, with Mainlanders actually including people from various provinces in China, including peoples other than the Han, such as Manchu and Hmong. The sociologist Wang Fu-chang (2003) has analyzed the origin and formation of the categorization of ethnic groups in Taiwan, suggesting that the development of this concept was based on three kinds of oppositional categorizations of people that took place during different historical periods: [Han and Aborigines], [Mainlander and native Taiwanese] (within the Han category), and [Haklo and Hakka] (within the native Taiwanese category) (pp. 56-63). He thus argues that such an “ethnic group” is essentially an ideology of categorization. Rudolph (2004) further argues that this categorization has been created by Haklo politicians as an alternative to the dichotomy of “Taiwanese and Mainlanders,” aiming at gaining the support of other “ethnic groups” in addition to the Haklo. Although the concept is a simplified categorization that neglects differences within each “ethnic group,” it has become a dominant frame of reference adopted generally by Taiwanese politicians and media in discussions on ethnic and nationalist issues. Through this categorization, the population in Taiwan is not divided by differences among the Chinese “provinces” to which Taiwanese citizens can trace their origins; this division of Chinese provinces implies a common Chinese origin. In contrast to the common Chinese origin, the distinction of the “four major ethnic groups” highlights the different languages and cultures existing only within Taiwan, which thus shifts the focus away from the “Chinese nation” to a new “Taiwanese nation.”

In summary, through drastic political transformation during the 1980s and 1990s, it has been popular to argue that Taiwan has been a distinctive nation, showing a sharp contrast with the emphasis on traditional Chinese culture during the 1950s and 1960s. These transformations created an institutional and discursive environment for claiming the nationhood of Taiwan. It was in such a context that the presidential candidate of the DPP, Chen Shui-bian got a surprising success in the 2000 presidential campaign, ending the nearly half-century-long rule of the Nationalist government (1945-2000). After Chen’s victory, the state banquets became highly charged with symbolic references to indigenization and ethnic integration.

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<sup>12</sup> In this survey, 4% of the interviewees did not choose any “ethnic group” but regarded themselves as “Taiwanese.” The outcome of this survey can be acquired on the website of the Council for Hakka Affairs: <http://www.hakka.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=43944&CtNode=1894&mp=1869&ps=> (retrieved 3/20/2009).

Furthermore, Hakka cuisine and Aboriginal cuisine emerged as “ethnic cuisine,” showing a parallel development with the political transformation. This chapter will focus on state banquets after 2000 and the proliferation of “ethnic cuisine,” examining how Taiwanese cuisine became a symbol of nationhood after the political transformation toward indigenization and democratization was implemented.

## **2. POST-2000 STATE BANQUETS RELATIVE TO INDIGENIZATION AND “ETHNIC INTEGRATION”**

A state banquet is an official banquet exclusively for the heads of state of those countries having diplomatic relations with Taiwan.<sup>13</sup> Before 2000, state banquets were hardly a public issue. They were held in special venues, such as the Office of the President, the Grand Hotel, or *Zhongshan* Hall, where only important politicians could be in attendance. For example, the state banquet for the King of Iran in May 1958 was held in the Office of the President, with the participants including the leaders of the five branches of the government, ministries, and diplomatic officers, totaling approximately 50 people.<sup>14</sup>

During the presidency of Chiang Kai-shek (1950-1975), Chiang and many government officials usually wore a traditional long Chinese robe and mandarin jacket to state banquets. The hall for a banquet would be decorated with Chinese antiques, with Chinese classical music serving as background music; the Chinese classical music was labeled “national music” at that time.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, some of the banquet menus would be printed in the characters used during the Qin Dynasty of ancient China around B.C. 221-207.<sup>16</sup> From clothes and music to the furniture and decoration, all these components constituted a space where the Chinese characteristics were significant. These Chinese characteristics also corresponded to the political reality: the Nationalist government, as led by Chiang Kai-shek, was still the legitimate government of the ROC and a member of the United Nations.

The Chinese characteristics could also manifest themselves in the banquet cuisine. During the presidency of Chiang Kai-shek, the first dish of a state banquet was conventionally a “plum blossom assortment” (梅花拼盤), which was a cold dish assembled in the shape of plum blossom, the national flower of the ROC.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> It is the definition of the Office of the President: please see the website: [http://www.president.gov.tw/1\\_art/act/banquet.html](http://www.president.gov.tw/1_art/act/banquet.html) (retrieved 3/28/2009).

<sup>14</sup> *UDN*, 5/14/1958(1).

<sup>15</sup> *UDN*, 3/11/1959(1); *UDN*, 6/1/1969(1).

<sup>16</sup> The image files of early banquet menus can be accessed in the database established by the Foundation of Chinese Dietary Culture (<http://ttsgroup.com.tw/newpage1/db16.htm>).

<sup>17</sup> The cuisine served in the state banquets before the mid-1960s were mainly Western dishes, while those afterwards were Chinese dishes.



After the cold dish, there was often a soup, a Chinese snack,<sup>18</sup> a shark fin dish, some meat and vegetable dishes, and a rice or noodle dish. A banquet would end with a Chinese dessert, such as walnut pudding (核桃酪), eight treasure rice (八寶飯), and red date cake (棗泥拉糕), which were snacks from Beijing or Zhejiang Province on the Mainland. Among the banquet desserts, the most famous one was steamed red bean rice cake (紅豆鬆糕) made by the Grand Hotel, which was propagated as the favorite dessert of Madam Chiang, the wife of Chiang Kai-shek.

The mode of state banquets changed gradually. During the 1980s, conventional Chinese banquet dishes such as bird's nest soup, abalone, and pigeon were served frequently. During the presidency of Lee Teng-hui beginning in 1988, the state banquets still served a selection of Chinese haute cuisine, taking the value and quality of the foods as the main consideration of the banquet cuisine.<sup>19</sup> However, the emphasis has changed significantly since the transition of power to the new DPP government in 2000.

Two prominent characteristics of the inauguration banquet of Chen Shui-bian on May 20, 2000 were the adoption of local snacks (*xiaochi*, literally meaning "small-eating") and the symbolic cuisines of "ethnic integration."<sup>20</sup> Two local snacks from Tainan, the hometown of Chen Shui-bian, were served at the banquet: milkfish ball soups (虱目魚丸湯) and bowl cakes made of rice (碗粿). It was the first time that local snacks were served at an inauguration banquet. Media reports highlighted that local snacks were receiving a national honor insofar as they were a main course at the state banquet, and the media praised the choice as an effective way to raise the status of local Taiwanese snacks.<sup>21</sup>

In addition to the emphasis on local snacks, the idea of "ethnic integration" was presented by the dessert "taro and sweet-potato cake" (芋薯甜糕), because taro used to be regarded as the mark of Mainlanders and the sweet potato represented native Taiwanese. Food is both a substance and a symbol; it is a way of communication that carries with it lots of messages (Counihan & Esterik, 1997; Wilk, 1999). The symbolic meaning of food can be shaped in a historical process, or it can surface in a specific social context, and the dessert "taro and sweet-potato cake" is a combination of both. Whereas taro and the sweet potato have been popular ethnic symbols, the

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<sup>18</sup> For example, curry dumpling (咖哩餃), spring rolls (春捲), and steamed beef buns (牛肉包子).

<sup>19</sup> For example, in Lee's inauguration banquet in 1996, some of the main dishes included lobster salad, shark fin, seafood dumplings, and giant oysters with abalone. However, the selection of "Chinese cuisine" during the 1990s has been hybridized and indigenized, as shown in Chapter Two.

<sup>20</sup> Other principles of this inauguration banquet include indigenization, popularization, and environmental protection, resulting in the disqualification of such dishes as shark fin and bird's nest.

<sup>21</sup> See for example *UDN*, 5/15/2000(38); *PLN*, 5/18/2000(38).

dessert transformed their implicit meanings into explicit and edible ones, which further made the state banquet a field where national rhetoric was expressed.

Both the banquet cuisine and the banquet settings were designed elaborately, reflecting an attempt to be distinct from any other previous state banquet held by the Nationalist government. Named the Four Seasons Banquet, the menu for the inauguration banquet was designed as a booklet with 39 pages, including both Chinese and English versions. In the prelude article “President Chen Shui-bian’s Wish for This Four Seasons Banquet,” Chen claimed that the banquet aimed to present the culinary culture of Taiwan to all people. He said that he had been born on the island and had acquired the same eating habits as those of the island’s people; therefore, all the ingredients at this state banquet were products chosen from Taiwan, including local snacks. Chen emphasized that these dishes reflected not only his own lived experiences but also those of most Taiwanese people.

In contrast to the Nationalist government, which had been transplanted from the Mainland, Chen’s government was the first one to stem from a political party created in Taiwan. Therefore, “being born on the island” became an important theme that was repeatedly underlined at this banquet. To highlight the local snacks of Tainan, the menu introduced the history of milkfish ball soup and bowl cake made of rice. It was also the first time that the menu introduced the flowers and liquors used in the banquet – both being Taiwanese products – and the five “national chefs” who were responsible for the banquet.

The symbolic importance of the state banquet became further significant at the inauguration banquet of 2004, when Chen won the controversial presidential campaign after having survived an assassination attempt on the eve of the election. Bathed in an intense atmosphere, the 2004 state banquet highlighted the same themes as the 2000 banquet, indigenization and ethnic integration, and applied them to every dish. Each dish at the banquet was given a specific name and meaning, such as “integration and peace among ethnic groups,” “everyone is united to support a strong nation,” and “a strong nation and peaceful society,” as Table 3.1 shows.

**Table 3.1 Menu of the inauguration banquet in 2004**

<b>Name of cuisine</b>	<b>Food ingredients</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Family of the south and north	Dried duck from Yilan (宜蘭鴨賞), mullet's eggs from Kaohsiung (高雄烏魚子), <i>Sergia lucens Hansen</i> from Donggang (東港櫻花蝦), smoked tea duck from Tainan (台南燻茶鵝)	Integration and peace among ethnic groups
Dragon leaping over the sea	Lobster produced along the eastern seashores of Taiwan	The nation is full of pleasure
Pride and happiness	Local lamb and asparagus with cheese, baked tomato, and plum sauce	Feeling pride and happiness
Plentiful harvest and storage	Sea fish from Penghu with spinach sauce	Enjoying a rich life every year
All civilians' celebration of their reunion	Soup with Tainan milkfish ball (台南虱目魚丸), spray ball (花枝丸), and vegetables	All people are united as a circle
Deep emotion toward hometown	Rice and meat dumpling, Hakka style (客家粽)	Everyone is united to support a strong nation
Sweet taste of home	Desserts: taro cake from Dajia (大甲芋頭酥), Aboriginal millet mochi cake (原住民小米麻糬), almond tea (杏仁露) with fried bread sticks (油條)	Sweet reunion at home
Fresh fruits of Taiwan	Pineapple from Guanmiao, bell fruit from Linbian, muskmelon from Pingdong, watermelon from Taidong	A strong nation and peaceful society

Source: "520 Guoyan caise chulu, Taiwan bentu shicai weizhu [Dishes of the state banquet on May 20, local food plays the main role]," *Central News Agency*, 5/13/2004

The banquet menu was a selection of famous Taiwanese local delicacies, such as the dried duck from Yilan and taro cake from Dajia. The emphasis on “locally produced” food was intended to echo the slogan “indigenization,” with the adoption of “ethnic cuisines” following another principle of ethnic integration. These “ethnic cuisines” included Hakka dumplings, Aboriginal millet cakes, and fried bread sticks (*youtiao*), the last of which constituted a normal food for breakfast in northern China and became popular in Taiwan after 1949. In contrast to the 2000 inauguration banquet that emphasized the integration of Mainlanders and native Taiwanese, the 2004 inauguration banquet strongly conformed with the discourse of “four major ethnic groups.” At the state banquet, the image of Taiwan was composed of the four main ethnic groups and local counties, which were marked by local agricultural products. Additionally, the menu repeatedly called for peace and unity, which made the banquet a feast of symbolic and political rhetoric, speaking more to the domestic audience than to the ambassadors and foreign guests who participated in the banquet.

In general, the emphasis on locality is not only crucial to the claim of indigenization but also closely related to domestic politics and commercial interests. The close connection can be exemplified by the “localized state banquet” (*guoyan xiexiang*) policy after 2000.

### **The “localized state banquet” policy**

Since 2001, state banquets have been frequently held in different counties along with the capital Taipei, a shift in policy that was innovated by the DPP government. From 2001 to the end of 2004, all eleven counties in Taiwan hosted a state banquet at least once, with the only exception being the outlying islet Penghu County. The first “localized state banquet” took place in Kaohsiung City, whose mayor was Hsieh Chang-ting, a leading member of the DPP. Just ten days later, another state banquet was held in Yilan County, which was the hometown of the Premier at that time.

The most significant feature of all the localized state banquets has been the emphasis on locally produced foodstuff and specialties. All counties deliberately chose, for state banquet dishes, such local delicacies as ricecake strips (粿條) from Meinong, “rice with shredded chicken” (雞肉飯) from Jiayi, and peddler’s noodles (擔仔麵) from Tainan. In addition, ethnic integration is still a common symbol presented in these banquets. For example, the banquet held in Pingdong County included *Minnan* (Haklo)<sup>22</sup> cuisine, Hakka cuisine, Aboriginal cuisine, and local cuisine, which were well orchestrated with the official discourse of ethnic groups and indigenization. However, it is not a formula that cuisines from all “ethnic groups”

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<sup>22</sup> *Minnan* means “south of Fujian Province,” which is the region where the Haklo originated.

have to be presented at a banquet. Instead, as the ethnic-population ratio in each county varies, so the dishes presented in each county differ. For example, in those counties such as Xinzhu and Miaoli where Hakka people occupy a larger proportion of the population, Hakka cuisine plays a main role at a banquet. The food and guests of these state banquets are listed in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2 State banquets held in cities other than Taipei (2001-2004)<sup>23</sup>**

Date	Location	State banquet guests	Local delicacies
Mar. 16, 2001	Kaohsiung Grand Hi-lai Hotel	Blaise Compaore, President of Burkina Faso	Ricecake strips from Meinong (美濃粿條)
Mar. 25, 2001	Yilan Stadium in Sport Park	Mejía Domínguez, President of the Dominican Republic	Dried duck (鴨賞), salty liver (膽肝), <i>gaozha</i> (糕渣), <sup>24</sup> meat sausage (肉捲)
Jul. 2, 2001	Taizhong Grand Formosa Regent Hotel	Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal	Hakka bowl cake (客家碗粿), authentic Taiwanese dessert: sweet taro paste (芋泥) and almond tofu (杏仁豆腐)
Jul. 16, 2001	Xinzhu Ambassador Hotel	H. E. Dr. Arnoldo Aleman Lacayo, President of the Republic of Nicaragua	Hakka cuisine: boiled chicken (白斬雞), shrimp cake (蝦泥餅) with orange sauce (桔子醬), Hakka bean sauce (豆醬), Hakka style rice dumplings (客家板粽)
Mar. 13, 2002	Jiayi County Jia-yuan Restaurant	Idriss Déby Itno, President of the Republic of Chad	Rice with shredded chicken (雞肉飯)
Apr. 6, 2002	Tainan Tayih Landis Hotel	Lic. Alfonso Portillo Cabrera, President of the Republic of Guatemala	Peddler's noodles (擔仔麵), rice bowl (米糕), lotus-root cake (蓮藕餅), lotus tea (蓮花茶), local seasonal fruits
May 21, 2002	Taoyuan City Monarch Plaza Hotel	Enrique Bolanos Geyer, President of the Republic of Nicaragua	Bean curd (豆干), Hakka-style fish (客家石斑), local-produced mulberry cheese dessert (桑椹乳酪)
Jul. 17, 2002	Zhanghua County Leader Landmark Hotel	Jean-Bertrand Aristide, President of the Republic of Haiti	Crispy oyster (蚵嗲), stir-fried rice vermicelli (炒米粉)

<sup>23</sup> The “localized state banquet” policy was implemented mainly during the first presidential term of Chen Shui-bian (2000-2004). From 2001 to 2004, every county (except Penghu) held at least one state banquet. During Chen’s second term (from 2005 to 2008), state banquets were held in only a few major cities, including Taipei, Tainan, and Kaohsiung.

<sup>24</sup> *Gaozha* is a deep-fried dish made of mashed pork, shrimp, and chicken.

	in Lugang		
Aug. 20, 2002	Yunlin County Janfusun Prince Hotel	Luis Ángel González Macchi, President of the Republic of Paraguay	Bamboo-cooked rice (竹筒飯)
Oct. 7, 2002	Kaohsiung City National Kaohsiung Hospitality College	Abel Pacheco de la Espriella, President of the Republic of Costa Rica	Seafood from Kaohsiung port
Oct. 21, 2002	Nantou County Taiwan Provincial Administration Information Hall	Ricardo Maduro, President of the Republic of Honduras	Local agricultural products, smoked plum juice (烏梅汁), local wine, local mineral water and Oolong tea
Aug. 23, 2003	Hualian County Farglory Hotel	Francisco Guillermo Flores Perez, President of the Republic of El Salvador	Local agricultural products, local lobster, wild chicken, wild vegetables, bamboo-cooked rice
Oct. 8, 2003	Jilong city Evergreen Hotel	Yahya A.J.J. Jammeh, President of the Republic of Gambia	<i>Dingbiancuo</i> (鼎邊趖), <sup>25</sup> deep-fried fish in batter (天婦羅)
Oct. 11, 2003	Miaoli County West Lake Resortopia	Dr. Bakili Muluzi, President of the Republic of Malawi	Local chicken and lamb, Hakka rice dishes, local fruits
Jan. 7, 2004	Pingdong County Taiwan Indigenous Peoples Culture Park	Fradique de Menezes, President of the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe	<u>Minnan cuisine</u> : bell fruit with mullet eggs (蓮霧配烏魚子), deep-fried local onions (洋葱圓) <u>Hakka cuisine</u> : spiced pig's knuckle (豬腳), "United four ethnic groups" (rice noodles with Chinese yam)(淮山板條卷) <u>Aboriginal cuisine</u> : heart of betel palm and chicken stew (檳榔心燉)

<sup>25</sup> *Dingbiancuo* is a noodle dish made on the margins of a kind of special wok. It is a famous local snack from Jilong Night Market.

			雞盅), local fish with white wine (白酒櫻哥魚) <u>Local cuisine</u> : local paprika (小青龍辣椒) and local mushrooms (雨來菇) <u>Dessert</u> : local snack “green mung bean sweet soup” (綠豆蒜)
Feb. 12, 2004	Xinzhu Lai-fu Resortopia	Anote Tong, President of the Republic of Kiribati	Hakka cuisine: Sautéed local persimmon fruit with scallops (柿餅醬干貝), local grass jelly in black-boned chicken soup (仙草燉烏雞)
May 23, 2004	Tainan Tayih Landis Hotel	Nicanor Duarte Frutos, President of the Republic of Paraguay	Broth of milkfish soup (浮水虱目魚羹), peddler’s noodles (擔仔麵) from Tainan, rice bowl (米糕), and An-ping bean dessert (豆花)
Dec. 16, 2004	Taidong City Naruwan Hotel	H.E. Dr. Kessai Note, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands	Local sugar apple (釋迦), sailfish, heart of betel palm (檳榔心), boar, wild lobster, wild chicken, local-produced milk, local “moon rice” (月光米)

Source: collected from the newsletters of the Office of the President ([http://www.president.gov.tw/1\\_art/act/banquet.html](http://www.president.gov.tw/1_art/act/banquet.html)) and the UDN news database (<http://udndata.com>) (retrieved 3/17/2009).

In his e-newspaper, Chen Shui-bian explained his intentions underlying the “localized state banquet” policy,<sup>26</sup> arguing that there are three advantages: foreign guests can have opportunities to understand local Taiwanese customs; the guests can taste local Taiwanese delicacies; and finally, local leaders also would get a chance to interact with these foreign guests. He underlined the assertion that state banquets in Taiwan are characterized by the *bando* style, which was a popular method of feasting in Taiwan particularly before the 1990s.<sup>27</sup> Chen further claimed that a state banquet is “for eating and for improving friendships,” which is a common saying in Hokkien, the language of the Haklo. However, although Chen argued that his state banquets were

<sup>26</sup> From October 18, 2001 to May 15, 2008, the Office of the President published the “E-Newspaper of A-Bian President” every Thursday.

<sup>27</sup> On *bando*, please see Section 4.2 of Chapter One.



similar to *bando*, there were actually many differences between them, involving such aspects as cuisine, location, and dining manners. Among these state banquets, most were held in grand hotels, with the cuisines served individually and not shared by the guests seated at the same dining table.

In such “localized state banquets,” an important characteristic is the change of both the dining venues and the participants, changes that transformed a state banquet from a diplomatic event to a domestic and commercial competition. While there were few official venues suitable for state banquets in counties other than Taipei, localized state banquets had to be held in local hotels or restaurants. Therefore, state banquets started to involve competition among local restaurants and grand hotels, particularly as holding a state banquet could bring fame and more revenue to a winning business. Since the “localized state banquet” policy commenced in 2001, state banquets have become an advertisement for hotels and cuisines. Restaurants and shops participating in the preparation of state banquets have promoted themselves as “state banquet hotels” and “state banquet restaurants,” with their food re-named “state banquet snacks.” It was reported that the revenue for a restaurant hosting the state banquet in Jiayi increased 20-30%, and the manager of another hotel in Tainan agreed that the term “state banquets” had become a brand for their snacks.<sup>28</sup> Following the fashion, some hotels and county governments started to promote a “state banquet menu.” For example, Kaohsiung Grand Hotel promoted the “State banquet menu of Southern Taiwan,” which remained at the high price of NT\$2,200 for each individual.<sup>29</sup> In contrast, the Zhanghua County Government cooperated with a hotel to promote a “normalized state banquet menu from Zhanghua,” emphasizing that it was as cheap as NT\$5,000 for ten people and thus affordable to most consumers.

In addition to changes in dining venues, there were changes in the participants at state banquets held at the local level. For state banquets in Taipei, the participants were restricted to officials from ministries and diplomatic circles; in contrast, the participants expanded considerably in those state banquets outside Taipei. Legislators, university principals, local political leaders, and business representatives were also invited to attend these local state banquets.<sup>30</sup> As a result, the opportunity to participate in a state banquet became a field where local politicians and businessmen

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<sup>28</sup> *UDN*, 8/22/2002(20).

<sup>29</sup> *PLN*, 7/14/2000(30).

<sup>30</sup> For example, in the banquet at Hualian, the guests included “representatives from all occupations in Hualian”; see the newsletter from the Office of the President: <http://www.president.gov.tw/php-bin/prez/shownews.php4?Rid=8624> (retrieved 3/17/2009). In another banquet in Taipei County, the participants covered local administrators, councilors, university principals, and business representatives; see the newsletter from the Office of the President: <http://www.president.gov.tw/php-bin/prez/shownews.php4?Rid=8627> (retrieved 3/17/2009).

competed. For example, a Nationalist councilor from Taoyuan County protested that she was not invited to the state banquet at Taoyuan on May 21, 2002; there was even a rumor that the invitations to “business representatives” at that state banquet had been decided according to the amount in taxes that they paid.<sup>31</sup> Such a protest and such a rumor indicate that state banquets have become a local competition, involving not only commercial interests but also political exchanges.

Nevertheless, it is too narrow a view to regard state banquets as merely a field of political struggle, ignoring the banquets’ influence on a wider range of consumers. As Chen Shui-bian frequently claimed, his principle was to popularize the banquets and to eliminate their elitist nature. With the “localized state banquet” policy, he could take state banquets from northern Taiwan to the south and from Taipei to local towns. The “localized state banquet” policy effectively popularized state banquets and commercialized them as a specific brand for the promotion of local tourism. With the increasing emphasis on local delicacies in state banquets, more restaurants highlighted their products as state banquet cuisine, state banquet dessert, or state banquet wine in the early 2000s. The proliferation of “state banquet food” reveals the popularity of local specialties among consumers. For example, Figures 3.1 and 3.2 are advertisements for some dishes served at state banquets. Figure 3.1 advertises a State Banquet Set Menu of a noodle shop in Tainan, whilst Figure 3.2 promotes the “bamboo-shoot bun” which has been a banquet dessert. During the process of popularizing state banquets, the government claimed that the combination of local agricultural products and culture and tourism resources could help build a new hometown with which local people could identify.<sup>32</sup> In other words, the government argued that local food is the link bridging people and the land, and cultural resources can further strengthen this link. Through the production of local food and the development of tourism, the relationships between local people and the land are more intense so that people’s sense of belonging to the land could deepen. As the sense of belonging to a given territory is important to the political claim of nationhood, the connection between people and land is crucial.

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<sup>31</sup> *UDN*, 5/22/2002(18).

<sup>32</sup> This claim was stated in the accounts of the official project “Local Agricultural Industry and Culture,” which is a sub-policy under the policy “Challenging 2008: National Development Project” of the Executive Yuan. Accounts of the policy can be acquired from the website of the Council for Economic Planning and Development:

<http://www.cepd.gov.tw/m1.aspx?sNo=0001568&ex=2&ic=0000153> (retrieved 8/30/2007).

**Figure 3.1 Advertisement for the State Banquet Set Menu in a restaurant in Tainan**



**Figure 3.2 Advertisement for the bamboo-shoot bun** (the left side is a photo of the chef with President Chen Shui-bian)



In sum, the policy of localized state banquets transformed both the concept of “locality” and the concept of “ethnic integration” from political tools to an edible reality, with the process of transformation involving competition between local governments, grand hotels, and local politicians. On the one hand, a localized state banquet is a deliberate performance disseminating political claims top-down; on the other hand, it creates an occasion for the general populace to experience the asserted ethnic integration by consuming these state banquet dishes and by becoming acquainted with local products.

Among the cuisines served in state banquets, Hakka cuisine and Aboriginal cuisine play important roles as two pillars supporting the ethnic-integration discourse. However, the framing of the two cuisines as “ethnic cuisines” occurred late in this process and can be traced back to the 1990s.

### 3. THE FRAMING OF “HAKKA CUISINE”

#### 3.1 Hakka and “Hakka cuisine” discourse

Hakka, literally means “guest people” and refers to a Chinese ethnic group whose ancestors were Han Chinese originating from northern China. After several large-scale migrations resulting from war and famine beginning in the fourth century A.D., tens of millions Hakka people have come to reside in southeast China, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia countries (Constable, 1996, p. 3; Wang, 2007, p. 876). Initially, they were called Hakka (guest people) by local inhabitants because of the former people’s status as newcomers to these regions; however, the term has been gradually transformed into a term of their self-assertion (Leong, 1997; Luo, 1965).

The Hakka people in Taiwan migrated mainly from Guangdong Province in southeast China three hundred years ago, comprising approximately 13.5% of the total population in Taiwan.<sup>33</sup> However, the “ethnic consciousness” of Hakka was the least intense among all “ethnic groups” in Taiwan during the mid-1990s (Huang, 1993, pp. 218-224), and some Hakka intellectuals called themselves an “invisible ethnic group” (Luo, 1993; Xu, 1991, p. 4). The “invisibility” of ethnicity reflected a variety of reasons. First, Hakka are not distinct from other Han Chinese in appearance; second, their residential neighborhoods are joined with or surrounded by those of other ethnic groups. In addition, Hakka people seldom spoke their language in public before the Hakka movement; this was partly because the Nationalist government discouraged the use of native languages before the 1980s and partly because Hakka had a practical need to communicate with other ethnic groups (Zeng, 2000, pp. 78-96). Therefore, their ethnic boundary was quite vague until the Hakka movement started during the late 1980s.

In Zeng’s (2000) research on the Hakka movement, she points out that it was political liberalization and the proliferation of social movements that triggered the emergence of the Hakka movement in 1987. Following the Aboriginal movement that started in 1984, Hakka activists actively organized themselves. On October 25, 1987, some young Hakka created the first Hakka magazine *Kejia fengyun* [*The Hakka Storm*], aiming to promote Hakka people and to guide them into a more central position in Taiwanese society. This is viewed as the beginning of the Hakka movement.<sup>34</sup> In the first issue of the magazine, they argued that there were four

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<sup>33</sup> According to the latest survey conducted by the CHA in 2008, 13.5% of the population in Taiwan chose Hakka as their single “ethnic identity,” while 18.6% regarded themselves as “Hakka” when they had multiple choices. In contrast to the earlier survey by the CHA conducted in 2004, single-choice identity was selected by 12.6% of respondents and a multiple-choice identity was selected by 19.5% of respondents.

<sup>34</sup> See Wang, 2007, p. 880; Xu, 1991, pp. 7-8. The magazine was renamed *Hakka* in January

million Hakka people in Taiwan but that their voices were ignored, so the magazine and its supporters intended to raise the ethnic consciousness of Hakka people by struggling for the common interests of Hakka (*Kejia fengyun*, 1987, “Opening Statement”).

After setting up the magazine, Hakka communities organized a movement to “return to our mother-language” in December 1988, demanding that society pay more attention to the Hakka language and challenging the language policy of the Nationalist government.<sup>35</sup> In December 1990, the Association of Taiwanese Hakka Public Affairs (*Taiwan Kejia Gonggong Shiwu Xiehui*) was established, transferring their main concern from language policy to the political participation of the Hakka and to a more consolidated Hakka identity. Its core members criticized that the Haklo and Mainlanders monopolized most social resources and political positions and that political participation should be a fundamental way in which the Hakka advance their rights and change their marginal position in Taiwanese society (Association of Taiwanese Hakka Public Affairs, 1993). They also argued that although Hakka are “native Taiwanese,” Hakka culture is often excluded from the definition of “Taiwanese culture.” For example, the term “Taiwanese language” (*Taiyu*) exclusively refers to Hokkien, the language of the Haklo, which totally neglects the Hakka language. Such a usage was widely accepted because the Haklo constituted about 70% of the population in Taiwan. Many Hakka felt excluded and marginalized by this situation, criticizing that the Haklo monopolized the meaning of Taiwanese-ness (Li Qiao, 1993, pp. 7-9).

It was in this context that the “four major ethnic groups” concept spread during the 1990s, partly as a response to the criticism from non-Haklo people. Spontaneously, the central government was urged to establish institutes charged with administering the affairs of the two “ethnic groups” (the Hakka and Aborigine groups). Following the establishment of the Council of Indigenous Peoples (CIP) in 1996, the Council for Hakka Affairs (CHA) started operations on June 14, 2001. The CHA claimed that its establishment was a response to the vociferous demands of the Hakka people, and that the CHA’s goal was to perpetuate the Hakka language and Hakka culture, which had been “expelled and suppressed by mainstream culture.”<sup>36</sup>

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1990.

<sup>35</sup> Their concrete demands included lifting the ban on Hakka broadcasting and TV programs, promoting bilingual education in school, and establishing a language policy that treated all native languages equally.

<sup>36</sup> Their goals also include fighting for the rights and future of the Hakka, and ultimately helping advance Taiwan to the status of a modern society respecting all races and ethnic groups. See the official statement by the CHA on the website: <http://www.hakka.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=7008&CtNode=529&mp=212&ps=> (retrieved 3/22/2009).

From the Hakka's status as an "invisible ethnic group" to the establishment of the CHA, the ethnic boundary of the Hakka has become progressively clearer in public discourse, with cuisine being one of the most recognizable Hakka symbols in the building of the Hakka image. The CHA actively organized activities to promote Hakka cuisine, treating it not only as a crucial component of Hakka culture but also as an effective way to attract public attention to Hakka culture. For example, the CHA (2003, 2004) published two introductory books on Hakka cuisine, paying particular attention to Hakka history and dietary culture.<sup>37</sup> In their respective first sections, the two books introduce the history of Hakka immigration, the features of Hakka food, and the food's association with Hakka ethnicity. Following these articles written by scholars is an introduction to restaurants and illustrations of representative Hakka dishes, such as Hakka stir-fries (客家小炒) and pork with preserved mustard stew (梅干扣肉). Hakka history, ethnic characteristics, and specific dishes compose a discourse on Hakka cuisine, and this discourse has spread widely through other Hakka cultural activities. For example, both the Hakka Food Festival (2005, 2006) and the Hakka Exhibition (2006) emphasized the same characteristics and dishes of Hakka cuisine, underlining that these culinary features originate from their immigration history, and that these features can symbolize Hakka ethnicity: frugality, hardship, hard work, and toughness (*yingjing*, literally meaning "hard-neck").<sup>38</sup> In addition to official activities, Hakka cookbooks are an important means to reproduce the discourse. All Hakka cookbooks in Taiwan have been published after 1996, and the writers of these cookbooks have tended to encourage readers, when enjoying traditional Hakka dishes, to recall their pasts and ancestors.

The typical introductions to exhibitions and cookbooks on Hakka cuisine underline three main characteristics of the "Hakka cuisine discourse":

### **(1) Salty, fatty, and aromatic characteristics**

*Hakka dishes are salty because dishes can be preserved for a longer time in this way. Salty dishes can replenish the body's salt after Hakka's hard work on farms as well. Hakka dishes are fatty because they can supplement the physical strength that Hakka need for heavy work. Hakka dishes are fragrant so that they can induce the appetite to eat more.* (CHA, 2006, p. 10)

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<sup>37</sup> The two books are publications of the "Hakka talent chef cultivation" project by the CHA.

<sup>38</sup> According to Wang's survey (2005) in 15 towns where Hakka's dwelled, "hardworking and frugal" is the first impression of the Hakka that people have, whether they are inhabitants (42%), shopkeepers (39%), or tourists (25%), and "tough" is often used to describe their stubbornness. See Wang, 2005.

The above official interpretation is tied to the immigration history of the Hakka people. Hakka intellectuals claim that they are late-comers in southeast China as well as in Taiwan; therefore, the Hakka could not live in the plains but lived in mountainous regions, struggling hard to survive in such a tough environment (CHA, 2003, p. 18; CHA, 2004, p. 13). Living in mountainous regions is a decisive factor influencing Hakka dietary habits. In official publications, it is argued that Hakka people had to expend much more labor to earn their living, thus, they needed more calories to maintain physical strength (CHA, 2003, p. 25). Consequently, they had to eat salty and fatty dishes to survive. Moreover, it is also stated that because Hakka people have been diligent and frugal, they used to add more salt and oil when cooking in order to preserve food for a longer time.

## **(2) Dried and preserved ingredients**

*Hakka live on every mountain. Due to the difficulty of finding food in mountainous regions, the frugal Hakka have developed all sorts of pickled foods. These pickled foods are very tasty and can be preserved for a long time.* (CHA, 2006, p. 10)

For the same reasons as those explaining their frequent immigration and struggles in tough mountainous regions, Hakka people are good at preserving vegetables and meat (CHA, 2003, pp. 19-20, 35-36; CHA, 2004, pp. 29-31). Representative pickled foods by the Hakka range from vegetables and fish to sauces such as mustard, radish, bamboo shoot, ginger, cucumber, plum, pork, red yeast, perilla, and sour citrus sauces. On the one hand, pickled food can be carried with ease, making it suitable for the Hakka's frequent resettlements. On the other hand, because fresh food is difficult to acquire in mountain regions, Hakka people pickle food to adapt to the hard environment. The official introduction asserts that their sophisticated pickling skills demonstrate the ability of Hakka to make good use of natural resources. Furthermore, they preserve food for future use instead of wasting it, which also reflects the Hakka virtue of being thrifty.

## **(3) Not delicate but practical and tasty**

*What is important in Hakka dishes is its substance but not appearance. Hakka dishes are large, simple, and undecorative. It reflects the ethnic characteristics of the Hakka: being practical but not being fancy.* (CHA, 2003, p. 35)

The official introductions to Hakka cuisine in cookbooks and exhibitions often stress that Hakka people emphasize the quality of foodstuffs rather than the appearance and

decoration of dishes, leading to Hakka cuisine's being characterized as simple but delicious (CHA, 2003, p. 55). It is claimed that although most Hakka dishes look plain, they are delicious and substantive.

These features together constitute an ideal type of Hakka cuisine and articulate the image of the Hakka people as wandering, endeavoring, frugal, painstaking, and diligent, which is in conformity with the "image of the Hakka" shown in the survey by the CHA (2004) and Wang's research (2005). The survey by the CHA shows that frugal (33.2%), painstaking (30.0%), and united (12.5%) are considered traditional characteristics of the Hakka people (CHA, 2004, pp. 4.29, 4.30). Wang's survey (2005) explores the most impressive and explicit image of the Hakka in society, concluding that diligent and frugal (34%) are the most significant characteristics of the Hakka. The second and third most significant characteristics in this survey are Hakka cuisine (23%) and hardworking (18%). This outcome shows that there has been an explicit impression of Hakka ethnic characteristics, which serves as a boundary that distinguishes them from other ethnic groups. Hakka interviewees in this survey considered "diligent and frugal" and "hardworking" the most significant characteristic (45%) of the Hakka. In contrast, only 10% of the Hakka interviewees considered Hakka cuisine significant. This difference shows that "diligent, frugal, and hardworking" have become features that Hakka people self-consciously use to distinguish themselves from other ethnic groups. Hakka cuisine, in contrast, is more important for other ethnic groups' efforts to define the boundaries of the Hakka.

#### **"Classical Hakka cuisine"**

The establishment of boundaries involves demarcation and identification. Whereas the above features of Hakka cuisine serve as a form of demarcation from other ethnic groups, the CHA provides an explicit definition of "Hakka cuisine." The definition is a conclusion drawn by nine specialists of Hakka culture and cuisine in 2005. They agree that "Hakka cuisine" refers to

Dishes which Taiwanese Hakka families are used to preparing; classical regional Hakka cuisine; and dishes cooked using Hakka ingredients.  
(CHA, 2006, pp. 8-9)

Following this definition, these specialists present a list of "Hakka ingredients," which include 28 pickled vegetables, organs, and processed foods made of tofu.



Based on this definition and characteristics, eight dishes comprising four stews and four stir-fries are highlighted as classical Hakka cuisine.

### Four Stews

Pickled vegetables and pig belly stew (酸菜炆豬肚)	Pork stew (炆爌肉)	Spareribs and radish stew (排骨炆菜頭)	Rich broth stewed with dried bamboo shoots (肥湯炆筍乾)
			

### Four Stir-fries

Hakka stir-fry (with squid and pork) (客家小炒)	Pig intestine stir-fried with shredded ginger (豬腸炒薑絲)	Duck blood stir-fried with leek (鴨血炒韭菜)	Pig lung stir-fried with pear and tree fungus (豬肺黃梨炒木耳)
			

**Figure 3.3 Four stews and four stir-fries**

Source: The website of the Council for Hakka Affairs. (retrieved 3/25/2007)

<http://www.hakka.gov.tw/lp.asp?ctNode=1711&CtUnit=161&BaseDSD=7&mp=1699>

According to the introduction by the CHA, these “classical dishes” are served during important Hakka festivals and life-cycle rituals such as weddings, funerals, and deity-worshipping ceremonies. The four stews combine fatty meat with diverse vegetables, whilst the four stir-fries mix vegetables and internal organs of pigs or other ingredients that are only eaten during festivals. However, although these dishes

are served on important occasions, they are not complicated in their cooking methods and do not use expensive ingredients.

Concerning cooking methods, stewing is a cooking method that enables dishes to be repeatedly heated so that the food can be preserved for a longer time; stir-frying is a cooking method that mixes various ingredients with a little cooking oil, so that leftovers are easily dealt with and so that the use of cooking oil is efficient (CHA, 2003, pp. 18-19). For example, the dish “Hakka stir-fry” is an invention that incorporates the leftovers of the Chinese New Year, mixing streaky pork and dried squid, which are eaten only at festivals. Furthermore, as internal organs of pigs are used in many of the above dishes, the CHA suggests that the Hakka make full use of pigs, which again reflects and embodies the Hakka virtue of “being frugal and practical” (CHA, 2006, p. 19).

Not only do the CHA actively define and reproduce “Hakka cuisine discourse,” but so too do local governments such as Miaoli County, whose Hakka residents amount to 60.6% of the population (CHA, 2004). The Miaoli Government started its certification of Hakka restaurants in 2003, issuing official marks for those restaurants passing the “authenticity” examination, which is conducted by specialists including chefs from grand hotels and college teachers who visit the restaurants without advance notification and give scores.

Nevertheless, ironically, while the boundaries of Hakka cuisine are becoming clearer through identification, promotion, and certification, the culinary characteristics of “salty, fatty, and aromatic” and their ties with the Hakka image of being “frugal, painstaking, and hardworking” are facing challenges from the trend of healthy and modern cuisine. For example, in the first year of certification, 30 local restaurants received certification for being an “authentic Hakka restaurant,” and the number rose to 39 in the certification of the second year. However, the number decreased to 28 in the third year. The restaurant owners who had received certification acknowledged that the mark only had limited help for their business, so their interests in certification diminished.<sup>39</sup> In 2007, although the certification of authentic Hakka restaurants continued, the Miaoli Government started a new certification scheme for “healthy Hakka cuisine,” placing more emphasis on nutrition, hygiene, and innovative recipes that “use less oil and salt, but keep the authentic Hakka taste.”<sup>40</sup>

The two certification schemes reveal the dilemma that arises when the CHA tries to define the boundaries of Hakka cuisine. Traditional cuisine, with its salt and oil, serves as a link to Hakka history and to Hakka ethnic characteristics, but the cuisine may turn off potential consumers. Furthermore, while the CHA draws the

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<sup>39</sup> Interview: the Hakka restaurant owner Mr. Huang (6/19/2008, Miaoli).

<sup>40</sup> See the Miaoli County Government website: [http://www.miaoli.gov.tw/index/policy/policy6\\_02.asp?memoir\\_id=1519](http://www.miaoli.gov.tw/index/policy/policy6_02.asp?memoir_id=1519) (retrieved 12/11/2007).

boundaries for Hakka cuisine by highlighting its connection with the common ethnic experience of suffering and cultural values, the boundary carries with it the danger of locking Hakka into a position defined by a relatively low social-economic status. Although oily and salty dishes were previously considered precious food, they no longer symbolize fortune and hospitality nowadays. Instead, when scientific knowledge discourages people from eating too much fat, internal organs, and salt, consumers take increasingly negative attitudes towards oily dishes, viewing them as foods from backwards times. Small servings of healthy and delicate foods have become the new trend. To resolve this dilemma, the CHA has started to describe Hakka cuisine as “sour, sweet, and aromatic” and not “salty, fatty, and aromatic” in their official advertisements (CHA, 2006, p. 8). This reveals that the dispute about “tradition or modernization” has been entangled with social-hierarchy issues.

### **3.2 The debate about tradition and modernization**

The fundamental intention of the CHA to promote Hakka cuisine is not only to highlight Hakka traditions but also to transform Hakka cuisine into haute cuisine, which will strengthen its reputation and elevate its price. As a CHA committee member claimed, the CHA attempts to promote Hakka culinary culture by modernizing it and making it healthier (CHA, 2003, pp. 22-23). The former Vice Councilor of the CHA, Zhuang Jin-hua, confirmed this intention overtly: “Culture and business must be connected. The proliferation of business can bring fortune and then self-confidence to Hakka people. It is impossible to have self-confidence without fortune.”<sup>41</sup> Zhuang emphasized that the intention of the CHA is to build a more elegant and modern image of Hakka cuisine and make it popular in dining markets. Dining business can boost the local economy of Hakka counties, and increase the self-esteem and social status of the Hakka, contributing to the building of a stronger Hakka identity. In other words, the emergence of innovative Hakka cuisine is an active claim for a desired ethnic identity, and such an emergence is encouraged by political elites.

In order to modernize Hakka cuisine and preserve its ethnic characteristics simultaneously, some Hakka restaurants use the strategy of working with those traditional “Hakka ingredients” defined by the CHA but changing the cooking methods. Such new dishes are identified as “innovative Hakka cuisine.” For example, Figures 3.4 and 3.5 present “innovative Hakka cuisine” from the 2006 Hakka Cuisine Festival. They both adopt traditional ingredients for the Hakka dishes but arrange the

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<sup>41</sup> Interview: the former Vice Councilor of the CHA, Zhuang Jin-hua (11/17/2006, Taipei).

food in fashionable ways, revealing a sharp contrast between themselves and rather simple traditional dishes presented in Figure 3.3.



**Figure 3.4 Salty roasted chicken without bone (去骨鹽焗雞)**



**Figure 3.5 Ginger chicken with mushrooms (溫中薑茸雞)**

Source: Taken at the 2006 Hakka Cuisine Festival by the author

Grand hotels have played an important role in the innovation of Hakka cuisine. Chefs from grand hotels cooperate with the CHA in various promotional activities, such as teaching classes (e.g., Hakka Chef Cultivation) and designing innovative Hakka recipes. When these innovative Hakka cuisines were introduced at the first national Hakka Cuisine Carnival (in 2005), the CHA asserted that Hakka cuisine had been modernized and upgraded because it was now available at five-star hotels.<sup>42</sup> In other words, the CHA regards “being sold at grand hotels” as an important criterion for haute cuisine. By doing so, the CHA has underlined that these haute Hakka cuisines served in grand hotels mark the higher status of Hakka people.

However, not all Hakka restaurants agree that traditional cuisine can or should be changed in this way. Some restaurateur-defenders of traditional cuisine insist that their restaurants serve only dishes with the traditional Hakka characteristics of being oily, salty, and aromatic, emphasizing these dishes’ connection with ethnic characteristics such as being hardworking, thrifty, diligent, and practical. These defenders argue that these dishes are never Hakka cuisine when cooked with less oil because the connection between “innovative” dishes and the past vanishes. Although people who advocate modern Hakka cuisine argue that giving up traditional oily dishes symbolizes the elevation of Hakka from their lower status in the social

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<sup>42</sup> Official website of the CHA: <http://www.hakka.gov.tw/ct.asp?xItem=10201&CtNod e=735&mp=200&ps=> (retrieved 3/25/2007).

hierarchy, people who insist on traditional tastes still regard these characteristics as important ethnic marks.

For example, Mr. Liu, the owner of the restaurant Old Hakka Cuisine in Meinong, a famous Hakka town in southern Taiwan,<sup>43</sup> asserts,

My restaurant is a quite traditional Hakka restaurant. All the dishes served here are those our ancestors ate during their time. True, they are oilier and saltier by today's standards, but they are our characteristics, I do not want to change them...they are not delicious if they are not so oily and salty...well, people do not eat these dishes every day, so it will not influence their health too much.<sup>44</sup>

Mr. Liu ended his antique business to establish this restaurant in 2001, when Meinong started to attract many native tourists. He decorated it with old furniture and antiques, such as wooden tables, cow carts, and old cooking utensils. The restaurant is designed to be a nostalgic space that reminds customers of a typical farmer's house from several decades ago. In addition to the space, most dishes feature the above characteristics of Hakka cuisine, despite some changes in ingredients. For example, the menu does not feature duck blood and pig lung because customers dislike them nowadays. However, in contrast with "innovative Hakka cuisine," dishes here are oily and fatty, which is also a characteristic underlined by Mr. Liu. He argues that these old dishes are embedded in Hakka history and should therefore be remembered by and conveyed to descendants. He adds that most of his customers are not Hakka and that they come to try Hakka cuisine for the first time; hence, his restaurant can popularize Hakka cuisine by preparing it according to the original approaches.<sup>45</sup>

While Mr. Liu's traditional Hakka dishes appeal to tourists, Mr. Lin's restaurant in Taipei attracts Hakka customers who miss that food from their childhood. Mr. Lin rejects changing either the ingredients or the tastes that customers are accustomed to, emphasizing that cooking methods and ingredients are both crucial to maintaining authentic Hakka flavors.<sup>46</sup> For example, in the typical Hakka dish "Hakka stir-fry," Lin rejects the popular addition of bean curd and celery; he sticks to the recipe he used to know during childhood, and criticizes other approaches as being

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<sup>43</sup> According to the surveys conducted by the CHA (2004, 2008), the Hakka residents in Meinong were 85.8% of the population in 2004 and 78.3% in 2008.

<sup>44</sup> Interview: Mr. Liu (12/17/2006, Meinong).

<sup>45</sup> Other restaurants in Meinong are also "traditional" ones, serving oily, salty, and fatty dishes; and the taste "has not changed for several decades," according to local inhabitants (12/17/2006, Meinong). Although these restaurants are not highlighted as Hakka restaurants, local inhabitants recommend these small and old restaurants as conveyors of "authentic Hakka cuisine." There are few restaurants serving innovative Hakka cuisine in Meinong.

<sup>46</sup> Interview: Mr. Liu.

“inauthentic.” Such criticism comes from the connection between food and memory, revealing that sensory responses to food can often serve as the site where the notion of authenticity is contested. In this sense, changes in these sensory responses to food “encode broader societal changes and provide reference points between then and now, here and there” (Choo, 2004, p. 209).

The development of traditional and innovative Hakka cuisine not only relates to tradition and modernization, but also to ethnic politics and changing social hierarchies. Traditional Hakka cuisine is defined to highlight the distinctive ethnicity of the Hakka, and the value of tradition is particularly significant in modern times; therefore, traditional Hakka cuisine is adopted as a symbol of Hakka ethnicity. However, because the Hakka movement since the late 1980s has aimed to elevate the status of the Hakka, and because the degree of modernization is viewed as a marker of social status, modern and innovative Hakka cuisine has become an important symbol that highlights the tastes and the distinctiveness of the Hakka. In short, Hakka cuisine symbolizes either ethnicity or social status. “Tradition or innovation” becomes a choice between ethnicity and social status. Restaurants and consumers make choices according to their different emphases on identity and social status.

#### **4. ABORIGINAL CUISINE: IN THE CENTER OR ON THE MARGINS?**

##### **4.1 The Aboriginal movement and “Aboriginal cuisine”**

Aborigines are the indigenous peoples of Taiwan who belong to the Austronesian language family, accounting for approximately 2% of the population in Taiwan.<sup>47</sup> Since the immigration of the Han – mainly Haklo and Hakka – to Taiwan in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, some Aborigines moved to mountainous areas and others assimilated to Han Chinese culture and intermarried with Han Chinese. During the Qing Dynasty, the Aborigines were officially classified as “barbarians” (*Fan*), including “wild” or “raw” Aborigines (*Sheng Fan*), and “civilized” or “cooked” Aborigines (*Shou Fan*). The former refers to those who dwelt in mountainous regions and who did not accept Han customs, while the latter indicates those who were living in plains regions and who were more assimilated into the Han culture; the latter were known also as “plains tribes” (*Pingpuzu*) (Li, 1982).

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<sup>47</sup> According to statistics by the Interior Ministry, the population registering as Aborigines in 2000 was 408,030, accounting for 1.83% of the total population, while by the end of 2008, there were 494,107 Aborigines, an increase to 2.14% of the population. See the Interior Ministry website: [http://www.moi.gov.tw/stat/news\\_content.aspx?sn=2084](http://www.moi.gov.tw/stat/news_content.aspx?sn=2084) (retrieved 4/1/2009).

Although consisting of more than 10 tribes living in different mountainous regions and having different languages, customs, and social structures, those Aborigines living in the mountainous regions were given a general ethnic name during the Japanese colonial era: *Takasagozoku* in Japanese or *Gaoshazhu* in Mandarin, literally meaning “high mountain tribes.”<sup>48</sup> After the Second World War, they were termed “mountain compatriot” (*shandi tongbao*, shortened to *shanbao*) in the Constitution of the ROC, indicating “people living in the mountains.” Until the late 1980s, it was common in Taiwan to call the Aborigines “barbarians” in Hokkien and regard them as poor, unreliable, lazy, and drunk.

The Aborigines’ endeavor to fight discrimination started with the establishment of the Association for Promoting the Rights of Taiwanese Aborigines (*Taiwan Yuanzhumín Quányì Cújínhuì*) in 1984. Aboriginal intellectuals called for the replacement of the term *shanbao* (mountain compatriot) with the term *Yuanzhumín* (Aborigines), and for a reversion from Han personal names to original personal names, pronounced in their native languages. Between 1988 and 1993, Aboriginal groups held three “Return Our Land Back” demonstrations, demanding the return of their traditional lands in the plains areas.

The Aboriginal movement made significant progress during the 1990s. The second constitutional amendment was passed on June 28, 1994, replacing the name *shandi tongbao* with the name *Yuanzhumín*. Furthermore, the Council of Indigenous Peoples (CIP) was established in December 1996, earlier than the Council for Hakka Affairs. The Aboriginal movement and the Hakka movement both emerged in line with political liberalization during the second half of the 1980s. They were reactions against a nationalistic Chinese high culture (Chang, 2003, p. 48) and against the emerging dominant “Haklo culture” at that time. Both of the movements demanded the right to use their own languages and to have more participation in public affairs, denouncing the dominance of the Mainlanders and Haklo.

As shown earlier in this chapter, it was in this context that the discourse of “four main ethnic groups” emerged and gained wide acceptance. The discourse served to build a discourse uniting all people under the notion of a “Taiwanese nation,” and to highlight Taiwan as a consolidated community distinct from China. At this point, the Aborigines played a particularly crucial role among the four ethnic groups in establishing the distinction of Taiwan on both genetic and cultural levels (Rudolph, 2004). On a genetic level, Aborigines’ proximity to the Austronesians created a connection between Taiwan and the Pacific region, weakening the relationship

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<sup>48</sup> In the late 1960s, the Aborigines were categorized as nine tribes, but the number of tribes gradually increased. According to the Council of Indigenous Peoples, now there are 14 tribes: Amis, Atayal, Paiwan, Bunun, Puyuma, Rukai, Tsou, Saisiyat, Yami, Thao, Kavalan, Truku, Sakizaya, and Sediq. Concerning the categorization of the Aborigines, see Hsieh, 1994.

between Taiwan and the Mainland China. On a cultural level, the Aboriginal culture was a factor in distinguishing Taiwanese culture from Han Chinese culture. Many Taiwanese nationalists argue that the existence of the Aborigines serves as proof that Taiwan has its own historical and cultural roots and that Taiwan belongs to a cultural circle other than the Chinese culture. In other words, although the Aboriginal population is tiny and their social position is marginal, their Austronesian heritage plays a crucial and central role in building Taiwan up as a distinct nation.

### **Cookbooks on Aboriginal cuisine**

The Aborigines' status of being "marginal but crucial" has been exemplified in the discourse of Taiwanese cuisine since the second half of the 1990s. Aboriginal cuisine is listed as a crucial ingredient of Taiwanese cuisine in textbooks on culinary culture (Lin, 2004; Zhang & Yang, 2004), and in cookbooks on Taiwanese cuisine (Liang, 1999). An example of the typical definition of "Taiwanese cuisine" nowadays is:

It refers to all tastes of those people on the island. ... Its cooking methods were passed down by pioneers from Fuzhou, Zhangzhou, and Xiamen who crossed the Taiwan Strait.... People of the island include not only the aforementioned settlers, but also the Hakka, Aboriginal groups, and people from every province of China (Liang, 1999, p. 3).

Although this cookbook's preface mentions Aboriginal groups, the cookbook itself introduces no Aboriginal cuisine, and this method of presentation is similar to the methods in other culinary textbooks. In short, Aboriginal cuisine is an integral part of Taiwanese cuisine, even if it is only in a marginal position and never a focal subject.

The first cookbook focusing on Aboriginal food was published by the CIP and the National Kaohsiung Hospitality College in 2000, including both traditional and innovative Aboriginal cuisine. The publication was financed by an official project aiming to promote tourism, and cuisine was viewed as "a good tool to promote tourism," as the CIP Councilor puts it overtly (CIP, 2000, p. 3). In this cookbook, the Councilor further claims that the aim of this book is to "integrate Aboriginal cuisine and local specialties so as to create more commercial benefits" (Ibid.). To illuminate the cultural distinction of Aboriginal cuisine, the cookbook emphasizes that Aborigines enjoy a pure life in mountainous environments and have a great passion for nature. Arguing that their dishes are characterized by natural, clean, and original tastes, this cookbook introduces some representative Aboriginal dishes, as summarized in Table 3.3:



**Table 3.3 Aboriginal cuisine from the nine main tribes**

Tribe	Cuisine	Tribe	Cuisine
Bunun	<i>Bunun</i> cake (made by local millet) (布農糰) Millet rice (小米飯)	Puyuma	<i>Yinafei</i> mountain cake (以那馞山地糰) Fried wild rat with basil (九層野鼠)
Amis	<i>Alivongvong</i> <sup>49</sup> (阿里鳳鳳) Stir-fried wild vegetables	Atayal	Grilled meat on stone (石板烤肉) <i>Langying</i> (steamed sticky rice cake) (朗應)
Paiwan	Millet <i>Qinafu</i> (millet and pork meat-ball) (小米奇那富) <i>Jinbole</i> (Sorghum and pork dumpling packed in a banana leaf) (金伯樂)	Yami	Boiled taro and crab (芋泥加蟹肉) Grilled fish Steamed dried fish (蒸魚乾)
Tsou	Bamboo cooked rice (竹筒飯) Banana cake (香蕉糕)	Rukai	<i>Qinabu</i> (taro and meat dumpling) (奇那步) Grilled boar
Saisiyat	Grilled boar with papaya (木瓜拌山豬肉) Assorted wild flowers (野花拼盤) Cassava and spareribs soup (樹薯排骨湯)		

Source: *Yuanzhumin chuantong shipu [Traditional Aboriginal Cookbook]*, CIP, 2000.

The cookbook introduces the Aboriginal cuisines of the nine major tribes. These dishes have certain common characteristics in both food ingredients and cooking methods, and these characteristics differ from those typical of Han Chinese cuisines. Concerning the ingredients, these dishes depend strongly on millet, taro, various wild greens, and game such as wild rat and boar. This cookbook argues that because these foodstuffs are grown or acquired chiefly in mountains, Aboriginal dishes are truly natural. In contrast, it suggests that Aborigines seldom eat the main

<sup>49</sup> *Alivongvong* is the *Amis* name of this dish, which is a meat and sticky rice dumpling packed in leaves. Because it is easily transported, it was nicknamed “the *Amis* lunch box.”

ingredients used by Han Chinese, like rice and chicken, owing to the different lifestyles between the plains-based Han Chinese and the mountain-based Aborigines. Concerning cooking methods, there are no complicated cooking skills in Aboriginal dishes; Aborigines tend to cook by steaming, grilling, and boiling instead of stir-frying and stewing, which are often adopted by the Han. Therefore, Aboriginal dishes are described as “simple and original.” Moreover, many cuisines introduced in this cookbook maintain their local names and feature a guide to pronouncing them, all of which strengthens the exoticism of Aboriginal cuisine.

Natural, clean, and environment-friendly are the common features repeatedly underlined in other cookbooks about Aboriginal cuisines. For example, an official cookbook published by the Tourism Bureau emphasizes that despite including no extraordinary dish like shark fin, Aboriginal cuisine possesses a “back to nature” dietary culture by adopting food from the sky and from the land (Huadong Zonggu Guojia Fengjingqu Guanlichu, 2001, p. 55). It also describes Aboriginal cuisines as environment-friendly:

The Aborigines get food by planting, hunting, fishing, and collecting. When planting, they use neither pesticides nor fertilizer so their planting is good for our environment. In addition, hunting, fishing, and collecting do not change the ecological system and are therefore more nature-friendly. (Huadong Zonggu Guojia Fengjingqu Guanlichu, 2001, p. 6)

However, the description above is far from the reality. The Taiwanese government has made it illegal to hunt freely in the mountains, with many animals that the Aborigines used to hunt listed as endangered species; therefore, hunting is hardly a viable way of gathering food ingredients in the contemporary world. According to the Economic Survey of the Aborigines, only 27.5% of Aborigines still live in mountainous areas (CIP, 2006b). Although these Aborigines eat some wild animals such as snails and flying squirrels, and although some of these Aborigines run the risk of being arrested for hunting, most of their food comes from local markets and only wild vegetables can be collected easily.<sup>50</sup>

In addition to the emphasis on “being natural,” these cookbooks of “Aboriginal cuisine” connect culinary characteristics to the Aborigines’ ethnicity, as Hakka cookbooks relate Hakka cuisine to Hakka ethnicity. While most descriptions of Aboriginal cuisine relate it to nature, mountains, and primitiveness, the interpretation of this cuisine is strongly associated with enthusiasm, optimism, and

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<sup>50</sup> Interview: Ms. Bai, *Bunun* tribe (1/10/2008, Taidong).

friendliness. For example, one cookbook states, “The *Amis* are fond of various wild vegetables. Their strong bodies and tempered personalities seem to be associated with their preference for these wild vegetables” (Huadong Zonggu Guojia Fengjingqu Guanlichu, 2001, p. 11).

The above image of Aboriginal groups in cookbooks is similar to the image presented in exhibitions at the Taiwan Aboriginal Cultural Park and the Formosan Aboriginal Culture Village (Hsieh, 1999). Having analyzed the content of exhibitions, Hsieh concludes that the “mountain people” are presented as “a group of happy primitive people who inhabit remote mountainous areas, living in straw or stone houses. They hunt and fish for a living; the young girls show enthusiasm to visitors, old women are tattooed, and the daily work is dancing and drinking” (p. 104). Both the exhibitions and the cookbooks aim to promote tourism, with their introductions to Aboriginal culture being simplified. There is little explanation about the differences among tribes and there are no words introducing their current daily lives. Instead, the description of Aboriginal lifestyles, uses of food, and ethnic characteristics, are more like a romanticized version than reality.

Aboriginal cultural heritage plays an important role in the romanticized imagination. In 2001, the CIP held an Aboriginal-cuisine cooking contest, requesting participants to prepare dishes that corresponded to specific stories. As a result, the stories presented in the contest closely concern Aborigines’ ancestors and histories. For example, the story of the dish “roasted snails” states that because it was rather difficult for *Amis* ancestors to procure meat, many families raised snails as a substitute. A story from the *Thao* tribe describes a legend about their ancestors finding fish in a meadow. These legends, myths, and symbols further etch Aboriginal culture in actual dishes. In this regard, this affair resembles the promotion of Hakka cuisine by the CHA, the two efforts articulating cultural tales about cuisines and highlighting the traditional roots of dishes from long ago.

Another similarity between Aboriginal and Hakka cuisine lies in the differentiation between traditional and innovative cuisine. While traditional cuisine underlines historical and ethnic roots, the CIP employs innovative cuisine as an important way to upgrade Aboriginal cuisine to the level of haute cuisine. According to their own press, the CIP has two goals for promoting Aboriginal cuisine. The first is to promote the Aboriginal cuisine to the global market by using ingredients and cooking methods from Chinese and Western cuisines. Second, the CIP aims to upgrade the status of Aboriginal cuisine by highlighting the wisdom of Aboriginal culture (CIP, 2006a, p. 3). To achieve these ends, the CIP invited chefs from grand hotels to design new menus, adapting Western cooking methods and decorative approaches to innovative Aboriginal cuisines. This type of development was similar

to that of Hakka cuisine, viewing Westernization and modernization as important ways to upgrade to achieve “haute cuisine” status.

Another symbol marking the upgrade of Aboriginal cuisine is its presentation at state banquets. The Pingdong County Government published the cookbook *Yuanzhumin guoyan shipu [Aboriginal Cuisine for State Banquet]* in 2004, introducing “modernized Aboriginal cuisines” to “provide the President with choices for holding state banquets” (Pingdong University of Science and Technology, 2004, p. 1). These dishes feature ingredients that the Aborigines have used for cooking and that include millet, sticky rice, pumpkin, river fish, boar, and various wild vegetables, but the cooking process depends on modern cooking facilities, and the decoration is fashionable. However, despite the title *Aboriginal Cuisine for State Banquet*, the book’s dishes presents only those from the *Paiwan* and *Rukai*, which are the main Aboriginal tribes located in Pingdong County. In this way, local politicians have used Aboriginal cuisine to echo the calls for ethnic integration and calls for a “localized state banquet” policy. For local governments, Aboriginal cuisines are distinctive resources that attract tourists while helping to articulate ethnic integration.

## 4.2 Aboriginal cuisine in restaurants: imagination and adaptation

Ethnic restaurants are important sites for presenting ethnic differences (Ferrero, 2002) and for enabling consumers to have convenient contact with other ethnic cultures. The first restaurant characterized as “Aboriginal” was established in Taipei in March 1994. A Han youth who was enthusiastic about the Aboriginal movement established the restaurant with a co-investment from a *Bunun* youth and a *Puyuma* anthropologist, who had just created one of the most important Aboriginal magazines, entitled *Shanhai wenhua [Culture of the Mountains and Sea]*, in January 1994. Located in the neighborhood of Taiwan University, where many intellectuals and social activists assemble, the restaurant appeals to students, intellectuals, and urban Aborigines. It provides a venue for exhibitions and lectures about Aboriginal culture and serves as a platform where minority groups can present themselves and gather for activities; thus, the site has been a potential cauldron “for ethnic cultural resistance.”<sup>51</sup>

However, even in such a culturally oriented restaurant, its cuisine has to be adapted to consumers, most of whom are Han Chinese. Therefore, some dishes preferred by the Aborigines were removed from the menu, such as the internal organs of flying squirrels and a typical *Amis* dish, *silau* (希烙), which is salted meat with a particularly strong flavor. When some Aboriginal dishes were criticized as “too simple, too original” by consumers, the restaurant changed its cooking methods from

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<sup>51</sup> This term is used by Ferrero (2002) to describe U.S.-based Mexican restaurants.

steaming and boiling to stir-frying with seasoning that the Han are accustomed to (Zeng, 2002, pp. 54, 63). After the adaptation, the menu's dishes exhibited a strong similarity to those dishes presented in Aboriginal cookbooks, featuring various wild vegetables, bamboo cooked rice, and grilled boar. However, the restaurant has preserved the original Aboriginal-language pronunciation of some dishes' names, such as *Pinapilan* (taro sausage), to create an exotic impression (Zeng, 2002, p. 63).

As previous studies have shown, ethnic restaurants are sites serving selective dishes that have been adapted to the tastes of local consumers and that provide an "exotic" eating experience within the boundaries of cultural expectations (Abarca, 2004; Ferrero, 2002; Lu & Fine, 1995). Consumers look for genuine but still tasty foods in ethnic restaurants, and the criterion of tastiness is based largely on one's lived experiences and eating habits. In this context, ethnic restaurants have created an "imagined pseudo ethnicity of the Other" (Ferrero, 2002, p. 200). The situation can be observed not only in Aboriginal restaurants in Taipei, where only 0.49% of its population are Aborigines, but also in Taidong, where its Aboriginal population accounts for 34% of the population.<sup>52</sup> The example of restaurants in Taidong can further highlight the fact that the client base of Aboriginal restaurants consists largely of other ethnic groups.

Aboriginal culture is the main tourist attraction of Taidong County, with Aboriginal cuisine playing an important role. Among the Aboriginal restaurants that tourists prefer in Taidong, *Mibanai* is a representative one that appeals to many urban tourists who expect a comfortable dining environment and special "mountain dishes." The restaurant is quite modern in its architecture, furniture, and tableware. Only the paintings on the wall and waitresses wearing traditional Aboriginal clothes imply that the restaurant features Aboriginal cuisine (Figure 3.6). The owner, a Han Chinese, explained that his intention was to change the "backward" stereotype of Aborigines and create a delicate dining venue. Therefore, he did not choose icons regarded as "primitive," such as a stone oven and wooden furniture, to decorate his restaurant. Instead, his clientele use British-style tableware and oil paintings in a bright space.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> The Aboriginal census data was collected by the Interior Ministry (published on 2/13/2009). See: [http://www.moi.gov.tw/stat/news\\_content.aspx?sn=2084](http://www.moi.gov.tw/stat/news_content.aspx?sn=2084) (retrieved 4/1/2009).

<sup>53</sup> Interview: the restaurant owner Lin Hui-yao (1/9/2008, Taidong).



**Figure 3.6 The Mibanai restaurant in Taidong**

Source: Taken by the author (2008)

Although the space does not fulfill consumers' expectations of Aboriginal culture, the restaurant presents an "Aboriginal impression" through its menu. The first page of the menu declares that the restaurant deals in the *Simple, Plain, Natural Life*, followed by a short description:

The sky is turning bright. Men go into the mountains to hunt and women collect wild greens, mushrooms, and bamboo shoots. Young girls go to the sea for seaweed and fish.... The elderly women rush to ferment millet wine.

Such a description confirms the image presented in Aboriginal cookbooks, showing a primitive and natural scene in mountainous areas. However, a glance at the dishes reveals them to be obvious adaptations and innovations. The menu consists of various wild vegetables and game, such as boar, Formosan muntjac, and mountain rabbits, but most dishes are quite innovative in the cooking methods used. The owner pointed out that it is important to serve delicious food but not those that Aborigines really eat. Therefore, most dishes have been created from his own inspiration, like "wild orange and meat stew," "roasted pumpkin with cheese," and "non-oily knuckle." It is manifest that the ethnic purity of the food is not the major consideration of the

restaurant owner; instead, he makes adjustments or creations in the ingredients and cooking methods to meet most consumers' tastes.

Despite these innovative dishes, the restaurant is recognized by consumers as a good Aboriginal restaurant. It is recommended by local people<sup>54</sup> and by some consumers who left messages on the restaurant's website. These consumers consider wild vegetables, boar, and pigeon as the characteristics of Aboriginal cuisine. The consumers either seldom seem aware of any alterations made to these cuisines or just neglect the alterations.

In contrast, other Aboriginal restaurants in Taidong create Aboriginal images by making a more prominent and obvious connection to Aboriginal culture. For example, the *Primitive Tribe* is a restaurant near the mountains and is characterized by a natural and primitive atmosphere. It consists of several wooden houses with thatched roofs and a square in the center, where Aboriginal music and dances are often performed (Figure 3.7). Some iron ovens are set in the corner of the square so that the consumers are able to see how chicken and fish are grilled. The restaurant has an exotic environment distinct from urban restaurants, and consumers sit on bamboo chairs and check the menu, which is made of bamboo and written by hand. The dishes served here are those supposedly most popular in Aboriginal communities, such as stir-fried wild vegetables, boars, heart of betel nuts, and river fish. By using primitive buildings, tribal songs, and dances, as well as various "wild" foods, the *Primitive Tribe* creates an atmosphere that fits many people's imagination of Aboriginal culture.



**Figure 3.7** The restaurant *Primitive Tribe*

Source: Taken by the author (2008)

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<sup>54</sup> During my fieldwork in Taidong, local inhabitants often recommended me the restaurant when I mentioned the attempt to try Aboriginal cuisine; curiously, many of these recommenders had never eaten there. According to the owner, only about 20% of their consumers had been Taidong inhabitants.

Although most clients of the restaurant are urban inhabitants who spend their holidays in Taidong and hope to try something with exotic tastes,<sup>55</sup> some consumers expect to learn about Aboriginal culture in their dining experience. Ms. Bai, the chef at another restaurant, *Bunun Tribe*, which has a similar atmosphere to that of *Primitive Tribe*, observed that consumers from northern Taiwan have a stronger interest in Aboriginal culture and cuisine than those from southern Taiwan:

Our customers from northern Taiwan are more interested in our Aboriginal cuisine, while those from the south prefer to share a table featuring various dishes, not just Aboriginal dishes.... These people seem to think that mountain dishes are not so special, but the northerners have great interest in that. Northerners often ask the names of foodstuffs and inquire into the exact cooking methods used for these dishes...they even try to cook these dishes at home.<sup>56</sup>

Ms. Bai observed that many northern visitors have a stronger motivation to understand Aboriginal culture, with Shi Wen-yu, a consumer from Kaohsiung, making a similar point. He articulated a distinction between the northerners and southerners of Taiwan:

Northerners seem to have a more sympathetic attitude toward Aborigines. They think Aborigines are a romantic people; their culture is exotic and worth preserving. Yeah...I agree that the preservation of culture is important, but I think some northerners have too strong a romantic imagination, especially young students.... Maybe there are more Aborigines in southern Taiwan, so we have become accustomed to them, and...we can see the other side of them.<sup>57</sup>

The differentiation between “north and south” shows that consumers may have diverse responses to and diverse conceptions of Aborigines and their culture. Aboriginal culture, including Aboriginal cuisine, is a field in which different social agents interact. Among these agents, first the governments and colleges drew the boundaries of Aboriginal cuisine in cookbooks, describing it as natural and primitive, characteristics that echo Aborigines’ perceived ethnic features. Second, owners of Aboriginal restaurants are the agents selecting ingredients and presenting them as “ethnic cuisines.” Such a presentation involves adaptation to financial burdens and to

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<sup>55</sup> Interview: Ms. Bai, *Bunun Tribe*.

<sup>56</sup> Interview: Ms. Bai, *Bunun Tribe*.

<sup>57</sup> Interview: Shi Wen-yu (1/9/2008, Taidong).



consumer expectations. Third, Aboriginal cuisine is a convenient way for Han consumers to have contact with the culture of “ethnic others” and thus attracts those who feel interested in Aboriginal culture. Consequently, the presented Aboriginal cuisine reflects official discourse, the presentation of restaurants, and the imagination of consumers. It is a closed system with only a loose relationship to Aborigines’ traditional foods and to Aborigines’ contemporary daily lives. The critical issue in this closed system is not “what is Aboriginal cuisine” but “what should Aboriginal cuisine be.”

The outcome of this closed system can be exemplified by the Aboriginal cuisine served in *Bunun Tribe*. As Ms. Bai mentioned, the most popular Aboriginal cuisine among northern consumers is the individual set meal shown in Figure 3.8.



**Figure 3.8 The “Aboriginal cuisine” set meal at the *Bunun Tribe* restaurant**  
Source: Taken by the author (2008)

Consisting of boar, deep-fried river shrimp, baked sweet potato, millet porridge, mountain cake, and stir-fried vegetables, the set meal presents a tasting sample of various Aboriginal ingredients with a typical meal pattern common in urban restaurants. With such a meal pattern, consumers can enjoy various foods in one meal. However, many ingredients in the meal have been transformed and are quite different from their original style. For example, the cooking method of the millet porridge is taken from northern China. The restaurant also removed from the menu some dishes that did not fit consumers’ preconceived images of Aborigines, such as taro dishes. Ms. Bai explained that her restaurant does not serve taro “because clients considered it neither special nor ‘Aboriginal’,” despite her argument that they ate taro and sweet potato frequently in daily life and that her lunch box often contained a sweet potato when she was a child.

In sum, the dishes served in Aboriginal restaurants are largely dependent on the imagination and innovation of their owners. The interviewed restaurant owners were not paying attention to the origins and traditions of Aborigines. The owners had established Aboriginal restaurants to create venues where consumers could have an Aboriginal experience and make a profit. Similarly, the government has been promoting Aboriginal cuisine with the intention of developing tourism.

## **5. “TAIWANESE CUISINE” AS A NATIONAL SYMBOL AND A COMMODITY**

After the establishment of the DPP government in 2000, Taiwanese food grew highly charged with symbolic meanings, an outcome that is prominent in two regards. First, “food produced in Taiwan” became prominent at state banquets, and state banquets articulated political demands regarding indigenization. With the growing Taiwanese consciousness regarding Taiwan as a distinctive nation, local delicacies and snacks have become representative of Taiwanese culture and have helped to build connections between the Taiwanese inhabitants and the native land. Second, Hakka and Aboriginal cuisines are framed as “ethnic cuisines” that display ethnic characteristics, echoing the categorization of the “four major ethnic groups.” On the one hand, the concept of “four major ethnic groups” underlines Taiwan’s status as a consolidated community that is distinct from China. On the other hand, this concept has integrated itself into food-consumption practices, alongside the development of Hakka and Aboriginal cuisines. The government promotes ethnic cuisines as convenient symbols to present specific features of ethnic groups, such as frugality and painstaking endurance for the Hakka and purity for the Aborigines. Through the mechanism of exhibitions, certification, and other forms of propaganda, these ethnic characteristics have spread to a wider population.

When Taiwanese local dishes and ethnic cuisines are shaped as political symbols, they also function as commodities in the marketplace, and the government has actively played the role of a market agent in the process. This was manifest in the cooperation between local governments and grand hotels in the promotion of state banquet menus and ethnic cuisines. The government was no longer merely establishing the rules and enforcing regulations. Instead, the DPP government not only formulated local food as an expression of “native consciousness” but also made it a product representing local or ethnic characteristics.

Although the government played an active role in the market, the market-based agencies did not passively follow or cooperate with this promotion by the government. Their negotiation is clear in the struggle between tradition and

modernization. While traditional cuisine is regarded as a symbol of ethnic authenticity, the emergence of modern cuisine reflects changing social conditions and a longing for the upgrading of social status. Since eating traditional oily, fatty, or plain dishes has been viewed as a mark of backward times, both Hakka and Aboriginal restaurants seek to present a modern ethnic cuisine, emphasizing healthy and delicate dishes. Eating healthy and delicate dishes is a new dining fashion and, moreover, a mark of the upgraded social status of Hakka and Aboriginal groups.



## **Chapter Four**

### **Taiwanese Cuisine as “Tastes of Home”:**

#### **Changing identification of home and cultural memory**

Chapters One through Three placed emphasis on the history of “Taiwanese cuisine”; but what is the role of consumers in shaping “Taiwanese cuisine”? How do consumers conceive these changes in the meaning of “Taiwanese cuisine”? Chapters Four and Five will examine how Taiwanese cuisine became meaningful for consumers and how consumers’ emotional attachment to specific local dishes took root through bodily practices. Chapter Four focuses on the changing identification of “tastes of home” in food memoirs.

Food memoirs are literary writings concerning food and personal themes. It is a genre consisting of recipes, cooking methods, descriptions of taste, eating contexts, and personal stories about food. They not only provide detailed descriptions of eating experiences but also reveal the emotional investment of writers, such as the nostalgia, suffering, and pleasure related to eating. Among other themes, “tastes of home” is a dominant theme in the literary works of this genre, particularly in those written by migrant writers. Thus, this chapter will examine such works to explore the changing notions of “tastes of home.”

#### **1. “TASTES OF HOME” AND FOOD MEMORY**

##### **1.1 Home, tastes of home, and cultural memory**

The idea of home or homeland has both physical and symbolic meanings. Regarding physical meanings, it refers to a house, neighborhood, town, or city, which is an environment where people live and grow up. Symbolically, the idea of home is relevant to shelter, family, and sense of security. These symbolic meanings of home are shaped by repeated practices and experiences. As Kenyon (1999) reveals, home is a place that we have “rights to return to,” with one’s understanding of home being the result of repeated practices over years (p. 89). A long-term process of going out and coming back makes home a site where one nests in the world, and this type of site can bring people not only a sense of security but also a sense of belonging. This symbolic home thus often serves as our point of reference in the world.

In addition to being a place that provides a sense of security, home is a site where emotional exchanges take place. Home is an idea based on the accumulation

of memories about past experiences, which involve numerous interactions and emotional attachments that characterize relationships with, for example, parents, neighbors, and local friends. As an essential element of daily experience, ritual, and specific occasions, food is often a marker of these experiences, a clue that can trigger one's memory and feelings of home. Many scenes revolving around food can be recollected around the family: looking forward to dinner, waiting for the snack stall on the corner every afternoon, or even sharing holiday meals with family in the midst of jovial discourse. As such, food memories of home consist of various social interactions. In the words of Assmann and Assmann,<sup>1</sup> it is "communicative memory" that refers to "the social aspect of individual memory" (Assmann, 2006, p. 3) and "those varieties of collective memory that are based exclusively on everyday communications" (Assmann, 1995, p. 126). According to their interpretations, emotion plays an essential role in defining "communicative memory" and inscribing memory into one's mind. Imbued with the emotions of love, attachment, hatred, or anger, events that happened in the past have been registered in the mind and are remembered.

While the temporal horizon of communicative memory is limited to between approximately 80 and 100 years, "communicative memory" can become part of "cultural memory" after ceremonial or organized communication has objectified the communicative memory (Assmann, 1995, pp. 127-128). Once cultural memory is shaped and maintained, it can serve as grounds where a group of people become conscious of their distinction and unity. Cultural memory is thus an important means by which a community can maintain its distinctive customs for generations and reproduce its group identity (Assmann, 1995, pp. 128-131). Assmann terms the connection between groups and identity the "concretion of identity," arguing that "a group bases its consciousness of unity and specificity upon this knowledge and derives formative and normative impulses from it, which allows the group to reproduce its identity" (Assmann, 1995, p. 128). In this way, Assmann conceptualizes "tradition" as a form of cultural memory, "a collective concept for all knowledge that directs behavior and experience in the interactive framework of a society and one that obtains through generations in repeated societal practice and initiation" (Assmann, 1995, p. 126).

According to these two concepts, food memories are "communicative memories" of individuals built on the basis of everyday communication. Individuals have their own memories, eating habits, culinary preferences, and identifications

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<sup>1</sup> "Communicative memory" and "cultural memory" here are concepts formulated by Aleida Assmann and Jan Assmann in their book written in German *Schrift und Gedächtnis: Beiträge zur Archäologie der literarischen Kommunikation* (Munich: Fink, 1987). Some of their works have been translated into English.

concerning “tastes of home,” and these attributes are closely related to one’s interactions with family, friends, and neighbors. However, once food habits or conventions are crystallized as dietary traditions that can be circulated widely in a society and transmitted from generation to generation, they have been transformed into “cultural memory.”

The textualization and intellectualization of food memories are important ways in which the objectification of communicative memory can be achieved. Through culinary textbooks, cookbooks, and other types of gastronomic writings, food memories and eating habits can be objectified, spread, and studied. As Ferguson’s (1998) study on the formation of French cuisine shows, various gastronomic writings have been crucial in establishing “French cuisine” as a cultural field. “French cuisine” as a cultural field consists of French court history, complicated manners during feasts, knowledge of geography and climate, the art of tasting dishes, and historical stories about cuisines. Food critics, journalists, and novelists have written articles about these topics; at the same time, readers and consumers have exchanged these texts among one another and have added their own opinions. Ferguson argues that it is through textual consumption and cultural mediation that French cuisine is articulated as a gastronomic field. The composition and the exchange of gastronomic writings diffuse dietary traditions and their corresponding values. By doing so, Ferguson suggests that gastronomic writings can nationalize culinary discourses and further secure the autonomy of the field (Ferguson, 1998, p. 630).

Studies of cookbooks and food memoirs also reveal the influence of food writings on collective identity. Naguib (2006) analyzes the cookbook memoirs of two Jewish Egyptians, showing that recipes about the homeland are an important means by which people in exile can remember and understand historical moments. In food memoirs, dishes are invested with nostalgia for the past, revealing powerful recollections of previous days. Naguib concludes that the recollection of the past is influential in building the collective identity of people who shared the same experiences and witnessed the same historical events. A similar argument is made by Roy (2002), whose research focuses on the linkage between food and national diaspora. He argues that when gastrophilic histories are tied to conditions of diaspora and migration, they are saturated with the idioms of national belonging and national purity.

In sum, food memories can be textualized and food writings can contribute to transforming communicative memory into cultural memory, where collective identity is rooted. This chapter explores the changing notions of “tastes of home” in food memoirs about Taiwanese cuisine, particularly concerning those works written by Mainlanders who moved from the Chinese Mainland to Taiwan after the Second

World War. The aim is to clarify (1) the changing identification of “tastes of home” and how writers identified “Taiwanese cuisine” as their “tastes of home”; and (2) how food memories were transformed from personal communicative memory into cultural memory. By exploring these two questions, this chapter can further examine the relationship between cultural memory and the identification of home.

## 1.2 Literary works concerning food memoirs in Taiwan

Literary texts on food first appeared as late as the 1970s in Taiwan. Before the 1970s, only a few related articles were published in newspapers or as part of a collection of prose. Among these food writers, the vast majority of those whose writings concern “tastes of home” were migrants moving from the Mainland to Taiwan after 1945.<sup>2</sup> Their common experience is of leaving their homeland owing to war and of being unable to return home for several decades. This shared experience makes the “nostalgia for the food of the homeland” a major topic in the aforementioned writers’ food memoirs. Some famous literary authors who never wrote about food on the Mainland started to write articles about their memories of food after moving to Taiwan. For example, a well-known literary critic and specialist on Shakespeare, Liang Shi-qiu (1903-1987), started to write articles on food after moving to Taiwan in 1949, with the main topic in his writings being the food from his hometown, Beijing (Chen, 1999, pp. 450-452).

Among these food-memoir writers, Tang Lu-sun (1908-1985) and Lu Yao-dong (1932-2006) are two representative figures. Tang Lu-sun is the first writer of culinary literature in Taiwan, with his 12 books making him the most productive. Lu Yao-dong is a prestigious historian and the first professor to teach the topic of Chinese dietary history at the university level.<sup>3</sup> Both Tang and Lu came to Taiwan during the late 1940s; however, while Tang had no chance to return to the Mainland, Lu went back to visit the Mainland for many times and most of his articles on food were written after his visits.

In addition to these writers who moved from the Mainland, there are a few authors who wrote about Taiwanese cuisine and identified it as their home food. To such writers are Lin Hai-yin (1918-2001)<sup>4</sup> and Lin Wen-yue (1933- ), who had

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<sup>2</sup> For example, *Jiexiangwei [Tastes of Home]* is a collection of articles written by newspaper readers who submitted them to a newspaper to introduce food from their homeland. Of all 409 articles in this book, only ten are about Taiwanese food. Most authors in this book came from various provinces and showed great enthusiasm for the food from their hometown, expressing a strong wish to return to the Mainland. See Cai, 1982.

<sup>3</sup> Lu studied history comprehensively, specializing in Chinese history from the third to sixth centuries A.D. and Chinese historiography.

<sup>4</sup> Lin Hai-yin’s original name is Lin Han-ying, with Hai-yin being her pseudonym, but because of her great reputation in literature, she is known as Lin Hai-yin nowadays.



similar family backgrounds. Born into Taiwanese families, they both studied and lived on the Mainland during their childhood or teenage years before permanently taking up residence in Taiwan after 1945. Lin Hai-yin was a prestigious writer and editor and the creator of an important publishing company that nurtured many Taiwanese writers. Lin Wen-yue is a professor of Chinese literature and is also known as the granddaughter of Lian Heng, a famous historian. Their writings on food account for only a tiny percentage of all their publications: Lin Hai-yin has only written a few articles focusing on food from Taiwan and Beijing, whilst Lin Wen-yue published one food memoir in 2000. Although their food writings are less numerous than those by Tang and Lu, these articles express complicated emotions toward two different homes: one on the Mainland, and the other in Taiwan. Their experiences make Taiwan a peculiar “homeland” with which Lin Hai-yin and Lin Wen-yue became familiar only after they grew up. As this chapter will show later, although these two writers have written about Taiwanese cuisine as their “tastes of home,” the formation and the meanings of their “tastes of home” differ from those of Tang and Lu.

## **2. TANG LU-SUN’S SEARCH FOR THE NATION IN “TASTES OF HOME”**

### **2.1 Purity of tradition in Chinese cuisine as cultural memory**

Tang Lu-sun was born in 1908 in Beijing, the capital of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), the last dynasty of Imperial China. Growing up in an aristocratic family in Manchu, he enjoyed the dishes made by private chefs and had the chance to taste various precious foods. Furthermore, Tang had been a financial officer in his youth, a position that had enabled him to travel around China. Owing to these experiences, the main themes of his food memoirs are the court life of the Qing Dynasty, the various foods of Beijing, and different Chinese regional cuisines.

Tang Lu-sun came to Taiwan in 1946 and his first article, “Dining in Beijing,” was published in 1974, right after his retirement from his position as senior officer of the National Tobacco Company in 1973. In the following twelve years, he wrote twelve books (see Table 4.1),<sup>5</sup> all being his memoirs on various Chinese foods and dining experiences across China. Among these books, Tang paid particular attention to the recipes, restaurants, specialties, anecdotes, eating habits, and other related customs of Beijing, his hometown.

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<sup>5</sup> Among all these publications, the final two books, *Tang Lu-sun tan chi* and *Lao xiangqin*, were published after his passing in 1985.

**Table 4.1 Tang Lu-sun's books on culinary writing**

1976	<i>Zhongguo chi</i> (Chinese Eating)
1976	<i>Nanbei kan</i> (Watching South and North)
1977	<i>Tianxia wei</i> (Tastes of the World)
1978	<i>Guyuan qing</i> (Affections for the Lost Home)
1980	<i>Lao gudong</i> (The Antique)
1980	<i>Suan tian ku la xian</i> (Sour, Sweet, Bitter, Spicy, and Salty)
1981	<i>Da zahui</i> (The Stew)
1982	<i>Shejin pinpan</i> (Assorted Dishes)
1983	<i>Shuo dong dao xi</i> (Talking about East and West)
1983	<i>Zhongguo chi de gushi</i> (The Story of Chinese Eating)
1988	<i>Tang Lu-sun tan chi</i> (Tang Talks about Eating)
1988	<i>Lao xiangqin</i> (My Old Fellow)

Tang's food memoirs have two important characteristics. First, as a member of the royal family, Tang possessed a background that provided him with not only sufficient writing material about court life but also a strong sense of pride in the Qing Dynasty of Imperial China. He presents China as a wealthy nation with a broad and sophisticated culture through his vivid descriptions of food, and the Chinese capital Beijing comes across as a particularly vibrant gathering place for the wealthy. His food memoirs rest on Beijing; and his memories form the basis for his comparisons of regional cuisines, including Taiwanese cuisine.

As a descendant of an aristocratic family, Tang could craft highly detailed narratives about court life, highlighting the delicate manners that were indeed requisite in the daily lives of aristocrats. His topics include royal feasts, the life of court ladies, games, ceremonies, the royal kitchen, and chefs. Although these topics do not constitute explicit political affairs, it is often through these seemingly trivial matters that widely regarded cultural and political themes can surface. In his vivid descriptions, he places greater emphasis on the cultural than on the material aspects of court life. For example, once a Japanese TV program spent US\$20,000 to prepare a famous Chinese banquet, called the "Manchu-Han Banquet" (*manhan quanxi*),<sup>6</sup> which included dishes made from elephant nose, shark belly, and whale. Tang criticized the banquet for being both too luxurious and uncivilized to qualify as a

<sup>6</sup> The banquet included four feasts and 70 cuisines in total. See Tang, 1988 [1978]-a, pp. 145-146.

genuine Chinese banquet. Although Tang himself never enjoyed a “Manchu-Han Banquet,” he proclaimed that “if the banquet was indeed as luxurious as this, then we Chinese have become a nation that spends extravagantly to have fun but not a great nation with an admirable culinary culture” (Tang, 1988 [1978]-a, p. 146). Similarly, Tang defended the Empress Dowager *Cixi*, arguing that her life was not so luxurious as suggested by the rumor that she had indulged in 128 dishes for a dinner. Instead, according to the menu he had read, her meals were much simpler and austere. The archive showed that even at her birthday banquet, there were only two pots, four large dishes, four middle dishes, and six small dishes—far fewer than the alleged 128 dishes (Tang, 1988 [1978]-a, pp. 148-149).

In his writings, Tang emphasizes that, rather than from “excessively luxurious and uncivilized” dishes, Chinese dietary culture stems chiefly from cuisine ranging from haute banquets to normal snacks. Tang claims that “the Chinese are talented people who know how to taste food; Chinese people can eat, love to eat, and understand how to eat” (Tang, 1984 [1980], p. 197); in this same regard, Tang wrote many passages introducing Chinese regional cuisines and local snacks, covering various banquets, dishes, tableware, rules of seating, banquet entertainment, and the tastes of food. He also made subtle comparisons about fish, buns, noodles, and festival foods from different regions, explaining the differences among them from both geographical and historical perspectives. In his introduction to court life and various Chinese regional cuisines, Tang characterizes Beijing as a “royal capital” that enjoyed all the best dishes of the Chinese nation. Tang’s articles frequently stress that Beijing has been the capital of China for more than six centuries and is thus a city where all the best foods can be found.

In his first article “Dining in Beijing,” from which he gained great attention and popularity,<sup>7</sup> Tang first claimed that there were nearly one thousand restaurants in Beijing during the 1910s and that these restaurants could be categorized into three groups; then he introduced these restaurants and their signature dishes. Some restaurants and dishes he introduced are truly amazing. For example, one restaurant could serve dishes for more than one thousand tables at the same time, serving around 10,000 people. Another restaurant was famous for its “ice-bowl assortment” (什錦冰碗) that used a lotus leaf as the container. This dish was made from eight kinds of newly picked nuts or fruits that were all irrigated with spring water. In addition, some of the described dishes, such as “deep-fried osmanthus” (桂花皮炸), are rarely found nowadays. Despite the beautiful name, this dish was actually “fried pigskin” (炸肉皮) made according to a long and complicated process: frying a piece

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<sup>7</sup> Tang Lu-sun, “Chi zai Beiping [Dining in Beijing],” *UDN*, 11/23/1974(12).

of pigskin and sealing it in a can for one year, boiling it in chicken soup to soften the pigskin during the next year, and finally cutting and stir-frying it with egg and ham.

In his works, Tang introduces hundreds of cuisines made according to complicated processes, particularly underlining dishes that could be found only in Beijing. For example, his favorite Beijing snack was “milk pudding” (*nailuo*), which originated in Manchuria, the homeland belonging to the Manchu, who established the Qing Dynasty. Tang emphasizes the assertion that various sorts of milk snacks could be found in Beijing along with the best milk pudding, such as roast milk, milk rolls, milk cakes (*naibobo*), and *naiwuta*.<sup>8</sup> In the royal kitchen, there was even a “milk kitchen” responsible for milk snacks and other snacks. Tang proudly describes that the wife of a Spanish ambassador had taken many roast-milk snacks back to Spain because she had considered them superior to all Dutch cheeses with bread (Tang, 1976, p. 66).

Tang’s writings express his pride living in Beijing and his strong sense of belonging to the city in his books. His works make frequent use of the term “Beijing-er” (*Beijingren*, the inhabitants of Beijing) and emphasize that Beijing is distinctive from all other Chinese cities. He describes food conventions, rituals, and customs in detail, stressing that the inhabitants in Beijing have much greater respect for manners and rituals much than people in other Chinese provinces. For example, when discussing seasonal eating, he states,

Beijing-ers are used to leading a life of leisure; therefore, we stress that people should eat everything “in season.” That is, if it is not the right time, we just do not eat it.... This rule of the right time for food is hardly understood by people from other provinces. (Tang, 1988a, pp. 2-3)

Tang emphasizes not only the right time to eat but also the correct cooking methods and seasoning:

Cooking should follow the rules. If not, “style” and “standard” will be lost. For instance, beef should be cooked with a large green onion; lamb pastry should be cooked with cucurbit, and shrimp should be cooked with leeks. If you do not follow these rules, the “style” of the dish will be absent, and the dish itself will definitely lack its delicious qualities. (Tang, 1988 [1978]-b, p. 43)

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<sup>8</sup> *Naiwuta* is the Manchu name of the snack, which is made from milk and Chinese yam. For Tang’s introductory remarks on these milk snacks, see Tang, 1976, pp. 65-68; Tang, 1977, pp. 119-122; Tang, 1988 [1978]-a, pp. 23-25.

In terms of “correct eating,” dining manners are cultural codes that have normative power according to Tang. There are rules governing the times and the occasions for eating, with these rules functioning not as law but as a semi-formal way of distinguishing one time or occasion from others. For Tang, there are rules to being an “authentic Beijing-er,” with the legitimacy of these rules coming from the cultural framework of Chinese society that has been shaped over a long history. After accumulating over centuries and receiving confirmation from social elites, these rules still command respect from contemporary people, who follow them as a form of distinction. In Assmann’s cultural memory theory, these rules are cultural memories that group members respect and transmit to the next generation. For Tang Lu-sun, the cultural memory of Chinese cuisine, or Beijing cuisine, should be transmitted from one generation to the next, and neglect of these rules is unacceptable.

The normative power of cultural memory is explicit. When Tang introduces the conventions, rituals, and customs of Beijing food vividly, on one hand it is Tang consciously selecting the food stories that he considered a crucial part of Beijing culinary culture, whilst on the other hand, it is Beijing culinary culture that is embodied in Tang, guiding him to obey these norms and values. As Assmann argues, society inscribes itself in these memories with all its norms and values and creates in the individual an authority, which has traditionally been called “consciousness” (Assmann, 2006, p. 7). Individual behavior is directed by specific cultural frameworks whose function is to embody cultural values and norms in individuals, encouraging them to remember and diffuse these values so as to shape cultural memory.

Once Tang, drawing from his experiences and memories, accepted Beijing culinary culture as the standard way of dining, he regarded Taiwanese food as alien in the sense that its quality seemed inferior to the quality he was familiar with in Beijing. Although Tang agreed that people in different regions have different food tastes, his works feature many complaints about his difficulties in trying to find authentic Beijing food in Taiwan. For example, after praising “chicken with bean tofu” (雞絲拉皮) in Beijing, he notes with regret, “Shops in Taiwan are able to prepare Chinese cuisines from all provinces now, but I have not found one good ‘chicken with bean tofu’” (Tang, 1976, p. 21). When introducing a specific white mushroom *koumo* (口蘑, *Tricholoma matsutake*) produced in northern China, he laments, “Do not mention eating real *koumo* in Taiwan, for I am afraid that nobody here has ever seen it” (Tang, 1976, pp. 50-51). Similar criticism is readily observable in Tang’s books, which frequently compare the food in Taiwan with that on the Mainland, and which just as frequently criticize the paucity of authentic Chinese

cuisine in Taiwan. Such insistence on “authenticity” is the second pronounced characteristic of Tang’s food memoirs.

Tang’s dissatisfaction with Taiwanese food focuses, in large measure, on Taiwanese restaurants’ unorthodox cooking methods and the phenomenon of “hybridity” in restaurants—Tang argues that a restaurant should concentrate on one regional cuisine and not on many. According to Tang, both the hybrid mixture of cuisines and the heterodox cooking methods are mistakes that might hurt dining conventions and rules that are well established. In other words, unorthodox cooking methods and hybrid cuisines contradict the cultural memory of Chinese food, with any violation damaging the terrain of Chinese culture. For example, when Tang discusses *Da-lu* noodles (大滷麵, stewed noodles), he argues that the correct name of this noodle should be *Dar-lu* noodles (打滷麵) because *Dar-lu* refers to the cooking method of this noodles and that *Da-Lu* is a meaningless term that only has a similar pronunciation and that was likely introduced by people who were ignorant of this cooking method. Tang notes with disappointment,

I have stayed in Taiwan for several decades. During these years, I have never tasted good Dar-lu noodles, and now even the name has been changed! ... In recent years, most patrons at restaurants have been Taiwanese; they think that “Da-lu noodles” is easier to remember than “Dar-lu”... Since the recipes of various regional dishes have been mixed and changed like that, how is it possible to eat something delicious? (Tang, 1984 [1980], p. 21)

Tang reveals his wish that authentic cooking methods, ingredients, and presentations of dishes be remembered and transmitted to future generations. For him, reproducing the experienced tastes in memory is a means of preserving dietary culture, and the preservation of China’s authentic dietary culture is important to the preservation of Chinese culture. Tang repeatedly asserts that Chinese dietary culture is a crucial part of Chinese culture, and that therefore, the components of the dietary culture, such as cooking methods, ingredients, and presentations of dishes, are important constitutive parts of Chinese culture. Tang’s complaints that the taste and even the name of a given traditional dish have suffered distortions are reflective of his worry that traditional dietary culture would be lost.

Tang’s worries resulted not only from changes in dietary culture but also from his emotional attachment to the Chinese nation, to which he belonged and with which he identified both politically and culturally. His insistence on the authenticity of Chinese culture is consistent with his cultural identity. When, in his works, he criticizes the lack of culinary knowledge in Taiwan, he is actually criticizing

disobedience to legitimate Chinese culture. The Mainland had become an inaccessible home, and Tang could only search for the reproduction of Chinese cultural traditions in Taiwan; his failure in this search is the main reason for his disappointment.

Tang's disappointment emerged as early as 1946, when he arrived in Taiwan. His memoirs claim that the dishes served in public canteens were terrible and that he could find a taste of home only in some Mainland restaurants.

In the early years of retrocession, there were few restaurants serving inland (*neidi*)<sup>9</sup> dishes. In some restaurants, like *Penglai Ge*, *Xin Zhonghua*, *Xiaochun Yuan*, and *Xin Penglai*, the buildings were nice, the waitresses were enthusiastic, and even the dishes were diverse, containing ingredients harvested from land and sea; nevertheless, the tastes were poor. We could get together to appreciate dishes consistent with our tastes of home only after restaurants serving Mainland cuisines were established in Taipei, such as *Laozhengxing*, *Zhuangyuan Lou*, *Sanhe Lou*, *Qionghua Lou*, *Yuyuan*, and *Yinyi*. (Tang, 1982, p. 136)

This quote refers to the restaurants that operated during the colonial era and the post-war period. As shown in Chapters One and Two, the restaurants mentioned by Tang, such as *Penglai Ge* and *Xin Zhonghua*, were prestigious dining establishments at that time. Following the conventions established during the colonial era, these Taiwanese restaurants advertised that they served “all the best of Chinese cuisine,” including dishes from many provinces. However, according to Tang, it is unprofessional and even ridiculous for a restaurant to serve diverse regional cuisines. Tang argues that each restaurant should concentrate on only one regional cuisine; that is, Shangdong restaurants should serve only Shangdong cuisine and Zhejiang restaurants should serve only Zhejiang cuisine (Tang, 1976, p. 80).

Such criticism was not unique to Tang's personal opinion but was commonly raised by writers from the Mainland at that time. Another writer, Liu Bing, termed the hybridity of restaurants a “strange phenomenon” in Taipei, regarding it as a mistake of both consumers and restaurants (Liu, 1980, pp. 3-6). These comments suggest that it was uncommon for a restaurant on the Mainland to serve various regional dishes, at least before 1945. The comments also suggest that the hybridization of dishes has been an important feature of “Taiwanese cuisine” that was shaped during the Japanese colonial era. However, this feature apparently failed

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<sup>9</sup> While “inland” (*neidi*) meant “Japan” during the Japanese colonial era, it refers to “Mainland China” in Tang's usage.

to gain the approval of migrants from the Mainland, who believed that a restaurant should specialize in a regional cuisine and even only specific dishes. This difference reveals the specific social conditions by which Taiwanese dietary culture developed.

For Tang Lu-sun and other writers who criticized hybridity as “strange,” the hybridity wreaked havoc on some important features of Chinese culinary tradition, such as correct use of eating seasons, correct cooking methods, and clear restaurant boundaries. Chinese dietary culture, particularly Beijing dietary culture, comprised valuable customs that became important in maintaining Tang’s Chinese and Beijing identity. Therefore, changing the name of a dish (*Dar-lu* to *Da-lu*) and serving a heterodox assortment of dishes were unacceptable practices for Tang and other like-minded writers. Their criticism that Taiwanese food was “alien food” and that Taiwanese restaurants amounted to “a strange phenomenon” reflects their sense of detachment from Taiwan and the condition of their diaspora.

## **2.2 Diaspora as a loss of home, nation, and cultural memory**

Diaspora is an analytical category that has been applied to research on post-colonial societies. The term “diaspora” was originally exclusively reserved for Jewish people who were dispersed outside of their putative ancestral homeland (Baumann, 2000; Boyarin & Boyarin, 1993; Ho, 2004). As Baumann shows, since the 1970s, the use of the term “diaspora”, in various disciplines of the humanities, has become increasingly generalized in reference to peoples who live far from their homeland (Baumann, 2000, p. 314). With the connotations of rootlessness, nostalgia, and homesickness, the term has frequently appeared opposite such other terms as “dispersion” (Beinin, 1998), “displacement” (Lavie & Swedenburg, 1996), and “de-territorialization” (Papastergiadis, 2000). These terms’ shared meanings under the umbrella of “diaspora” constitute a solid reference to people who are living far from their perceived homeland, but who retain a connection with this “point of origin” (Sanjek, 2003, p. 323). As Clifford asserts, “Diaspora consciousness is entirely a product of cultures and histories in collision and dialogue... Diasporic subjects are, thus, distinct versions of modern, transnational, intercultural experience” (Clifford, 1994, p. 319). The term “diaspora” has come to refer to a specific type of approach and of experience, supposedly a characteristic of people living “here” and relating to “there” (Baumann, 2000, p. 324; Clifford, 1994, p. 322).

Tang’s writings often reveal strong emotions stemming from the China-to-Taiwan diaspora. The diaspora is not only for a lost home but also for a lost nation and cultural memory. Tang’s food memoirs typically start with his memory of specific food, restaurants, or customs in Beijing or other regions on the Mainland, and end with his disappointment that he could not find similar food in



Taiwan and thus will have to wait for the recovery of the Mainland. On the one hand, Tang paints a rosy picture of home through his recollections of food, which function as a nostalgia-laced invitation tempting Tang's readers to enter the landscape of an iconic, wealthy, and prosperous Beijing. On the other hand, the disappearance of this rosy home reminds him and readers of the loss of a prosperous age, generating the sense of diaspora. For example, Tang recollects the pleasure of enjoying delicious smoked ribs with Chinese liquor. In the last paragraph, he states,

I have asked all Beijing restaurants in Taipei [about the ribs dish]; only a few knew the dish ... I am afraid that only when we recover the Mainland and have a celebration banquet in Beijing will I be able to partake of smoked ribs and drink the "white lotus" (蓮花白)<sup>10</sup> produced in Haidian. (Tang, 1984 [1980], p. 63)

Tang's food memoirs often draw a connection between the unavailability of food and the Mainland as a lost home. He worries not only about the loss of traditional Chinese dietary culture in Taiwan but also about the collapse of it on the Mainland. Tang admits that the tastes of home always stimulated his yearning to return home and that an important motive of his writing was to lend strength to the ambition to recover the Mainland (Tang, 1988 [1978]-a, p. 2). In other words, although concentrating on food, Tang's food memoirs are embedded with a strong emotional attachment to a united and strong China.

His sense of loss can be partly explained by the unavailability in Taiwan of certain Mainland dishes and partly by the Nationalist Party's exile from the central position of Mainland China to the peripheral position of breakaway Taiwan. When he recalls dishes and restaurants on the Mainland, he also worries that political conflicts have resulted in the destruction of these restaurants (Tang, 1976, p. 25). Although he provides tips about how to select restaurants in Beijing and the best ways to communicate with the waiters, he also mourns the state of affairs in which these hints are of no use as long as people on the Mainland, rather than patronize restaurants, use "food tickets." Beijing for Tang suggests an untouched home and a lost nation, in which his identification and cultural memories are rooted.

For diasporic subjects, cultural memory is particularly important because it is the grounds on which they can confirm their identities. When cultural memories weaken, the sense of diaspora deepens. Restaurants providing Chinese regional cuisines are not only cultural sites that help preserve specific cultural manners, but also "memory sites" that host cultural memories. Assmann asserts that memory sites

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<sup>10</sup> A kind of Chinese liquor produced in Beijing.

(lieux de mémoire) are memory aides that enable the members of a society to learn and remember their traditions. These memory sites can be monuments, rituals, celebratory feasts, and customs (Assmann, 2006, pp. 8-9). In this sense, Chinese restaurants in Taiwan are memory sites for the migrants who wish to recollect their tastes of home in a space constituted by foods and countrymen. However, in Tang's case, the hybridization of regional cuisines disturbed his memory and its function as a site, and thus, Tang rejected the hybridization. His emphasis on the "purity of regional cuisines" also reflects the emotional needs of the "purity of memory."

Assmann presents the "cultural memory" theory by using examples of religious rituals, but Tang's food memoirs show that cultural memory can also be performed and remembered in the foodways—the specific ways in which a community prepares, cooks, and consumes food. By introducing and recollecting Chinese regional cuisines and various dining rituals, Tang appears to have been relocating himself in the past, thereby keeping the past alive. Relocation might thus be a sought-after balance between loss and healing (Naguib, 2006, pp. 39-40). Tang deplores the disappearance and demise of traditional dietary culture when introducing Beijing food. His writings express a strong sense of diaspora regarding the chasm that opened up between him and the "home" of his family and nation.

### **3. LU YAO-DONG: "TASTES OF HOME" CHANGE, CULTURAL MEMORY REMAINS**

#### **3.1 The transformation of "tastes of home"**

In contrast to Tang Lu-sun, who could not return home after 1949, Lu Yao-dong (1932-2006) had the chance to go back to his homeland after martial law was lifted in 1987. Trips between the Mainland, Hong Kong, and Taipei created opportunities for Lu to revisit the meaning of "home," a visitation that inspired considerable insight into the relationship between identification of home and cultural memory.

Born in Suzhou in 1932, Lu Yao-dong immigrated to Taiwan in May 1949 with his family to escape the civil war (Lu, 2000a, p. 9). He got a Masters degree in Hong Kong and a PhD degree in Taiwan. After attaining the status of PhD, he entered into a teaching career in Taiwan (1966-1976) and Hong Kong (1977-1991), and then returned to teach in Taiwan in 1991 until his retirement in 1998.<sup>11</sup> As such, his studies and teaching career were characterized by constant moves back and forth between Taiwan and Hong Kong. Thus, the food and restaurants in Taipei and Hong

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<sup>11</sup> See the short biography of Lu Yao-dong provided by the Department of History of the National Taiwan University: [http://ccms.ntu.edu.tw/~history/1\\_announcement/ 11\\_general/950220.doc](http://ccms.ntu.edu.tw/~history/1_announcement/11_general/950220.doc) (retrieved 3/10/2006).

Kong are the first theme of his food writings. Lu often made comparisons between food in the two cities, with these comparisons forming the core of his first food memoirs *Zhi shengxia danchaofan* [*Only Fried Rice with Egg Left*] (1987). After the Taiwanese government lifted martial law in 1987, Lu returned to his hometown of Suzhou and travelled widely across China. What he ate, observed, and thought during his trips constitutes the substance of his second book, *Yifei jiushiwei* [*Not the Taste of Previous Days*] (1992). His newspaper articles along with some earlier essays were compiled for publication in Lu's third and fourth books: *Chumen fang guzao* [*Visiting the Old Times*] (1998) and *Du da neng rong* [*A Big Appetite*] (2001).

Before returning to the Mainland, Lu seems to have felt nostalgia similar to that felt by Tang Lu-sun; in short, Lu regarded his birthplace on the Mainland as his home. Suzhou to Lu Yao-dong was like Beijing was to Tang Lu-sun. The two writers would often refer to the motherland that they were eager to return to. When he finally returned to Suzhou for the first time, after an absence of four decades, he acknowledged firmly that Suzhou was undoubtedly his home: "Every time I was asked which place I would return to if I could, my answer was this town" (Lu, 1992, p. 120). Although Lu left Suzhou when he was only 18 years old and moved frequently because of war, *this town* remained the place he regarded as his home and longed to revisit. For Tang and Lu, their "home" on the Mainland was their place of origin, which, like the roots of a tree, connected the two men with family members, neighbors, and memories of childhood. In this context, "tastes of home" constituted a route that directed them to family, neighborhood, and childhood, from which they had been physically displaced for decades.

The second similarity between Tang and Lu is the explicit connection that the two writers made between "tastes of home" and nation. Just as Tang viewed his home as the root through which he could relate to fellow countrymen, Lu connected himself to the nation and to fellow countrymen through the tastes of home. For example, when Lu suggests in his writings that Taipei is the hub of various Chinese regional cuisines, he soon mentions his countrymen on the Mainland and deplors those tasty foods' near absence in contemporary Mainland China: "In that society which consists of blue ants,<sup>12</sup> is there anyone who has the money, time, and freedom to eat these snacks in stalls?" (Lu, 1987, p. 164) At this point in the passage, Lu's identification of home expands from individual shelter to national belonging and becomes entangled with historical events.

The two writers' third similarity lies in their opposition to the hybrid cuisine of restaurants in Taiwan. As mentioned earlier, many Mainlander writers in Taiwan

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<sup>12</sup> "Blue ants" refers to Chinese people ruled by the Chinese Communist Party because they often wore blue clothes and pants. The term was widely used in the 1950s.

have considered Taiwan-based restaurants' hybridization of Chinese regional cuisines to be a violation of Chinese tradition. Lu's writings raise serious criticism of this phenomenon. He laments that the traditional manners of Chinese culinary culture have been destroyed in Taipei, with Hunan restaurants selling Guangdong cuisine, and American food such as McDonald's fast food easily "invading" Taiwan:

Every dish has its own source and method: if the method is ruined, then the dish deteriorates. Currently, Taipei is claimed to be the chief site where Chinese cuisines converge. Food from every place can be found here, but restaurants in Taipei have made the mistake I just mentioned. (Lu, 1987, p. 5)

However, in spite of such criticism of the Taipei culinary scene, Lu increasingly regarded Taiwanese cuisine as another set of "tastes of home" after his twenty-year-long stay in Hong Kong.<sup>13</sup> He wrote about his changing perceptions of tastes while describing a trip from Taipei to Hong Kong: before embarking on a return trip to Hong Kong to work, his friend Xia, who owned a food stall in Taipei, brought some fresh sesame cakes with pork (醬肉燒餅) to the airport to see him off, saying, "Take these cakes; you can eat them on the way" (Lu, 1987, p. 169). These words were so simple but gave Lu a physical and mental impression that he was "leaving" (Lu, 1987, p. 170). The sense of leaving, in general, induces a sense of detachment from a familiar place and a sense of going from "here" to "there." Although Lu had long worked and resided in Hong Kong, his departure from Taiwan to Hong Kong did not trigger in him a sense of "returning home" but a sense of leaving. In other words, Lu did not consider Hong Kong a place where he had acquired a sense of belonging. In contrast, Taiwan was more like a home to him, with Lu himself also conscious that Taiwan had become another homeland for him:

Taipei is not my homeland, yet it is my homeland. After living here for a long stretch, a person can witness this erstwhile alien place become a homeland...once I left here, whether for a short or a long time, a sense of attachment and longing emerged. (Lu, 1987, p. 151)

In Lu's narratives, his sense of home rests on his dining experiences in Taiwan. Lu admits that indeed Hong Kong was a place known for its cuisine, "but my stomach is not suited for the cuisine here" (Lu, 1987, p. 152). He describes his longing for Taipei food vividly:

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<sup>13</sup> Lu Yao-dong studied in Hong Kong for five years and taught there for fifteen years. See: Lu, 2000b, p. 43.

Every time when I wake up from my nap in the afternoon, I stare at the ceiling and think of the food in Taipei. ...then I get up but soon sit down by the bed and feel frustrated because everything I want to eat is not beside me. (Lu, 1987, p. 168)

Lacking the impression that Hong Kong food was a familiar “taste of home,” Lu searched for the “tastes of Taipei” to cure his homesickness during his work-related stays in Hong Kong. Lu compares Hong Kong with Taiwanese food, criticizing that Hong Kong people were very proud of their Guangdong cuisine, so they tended to assimilate other regional cuisines to it, adding Guangdong flavor to everything (Lu, 1987, p. 145). As a result, he complains, he could not find delicious sesame cakes (燒餅) and fried bread sticks (油條) for breakfast, nor good braised beef (醬牛肉) to enjoy liquor with, so his wife had to bring him “luggage filled with food” from Taipei to Hong Kong (Lu, 1987, p. 151). He searched for the “tastes of Taipei” everywhere in Hong Kong and missed those shops where he had eaten in Taipei. When he finally found a Fujian restaurant in Hong Kong, he felt the comfort of returning to an eatery in a certain small town in Taiwan (Lu, 1987, pp. 34-46).

However, although Lu increasingly regarded Taipei food as his “tastes of home,” and Taipei as his homeland after living in Taipei for a long time, one should not hastily conclude that Lu’s lengthy residence in a new, alien place necessarily transformed it into home. It is clear that although Lu spent twenty years in Hong Kong, he did not view it as his home. The following section will argue that only a site where cultural memory is rooted can be a home. Although Suzhou was the birthplace of and an ideal home for Lu, there were other factors differentiating Taipei from Hong Kong and attaching the meaning of home to Taipei. These factors become clearer after an analysis of his return to Suzhou on the Mainland.

### **3.2 Re-staged cultural memory in Taipei**

Lu’s experience of returning to the Mainland brought him a different understanding of home. As the title of his second book *“Not the Taste of Previous Days”* asserts overtly, articles in this book repeatedly express Lu’s regret over changes in the culinary landscape on the Mainland. When he went back to his birthplace finally, he felt like a stranger:

Now I am really here, walking on the town’s main thoroughfare, but it seems that this town has changed considerably. This is still the street where I walked thousands of times..., however, not only have [the

breakfast shop] *Zhuhongxing* ended its business, but even the store has been demolished. (Lu, 1992, pp. 120-122)

Lu's hometown was quite different from the ideal home that he had entertained in his mind. Lu searched for the noodle shops he had used to frequent on his way to school every morning, but he searched in vain (Lu, 1992, p. 93). In order to indulge in the local dish "stir-fried shrimp" (清炒蝦仁), which he greatly missed, he ordered the dish in thirteen different restaurants within two weeks but could not re-encounter "the delicious taste hinted at in my memory" (Lu, 1992, p. 100). His finding is not surprising because significant changes had occurred on the Mainland during the previous four decades. Not only had his hometown changed, but so too had other cities and food on the Mainland. Lu travelled extensively to try dishes that had enjoyed a strong reputation in the past, but most of them disappointed him. In Shanxi Province, the taste of a noodle dish known as "cat ear" (貓耳朵) was quite plain and "not worthy of my long trip;" in Hangzhou, the famous "quickly stir-fried spring bamboo shoots" (醬爆春筍) also disappointed him, so after this trip, he settled for making the dish by himself (Lu, 1992, pp. 21-22); in Nanjing, the salty duck (鹹水鴨) "is worse than that in Taipei" (Lu, 1992, p. 106). In addition to food, Lu was disappointed in the service, dining manners, and customers in the restaurants. For example, when he visited the renowned restaurant *Laozhengxing* in Shanghai, what surprised Lu was not the slow service, distasteful food, and expensive prices but the consumers who squatted on the benches and spat on the floor (Lu, 1992, p. 113). In a restaurant in Suzhou, he was shocked by the big plates they used because Suzhou was a graceful and delicate town in his mind, but the big plates suggested to him that people here have started to eat unrestrainedly (Lu, 1992, p. 92).

Confronted by the above changes, Lu considered them to be constitutive of a cultural problem resulting from the break between traditional and modern Chinese society:

They cut society into new and old parts, just as one would cut tofu into two pieces. Diet has its own tradition and heritage, no different from other components of culture. But after the drastic changes from which emerged the new society, its people have been unable to find their way back to the days of old. (Lu, 1992, p. 3)

He argued that diet is an important component of culture that, over the long term, integrates itself into daily life; therefore, local snacks can be a window through which one can better understand local customs and people. In his search for

traditional food in many Chinese cities, he found that although the living standards were improving and although many dishes familiar to him were available, the tastes of these dishes had changed (Lu, 1992, pp. 116-117). Even if able to afford these dishes, most of the population apparently neither knew how to enjoy the dishes nor were in the mood to enjoy them. His perspective emphasizes the gap between tradition and modernity on the Mainland, an emphasis that implies the disappearance or the weakening of Lu's ideal "home" in his memory. When he stayed in his birthplace of Suzhou, Lu noted, "In the town where I lived and with which I was quite familiar, I have become a stranger" (Lu, 1992, p. 127). "Being a stranger at home" denotes this distance from the imagined homeland. For diasporic subjects who left home and went to other places, the homeland becomes different from what they imagine, strengthening their sense of diaspora.

Whereas Suzhou and other cities on the Mainland were not the homeland with which Lu felt familiar, Taipei became the chief new site where he searched for traditional Chinese dietary culture. It is noteworthy here that although Lu expressed a strong longing for Taipei food when he stayed in Hong Kong, he constantly longed for food from the Mainland: he seemed unable to stop himself from searching for good restaurants serving such dishes as Beijing roast duck, Shandong soymilk, and Shanxi noodle dishes (Lu, 1998, pp. 107, 112, 145-148); he was also deeply interested in the origins and the histories of restaurants that had moved from the Mainland to Taipei. In short, although Lu started to think of Taipei as his home, what he most longed for was the remapping of Chinese dietary culture in Taipei. He regarded the Chinese Market in Taipei (introduced in Chapter Two) as the best site where one could find Mainland food in Taiwan. In contrast with the food he found on the Mainland, Lu regarded the snacks sold in the Chinese Market as highly "authentic" and consistent with his memories of the tastes in question. Lu suggests that these authentic snacks bore the vendors' nostalgia-laced emotions, and that these emotions rendered the snacks even more delicious (Lu, 1998, pp. 105-111).

Overall, Lu went to great lengths in searching for those remembered dishes of yore, regarding them as authentic tastes representing the accumulation of Chinese dietary culture throughout Chinese history. In particular, he viewed—and his writings treat—local snacks as the sites where traditions are preserved and presented, suggesting that local snacks well reflect social and historical transformations (Lu, 1992, pp. 2-3). In the process of searching, he placed great emphasis on "legitimate" cooking methods and sought out "authentic" tastes of dishes. While he could not find a sufficiently traditional dietary culture either in Hong Kong or on the Mainland, he regarded Taipei as the site where the traditions had been best preserved. In other words, he identified Taipei as a

home-away-from-home insofar as Taipei could best quench his thirst for re-living cultural memories.

Lu's identification of home thus confers another meaning to "home," that is, home is the site where cultural memory is preserved. As Assmann argues, cultural memory constitutes the grounds where group identity is established, and the cultural memory of Chinese food is the grounds where Chinese identity is formed. While identification is the linkage between the individual and the group, Chinese food is an important linkage between Lu and the Chinese nation/people. In other words, food is a crucial means by which Lu confirms his national identity. However, although he insisted on the maintenance of the Chinese culinary tradition, interestingly, Lu himself also participated in the creation of a new tradition in Taiwanese food.

Although Lu criticized the hybridity phenomenon in Taiwanese restaurants, as Tang Lu-sun and some other Taiwan-based Mainlander writers did. In the context where the fusion of regional cuisines was becoming standard, the authenticity of regional Chinese cuisines could hardly be maintained. Old restaurants established by Mainlander migrants ended business gradually. And during this time, Lu acknowledged that these regional cuisines were absorbing each other and were integrating into local dishes, a process that yielded innovative dishes and new tastes (Lu, 1998, p. 110). Regarding this matter, it should take note of his later years, when Lu was renowned as a historian of Chinese food culture, and when his argument about "beef noodles" first became widely known and cited.

Beef noodles are regarded as representative Taiwanese cuisine nowadays, but the origin of this dish remains disputable. Taiwanese people seldom ate beef, at least during the Qing Dynasty and the Japanese colonial era (Inô Kanori, 1965 [1928], pp. 662-679; Tôhō Takayoshi, 1997 [1942], pp. 19-20). There was a prohibition on the consumption of beef during the Qing Dynasty because cattle were an important component of energy-expanding labor on farms. Eating beef was also a common taboo in Taiwanese rural villages because farmers used to use cattle as part of the work force. Therefore, eating beef is a relatively recent phenomenon in Taiwan, and it was only during the 1950s and 1960s that beef noodles became a popular dish.<sup>14</sup> There was even a "beef noodle street" in Taipei where several famous beef noodle shops were located. As many shops named their noodles "Sichuan-style beef noodles" and because most of the noodle-shop owners were migrants from the Mainland after 1945, it was widely believed until recently that Mainland soldiers

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<sup>14</sup> See, for example, Sun, 2001, pp. 153-156; Tong, 1986, pp. 106-107; and the introduction of "beef noodles" in the National History Database: [http://nhd.drnh.gov.tw/AHDPortal/browse/noun\\_content.do?method=showContent&showId=274](http://nhd.drnh.gov.tw/AHDPortal/browse/noun_content.do?method=showContent&showId=274) (retrieved 7/20/2009).



chiefly from Sichuan Province had introduced Taiwan to beef noodles.<sup>15</sup> Not until the late 1990s did a different story emerge, when Lu Yao-dong started to argue that the so-called Sichuan-style beef noodle was actually an invention in Taiwan and perhaps originated in military dependents' villages at *Gangshan* in south Taiwan. According to Lu's argument, "hot bean paste" (辣豆瓣醬) is an essential ingredient of the so-called "Sichuan-style beef noodles" and is also an important specialty of *Gangshan*. Beginning on July 1, 1949, *Gangshan* was the site of the Air Force Academy, and many soldiers at the Air Force Academy hailed from Sichuan Province. Among the local dishes of Sichuan, "A Small Bowl of Beef in Red Soup" (小碗紅湯牛肉) is quite similar to beef-noodle soup. Thus, according to Lu, cooks in the villages for military dependents perhaps created beef noodles by combining *Gangshan* the "hot bean paste" ingredient with the "A Small Bowl of Beef in Red Soup" dish from Sichuan, and noodles.<sup>16</sup> His argument about the origins of beef noodles has been adopted and propagated by the Taipei City Government at the Beef Noodle Festival that started in 2005.<sup>17</sup> Advertisements and other media-disseminated propaganda stemming from this festival have widely proclaimed beef noodles to be a Taiwanese specialty. Now rather than mention "Sichuan beef noodles," most people call the dish "Taiwanese beef noodles."

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<sup>15</sup> In addition to Sichuan-style braised beef noodles, "clear stewed beef noodles" is another major kind of beef-noodle dish in Taiwan.

<sup>16</sup> Lu Yao-dong, "Zailun niuroumian [Talking about beef noodles again]," *China Times* 2/15/1999(37); "Hailun niuroumian [Talking more about beef noodles]," *China Times* 2/22/1999(37). Also see Lu, 2001, pp. 194-201.

<sup>17</sup> See the website of official Beef Noodle Festival 2005: [http://www.tbnf.com.tw/en/m\\_know.htm](http://www.tbnf.com.tw/en/m_know.htm) (retrieved 8/2/2009).



**Figure 4.1 Braised beef noodles**

Source: Website for the Taipei Beef Noodle Festival 2005,  
[http://www.tbnf.com.tw/en/m\\_know.htm](http://www.tbnf.com.tw/en/m_know.htm) (retrieved 8/2/2009)

However, Lu's argument rests on his experience in Sichuan Province, where he found no vendor selling such beef noodles, and thus contains no conclusion backed by solid evidence. However, through his participation in the Beef Noodle Festivals and the related media-driven promotions, his assumption has been intellectualized and legitimized. The popular food writer Yilan suggests that every Taiwanese has his or her own story about beef noodles. She believes that a connection exists between this genuine Taiwanese invention and the emotion-laden memories of most Taiwanese people, regardless of these people's ethnic origin.<sup>18</sup> First of all, both scholarly discourse and commercial promotions articulate beef noodles as "a distinctive Taiwanese invention"; second of all, most Taiwanese people have their own experiences and memories of beef noodles since the popularization of beef noodles got underway in the 1950s. As a result, many Taiwanese people nowadays consider beef noodles to be a common "taste of home." In this way, the knowledge surrounding beef noodles has become a new food tradition.

#### **4. TAIWANESE CUISINE AS THE "TASTES OF HOME"**

Whereas both Tang and Lu were migrants from the Mainland to Taiwan, both Lin Hai-yin and Lin Wen-yue came from Taiwanese families but grew up on the Mainland; consequently, the latter two have regarded their home as comprising both Taiwan and the Mainland. On the one hand, Taiwan is the homeland of their parents

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<sup>18</sup> Yilan's personal website:  
<http://www.yilan.com.tw/html/modules/cjaycontent/index.php?id=599> (retrieved 8/2/2009).

and also the place where they lived after their 30s, but on the other hand, the Mainland is the place where they grew up and established their families; thus, it is a crucial site of their memories. The following analysis of these two authors' writings reveals another way in which Taiwanese cuisine is conceived as a taste of home.

#### **4.1 Lin Hai-yin: alien home, a familiar “taste of home”**

Lin Hai-yin is a writer with a great reputation in both China and Taiwan. Her autobiographical novel *Chengnan jiushi [Memories of Peking: South Side Stories]* was filmed on the Mainland in 1981. She is considered a writer who inherited the spirit of the May Fourth Movement in China (Yan, 2000, p. 6).<sup>19</sup> In Taiwan, she is respected as a crucial founder of Taiwanese literature, and her publishing company is a hotbed of many important Taiwanese writers (Ye, 2002; Wang, 2008). All the stories in her novels take place in Beijing during the 1930s or in Taiwan during the 1950s and 1960s. She wrote at length about members of Taiwan's lower classes, such as adopted daughters sold as sex-workers and poor Mainlanders who found themselves exiled in Taiwan at the end of the civil war. Her writings are thus regarded as a reflection of real-life themes on both sides of the straits.

Lin Hai-yin's accomplishments stem partly from her unique experiences. Lin Hai-yin's father and mother came from Hakka and Haklo family in Taiwan respectively, but she was born in Osaka, Japan in 1918. Her father moved to Beijing to work, starting in 1920, under his own father's direction, and Lin Hai-yin moved to Beijing in 1922 with her mother. After marrying and starting a family, she returned to Taiwan with her husband and children in 1947 because of the civil war. Lin Hai-yin spent 26 years in Beijing in total, and these years made Beijing an important homeland for her. However, Taiwan also occupied a special position in her mind. As Taiwan was the homeland of her parents, she regarded Taiwan as her homeland when she lived on the Mainland. Her understanding of Taiwan came from her parents and her father's Taiwanese friends. These Taiwanese who worked on the Mainland called themselves “sweet-potato people” (*fanshuren*) (Lin, 2000, pp. 22-29). Lin Hai-yin suggests that although this term was used more as a joke, it reveals the hardships of these Taiwanese on the Mainland. These “sweet-potato people” viewed China as their motherland and thus migrated to the Mainland to avoid Japanese colonial rule; however, they were often distrusted by the local people. To hide their Taiwanese origin, many of them registered their birthplace as Fujian or Guangdong Province, where their ancestors had been born (Lin, 2000, pp.

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<sup>19</sup> Lin Hai-yin was also awarded the “Five-Fourth Award” in 1999 by *Wenxun*, a literary magazine which was financially supported by the Nationalist Party in Taiwan. See: <http://www.wenhsun.com.tw/activity/54award02.asp> (retrieved 8/2/2009).

22-23). In addition to suffering discrimination by the Chinese on the Mainland, they faced investigations and other forms of harassment by the Japanese police. Lin Hai-yin's youngest uncle died while participating in an anti-Japan patriotic activity on the Mainland. All these experiences made Lin Hai-yin sensitive to the differences between the Taiwanese and other Chinese. She heard much about Taiwan from her mother and, as a child, often imagined life in Taiwan. Furthermore, even though she did not return to Taiwan until her thirties, she was familiar with Taiwanese food long before then because of her mother's influence.

Since Lin Hai-yin's parents came from Hakka and Haklo background respectively and because her husband came from Jiangsu Province on the Mainland, she was well aware of the differences between these different cuisines. She labeled the dishes made by her mother "Taiwanese cuisine and Hakka cuisine:"

My mother's...dishes are Taiwanese and Hakka cuisines. When cooking vegetables and leeks, lettuce, or spinach, she often blended them with Japanese soy sauce. She is good at cooking sautéed fish *wuliu* (literally five willow branches)(五柳魚), stir-fried streaky pork with garlic sprouts (青蒜燒五花肉), stir-fried pig liver (炒豬肝) or heart (豬心), stir-fried pig lung with ginger (薑絲炒豬肺), and the like.<sup>20</sup> (Lin, 2000, p. 14)

The dishes that Lin Hai-yin lists were common dishes in Taiwanese families at that time, and she can further differentiate between Hakka and Haklo dishes on the basis of her parents' food preferences. She describes in her autobiographical novel how a Hakka father would complain about the cooking of his Haklo wife:

When a Hakka friend visits, Father asks Mother to cook more dishes, but he often complains that she cannot cook Hakka dishes well. For example, he complains that the "tofu stew" (釀豆腐) is too light or the boiled chicken (白斬雞) is too old. Once, Mother cooked a dish from her homeland; although Father admitted that the dish was delicious, he still complained to his friends: "Those Haklo can cook nothing but sautéed fish!" (Lin, 2000 [1960], p. 121)

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<sup>20</sup> Among these dishes, sautéed fish *wuliu* is also named as *wuliuzhi* (五柳枝), referring to a special fish recipe: sauté a fish first, and then cover it with pork or five well-sliced vegetables, such as radish, onion, spring onion, ginger, and garlic. The dish has been widely recognized as a representative traditional "Taiwanese cuisine" by many senior chefs and cookbook writers, confirming that it was indispensable in banquets and festivals several decades ago. See for example Liang, 1999, pp. 84-85; Xinye restaurant, 1997, pp. 64-65. Also see Chapter Five of the current study.



**Figure 4.2 Sautéed fish *wuliuzhi***

Source: Author, taken in a Taiwanese restaurant in Tainan (2008)

This description shows that the boundary between Hakka and Haklo dishes existed even within a family. However, Lin Hai-yin was very conscious that her food preferences differed from the “Taiwanese tastes” of her parents, admitting that “I have my own Beijing foodway, and of course flour-dishes are dominant, such as dumplings (餃子), meat cakes (餡餅), leek rolls (韭菜簍), noodles with soybean paste (炸醬麵), pancakes with green onion (薄餅捲大蔥), and stir-fried leek sprouts with bean sprouts (炒韭黃豆芽菜)” (Lin, 2000, p. 14). The difference in food preferences is even apparent in some Beijing specialties, such as bean juice (*douzhi*, 豆汁). Bean juice has a sour taste that is not readily accepted by people other than indigenous Beijing-ers. Therefore, the ability to consume the snack is often viewed as a good indicator of whether or not someone is a real Beijing-er. While Lin Hai-yin regarded it as a delicious snack, her mother was disgusted by its smell and never tried it (Lin, 2000, p. 4).

Although Lin Hai-yin developed her own Beijing foodway, she regarded Taiwanese cuisine as her “tastes of home.”<sup>21</sup> Her appetite for Taiwanese food was cultivated by her mother’s dishes that maintained the local characteristics, such as boiled meat and braised dishes with soy sauce. In her writing, she states that the features of Taiwanese dishes lay in simple cooking methods and seasoning: vegetables were cooked by quickly stir-frying them and meat was often boiled. These cooking methods thus preserved the original flavors of the food, but for her husband, who came from Jiangsu Province, such “Taiwanese cuisine” was too simple. Lin Hai-yin further states that when she, in the company of her husband,

<sup>21</sup> Lin Hai-yin, “Jiaxiangwei [Tastes of Home],” *Central Daily News*, 2/12/1950(7).

would go home to enjoy her mother's Taiwanese dishes, her husband found all the food to be unappetizing, and Lin Hai-yin would have to ask her mother to vary the cooking methods a little. Even so, when her husband teasingly commented that because the minds of the Taiwanese are simple, the Taiwanese can make only simple dishes, Lin Hai-yin defended the people and their culture: "We do not make changes. Everything keeps its original flavor on this island. Why should we chase after the complexity of a civilized society?"<sup>22</sup>

The complaint from Lin Hai-yin's husband is similar to the opinions of Tang Lu-sun and Lu Yao-dong, both of whom regarded Taiwanese cuisine as simple and as less civilized and delicious than other Chinese regional cuisines. However, Lin Hai-yin defended these dishes and viewed them as the authentic flavor of this island. She claims in her writings that these Taiwanese dishes, being her "tastes of home" transmitted from her mother, never bored her. Her emotional attachment to Taiwanese cuisine was not rooted in a long experience of living in Taiwan but in the cuisine's connection with her parents. Although Taiwan was a strange place for her because she had spent few days on the island before 1947, Taiwan remained her "home," and Taiwanese food served as a tie connecting her with her parents and this island. In contrast with Tang and Lu, Lin Hai-yin's emotional attachment to Taiwanese cuisine was bound up with her family but not with a nation or an overarching history. Her food memories about Taiwanese food were established around her mother, childhood, and family life but were seldom, it would seem, direct results of traditional or historical events. In short, it was her mother's dishes but not tradition that most immediately and most evidently established Taiwanese cuisine as her "tastes of home," a story similar to Lin Wen-yue's.

#### **4.2 Lin Wen-yue: "home" embodied in people but not in locality**

Lin Wen-yue came from a distinguished family in Taiwan. Her grandfather Lian Heng was a historian who wrote *Taiwan tongshi* [*General History of Taiwan*] (1918), and her uncle Lian Zhen-dong was the first councilor of Taipei appointed by Chen Yi after the end of Japanese rule. However, although her parents came from Zhanghua and Tainan County in Taiwan, she never stayed in Taiwan before she was fourteen. Born in the Japanese enclave in Shanghai, Lin Wen-yue studied at Japanese schools with Japanese classmates and spoke Japanese, which was her first language. Thus, she considered herself to be Japanese in her childhood, until the defeat of Japan in 1945 (Lin, 1978, p. 30, 1988, pp. 23-24). During the next year, her

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<sup>22</sup> Lin Hai-yin, "Jiaxiangwei [Tastes of Home]," *Central Daily News*, 2/12/1950(7).

family moved to Taiwan, finally returning to the “homeland” in which she had never lived before.

Similar to Lin Hai-yin, Lin Wen-yue has a family background and migration experience in which complicated meanings about the notion of “home” are embedded. While Taiwan is her homeland because it is the geographical origin of her family, she has regarded Shanghai as “always my homeland in my memory” because it is a city bound to many childhood memories (Lin, 1999, p. 94). Furthermore, she has referred to Kyoto, a Japanese city where she stayed for one year, as her “homeland of the soul” (Lin, 2004, pp. 49-52).<sup>23</sup>

Although all three of these cities are her homelands, her writings suggest that she has felt both a sense of uncertainty and a sense of rootedness in Taiwan. For example, once when she passed by the hometown of her father at Zhanghua, she asked herself,

I have lived in Shanghai but I am not a Shanghai-er, I lived in Tokyo but am not a Tokyo-er, I lived in Taipei but am not a Taipei-er. Then which city should I belong to? Suddenly I felt no place to locate myself – it seems that I am just a guest everywhere. (Lin, 1986, p. 16)

The sense of having no roots reveals Lin Wen-yue’s vague image of home. In contrast to Tang and Lu, whose writings express the authors’ strong emotional attachment to their homeland on the Mainland, Lin Hai-yin and Lin Wen-yue, who moved from the Mainland to Taiwan, have exhibited a more reluctant attitude to considering Taiwan as their home. In this context, Lin Wen-yue’s “tastes of home” bond not to a specific place but to those people interlinked with her memory of home. *Yinshan zhaji* [*Notes of Drinking and Cuisine*], published in 1999, is her only book focusing on food and is composed of her personal recipes, cooking notes, and stories about those dishes she made. When she had banquets at home, she used to record her recipes and guests on a small card; these cards accumulated over the years and thus became a source of her food memories and a bridge to the past.

Of all the nineteen recipes recorded in this book, seven dishes are representative of Taiwanese cuisine and are popular in Taiwanese families or at festivals. All dishes in this book are connected to specific memories, and the following section discusses the themes of these memories.

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<sup>23</sup> Although Lin Wen-yue is a professor of Chinese literature, she has impressive knowledge of Japanese literature and has translated into Mandarin such classical Japanese literature as *Genji monogatari* [*The Tale of Genji*], *Izumi Shikibu nikki* [*The Diary of Izumi Shikibu*], and *Makura no sôshi* [*The Pillow Book*].

### (1) Banquets with family

Some dishes that her book discusses stem from her dining experiences with her family, and these dishes have always triggered in her various memories of her family and of wonderful days with them. For example, her grandfather Lian Heng was among those who often enjoyed Taiwanese haute cuisine at the restaurant *Jiangshan Lou*; thus, Lin Wen-yuan heard from her mother about some dishes that the restaurants served and that included “Buddha Jumps over the Wall” (佛跳牆)<sup>24</sup> and sweet taro paste (芋泥), which was often delivered to Lian’s room as a snack. After returning to Taiwan, she occasionally enjoyed “authentic Taiwanese cuisine” in a private club at Beitou with her family (Lin, 1999, p. 26). These experiences established in Lin Wen-yue’s mind an image of Taiwanese haute cuisine and influenced her cooking. She tried to cook these dishes at banquets, and her family always came to her mind when she cooked or enjoyed these dishes.

In the last article in this book, Lin Wen-yue describes her mother’s masterpiece sautéed fish *wuliuzhi*, referring to it as a famous Taiwanese dish particularly at local banquets held during important festivals. As mentioned earlier, this dish was also an important banquet dish of Lin Hai-yin’s mother. In her writing, Lin Wen-yue states that her mother, when they were all living in Shanghai, made this dish on special occasions like birthdays or when guests from remote places came to visit; therefore, the dish reminded her of happy days: “I do not remember details of those events, but the memory of the pleasant mood is still fresh in my mind despite the passage of time” (Lin, 1999, p. 145).



**Figure 4.3 Buddha Jumps over the Wall**

Source: Author, taken at the 2006 Exhibition of Taiwanese Cuisine

<sup>24</sup> The dish “Buddha Jumps over the Wall” originates from Fujian Province and refers to a kind of stew that contains several precious ingredients, including shark fin, sea cucumber, and abalone. Its name suggests that the flavor of this dish is amazing; hence, a monk jumped over a wall to eat it, so the story goes.



## (2) Festive food

Homeland dishes are particular favorites during festivals, such as radish cakes (蘿蔔糕) during the Chinese New Year and “Taiwanese rice dumplings with meat” (肉粽) during the Dragon-boat Festival. Both Lin Wen-yue’s writings and Lin Hai-yin’s writings mention that it was necessary in their families to make special dishes during festivals and that the dishes specific to Taiwanese festivals differed from comparable dishes eaten in Beijing and Shanghai. For example, Lin Wen-yue recalls that all the women in her family had to help make “Taiwanese rice dumplings with meat” before the Dragon-boat Festival, and what they made was apparently different from the corresponding dishes consumed in Shanghai (Lin, 1999, p. 70). This memory stayed with her, and after marrying, she insisted on making these dumplings for her family: “by repeating Mother’s practices of the past, I can recollect the sweet and fragrant flavor in my memory” (Lin, 1999, p. 117).



**Figure 4.4 Taiwanese rice dumplings with meat**

Source: Author, taken in an assembly (2007)

According to Lin Wen-yue’s memory of food, her most emotional attachment to these dishes has been a nostalgic mood toward her family and toward an era long since passed. When recalling those dishes, she would also recall the pleasant gatherings or festivals spent with her family, teachers, or classmates. As with Lin Hai-yin’s mother, Lin Wen-yue’s mother would serve Taiwanese food despite being far from their homeland of Taiwan, and these dishes would trigger memories of the remote place of origin. In other words, Taiwanese cuisine would function as their own mother’s “tastes of home,” but through their mothers, these Taiwanese dishes imprinted themselves in the daughters’ memory and influenced their consciousness of Taiwanese cuisine. Their memories of “home” are thus closer in form to a “communicative memory” shaped in a social context than to a “cultural memory.”

Although both Lin Hai-yin's writings and Lin Wen-yue's writings treat Taiwanese cuisine as the authors' "tastes of home," this "home" refers to family rather than to a specific place.

## 5. HOME AND CULTURAL MEMORY

This chapter explored how Taiwanese cuisine has evolved into "tastes of home." The cases of Tang and Lu highlight the assertion that the idea of "home" is closely connected with cultural memory. Cultural memory constituted the grounds where the two writers' national and cultural identities were maintained, thus Tang always regarded Beijing as his home, and the object of Lu's identification with "home" shifted from Suzhou to Taiwan. Only when Lu conceived of Taiwan as the home where his cultural memory was preserved did Taiwanese cuisine evolve into his "tastes of home." In contrast, Lin Hai-yin and Lin Wen-yue's stories treat Taiwanese cuisine as the two authors' childhood "tastes of home," even if Taiwan was an unfamiliar place to them. Such "tastes of home" originated from the writers' blood ties with their respective parents, ties that were embodied in traditional family dishes.

These cases show that there are at least three meanings applicable to "home" in this context. First, home is the place where people grow up or live for a long time. Second, home is a place that provides the cultural memories that an individual identifies with. Third, home can be a memory site—rather than a place—where one's family and other related people are interlinked.

This chapter also reveals that the concept of cultural memory is a good way to understand how traditions change because it provides insight into the dynamics of these changes. Cultural memory is a foundation on which group identity forms. This formation is related to not only the accumulation of customs and conventions, but embedded cultural values, as well. Group identity can serve as common cultural grounds that a community shares and identifies with. When individuals identify with cultural memory, the identification becomes a link connecting the individuals to the group. By means of these grounds, a sense of distinction and unity can strengthen the group as a community. However, when customs and conventions change or hybridize, new experiences and memories can surface in the minds of community members. With the accumulation of new experiences and new memories, textualization or intellectualization helps transform them into cultural memories—that is, into a new tradition. The changing discourse on beef noodles is a good example of this phenomenon. Beef noodles was a new dining experience in Taiwan after the 1950s, but as more and more Taiwanese acquired the experience of dining on beef noodles, this experience was further textualized, intellectualized, and disseminated, ultimately forming a new dietary tradition.

The development process of a new food tradition can also explain some changes in Taiwanese cuisine. While the hybridization of regional cuisines has continued, various foreign dishes and ingredients have entered the Taiwanese market to reshape both the culinary scene and the dining experiences of Taiwanese people. Once new dining experiences become somewhat familiar, the previously new experiences accumulate and become new memories for both individuals and social groups. It is in this way that, in Taiwan, many common experiences and memories of Taiwanese cuisine have taken shape.

However, diverse identifications of Taiwanese cuisine still exist, even if they concern common experiences and memories. This chapter has shown how textualization and intellectualization play an important role in the shaping of cultural memory and of new traditions. The next chapter will shift the focus to the bodily memory of consumers in a wider context of everyday life, further exploring the relationship between consumers' national consciousness and their preference for Taiwanese or Chinese cuisine.



## Chapter Five

### Bodily Memory and Sensibility:

#### Eating habits, culinary preferences, and national consciousness

The embodiment of nationhood may exist not only in textual forms like food memoirs but also in bodily practices. Chapter Four analyzes the changing identification of “home” by examining food memoirs, whilst this chapter extends its focus to the wider population and their “bodily memories,” examining how consumers conceive of the notion of Taiwanese cuisine and the relationship between their national consciousness and culinary preference. This chapter will explore the diverse meanings of Taiwanese cuisine defined by consumers and consumers’ different culinary preferences for Taiwanese and Chinese cuisine. Also, it will scrutinize how consumers’ culinary preferences and different definitions of Taiwanese cuisine are related to their national consciousness, exploring to what extent and by what means food consumption can embody national consciousness.

#### 1. NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND BODILY MEMORY

##### 1.1 National consciousness and social experience

It has been argued that national identity, that is, being Taiwanese or Chinese, has been a fundamental social cleavage in Taiwan, particularly since the late 1980s.<sup>1</sup> Empirical studies on Taiwanese identity show that Taiwanese society has witnessed a rise in Taiwanese identity and a decline in Chinese identity since the 1990s, while the percentage of the population having a dual identity—regarding themselves as “both Taiwanese and Chinese”—has remained stable.<sup>2</sup> Why did Taiwanese identity become significant during the 1990s? The dominant perspective ascribes the

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Shyu, 1996; Wu, 1993; Chang, 2003.

<sup>2</sup> According to a long-term survey from 1992 to 2008, the percentage of Taiwanese citizens who perceive themselves as Taiwanese increased from 17.3% in June 1992 to 50.8% in Dec. 2008; the number in 2008 is greater than the number of Taiwanese citizens who regard themselves as both Taiwanese and Chinese (40.8% in Dec. 2008 and 45.4% in June 1992), while the number of Taiwanese citizens who identify themselves only as Chinese has dropped dramatically from 26.2% to 4.2% during the same period. See *Core Political Attitudes Trend Chart* conducted by the Election Study Center of National Cheng-chi University. (<http://esc.nccu.edu.tw/newchinese/data/TaiwanChineseID.htm>, retrieved 6/17/2009). The analysis by Ho and Liu indicates that the rise of “Taiwanese identity” exhibits no difference in relation to ethnic background, education, age, gender, and partisanship. See Ho & Liu, 2002.

significance to the rise of democratization and ethnic politics since the late 1980s.<sup>3</sup> Researchers argue that democratization opened a space for political expression and competition, strengthening Taiwan's demand for self-determination and the quest by many Taiwanese for an international identity separate from Chinese identity. Taiwanese consciousness, which had been suppressed under the authoritarian regime, was thus justified during the 1990s. Furthermore, different ethnic consciousnesses, such as the Hakka and Aboriginal identities, emerged and crystallized during a process of political liberalization, paving the way for an emerging Taiwanese "national identity." Whilst ethnic consciousness gained prominence and strength within the democratic regime during the 1990s, the two factors of democratization and ethnic politics were intertwined and were associated with domestic political struggles. Wachman (1994) thus concludes that both the Nationalist government and its opposition exploited the national-identity issue as a way of attracting popular support among given constituencies (p. 261).

However, although a wealth of research has examined the origins of Taiwanese identity from a historical perspective and analyzed Taiwanese identity's emergence within changing domestic and international structures, two issues in this research merit further consideration.

First, many empirical studies on Taiwanese national identity are grounded mainly on surveys of Taiwanese or Chinese identity, and the surveys' respondents themselves defined "Taiwanese or Chinese identity" when answering whether they were Taiwanese or Chinese. In other words, what is revealed in these surveys is a performed or exhibited identity. A hidden assumption behind such surveys is that the respondents or interviewees understand well their own "national identity" and can draw a thoughtful conclusion regarding whether they are Taiwanese or Chinese. This assumption may not be true. Brown's (2003) research shows that individuals' choice of identity is influenced by individuals' perceptions of power and social relations, but respondents or interviewees might be unconscious of such an influence (p. 62). Second, the performed identities in surveys might be strategic choices that vary according to the context of the survey. This "strategic choices" reason can explain the findings of Ho and Liu (2002) that the results of identity-themed surveys are politically charged and obviously influenced by political events (p. 70). I am not arguing that surveys are incapable of shedding light on national identity; however, it should be made clear that the performed identity revealed in surveys is neither necessarily nor fully representative of the respondents' national consciousness.

The examination of social experience and practices is another important way to explore the national consciousness of individuals. Craib (1998) poses the concept of

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<sup>3</sup> See for example, Chang, 2003; Chu, 2004; Chu & Lin, 2001; Gold, 1994; Wachman, 1994; Wang, 2003; Wu, 1997. Also see Chapter Three.

“experiencing identity” to explain that identity is not only “one element or process within a self” but also the way people experience the world (p. 1). He identifies experience as “a wide range of affects which has both physical and ideational components, both of which may be conscious or unconscious or some combination of both” (Craib, 1998, p. 10). In the dynamic process of experience, external and internal stimuli constantly interact with each other (Craib, 1998, p. 168). Therefore, he interprets individuals’ identity choices as “closing down” the psychic space around one or another social identity, while “opening up” another psychic space to explore oneself and one’s relationships. The closing and the opening can be conscious or unconscious processes (Craib, 1998, pp. 170-177).

Craib suggests that identity has unconscious and social dimensions, whilst Brown (2004) further highlights the bi-directional relationship between social experience and perception in her anthropological research on ethnic groups in Taiwan and China. Focusing on identity changes in ethnic groups ranging from the aborigines to the Han, she argues that identity is essentially experiential, and that both individual and group identities stem from negotiated everyday social experience. On one hand, individuals live and create their own social experiences, but on the other, they understand these experiences “in terms of the cultural meanings of the specific society in which they live” (Brown, 2004, p. 13). Although their perceptions of the social-power hierarchy and of cultural meanings may not accurately reflect actual social power relations, these cultural meanings of social power relations can still “guide and constrain individuals’ interpretations of actual events and possible future actions” (Brown, 2004, p. 220). In other words, social experience and perception mutually influence each other and constitute the grounds where individuals understand the living world and make decisions in social interactions. However, social experience consists not only of events, conversations, and narratives but also of bodily practices. Therefore, research attempting to explore national consciousness through social experience should account for bodily practice.

Preference for a specific food or cuisine can be congenital or can be learned through eating experiences. The preference for Taiwanese or Chinese cuisine involves both the cuisines and the bodily practices of eating. To explore both the formation of preferences for Taiwanese cuisine or Chinese cuisine and the preferences’ relationship with national consciousness, this research adopts the concept “bodily memory”<sup>4</sup> to theorize the concept “culinary preference.”

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<sup>4</sup> Both Connerton (1989) and Lee (2000) have used the term “bodily memory” in their writings. I am inspired by their conceptualization of bodily memory but expand its meanings in the context of this study. I will explain their conceptualization of this concept when presenting their ideas in this chapter.

## **1.2 Bodily memory relative to culinary preference and identification**

The body is often viewed as a site of cultural codes. For example, Douglas (2003 [1970]) argues that the body is an important symbolic system that can reveal the cultural structure of a society (pp. 65-81). Bourdieu's (1984) theory of "habitus" also highlights the body as a bearer of value and marker of social positions, positing that body is "the most indisputable materialization of class taste" (p. 190). Butler (1993) suggests that repeated practice is a crucial way of embedding cultural and social norms in the body. She argues that, through repeated physical practices and performances in daily life, the body memorizes the proper way to act in specific social and cultural contexts; and conversely, these ways of acting can be generated by specific social cues. In this sense, daily practice and performance are shaped and conditioned by historical and social contexts, and bodily behavior is thus culturally appropriated and socially constructed. As Connerton (1989) states in his influential book, bodily practices enact the past and thus serve to embody cultural memory (p. 72).

However, body and social contexts mutually influence each other. Researchers who focus on the body and society particularly underline the subjectivity of the body. Shilling (1993) argues that the body is an unfinished entity that is imprinted by social life and that shapes it (p. 114). The body not only reflects culturally and socially informed memories but also creates the sensual ground that brings meaning to people's consciousness. The subjective aspect of the body is evident in studies on traumatic experiences and memory (cf. Becker, Beyene, & Ken, 2000; Kleinman & Kleinman, 1994). Experiences attributable to victims of violence and to refugees can evolve into embodied memories that recreate social meanings, and the traumatic experiences of "sociosomatics" manifest themselves in physical responses such as sleeplessness, fatigue, and dizziness. In sum, the interactions between body and memory are better understood as a bi-directional process. The body is a bearer of social values and communal experiences, and practices imprint these experiences on the body over time. The body can also function to generate meanings.

Drawing on the bi-directional process that underlies the relationships between body and memory, this research uses the term "bodily memory" to encompass these two meanings of body. On one hand, bodily memory is the sense or memory inscribed in bodies. Specific social contexts can evoke a sense or a memory. The memory as well as the process of inscription is affected by one's social position and cultural disposition. On the other hand, bodily memory is the sensory experience by which individuals consider and make sense of objects or events, conferring cultural



significance on them. Such “bodily memory” has the three following crucial characteristics.

### **(1) Individual memory and particularity**

Bodily memory is created or accumulated by physical experiences, which become meaningful only within one’s life history. Bodily memory is thus individual and not collective. It is particularly significant when an event is related to physical labor or a physical sense. As emotions, feelings, and senses vary by individual, so the memories of events differ. In other words, bodily memory reveals the particularity of individuals.

However, this is not to say that bodily memory cannot be transformed into social memory. Connerton (1989) reminds us that the incorporation of the human body and social memory is an important way through which societies remember.<sup>5</sup> Although bodily memory is grounded in individual experiences, it is also the basis on which individuals situate themselves and connect with others. Lee (2000) also points out that bodily memory and social memory are intertwined experiences. She suggests that bodily memory is often a response “to changing social contexts,” and the response is closely related to the social position and network of the individual. In other words, bodily memory is also an important “source of social memory” (Lee, 2000, p. 219).

In this sense, although bodily memory is an individual memory, it serves as the linkage between an individual and shared collective memories. When a public event occurs, it is through individuals’ emotions and feelings toward this event that the event is memorized. Drawing on a study by Kleinman and Kleinman linking physical experience with cognitive processes and expressions of suffering, Lee (2000) argues that

... past experiences are sedimented in the body and reconfigured into a source of meaning-making in which bodily signs and experiences are understood within a personal history framed by sociopolitical events. The body serves as a template of social experience, which is then articulated into stories of collective history. (p. 207)

While serving as a way in which individuals participate in collective memory, bodily memory can serve as an analytical tool for examining how human bodies conceive of and react to collective social memories. Individuals deal with experiences according

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<sup>5</sup> Connerton points out three ways by which a society remember, in addition to the “body,” the other two ways include inscriptions onto cultural texts such as myths and monuments, and commemorative rituals that engage people in participatory rationality and social action.

to their own reference structure, which varies from person to person. An examination of bodily memory can thus shed light on the process of personal engagement with social memory.

## **(2) Emotional bond**

Memory is highly selective so that not all events or behaviors are remembered. What is memorized is essentially related to certain forms of emotion: suffering, pleasure, pride, or pain, and these emotions are often the subject of research on bodily memory. For example, Becker, Beyene, and Ken (2000) explore the bodily distress of Cambodian refugees, pointing out that fear and mistrust resulting from physical and emotional pain can evolve into embodied memories and can further influence these refugees' relationships with others and with the world (Becker, et al., 2000). In this sense, emotion is better understood as a relational process that informs social interaction and is thus socially efficacious (Lee, 2000, p. 207). Emotional bonds are another medium by which the linkage between individuals and the collective are made.

## **(3) The unconscious**

Memories that are encoded in bodies are derived from sensory experiences, even though people are not necessarily conscious of the derivation. As Bourdieu's concept "habitus" underlines, bodily memory works in the unconscious. Lee (2000) explains that "although bodily acts are ... products of conscious learning over time, these behaviors settle into the unconsciousness, becoming 'obscure in the eyes of their own producers'" (p. 205). Through the "habit memory" that is sedimented in the body, certain habits and behaviors become natural (Connerton, 1989, pp. 34-35). The characteristic of unconsciousness is particularly significant in food habits. Sutton (2001) argues that the power of food lies in the ability to mask class issues under the guise of "taste and personal preference" (p. 4). The taken-for-granted-ness of eating habits and culinary preferences prevents a deeper consideration of how social class, ethnicity, and national consciousness may influence culinary preferences.

On the basis of these characteristics, "bodily memory" is adopted in this research as an analytical concept to theorize culinary preference. Individual preferences for specific foods and the senses of taste are subjective feelings that vary from individual to individual, which is why there is no standard definition of taste, such as a delicious taste, a sweet taste, or a sour taste. However, the response to taste and the

preference for food is not entirely impromptu or arbitrary. Instead, preferences for cuisine are often cultivated in daily life over a long time and are closely associated with one's memory of food. The feeling of something being "delicious" is a bodily response to food, with the response generated by individual criteria of taste, criteria that are shaped and cultivated over a long time. In other words, food preference is a form of bodily memory.

According to this conceptualization, culinary preference is a sort of bodily memory in two senses. First, the bodily response to food is shaped by social values and communal experiences over time. For example, shark fin is "haute cuisine" in China, and the impression of "deliciousness" when eating shark fin dishes can derive from their high monetary and social value. Second, the subjective bodily response to food can produce new meanings and change the value of food. Using the same example of shark fin, when some consumers find the real flavor of sharks to be distasteful, they may start to dislike the dish and stop eating it.

Furthermore, in my references to culinary preference as a form of "bodily memory," the three aforementioned characteristics of bodily memory (particularity, emotional bond, and the unconscious) are also features of culinary preferences. First, culinary preference is apparently individual, but is also collective. Researches on the formation of "food taste" have shown that groups whose members are of the same ethnicity, generation, class, or region exhibit some commonalities in their culinary preferences.<sup>6</sup> Second, food preference is often an emotional choice and not necessarily rational. One's preference for a specific flavor is often influenced by repeated exposure to a given food and by experiences shared in families or in other social contexts. Thus, food can often remind us of memories of childhood, family, friends, or festivals. However, although able to recognize their preferences for a specific food, people are not necessarily conscious of the reason for their own preferences. Individuals are not always conscious of the feelings that are inscribed in their bodies.

In sum, culinary preference is a sensory choice generated by bodily practices and eating experiences; it is an individual choice but formed in social networks and thus is constitutive of the grounds of social interaction; it is associated with like and dislike—that is, with the emotional experience of individuals—even though individuals are often not conscious of how a preference is formed. This chapter will employ the concept of bodily memory to analyze how culinary preferences are formed in a wider social context and how individuals make sense of their culinary preferences. "Culinary preference" in this chapter refers to the preference for either Taiwanese cuisine or Chinese cuisine.

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<sup>6</sup> See, for example, the researches collected in Korsmeyer (ed.), 2005.

In-depth interviews were conducted with 24 informants, comprising 15 females and 9 males. Focusing on how they conceived of the notion of “Taiwanese cuisine,” I have explored not only their definitions and understandings of Taiwanese cuisine but also their food-centered life history to better understand the process of taste-cultivation. In addition to their claimed food preferences, I observed their daily food practices such as cooking methods, eating-out choices, and the food stocked in their refrigerators. Most of the interviews were conducted at the homes of the informants to obtain non-verbal information about their eating habits, their cultural dispositions, and the total repertoire of their social practices.

Of the 24 informants, 13 had no clear definition of Taiwanese cuisine; however, this finding does not mean that they knew nothing about the matter. To five of the informants, Taiwanese cuisine was not a meaningful category and they had alternative classifications, such as *Bensheng* (inner province) vs. *Waisheng* (other provinces) and Western vs. Chinese. Two of the informants referred to specific dishes as Taiwanese cuisine, despite having no clear definition of “Taiwanese cuisine.”

The 11 informants who demonstrated a clear awareness of the features of Taiwanese cuisine differed from one another regarding their corresponding definitions. Four considered it to be distinctive of Taiwanese national culture and expressed pride in it; two informants defined “Taiwanese cuisine” by referencing their hometown’s local dishes; one informant understood Taiwanese cuisine from the perspective of ethnic politics; and the other four informants regarded Taiwanese cuisine as Chinese regional cuisine. Table 5.1 presents an overview of their “Taiwanese cuisine” definitions, and the Appendix presents more information about the informants’ background. In the following, I select certain cases for each category to explore the corresponding informants’ conception of Taiwanese cuisine, culinary preferences, and national consciousness. The selection is dependent on the significance of the informants’ culinary preference and the depth of the interviews; however, both typical cases and special cases in each category are discussed.

**Table 5.1 Overview of the informants' definitions of "Taiwanese cuisine"**

Perspective relative to locality and gender		F11, F15 (Mrs. King)
Perspective relative to ethnicity		M4 (Mr. Tan)
Perspective relative to Taiwanese national culture		F2, M1 (Jay), M6 (A-de), M2
Perspective relative to Chinese cuisine		F6 (Mrs. Hsieh), F10, M3, M5
No clear definition	No idea at all	F3 (Mrs. Yang), F4 (Mrs. Peng), F12 (Mrs. Huang), F14 (Mrs. Ye), M8, F8 (Mr. & Mrs. Guo, couple)
	Referring to family dishes	F1 (Mrs. Cheng), F9
	Alternative categorization	F5 (Mrs. Shi), F13 (Ms. Ming), M7, F7 (Mr. & Mrs. Xu, couple), M9 (Mr. Li)

\* F: female, M: male

## 2. INFORMANTS WHO HAD CLEAR DEFINITIONS OF "TAIWANESE CUISINE"

The 11 informants who had clear definitions of "Taiwanese cuisine" displayed different considerations in their perceptions. The following section analyzes how consumers made sense of Taiwanese cuisine and further discusses the relationship between their culinary preferences and their national consciousness.

### 2.1 Perspectives relative to locality and gender

Mrs. King<sup>7</sup> was an informant possessing a clear impression of Taiwanese cuisine. Viewing it as the traditional wisdom of Taiwanese women, she defined "Taiwanese cuisine" by explaining three representative Taiwanese cuisines: pork sauce (or *Bah-sin-a* in Hokkien, 肉漬/肉燥), milkfish (*Chanos chanos*), and sautéed fish *wuliuzhi* (五柳枝, literally, "five willow branches").

<sup>7</sup> Mrs. King was born in 1932 in Tainan County. She started to promote "the art of living" and to teach cooking in 2001. She is known for her rich understanding of Tainan food, and I knew her through a friend living in Tainan. We visited her home/office twice, spending one morning and one evening there.

Mrs. King's perspective on pork sauce stemmed from her childhood experiences in a rural region of Tainan in south Taiwan. Born in 1932 in a peasant's family, Mrs. King grew up under Japanese colonial rule and had a heavy workload on a farm. The lack of material resources and dignity made childhood a painful period for her.

"The colonized people were very poor," Mrs. King said with slight anger. Her memory of childhood was haunted by the hardships she suffered and witnessed before the end of the Second World War. She remembered that when the Japanese army drafted an older neighborhood boy to take part in the war, his whole family cried loudly. When studying at elementary school, she was often called "Qing slave" (*qingguonu*) by the Japanese children and she was even assigned the task of collecting bones from human corpses during the Second World War. These experiences left a deep impression on her and gave her a clear idea that being ruled by colonists was a tragedy. She suggested that the experiences also influenced the tastes of local people. For example, during the Japanese colonial era, Tainan was an important place for the planting and processing of sugar cane (He, 2007, pp. 162-191). However, local Taiwanese were not allowed to eat the cane that they had planted on their own farms; instead, the harvest had to be sold to Japanese sugar enterprises at a fixed price, which was quite low. To explain the situation, Mrs. King cited a popular Taiwanese saying during the colonial period among cane farmers: "The most stupid thing is to plant cane for Japanese companies to weigh."<sup>8</sup> She noted that sometimes she and her friends would find a piece of cane that had fallen from a cane-train and would share it, enjoying the sweet taste. Nevertheless, after eating it, they had to carefully dry the residue of the cane on the roof and then burn it or there would be serious punishment if the Japanese police found any residue of it. Mrs. King argued that the lack of sugar in the colonial era explains the current Tainan inhabitants' preference for sugar.

Tainan dishes are famous for their sweet taste now because people here tend to add more sugar than in all the other regions of Taiwan. You see, people did not have sugar in the past, even though Tainan was where sugar was produced; therefore, people there felt happy that they could finally enjoy it. That is why people cannot help but add sugar when cooking.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to sugar, pork was rare during her childhood. As shown in Chapter One, although most households in rural areas had pigs during the colonial era, these pigs were raised for sale and not for daily consumption at home. Only during the Chinese

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<sup>8</sup> The proverb is uttered in Hokkien and written as "天下第一齋，種甘蔗乎會社磅。"

<sup>9</sup> Interview: Mrs. King (7/22/2008, Tainan).

New Year and important festivals could rural people eat pork. Mrs. King emphasized that feeding a pig took much time and food, making it an expensive undertaking for her family and many other people at that time. In this context, “pork sauce” was a good way of making economical use of a pig. The sauce consisted of stewed pork with dried shrimps, dried mushrooms, rice wine, and various seasonings, and “only one spoon of it could make you finish a bowl of rice,” said Mrs. King. Pork sauce is a basic sauce in many Taiwanese local dishes, such as peddler’s noodles (擔仔麵), rice bowls (米糕) and soy ground pork on rice (滷肉飯), which are still popular today. As an important delicacy forty years ago, pork sauce represents days of suffering and hard work, and Mrs. King regarded it as a symbol of the Taiwanese people who always worked hard in a tough environment.



**Figure 5.1 Peddler’s noodles**



**Figure 5.2 Rice bowl with pork sauce on top**

Source: Author, taken in restaurants in Tainan (2007)

While pork sauce is a common food that people can acquire around Taiwan, Mrs. King’s emphasis on milkfish was further bound to her hometown Tainan. Tainan was the first developed city in Taiwan and was the capital of Taiwan Province during the Qing Dynasty. Milkfish had been an important product of aquaculture in Tainan since the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. Historian Lian Heng notes that milkfish was a local specialty of Tainan and that no milkfish aquaculture existed north of Jiayi (Lian, 1962 [1918], pp. 714, 718).



**Figure 5.3 Milkfish soup**

Source: Author, taken in a restaurant in Tainan (2006)

Being a native inhabitant of Tainan, Mrs. King argued that milkfish should be a culinary symbol of Taiwan:

Jia-nan Plain is the homeland of milkfish, ... we should pass down the taste of milkfish generation to generation because it is a taste Taiwanese people should not forget ... a bowl of unseasoned milkfish soup not only is a delicious soup, but marks the history of the struggle of the Taiwanese, as well.<sup>10</sup>

By embedding milkfish in Taiwanese history, Mrs. King expanded the meaning of milkfish from a local product to a symbol of the Taiwanese people, further making the connections among food, nation, and people. These connections between local food and a national symbol present the character of material culture as having the potential to serve as a medium for identity. Local food comprises not only “placed cultural artifacts” but also “dis-placed materials and practices” that can yield new meanings (Cook & Crang, 1996). At first, milkfish was a local specialty linked to the geographical conditions and local knowledge in Tainan. However, by referring to Taiwan as the “nation” to which the people of Tainan belong, Mrs. King could also articulate milkfish as a national symbol of Taiwan.

In addition to connecting local food with the nation, Mrs. King’s consciousness about Taiwanese cultural traditions related to her nearly 50-year-long role as a housewife, which was significant in her interpretation of sautéed fish, *wuliuzhi*. As mentioned in Chapter Four, the mothers of Lin Hai-yin and Lin Wen-yue, who came from Taiwan, cooked the sautéed fish *wuliuzhi* for special guests or during festivals, even when living abroad. Thus, *wuliuzhi* became a component of the “tastes of home”

<sup>10</sup> Mrs. King, 2002, *Bingxiang guanli [Refrigerator Management]*. Tainan: self-published, p. 75.



for Lin Hai-yin and Lin Wen-yue owing to its connection with pleasant family life. Mrs. King's interpretation of *wuliuzhi* derived, in large measure, from her position as a housewife. Mrs. King's husband owned a private clinic in Tainan, so she worked at home to manage the clinic and take care of five children. In 2001, she started to promote household management and took it up as a serious profession. She gave lectures in communities and published books to promote her idea of "kitchen management," teaching the correct way to use a refrigerator and effectively prepare meals. Arguing that a housewife should be considered a professional worker whose responsibilities require considerable knowledge and creativity, she claimed that the dish *wuliuzhi* reveals the wisdom of housewives well. Mrs. King explained that when Taiwanese housewives would serve this dish, they would reserve the whole fish for their husband and children and would, themselves, eat only the five vegetables on top. As the five vegetables had diverse nutritional elements and were delicious as prepared in the dish, housewives—even in the absence of fish—could enjoy the dish with their families. In addition, Mrs. King stated that many normal dishes can be transformed into delicious dishes after cooking them with these five ingredients. As such, according to Mrs. King, *wuliuzhi* is not only a cooking method perfectly embodying the wisdom of Taiwanese women, but also a symbol of Taiwanese families.

Although this dish was popular haute cuisine during the early period of the Japanese colonial era and can be found in the menus of famous restaurants,<sup>11</sup> the origin of this dish and the meaning of the term *wuliuzhi* remain uncertain. *Wuliu* is the alternative name of the famous Chinese poet Tao Yuan-ming (365-427 A.D.); however, it is still uncertain why this name was adopted as the name of a dish. Lin Wen-yue, a Chinese literature scholar (see Chapter Four) who can cook this dish also notes that the origin of this dish is unknown (Lin, 1999, p. 142). In other words, Mrs. King's interpretation is perhaps her own invention based on her lived experiences. Since the original meaning of this dish is unknown, consumers can change or expand a related meaning by conferring on the dish their own understanding of it.

In sum, Mrs. King's identification of Taiwanese cuisine was rooted in a specific local perspective (a Tainan perspective) and a specific gender perspective (woman and mother). Her preferences for pork sauce, milkfish, and sautéed fish were apparently rooted in her social position and lived experiences: a child growing up in a rural Taiwanese region, an inhabitant of the important fishing region of Tainan, and a housewife. These personal experiences influenced not only her culinary preferences but also her understanding of Taiwanese cuisine. In her interpretation, pork sauce has symbolized the difficult life of the majority of Taiwanese people; the history of

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<sup>11</sup> This dish can be found in Shinju, 1903, p. 76; "Oishi Taiwan ryôri [Delicious Taiwanese cuisine]," *TNSP*, 10/16/1934(6).

milkfish has represented the importance of Tainan, which is the ancient capital of Taiwan; and the sautéed fish *wuliuzhi* has revealed the wisdom of Taiwanese women. Shared by many Taiwanese people, these dishes represent typical Taiwanese life and should be remembered.

## 2.2 Perspectives relative to ethnicity

As a Hakka born in Xinzhu County, Mr. Tan<sup>12</sup> was enthusiastic about introducing Hakka culinary culture to me and displayed his sensitivity to Hakka-ness. However, Mr. Tan's consciousness of "being a Hakka" became prominent only after he left his Hakka village for Taipei at the age of 13. When he moved to *Tonghua* Street, one of the developing regions of Taipei City during the 1960s, where many migrants gathered, he found out about various Mainland and Haklo snacks and dishes for the first time. These new dining experiences highlighted ethnic differences in food and reminded him of his childhood memories of Hakka food.

This region had just started developing when I moved there, and most inhabitants there were migrants from other counties or areas just outside of Taipei. Many migrants sold food to make a living, and Hakka people tended to sell traditional Hakka snacks or dishes. It was quite easy to recognize Hakka people from what they sold ... pickled vegetables, rice cake (粿), mochi cake (麻糬), and so on..., when you found someone selling these snacks, you knew they were Hakka. [Laughing] you did not even have to ask them whether they were Hakka!<sup>13</sup>

Hakka migrants originally sold Hakka food to make a living, but these dishes or snacks evolved into a distinctive mark of Hakka ethnicity. Mr. Tan explained with confidence that the differences between Hakka food and other ethnic foods are significant. For example, he mentioned that *qicengta* (*Ocimum basilicum*) is a popular herb used by Hakka families. When I argued that Haklo families also used *qicengta* in cooking, Tan responded:

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<sup>12</sup> Mr. Tan was born in 1951 in Xinzhu County. At the time of the interviews, he was living in Taipei, selling vegetables in a market, and shouldering most of the responsibility in raising three children. His son had been my tutee for three years (between 1998 and 2001); therefore, I was familiar with his family and dining habits because of my weekly visits to his home over the course of three years. I conducted interviews with Mr. Tan twice in 2008 (for two hours on each occasion), and I interviewed his son twice.

<sup>13</sup> Interview: Mr. Tan (3/8/2008, Taipei).

The Haklo might eat *qicengta* several times a week, but we Hakka eat *qicengta* in almost three meals everyday! We have had various ways of cooking it ... When I lived in Xinzhu, I could smell the aroma of *qicengta* when I approached our house; its flavor was really special and strong. But now, the smell of *qicengta* is not so good. I do not know why, but its smell is different from what it used to be.<sup>14</sup>

Sensory perception is an important means by which cultural and historical memories are encoded in food (Seremetakis, 1994). The smell of *qicengta* reminded Mr. Tan of his childhood in a Hakka village and, therefore, served as a medium through which he could recall his childhood and old home. Also, *qicengta* was an indicator of sameness and difference to him: it was a way of bonding the Hakka together and separating them from other ethnic groups.

While the smell of *qicengta* constituted part of Mr. Tan's memory of food and childhood, *qicengta* itself influenced the body of the Hakka people in his experience. When his first son was born, the hospital did a special inspection of his son's liver after finding out that Mr. Tan was a Hakka. The doctor explained that this was because there was a higher percentage of Hakka who had a specific kind of liver disease, and "eating too much *qicengta*" was regarded as a possible reason for this liver disease at that time.<sup>15</sup>

These experiences constituted Mr. Tan's bodily memory of *qicengta* and established a connection between the bodily memory and Hakka-ness. To Mr. Tan, food consumption has deeply embedded *qicengta* in the daily life and in the body of the Hakka people. He also associated Hakka food practices with the environment where the Hakka lived. He explained that the Hakka ate lots of *qicengta* not because *qicengta* was delicious but because it can grow in poor soil. Most Hakka were still quite poor during the 1950s, so it was common to eat *qicengta* as a daily vegetable. It was at this point that the smell of *qicengta* was connected to the tough environment where he grew up. Mr. Tan's father had been a soldier usually absent from home, so Mr. Tan, as a child, had had to help his mother with various jobs to earn a tiny income. He recalled those hard days when he lived in the Hakka village:

My mother had to gather excrement for use as fertilizer, and this job was just one of many. She had to do so many kinds of work just to feed us....  
I was very little at that time, and I always followed her around,

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<sup>14</sup> Interview: Mr. Tan.

<sup>15</sup> However, there is no sufficient medical literature supporting the association between *qicengta* and liver diseases yet.

suffocating from the disgusting smell of toilets and counting the number of houses—that way, I knew when the job would be over.<sup>16</sup>

In such a tough environment, Mr. Tan emphasized that they got food from nature, not from the market. Another Hakka dish that developed in this tough environment was “rice-wine crab” (嗶螃蟹). Mr. Tan claimed that

All senior Hakka have to be thoroughly familiar with this dish: catching small crabs from the river, bathing them in bottles with salt and rice wine, and then eating them without cooking them over heat. Few Haklo ate crab in this way. It is really, really delicious, very tasty.<sup>17</sup>

Mr. Tan’s memory of childhood was linked to various smells or tastes from his lived experiences, and he made sense of these sensual experiences from a Hakka perspective. Even though my questions initially focused on his impression of Taiwanese cuisine, he immediately started to talk about Hakka food. As de Certeau, Giard, and Mayol (1998) argue, everyday food-consumption practices make “concrete one of the specific modes of relation between a person and the world, thus forming one of the fundamental landmarks in space-time” (p. 183). Mr. Tan conceived his eating as a Hakka foodway, and such a perspective as well as daily practice reversely confirms and strengthens the way he made sense of the world. Ethnicity served as an important means by which Mr. Tan understood the relationship between people in Taiwanese society.

The “four main ethnic groups” concept was an effective categorization for Mr. Tan, and the differences among ethnic groups were significant in his point of view. His wife came from a Haklo family, and they first met each other through an introduction provided by a matchmaker. Mrs. Tan worked in a company owned by her brother, and she invested most of her time and energy in her job. To take care of both his mother and children, Mr. Tan resigned from his job at the Taipei City Government’s Water Resource Agency in 1983, and subsequently helped his mother to plant and sell vegetables in the market near his home. Therefore, Mr. Tan did most of the housework, including cooking and child rearing.<sup>18</sup> His marriage to a Haklo influenced his consciousness about ethnic groups in daily life. His understanding of Haklo people resulted mainly from his interactions with his wife and

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<sup>16</sup> Interview: Mr. Tan.

<sup>17</sup> Interview: Mr. Tan.

<sup>18</sup> The absence of the mother was also pointed out by Mr. Tan’s son, who even described his mother as “selfish” and “not taking care of the family” in a later interview (5/24/2008, Taipei).

her relatives. He used to compare the Hakka with the Haklo regarding food, customs, and ways of thinking. While married life had not met his expectations, Mr. Tan tended to attribute his wife's disadvantages to her Haklo background. For example, he regarded the Haklo as clever calculators who concentrated more on business than family and who were not as painstaking as the Hakka when undertaking tasks, to such an extent that he even expressed regret at not having married a Hakka woman.

He again reflected this negative impression of the Haklo in his opinion regarding Taiwanese politicians who ignore the culture and importance of the Hakka. Although many DPP politicians claim the power of determination on behalf of "all Taiwanese," Mr. Tan complained that these politicians actually privilege Haklo power and that their ignorance of the Hakka is obvious in their language use. Many politicians tend to speak Hokkien on public occasions, including in parliament and during election campaigns. Some politicians suggest that Hokkien should be the second national language after Mandarin. Mr. Tan criticized this suggestion, arguing that it completely neglects the Hakka language and that the "Taiwanese language" (*Taiyu*) should not exclusively refer to the language of the Haklo. Despite the establishment of the Council for Hakka Affairs, he stated, "I do not think that those politicians really care about Hakka affairs. Yes they care, but only during the election campaigns." Therefore, he showed little interest in political issues and nation-building activities, such as the campaign for rectifying the official name of Taiwan and the political marches expressing the wish that Taiwan enter the United Nations. These activities aim to change the official name of Taiwan from the "Republic of China" to "Taiwan" and to equate a U.N. seat with international recognition of Taiwan's national status, separate from China. Mr. Tan agreed that Taiwan was a distinctive nation composed of different ethnic groups, but he further emphasized that these ethnic groups should enjoy equal status. Therefore, he exhibited great enthusiasm for exploring the history of the Hakka and the migration of his family. For example, he had carefully preserved his family archives for his children. Furthermore, he had studied on his own the historical development of Taipei, particularly the region where he was living at the time of the interviews. He felt considerable pride in his historical knowledge and his research undertakings. However, his enthusiasm for the history of the Hakka and Taipei was not aroused by policies or politicians: he felt annoyed with many of them who "just make use of Hakka culture but do not understand it at all."<sup>19</sup> He felt a sense of belonging to Taiwan as a nation, but further argued that the nation does not belong exclusively to Mainlanders or the Haklo people.

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<sup>19</sup> Mr. Tan's words.

In Mr. Tan's case, he showed an obvious preference for Hakka food, understanding Taiwanese cuisine from an ethnicity perspective. His consciousness about ethnicity and nation echoed the "four major ethnic groups" concept. And both his memories of Hakka dishes and his interaction with other ethnic groups influenced the formation of his related perspectives.

### **2.3 Taiwanese cuisine as a national cuisine**

Of the 11 informants who expressed clear definitions of Taiwanese cuisine, four argued that Taiwanese cuisine has been a national cuisine and is a crucial part of Taiwanese national culture. Of these four informants, A-de<sup>20</sup> exemplifies an emphasis on the subjectivity and the nationhood of Taiwan. Born in Taizhong in 1949, A-de dropped out of high school at the age of 16 and started to learn photography. He had been working for newspapers and magazines as a professional photographer since 1974. As a professional photographer, A-de had taken thousands of photos of people, scenery, and folk activities across Taiwan. With the emergence in the late 1970s of social movements demanding more liberalization, A-de had many opportunities to contact activists and to participate in their political demonstrations. He agreed that Taiwan has been an independent nation and that Taiwanese people should have more power of determination. Furthermore, he and his friends who advocated political reforms preferred to dine in some "Taiwanese restaurants" that had become important sites where political dissidents assembled during the 1980s.<sup>21</sup>

In my interviews with him, he stated that "Taiwanese cuisine" naturally refers to local dishes eaten by the majority of Taiwanese everyday. He placed emphasis on local snacks in particular, such as pork-sauce rice and spareribs soup. He argued that these local snacks are prepared in places where Taiwanese people grow up and, thus, the snacks are a crucial part of Taiwanese peoples' lived experiences. Just as his photos of temples, ancient monuments, and elderly people would bring him a sense of "being rooted in this soil," so too did local snacks. This is why he would feel comfortable when enjoying local snacks with which he was familiar. In contrast, he regarded beef noodles as a foreign dish that had been articulated by some Taiwanese politicians in recent years. He argued that beef noodles were "foreign" because this dish had not been widely enjoyed by the majority of local people until recent years, particularly not by people in rural areas. It is not what he had used to eat and not a taste rooted in his memory.

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<sup>20</sup> A-de was born in 1949, I knew him through a friend who is also a photographer.

<sup>21</sup> For example, A-du's Taiwanese restaurant established in 1977 was known as a site where political rebels assembled before martial law was lifted, about A-du, also see Chapter Two.

Interestingly, while A-de regarded beef-noodles as a foreign dish, some other informants considered it a “national dish” representative of Taiwan. In line with Lu Yao-dong’s explanation of beef noodles’ historical origins (see Chapter Four), Jay<sup>22</sup> believed that beef noodles had been an invention of modern Taiwan. He argued that this dish is a hybrid of the food eaten by Mainlanders and the food eaten by Taiwanese and is a symbol of newly shaped Taiwanese culinary culture. Born in 1969, Jay grew up during the period of political liberalization, accepting that Taiwan is a distinctive nation. Although he displayed no interest in advocating the independence of Taiwan during our interviews, his enthusiasm about Taiwanese food was obvious. Living in Kaohsiung for almost forty years, he had a list of “the best snacks, dishes, and specialties in Taiwan.” Jay felt highly proud of Taiwanese food and admired it as the best food in the world. When his friends visited Kaohsiung from other cities or countries, he would often take these friends on a “gourmet trip” in the city or even throughout Taiwan. Most of the dishes that he recommended were not haute cuisine in restaurants. Rather, he most strongly admired local snacks and regarded them as the “authentic Taiwanese taste.” These snacks included bowl cakes made of rice (碗粿), deep-fried meat dumplings (炸肉圓), and seafood sold by the seaside in Kaohsiung. Moreover, the snacks were cheap, substantial, and delicious, and Jay argued that these features are the decisive advantages of Taiwanese cuisine. Jay also took a positive attitude toward the emergence of state-banquet dishes. He agreed that local snacks should be adopted as state-banquet dishes because the adoption would attract more attention to local snacks and raise their social status.

Jay’s father ran a Chinese medical clinic located in a market in Kaohsiung City. When younger, Jay used to eat local dishes everyday and became acquainted with the owners of these stalls. Although he did not engage in political or social movements as A-de did, Jay voiced a sense of pride about Taiwanese cuisine, and this pride was similar to that voiced by A-de and the other two informants who regarded Taiwanese cuisine as a national cuisine. They agreed that Taiwan is a distinctive nation and expressed enthusiasm about Taiwanese cuisine, viewing it as a genuine and distinctive property of Taiwan.

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<sup>22</sup> Jay was born in 1969 and worked in Kaohsiung at the time of the interview. I knew him through a friend before my fieldwork got underway in Kaohsiung in 2006. Jay introduced diverse local Kaohsiung snacks to me and introduced me to some owners of food stalls for interview purposes.

## 2.4 Perspectives relative to Chinese cuisine

While some informants defined Taiwanese cuisine as a national cuisine, others considered it a Chinese regional cuisine. The four informants taking this latter perspective exhibited a much stronger interest in Chinese cuisine than Taiwanese cuisine, with three of them being the descendents of Mainlanders.

Mrs. Hsieh's<sup>23</sup> family migrated from Mainland China to Taiwan in 1955 when the US navy helped the Nationalist government ship its supporters from Dachen Island to Taiwan. This military action was known as the "Dachen evacuation" during the civil war between the Nationalist Party and the Communist Party. These evacuees constituted a migration that took place much later than the migration of other Mainlanders who moved to Taiwan between 1945 and 1949. Viewing Taiwan as a base for preventing the expansion of the Communist camp at that time, the US government was involved in the civil war and moved about 18,000 civilians and 15,000 troops from Dachen to Taiwan (Chen, 1987, p. 122). These people from Dachen were admired as "Dachen patriots" (*Dachen yibao*) by the Nationalist government. After the military evacuation, the government built 35 "New Dachen Villages" in 12 counties for the refugees and provided them with food for one year (Chen, 1987, pp. 118-119). In contrast to the "villages for military dependents" (see Chapter Two), these Dachen Villages were not administrated by the Ministry of National Defense; their organization was not as systematic as that of other military villages (Chen, 1987, p. 256).

Many of the Dachen people had been born not on Dachen Island but in Zhejiang, a coastal province near Dachen. This was the case with Mrs. Hsieh. Born in 1946 in Huangyan in Zhejiang, she moved to Dachen Island in 1947. Her father successfully ran a fishing boat business on Dachen and led a good life when she was very little. They had servants and cooks at home, and she even had her own nursing mother. Their financial condition worsened after her family's move to Taiwan in 1955, when they started living in a New Village in Xinzhu County. The father's fishing boat business could not survive the move. Mrs. Hsieh's parents, instead, prepared dried eels (鰻魚乾) for a living, and at the age of 15, Mrs. Hsieh worked as an embroiderer, as did her four sisters.

Seafood is an essential food resource of Dachen people because Dachen Island is located near an important fishing ground, with most inhabitants engaged in the

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<sup>23</sup> Mrs. Hsieh was born in 1951 in Zhejiang Province and lived in Taipei at the time of the interviews. Having worked in the Taipei City Government, she retired in 2006. Her son was my college classmate between 1995 and 1999, so I had information about their eating and dining habits before the interviews, which I conducted with Mrs. Hsieh on two separate occasions in 2008: the first interview lasted three hours, and the other lasted one hour. I got additional information from her son by means of informal interviews with him.



fishery industry (Chen, 1987, pp. 14-15; Chen, 1982, p. 10). Among other products, eel was popular and important as a festival food on the island. Every family on Dachen made dried eels before the Chinese New Year, with dried eels thus becoming a “taste of home” for many older Taiwanese who had lived on Dachen for many years. Even after leaving Dachen for Xinzhu, many of these people made dried eels for food or business in the Taiwan-based villages where former Dachen people now resided. In the interviews, Mrs. Hsieh remembered the various methods of cooking eel:

We cut eels from the back and dried them naturally, using the strong wind. We had a very large square for drying them in our village.... Dried eel is really delicious; it has a very appealing flavor. We would just slice it, and beer goes well with the taste of dried eel, the flavor is really great. Furthermore, you can cook it with rice cakes or stir-fried noodles.... As for the eel head and tail, they are wonderful to stew with meat.<sup>24</sup>

Mrs. Hsieh noted, as well, that dried shrimp and “fish noodles” (魚麵) are representative Dachen specialties. Made with fish and sweet-potato starch, fish noodles are actually a kind of seasoning that can be added to any dish. “It can create a very special flavor for all dishes,”<sup>25</sup> Mrs. Hsieh claimed.

Migration-food studies and Chapter Four of the current study both show that many migrants have maintained their original eating habits, viewing food as a connection between themselves and their home countries. As Kunow (2003) argues, food is essentially a representation used to support constructions of an “imaginary homeland” (Rushdie, 1991), and food thus becomes a negotiation between “here” and “there” (p. 158). This phenomenon is also true in Mrs. Hsieh’s case. She was excited about depicting the details of the specialties from her hometown, complaining that her sons were not interested in these dishes so she seldom would cook them anymore. However, she would still prepare this “taste of home” during the Chinese New Year and other festivals, not because these dishes were popular in her family but because she was emotionally attached to the community and to the land of her origin. For Mrs. Hsieh, cooking and eating Dachen food was a way of enacting the past and embodying cultural memory. Through preparing and sharing one’s traditional hometown foods on special communal occasions, like Chinese New Year, a common sense of belonging can establish itself and resurrect itself regularly.

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<sup>24</sup> Interview: Mrs. Hsieh (2/16/2008, Taipei).

<sup>25</sup> Mrs. Hsieh presented me with a detailed explanation of each step in the preparation of fish noodles. She mentioned that she had made fish noodles when she missed its flavor, but that now she would seldom make them because her family had no interest in the seasoning.



**Figures 5.4 & 5.5 Festive foods from Dachen Island**

I conducted my interviews with Mrs. Hsieh just after the Chinese New Year, so she gladly showed me the Dachen foods she had prepared for the festival. Figure 5.4 (left) shows Dachen rice cakes (in red bags)(大陳年糕) and fruit rice cakes (百果鬆糕)(a snack from Zhejiang Province), which are available in only a few shops established by the Dachen people. Figure 5.5 (right) is a kind of fish cake made by one of Mrs. Hsieh's sisters.

What needs to be highlighted is that Mrs. Hsieh's preference for Dachen food displays not only a nostalgic emotion but also a sense of pride and distinction, and the sense of pride is closely associated with an image of a Dachen patriot. Mrs. Hsieh reminded me of the difference between New Dachen Villages and military dependent's villages, emphasizing that Dachen people differ from other Mainlanders because the Dachen people are established patriots. To Mrs. Hsieh, Dachen people shared an experience of extraordinary suffering during the war and, under great duress, retreated from their tiny island because of orders issued by the Nationalist government. Although forced to leave home during military action, most Dachen people felt relieved to move to Taiwan under the leadership of Chiang Ching-kuo, the son of Chiang Kai-shek.<sup>26</sup> Before the evacuation, the younger Chiang had visited Dachen Island several times, even during bombardments. Chiang's visits were viewed as a sign of the government's deep respect for the Dachen; the order to evacuate was

<sup>26</sup> This assertion was suggested by Mrs. Hsieh in the interview, with Ke's research on the Dachen people offering a similar observation. Dachen people respected Chiang Ching-kuo and thanked him for his visits during the war; their trust in him was an important reason for the evacuation's smooth execution. See Ke, 2002, pp. 45-49.

also regarded as an immediate way to avoid the endless bombing. It is in this context that many Dachen people expressed gratitude to the Nationalist government, particularly to Chiang's family. In addition to the military action that took them to a safer place, the government provided them with practical financial and educational support. For example, in 1955 Madam Chiang established Guang Hua Children's Home, which comprised both a kindergarten and an elementary school, to care for 201 children from Dachen Island and for orphans of soldiers.<sup>27</sup> The school expanded gradually into a junior high school (1958) and, then, into a senior high school (1969), and all the students enjoyed both the facilities and meals free of charge.

The Dachen who received such care from the government trusted and relied extensively on the Nationalist leaders. Mrs. Hsieh herself graduated from the elementary school established by Madam Chiang, and Mrs. Hsieh's two brothers received their senior high school degrees from the same school. She expressed gratitude for the educational opportunity because it gave her and others an opportunity to get good jobs. Her gratitude toward the Chiang family and the Nationalist government was apparent in my interviews with her. For example, when she described the re-establishment of Dachen Villages, she could not remember exactly who had formulated the policy, but she soon attributed it to Chiang Ching-kuo, saying "he is the only person who was really concerned about us."

Mrs. Hsieh's food narratives about her hometown were intertwined with her memory of the forced migration; in turn, the migration is closely associated with the "nation," which directly and in large measure refers to the Nationalist government and particularly to the Chiang family. In other words, Mrs. Hsieh's past experience of migration constituted the grounding for both her memory of food and her political identification with the nation.

### **3. WITHOUT A CLEAR DEFINITION OF "TAIWANESE CUISINE"**

It is not the case that all Taiwanese consumers of food have a clear image of what Taiwanese cuisine is. Six informants in this research had no idea about Taiwanese cuisine at all and knew of no difference between Taiwanese cuisine and Chinese regional cuisines. Two informants referred to some family dishes as Taiwanese cuisine, such as stewed pork and boiled chicken; and five informants raised an alternative categorization of dishes, in which Taiwanese cuisine was a meaningless category.

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<sup>27</sup> It was renamed Hua Xin Children's Home in 1956.

Most of the six consumers who had no conception at all of Taiwanese cuisine did not live in Taipei (i.e., Mrs. Yang from Tainan, Mrs. Peng from Taidong, Mrs. Ye from Taoyuan, and Mr. and Mrs. Guo from Penghu). In addition, all six consumers were housewives except for Mr. Guo and Mrs. Huang, who was a retired junior high school teacher. They had been cooking for their families most of their lives and seldom ate out; therefore, they had no idea about the classification of certain cuisines and restaurants. Their impressions of Taiwanese cuisine came from advertisements and the media, a situation that explains why they were well aware of some famous “Taiwanese restaurants.” Even so, they had little interest in dining in these restaurants out of financial considerations. Both Mrs. Peng and Mrs. Ye argued that the dishes served in “Taiwanese restaurants” are easily cooked at home and that there was, thus, no sound reason to spend lots of money in restaurants for these normal dishes. In the opinion of these two housewives, eating out would mean “to eat something one cannot make at home,” and the monetary value of dishes was their most important consideration governing whether or not to eat out.

Such an attitude toward eating out can be traced back to their tough lives during childhood. Born in villages in remote counties in Taiwan, Mrs. Cheng, Mr. Guo, and Mrs. Peng had led self-sufficient lives, as shown in Chapter One, and even as children had had to work hard for their families. Before the 1970s, they would eat chiefly dried sweet potato and pickled vegetables, and would add a little meat to their diets only during the Chinese New Year or for religious festivals in their villages. Interestingly, although the festival dishes they remembered are listed as authentic Taiwanese cuisine in cookbooks, media, and Taiwanese restaurant menus nowadays, these consumer-informants did not acknowledge these dishes as “Taiwanese cuisine” during my interviews.

Five informants raised an alternative categorization for the cuisines in question. Mrs. Shi, of Aboriginal ethnicity, simply categorized dishes as Aboriginal cuisine or Han cuisine, and there was no difference between Taiwanese cuisine and Chinese cuisine in her mind. For Mr. and Mrs. Xu, a couple living on Penghu Island for almost 80 years, Taiwanese cuisine referred to all dishes from Taiwan Island, as Penghu has its own specific food culture that is influenced by poor soil, windy weather, and the fisheries industry. Another informant, Mr. Li, was a special case. Growing up in an extraordinarily rich family emphasizing Western education, he started to enjoy steak, apple pie, and English afternoon tea during the 1950s and 1960s. Hence, he adopted the categorization of Chinese and Western cuisine; in contrast, Taiwanese cuisine was a meaningless category to him.

This current section will focus on the alternative categorizations given by Ms. Ming and explore the gap between her culinary preferences and national

consciousness, which will help further clarify the complicated relationship between the two factors.

Ms. Ming<sup>28</sup> worked in a company which had been owned by the Nationalist Party, and most of her colleagues were descendants of Mainlanders who had migrated to Taiwan after 1945. She said that when they would ask an office worker where he or she was from, the answer should be a province of China, not somewhere in Taiwan. For example, Ms. Ming's parents were from Shanghai, so she was Shanghainese. Furthermore, having received a degree in Chinese literature, she admitted that she favored Chinese culture and was inclined to support Taiwan's future unification with the Mainland. In short, Ms. Ming expressed "Chinese identity" in both cultural and political domains. In contrast, her food preferences were various, starting with a specific Chinese regional cuisine (Zhejiang cuisine) and extending to various Chinese foods, Thai foods, and Western foods; at the time of the interviews, her favorite was Hakka cuisine.

Ms. Ming's parents moved from Shanghai to Taiwan after the Second World War; thus, her mother would prepare many Shanghai dishes. As her mother prohibited her children from eating out, the young Ms. Ming had few chances to eat local snacks from food stalls and even had no experience of eating Chinese dumplings (*jiaozi*), a typical food from northern China. According to her self-description, her food map expanded for the first time in junior high school, where she shared a lunch box with her best friend whose mother hailed from Hunan Province. Hunan cuisine is famous for its spicy taste, and Ms. Ming described to me the food in her friend's lunch box as having a "very heavy-taste, using lots of peppers, vinegar, and garlic; anyway, it was very spicy." In contrast to the sour and spicy taste of Hunan dishes, Ms. Ming described the taste of Shanghai cuisine as the "taste of soy sauce and sugar." In other words, she would distinguish these regional cuisines by her sensual memory of its taste; she had no interest in acquiring more information about the history or the recipes of these cuisines.

Ms. Ming's taste map expanded again after she met her partner, who was born in a Hokkien-speaking peasant family, where she "found many surprises on the dining table." This is where she first developed an understanding of "local food in Taiwan."

My boyfriend is an authentic *Benshengren*, and I am an authentic *Waishengren*<sup>29</sup>; therefore, we have found many differences between us

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<sup>28</sup> Born in 1967 in Taipei, Ms. Ming was working in a Taipei-based media position at the time of my interview. I knew her through a friend who was Ms. Ming's colleague. I conducted my three-hour interview with her in 5/24/2008.

<sup>29</sup> *Benshengren* and *Waishengren*, literally "inner province people" and "people from other provinces," are terms used in Taiwan to distinguish local people from "Mainlanders" who moved from the Mainland to Taiwan after the Second World War mainly during 1945-1949.

when eating. For example, I have never eaten “pickled cucumber with pork” (瓜仔雞) and “fried eggs with dried radish” (菜脯蛋), but they are authentic “Taiwanese cuisine,” aren’t they? And my boyfriend had never eaten yellow bean sprouts until he knew me, but the ingredient is quite normal in the meals of my family.<sup>30</sup>

Aware of the food-related differences between her and her partner, she concluded that these differences were rooted in the different life styles of the *Bensheng* and *Waisheng* families:

I found there was a radical difference between our families: my mother took two hours to prepare a meal, so she made dishes in a complicated, slow way, but my boyfriend’s mother had to cook quickly for a big family, basically within 30 minutes. Well...his mother also had to work on the farm, but my mother was a housewife. As a result, our dishes were different. For example, my mother prepared sparerib soup every day, and the soup would need to be stewed for two hours, but he [Ms. Ming’s boyfriend] did not know anything about the dish during his childhood.<sup>31</sup>

Ms. Ming’s comparison revealed her awareness of differences between *Bensheng* and *Waisheng*, implying that *Bensheng* and *Waisheng* was a normal method of categorization, a naturalized reference structure that would guide her comparisons. She would put this reference structure into practice when attempting to identify differences in daily-life food. She could distinguish the dishes of her boyfriend’s peasant family from those of her own urban family, pointing out their features and ascribing the culinary differences to differences in modes of labor. Ms. Ming did not regard the culinary differences as regional differences or as rural-urban differences; instead, she labeled them as *Bensheng* and *Waisheng* differences. Ms. Ming could not explain to me how she had come by the classification of *Bensheng* and *Waisheng*, and this inability likely stemmed from her unconscious adoption of this classification.

What should be underlined here is that although Ms. Ming continued to use the *Bensheng* and *Waisheng* classification consciously and could list different dishes in both categories, she did not consider “*Bensheng* cuisine” to be “Taiwanese cuisine.” Ms. Ming admitted to me that she seems “to have no idea at all of what Taiwanese cuisine is.” While Ms. Ming acquired her conception of *Bensheng* and *Waisheng* by repeating her family’s dining practices and then by comparing those practices with the practices of her partner and of his family. Throughout this complex

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<sup>30</sup> Interview: Ms. Ming (5/24/2008, Taipei).

<sup>31</sup> Interview: Ms. Ming.

back-and-forth process, the notion of Taiwanese cuisine remained absent in her perceptions of tastes.

Nevertheless, Ms. Ming's map of tastes expanded as she acquired more experiences, and she claimed to me that her tastes had grown quite different from the tastes of her original family, and that her current preference was for Hakka cuisine. She liked Hakka dishes because of their rich and salty flavors; in contrast, dishes associated with Shanghai and *Bensheng* were too sweet for her. However, although she liked Hakka dishes and wanted to travel around the countryside to experience other authentic Hakka dishes, she had little interest in either the history of the Hakka people or the stories behind these dishes. When she enjoyed food in Hakka restaurants, she did not think of the features of Hakka people that are often embedded in Hakka cuisine and that include the people's historical hardships and the people's frugal way of life. Rather, she just enjoyed the tastes of the foods and gave other matters "not much thought."

Her case shows the disconnections among her culinary preferences, her memories, and her identity. She emphasized that although she had some preferred foods, there were actually few foods that she did not accept. While some consumers believe that food can carry ethical, cultural, or historical meanings, she seldom associated food with a specific culture. Although she knew about certain differences among regional dishes, she did not link them to culture, ethnicity, or nationalism. In other words, in contrast to the informants whose culinary preferences exhibited these informants' stronger identification with a nation or nationalism, in the case of Ms. Ming, food and national or cultural identity were disconnected. In short, she did not treat food as a bearer of culture, and thus, she rather easily crossed the boundaries separating cuisines. People who detach food from culture, as did Ms. Ming, may show interest in food and cooking but do not value it as the heritage of an ethnic group or a nation.

#### **4. WHAT MAKES FOOD "TAIWANESE" TO THE RESPONDENTS?**

##### **4.1 Social position and social experience**

The comparison of the above cases shows that "Taiwanese cuisine" is not meaningful to all consumers. People who regard Taiwanese cuisine as a meaningful concept understand it from diverse perspectives. Consumers' social positions and social experiences are influential in shaping these diverse perspectives through bodily memories of specific flavors and dining contexts. In concrete terms, the consumers' understandings of Taiwanese cuisine are established on two grounds. The

first ground comprises a set of eating behaviors concerning food preparation (planting and cooking), eating, and sharing. By repeating these food practices in daily life, consumers develop their own food memories and habits, such as milkfish for Mrs. King and *qicengta* for Mr. Tan. Second, these memories and habits gain different meanings through their specific social positions that relate to gender, ethnicity, and social class. The social position of an individual is often multi-faceted, as is the identity of an individual. The weight of different facets of identity varies among individuals and heavily depends on their social positions and lived experiences.

In addition to different definitions of “Taiwanese cuisine,” the correlation between culinary preferences and national consciousness differs from consumer to consumer. While some consumers—such as Mrs. King, Mr. Tan, A-de, and Mrs. Hsieh—exhibit coherent tendencies in culinary preference and in national consciousness, the connections are not so obvious in other cases. Chaney’s concept of “sensibility” is a useful reference for clarifying how culinary preferences are linked to one’s perception of nation. Chaney defines “sensibility” as

...a way of responding to events, or actions or phenomena that has a certain pattern or coherence, to the extent that identifying a sensibility provides a way of explaining or predicting responses to new situations...these responses and choices are imbued by those concerned with ethical and aesthetic significance—ways of living that are fundamental to a sense of identity. (Chaney, 1996, p. 8)

In other words, sensibility is a framework inscribed in an individual, serving as principles guiding one’s behavior and one’s reactions to varying social conditions. Imbued with ethical and aesthetic concerns, the framework is a reference structure that people employ to make sense of their experiences.

Adopting the concept of “sensibility” and Bourdieu’s concept of “habitus,” Tivadar and Luthar (2005) show that there has been a significant association of Slovenian consumers’ food practices with the consumers’ worldviews and cultural consumption. The researchers argue that sensibility is “a selection and configuration of interests and practices and a particular valuation of them,” which can produce a distinct way of life where variables in the field of culture or politics are consistent with variables in the fields of food (p. 216). In this sense, food-consumption preferences and impressions are better understood as articulations of ethical, political, and cultural choices that “together form a predictable homology, which results in an identifiable sensibility,” and the homology comes from a specific inherent logic within the framework (Ibid.). Therefore, Tivadar and Luthar argue that food practices and attitudes should be considered in relation to cultural, ethical, and political



attributes and not only to socio-demographic factors such as class, education, and gender.

The concept of “sensibility” provides a possible explanation for the association between culinary preference and national consciousness. Sensibility rests on certain unifying principles that can influence the total repertoire of an individual’s practices, including speech patterns, cultural consumption, and food practices. These unifying principles influence individuals’ behaviors and social actions, as well as their food consumption. For example, Mrs. King’s preference for Taiwanese cuisine and Mrs. Hsieh’s preference for Chinese cuisine represent their coherent political and cultural dispositions by which individuals situate themselves in the world. Their perceptions of Taiwanese cuisine and their food-consumption behaviors are guided by the same sensibility that serves as the basis on which an individual makes sense of the world. It is on the same basis that culinary preference and national consciousness can be linked. When consumers do not have such common ground that can produce coherent attitudes in political, ethnic, and aesthetic spheres, or when the common ground is not solid, then there will be either no or weak coherence between national consciousness and food preferences.

Bodily memory is influential in the formation of such common grounds. When individuals have explicit bodily memories about food and nation (though they may not be conscious of it), the sensibility is more obvious. For example, Mrs. King’s memory of the painful life under colonial rule and of pork, Mr. Tan’s memory of poor Hakka people and of the smell of *qicengta*, and Mrs. Hsieh’s memory of migration and of various fish on Dachen Island. These explicit linkages between nationhood or ethnicity and food can further strengthen people’s sensibilities. In contrast, although Ms. Ming expressed a clear national identity and Mrs. Cheng as well as Mrs. Peng had many experiences of suffering and deprivation in their childhood, there was relatively little interaction between their understanding of nation and their experience of food. Thus, the correlation between their culinary preferences and national consciousness was weak.

## **4.2 Need for inclusion and exclusion**

The examples introduced in this chapter show that food can help to define “me” and “us,” and can thus serve as part of our physical surroundings. Bell and Valentine (1997) argue that food “articulates notions of inclusion and exclusion, of national pride and xenophobia” (p. 168). This chapter demonstrates that the meaning of food and its function of inclusion and of exclusion operate only when the individual or the collective conceives of the meaning or even actively constructs the meaning that is assigned to foods. These meanings, despite emerging in repeated daily-life practices,

do not self-evidently act as a boundary-marker, and the imbedding effect of “nation” is not the same across all consumers. One’s continual awareness regarding one’s own identity and repeated practices that are manifest in dining habits translates national identity into “a language that people can understand and experience, even if unconsciously” (Palmer, 1998, p. 195). For some consumers such as A-de and Jay, body can act as a critical site for the performance of identity; however, for consumers who do not confer cultural values on food, “national cuisine” is less meaningful.

Furthermore, the examples in this chapter illustrate that consumers can play an active role in defining the meaning of Taiwanese cuisine. Mrs. King interpreted the dish *wuliuzhi* in her own way and promoted it in her household-management class. Through teaching in communities and publishing, her ideas were being disseminated to a wider population. Consumers who neither teach nor publish have their own interpretations of Taiwanese cuisine. Despite those who love to eat Taiwanese cuisine, state banquets can still be meaningless. Even in cases where consumer behavior echoes the idea of nation-building, these behaviors are not necessarily the product of political ideology or politicians. For example, Mrs. King and Mr. Tan exhibited a strong “Taiwanese consciousness” or “Hakka consciousness”; however, this consciousness resulted not so much from political movements and propaganda as from these individuals’ own experiences and understanding, which had accumulated over the course of daily life. In other words, consumer support of national cuisine cannot be explained only by the influence of government and politicians. Government and politicians may reversely seek support by articulating discourses that echo consumers’ experiences and understanding, such as the promotion of Hakka cuisine.

Food is often viewed as a boundary marker in anthropological research. Sutton (2001) suggested that there is a broad consensus that food is about “identity creation and maintenance” (p. 5). However, this chapter’s examination of consumers reveals the restricted boundary-marker roles that food can play. In the case of Taiwanese cuisine, consumers have different understandings and interpretations of Taiwanese cuisine. Although in some cases, consumers prefer to assemble in a Taiwanese restaurant and although they exhibit obvious Taiwanese national consciousness, their preference for Taiwanese cuisine cannot be explained only by their identification with Taiwanese nationhood. In other words, the preference for Taiwanese cuisine cannot be interpreted as a pure expression of Taiwanese identity. The correlation between culinary preference and national consciousness would appear to result from common grounds of sensibility. Social positions, the social experiences of consumers, and their need for inclusion and exclusion all influence consumer perceptions of “Taiwanese cuisine.”

## **Conclusion:**

### **Embodied “Nation” in Commodities and Sensibilities**

This dissertation examines the transformation of Taiwanese cuisine, aiming to explore how nationhood is embodied in food consumption. Instead of viewing “nation” as a given concept, this research scrutinizes how different concepts/versions of nationhood of Taiwan are embodied in the formation of Taiwanese cuisine and how consumers participate in this process. Therefore, beginning by presenting a historical overview of Taiwanese cuisine throughout the twentieth century, the dissertation shows how different notions of Taiwanese cuisine emerged under three different political regimes, while the status of Taiwan shifted from being a Japanese colony to a base of the ROC government, and then to a community announcing its distinctiveness in political and cultural domains. The second part of this thesis focuses on the perceptions and the bodily practices of consumers relative to Taiwanese cuisine, demonstrating the importance of cultural and bodily memory in the embodiment of nationhood. Chapter Four shows that Taiwanese cuisine could function as “tastes of home” for migrants who, in the late 1940s, made their way from the Mainland to Taiwan, where their cultural memories took root. The case studies in Chapter Five further illustrate consumers’ various definitions of “Taiwanese cuisine” and the complex relationship between national consciousness and culinary preference.

On the basis of the respective examinations of the preceding five chapters, I return in this concluding chapter to the three levels of questions I initially posed in the Introduction. My discussion begins with the three concrete questions regarding Taiwanese cuisine; then it will focus on the embodiment of nationhood in food consumption, and the interactions between politico-cultural elements of a nation and individuals in the maintenance of nationhood.

#### **1. THREE FEATURES OF NATIONAL CUISINE: RELATIONAL, PERFORMATIVE, AND COMMERCIAL**

First, what are the definitions of “Taiwanese cuisine” under different political regimes? The examination of Taiwanese cuisine shows that the definition of this term varies according to the term’s changing relationships with Chinese cuisine during the three political periods.

During the Japanese colonial era, “Taiwanese cuisine” referred to a selection from Chinese cuisine. Selected from Chinese regional cuisines, these dishes were

adapted to local food resources and to the tastes of the most privileged clients, that is, the Japanese ruling class and the Taiwanese upper class. After undergoing this adaptation, these dishes were presented under the name “Taiwanese cuisine” during the Japanese colonial era. Shortly after the Second World War, the Nationalist government fled from the Chinese mainland to Taiwan, where the Nationalist Party established its authoritarian rule. The relationship between Taiwanese cuisine and Chinese cuisine thus changed: Chinese cuisine was the national cuisine and Taiwanese cuisine became a constitutive part of it. Because the new authoritarian rule and its dominant cultural assumptions presented Chinese cuisine as part and parcel of the national culture, Taiwanese cuisine was marginalized in this transplanted culinary map and was only vaguely defined during this period. However, the 1990s witnessed political liberalization and an increasing emphasis on the subjectivity of Taiwanese culture, in turn fueling challenges to the idea that “Taiwan is a part of China”: in this context, Taiwanese cuisine came to occupy a category notably different from the category occupied by Chinese cuisine. Nowadays, it is commonly argued that Taiwanese cuisine comprises various Chinese regional dishes, Aboriginal and Hakka dishes, and some Japanese ingredients, and thus it can serve as a national symbol of Taiwan.

As the changing definitions of “Taiwanese cuisine” mark the object’s changing relationship with Chinese cuisine, it is evident that “Taiwanese cuisine” is a *relational* concept. The definition of “Taiwanese cuisine” serves as a boundary demarcating the dietary culture of one group from that of others. The existence of a relational concept thus presupposes the existence of some others, from which it must be distinguished.

The feature of being *relational* is applicable to a specific cuisine that represents a nation, an ethnic group, or a locality; that is, applicable to a national cuisine, an ethnic cuisine, or a local cuisine. Its definition is dependent on its relationships with other external political entities or internal groups within the nation. Therefore, in terms of the relationship with external political entities, a newly forged cuisine can be a local cuisine when defined according to its relationship with the global system; or it can be a national cuisine when defined according to its relationship with other nation-states. This is why the perspectives of globalization and nation-building are raised in the studies of cuisine. However, when it is expressed in terms of its relationship with other internal groups, such as other ethnic groups, a cuisine can be an ethnic cuisine, and a hierarchy may exist among these ethnic cuisines.

National cuisine is not only a *relational* concept but also a *performative* one. As definitions of a national cuisine serve to distinguish it from other cuisines, those cuisines nominated as “national” are often selective ones that perform the critical task of highlighting their distinctiveness. In the case of Taiwan, the Taiwanese cuisine during the Japanese colonial period acquired both a form and content that highlighted

the dishes of the new colony as well as the distinctions of social elites. However, as soon as the post-war period started, there was no longer a need to highlight these specific distinctions relative to Taiwanese cuisine, and the definition of “Taiwanese cuisine” became vague. As such, the definitions of “Taiwanese cuisine” involve the motives of the actors wielding the power to define. In the process of selection and presentation, the definers of “national cuisine” have played a crucial role, and the definer as an actor constitutes the focus of my second question: who has drawn the boundaries demarcating Taiwanese cuisine?

My second question concerns who planned and enacted the changes of Taiwanese cuisine. The changing notions of Taiwanese cuisine mark the changing definers, including the owners of Taiwanese restaurants, cultural mediators, and politicians. During the Japanese colonial era, the upper class, including the political elites and intellectuals, was the major clientele of Taiwanese restaurants, and the owner of the restaurant *Jiangshan Lou* published articles to define “Taiwanese cuisine” and its dining manners. However, soon after the migration of the Nationalist government brought numerous new consumers of Chinese regional cuisines and cultural mediators to Taiwan. These new definers participated in the process of selecting and presenting a national cuisine, shifting its meaning to “authentic Chinese cuisine.” In the process of defining, the Nationalist government built itself up as the guardian of traditional Chinese culture; Taiwan’s cookbook writers and intellectuals laced Chinese regional cuisines with strong expressions of nostalgia, and restaurants serving Chinese cuisines proliferated. Again, different definers surfaced with the process of democratization and indigenization. After its establishment in 2000, the DPP government played an active role in the marketplace to transform Taiwanese cuisine into a national symbol, and did so specifically by cooperating with restaurant owners and tourism agencies.

Although the upper classes, various governments, and various cultural and market agents have played active roles in the shaping of national cuisine, the performed national cuisine is not an invention stemming uniquely from a talented individual’s imagination; instead, it is constituted and articulated by a plethora of components that have taken root in and accumulated in Taiwanese society. The presented “Taiwanese cuisines” during the three political periods under observation are rooted in two traditions: the traditions of elite food and the traditions of popular food in Taiwan.

The elite food tradition originated during the Japanese colonial era, when Taiwanese cuisine symbolized colonial food and haute cuisine, and when its clientele consisted of the social elites. Through the definitions and the promotions provided by restaurant owners and through the consumption practiced by social elites, Taiwanese cuisine evolved into a new symbol of haute cuisine. For the Japanese colonizers, the

experience of enjoying Taiwanese cuisine could contribute to prestige and sophistication because the cuisine enhanced their experience not only of food but also of the cultural context. This elite food tradition declined after the end of the colonial era in 1945, when the previous upper class ceded place to the Mainlanders alongside the dramatic shift in political power to the Nationalist Party. After the transplantation of the Nationalist government from the Mainland to Taiwan, the previously haute Taiwanese cuisine was relegated to some public canteens and restaurants where government officers and rich businessmen dined. With government discouragement, a decrease in clientele, and the emergence of various Mainland restaurants as well as other dining venues, this elite food tradition disappeared gradually and is hardly visible today.

The second food tradition stemmed from the food of average Taiwanese families, a category that includes domestic cooking and feast cuisines served on special occasions and festivals. Although colonial-era Japanese anthropologists viewed these dishes as “food of Taiwanese” rather than as “Taiwanese cuisine,” segments of the Taiwanese population, with assistance from some Taiwanese politicians, began highlighting the dishes’ status as authentic Taiwanese cuisine in the 1990s. Underlying this shift in both perception and emphasis was the advocacy of the idea of Taiwanese subjectivity. Also since the 1990s, local politicians have been acquiring more political power and Taiwanese culture has become an increasingly important ingredient in the notion of a “Taiwanese nation.” In this context, Taiwanese cuisine has functioned as a cultural icon. Through state banquets, local food festivals, and promotion of ethnic cuisines, local Taiwanese dishes and ethnic cuisines have become viable commodities in the marketplace.

From the development of the two traditions, definers who have the power of cultural interpretation and reproduction can select ingredients of the presented “national cuisine” with the aim of strengthening their political positions and cultural distinction. However, although these actors play an important role in defining national cuisine, the role of consumers should not be ignored since national cuisine is also a commodity in the dining market. In other words, national cuisine is not only a *relational* and *performative* concept, but also a *commercial* product. A sufficient consumer base is crucial to Taiwanese cuisine’s viability as a commodity. Therefore, although the appreciators and consumers of Taiwan-based *Taiwanese* restaurants gave way to appreciators and consumers of Taiwan-based *Chinese* restaurants after the Second World War (when various Chinese regional cuisines entered the market along with powerful producers and consumers of these cuisines), Taiwanese restaurants re-emerged since the mid-1960s and witnessed a rise during the 1970s and 1980s, when Taiwan was a site of growing tourism and impressive mercantile success. Furthermore, the economic growth in Taiwan created more local consumers

who could afford expensive food and who felt a need to highlight their social distinctions. High-priced food, such as seafood, was established as a main feature of Taiwanese cuisine at this time.

Regarding the third question concerning the role of consumers in the formation of national cuisine, three roles can be identified from this research, that demonstrate different ways in which consumers participate in the formation of national cuisine:

- (1) **Definer:** Consumers can become actively involved in the formation of national cuisine by establishing and promoting specific knowledge of dining manners, and by further associating these with a particular social status or personal distinction. By doing so, consumer-definers can transform certain eating practices into carefully conducted exercises in the reproduction of intimacy and knowledge. This role is particularly prominent when the number of consumers is limited, and when new foods are introduced, such as when Taiwanese cuisine emerged during the Japanese colonial period.
- (2) **Interpreter:** Consumers can develop their own interpretation of national cuisine. Based on their personal interpretations, they can change the meaning embedded in cuisine. For example, among the informants for this research there were different interpretations of beef noodles. Some regarded beef noodles as a foreign food while others considered it a local invention. Moreover, these different interpretations were closely associated with the informants' different social positions and social experiences.
- (3) **Practitioner:** Consumers' practices concerning national cuisine can further shape the content and feature of national cuisine. This research shows that consumers' understanding of Taiwanese cuisine is influenced not only by the media but also by their own experiences of cooking and dining. These experiences are crucial in providing the corporal ground of the concept of "Taiwanese cuisine."

It should be pointed out that "Taiwanese cuisine" is not a meaningful category for all Taiwanese people. In other words, not all consumers play the role of definers and interpreters of Taiwanese cuisine. Only for those who perceive the symbolic meanings of cuisine, or those who embed meanings in particular dishes, can the nationhood of cuisine render itself perceivable. Moreover, consumers have different definitions and interpretations of Taiwanese cuisine. As I have shown in Chapters Four and Five, these differences result from different needs of inclusion and exclusion, and from personal experiences and memories, including cultural and

bodily memories. Moreover, consumers may take on different roles with the accumulation of experiences and memories, and the change of their social positions.

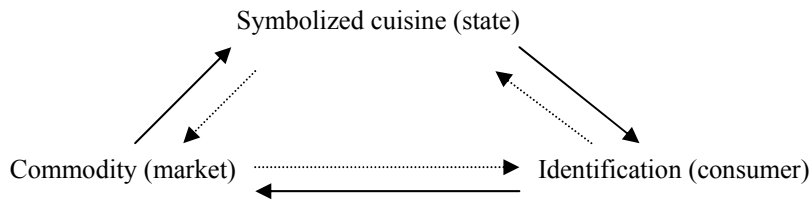
## **2. HOW “NATION” IS EMBODIED IN FOOD CONSUMPTION**

As shown above, national cuisine is a relational and performative concept as well as a commercial product. Its formation is based on its relationship with other factors; the ingredients of performed “national cuisine” are chosen by people who have motives and the power to define; and a national cuisine can be formed only when it is also defined, interpreted, and practiced as such by consumers. This research finds that there are three stages leading to the embodiment of nationhood in food consumption:

Firstly, specific cuisines are symbolized and performed as “national.” In the process of symbolization, political elements, including laws, policies, regulations, tourism promotions, certifications, or exhibitions, are influential in defining the external relations of a nation with other political entities, as well as the internal relations within the nation, such as ethnic and centre-periphery relations. Based on these relations, cultural elements, such as memory, tradition, myth, and history can be employed to embed the notions of nation, locality, or ethnicity in particular dishes, so that these dishes can be presented as national, local, or ethnic symbols. Political actors are powerful in selecting ingredients that comprise the national cuisine and in building it as a national symbol, and the political actors’ selection often conforms with their specific political interests.

Secondly, the symbolized cuisines are commodified. These commodities, such as state banquet dishes, ethnic cuisines, or national wine, provide a ground where consumers create their own experiences of the symbolized forms of nationhood. However, this pattern does not mean that political actors and market agents are dominant in the embodiment of nationhood. There is still the third stage: the practices and the identifying activities of consumers. When consumers perceive and practice these cuisines as national, the nationhood can be embodied in these particular cuisines. Although I use the term “stage” to signify this process of embodiment, these three stages form a circle and can restart from any stage. When the meaning or significance of “nation” changes, the process can restart. The following figure illustrates the process of the embodiment of nationhood in food consumption:





**Figure 6.1 Embodiment of nationhood in food consumption**

The formation of a national cuisine relies on the cooperation of state and market agents as well as the participation of consumers. The state and the ideology of nation-building can hardly serve as the single force shaping a national cuisine. Although a culinary category may refer to “national” cuisines, the entanglement of political and commercial interests is also crucial in the formation of national cuisine, and this entanglement is particularly evident in the development of state banquets. As such, the proliferation of Taiwanese cuisine in recent decades has not been a simple top-down process dominated by political ideologies of Taiwanese nationalism.

### **3. NATIONHOOD AND SENSIBILITY**

The discussion above has highlighted the process leading to the embodiment of nationhood in food consumption. Through this process, national cuisine is established as an embodied form of nationhood, which can serve as a boundary demarcating one nation from others. This research shows that the boundaries of Taiwanese cuisine change in accordance with political transformations, and such boundaries can be viewed as the “soft boundaries” to which Duara refers (1993).

Duara argues that every cultural practice is a potential boundary marking a community, including soft boundaries and hard ones. “Soft boundaries” signify those boundaries that serve to identify a group but that do not prevent the group from sharing and adopting the practices of another group. By definition, cultural practices such as culinary habits, language, rituals, music and dialect are soft boundaries if in-group members tolerate the sharing and the adopting undertaken by other-group members. Duara suggests that soft boundaries can evolve into hard ones when in-group members seek to “define and mobilize a community” by privileging a particular cultural practice or a particular set of cultural practices as the constitutive principle of the community (p. 20). In other words, when a community seeks to make a distinction between itself and other communities and to strengthen its self-consciousness of this distinction, the soft boundaries may harden and become hard boundaries. Duara argues that when the perception of a community’s soft

boundaries evolves into a perception of hard ones, an incipient nationality takes form. Nevertheless, hard boundaries can also soften. Between the poles of soft and hard boundaries exists a spectrum, and a community can have soft boundaries with one community but have hard boundaries with another.

From the perspective of soft and hard boundaries, the formation of national cuisine is a process wherein soft boundaries transform into hard ones. The transformation implies that the community has a growing need to undertake acts of exclusion and of inclusion, and that the community is becoming more and more self-conscious of its nationhood. In light of this view, the changing definitions of Taiwanese cuisine can be understood as movement along the spectrum between soft and hard boundaries. “Taiwanese cuisine” emerged as a selection of Chinese cuisines during the Japanese colonial era, and many of the boundaries between Taiwanese and Chinese cuisine have been soft and even vague. However, when migrants from the Mainland brought various Chinese cuisines to Taiwan, the boundaries became hardened. This hardening was evident in the negative and intolerant attitudes that many Taiwan-based Mainlander writers held toward the hybrid dishes served in some Taiwan-based restaurants during the post-war period. However, as tastes underwent adaptations and shifts and became more diverse, the boundaries between Chinese and Taiwanese cuisine softened within Taiwan. In contrast, new boundaries emerged between the aforementioned dishes and the dishes of such ethnic groups as the Hakka and Aborigines. After Taiwanese cuisine was employed as a national symbol after 2000, the soft boundaries between Taiwanese cuisine and other national cuisines started to harden.

This process shows the dynamic boundaries that ebb and flow between communities. The concept of soft and hard boundaries clarifies the nearly constant flux that characterizes a national cuisine. In addition, the concepts highlight the fact that a nation’s boundaries exist in and powerfully affect daily life. As boundaries of nation, cultural practices such as culinary habits, rituals, and music function in daily life as a means of demarcation, distinguishing a community from others. In other words, national boundaries exist in daily life and subsist through cultural practices. Constituting the corporeal and experiential grounds of a nation, these daily-life cultural practices strengthen the embodiment of nationhood.

Duara’s discussion of soft and hard boundaries centers on between-community distinctions; however, my research on Taiwanese cuisine shows that individuals have their own spectrum of soft and hard boundaries. Culinary habits can serve as hard boundaries for some but as soft ones for others. As I have shown in Chapter Five, individuals have different definitions of “Taiwanese cuisine,” and moreover, consumers are characterized by different sensibilities. In the following, I will further

develop the concept of sensibility, discussing how it can help to understand the relationship between the nation and the individual.

Chaney (1996) suggested that sensibility is a framework inscribed in an individual, a reference structure that people employ to make sense of their experiences. The framework of sensibility rests on some unifying principles that can influence the total repertoire of an individual's practices. Chapter Five's examination of consumers further shows that individuals differ from one another regarding the emphasis that they place on social categories such as nation, ethnicity, locality, gender, and so on. Therefore, I suggest that one's sensibility consists of various social categories, and that individuals differ from one another regarding the degree of importance that they assign to these social categories.

Sensibility is cultivated as early as infancy, and the formation of sensibility is influenced by both verbal forms of discourse and non-verbal sensual/bodily experiences, such as touching, tasting, and smelling. Through education, media exposure, and various bodily practices, individuals acquire knowledge, information, and experiences that help develop their sensibilities. The example of Lu Yao-dong clearly reveals both the influences of discourse and sensual/bodily practices on his sensibility. His intellectual training, cultural identification, and life experiences all helped shape his sensibility, which serves as a set of principles that guide his behavior and responses to phenomena. Therefore, he initially established a connection between himself and his fellow countrymen on the Mainland through food and regarded hybrid dishes in Taiwanese restaurants as a violation of Chinese tradition. However, with the accumulation of new experiences and cultural memory, he acquired a taste for these Taiwanese dishes, which took the place of his native cuisine. This demonstrates that both cultural and bodily memories are influential in the formation of sensibility, and that sensibility may change over time.

Since experiences of discourse and sensual/bodily practices differ among individuals, they develop different sensibilities. For example, the informants in this research differed from one another in their understanding of Taiwanese cuisine. Some informants highlighted the symbolic importance of locality, while some perceived it from an ethnic perspective. These different understandings of Taiwanese cuisine resulted from their individual sensibilities, with different rankings for various social categories.

Owing to the difference in priority given to different social categories, the nation is not necessarily an important concern for all individuals. Consumers can either make their own interpretations of objects marked as "national" or resist such external stimuli by simply regarding them as meaningless. Therefore, consumers can play different roles—definers, interpreters, and practitioners—in the creation of national cuisine. While those who have stronger sensibilities toward nation tend to play the

roles of definers and interpreters, those whose sensibilities toward the nation are relatively weak tend to be practitioners. “National cuisine” is a meaningful concept for those consumers who have a relatively strong sensibility toward the nation and who regard food as representative of the cultural values of a nation.

Following the discussion of sensibility, I would like to revert to the original concern of my research: how does the subjective identification of individuals interact with the politico-cultural elements of a nation so as to create or maintain nationhood in everyday life? This research reveals that the interaction can be understood from the perspectives of both the nation and the individual. Looking at the concept of “nation,” it is not only an institutional or discursive regime but also a space that has a corporeal and experiential grounding. Nationhood is embodied in various material forms and attached to numerous aspects of everyday life, such as law, entertainment, and cuisine. Through these embodied forms of nationhood, the political and cultural elements of a nation, like state apparatus and tradition, operate in the corporeal grounding of everyday life. For example, in the case of Taiwanese cuisine, the microphysics of nationhood<sup>1</sup> enter and are presented in a multitude of sites, such as state banquet wine, cookbooks, beef noodle shops, ethnic cuisines, and regulations on restaurants. These sites constitute a space where nationhood can be tasted, perceived, and circulated, so that it can be further manifested.

Looking at the individual, since the corporeal grounding of a nation has visual and sensual dimensions, individuals can interact with the embodied nationhood through their sensual and bodily experiences within these dimensions. For example, through dining experiences in outdoor banquets during festivals, individuals create their own experiences of Taiwanese public culture. By savoring Aboriginal snacks and appreciating the dancing in Aboriginal restaurants, the notion of ethnic groups is put into practice, with the strengthening of the connection between ethnic groups and nation.

Hence, looking at both sides, the interaction between the individual and politico-cultural elements of a nation can be understood as bi-directional. On one hand, the political and cultural elements of a nation, such as state apparatus and tradition, influence an individual’s sensual and bodily experiences in the corporeal grounding of everyday life; these experiences contribute to the cultivation of an individual’s sensibility. On the other hand, sensibility functions as a mechanism by which individuals perceive incoming information and assign their own meanings to this information. In the process, various forms of embodied nationhood constitute the space where an individual’s sensibility is cultivated. In turn, individuals draw different meanings of the embodied nationhood based on their sensibilities. Through

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<sup>1</sup> The usage of microphysics here is borrowed from Linke (2006), p. 218.

the bi-directional interaction between one's sensibility and embodied nationhood, the "nation" is practiced and embodied in daily life.

Based on the analysis above, this research suggests a factor that can limit our capacity to understand the controversies swirling around national identity in Taiwan. Because individuals have different sensibilities that help make sense of the world and guide their behaviors, individuals differ from one another regarding their conceptions of nationhood and of nationalist discourse. The growth of Taiwanese nationalism cannot be translated into a rise of Taiwanese identities directly, and the dichotomous ideologies of Chinese nationalism and Taiwanese nationalism should not be unquestioned assumptions in understanding the national consciousness of Taiwanese people. This point of view reminds us that the effects of political ideology and discourse should not be over-estimated. In other words, research should not equate elite ideology and elite discourse with a population's consciousness without first rigorously exploring the associations between these alleged causes and effects.

Furthermore, this research provides a reflection on "nation" from a micro-macro perspective. The nation-state is a dominant political form in the modern age, and influences people in many ways. A plethora of studies have shown that nationalism is an important ideology influencing people's lives, and the influence may come from war, education, media, and so on. By contrast, this dissertation takes another perspective involving body and food to examine some of the micro-level operations of a nation. Although the macro-structure of these national cultures cannot be reduced to individuals' understanding of nation, the examination of national culture from a micro-perspective can help to explain the diversity of national identities, particularly when a posited nationhood remains controversial.

Finally, this dissertation illustrates that national cuisine cannot be explained as a political artifact dominated by political ideologies alone; nor can it be understood as a touristic artifact that has been conceived to generate profits. Instead, it is better to interpret national cuisine as a symbolized product that has commercial potential. However, the product can be completed only through the interpretation and practice of its consumers.



## **Epilogue: Research Limitations**

The limitations of this research stem mainly from methodology. From the perspective of anthropology, a more complete ethnography is needed. For example, I could have spent more time interacting with consumers whom I interviewed so that I would have had a better grasp of their eating habits, political inclinations, and other details of daily life. By contrast, from the perspective of sociology, the interview samples could have restricted my research findings. However, since this research focuses on the concept of “Taiwanese cuisine” in history, the fieldwork site is a historical space—not any town where I could stay for a long period of time. The methodology I chose is thus a compromise in the interdisciplinary framework. Many inspiring details in my fieldwork resisted analysis when the time-span of the research covered long stretches such as one century; for example, the formation of a “gourmet field” that has been powerful in the shaping of culinary discourses, and the social function of restaurants, particularly during the Japanese periods. Many fascinating topics merit further investigation.

Furthermore, although this research adopts an interdisciplinary framework, it should be acknowledged that a more wide-range and long-term fieldwork study of consumers is worth conducting in the future. In contrast to the food-centered life history I carried out in this research, a more extensive survey, with complete ethnography fieldwork conducted at different sites, could provide more diverse and therefore a better understanding of consumers from different angles, such as gender, social hierarchy, and urban-rural differences.

Another limitation derives from the fragmented nature of the current study’s historical literature. In the past, people did not regard food consumption as an important affair to be well administered and recorded; thus, related records, statistics, and descriptions concerning food are quite limited in historical archives. In this research, I depend significantly on newspapers to explore Taiwan-based consumption during the post-war period from 1945 to 1960, and this dependence reflects the lack of other historical resources. A more well-rounded body of data would help flesh out research, particularly for this period.

Last but not least, research on national cuisine is a field worthy of more comparative studies. In this research, although I have tried to clarify the historical process of Taiwanese cuisine, I believe that more insights can be gained through between-country comparative research on national cuisine. For example, by comparing Taiwanese cuisine with Singaporean cuisine, research could further examine the “Chinese-ness” of Taiwan’s national culture; or by comparing Taiwanese cuisine with Indian cuisine, research could broaden our understanding of

colonialism's influence on colonies' food habits. Such comparative studies could facilitate the further analysis of issues concerning hybridity and relationships between state and market.



## Glossary of Characters

\*Japanese characters are marked in *italics style*

Alivongvong	阿里鳳鳳	Cixi	慈禧
Amis	阿美	dabao	打包
<i>Andô Sadami</i>	安東貞美	Dachen	大陳
Anping	安平	Dachen yibao	大陳義胞
<i>Asaka Yasuhiko</i>	朝香宮	Dadaocheng	大稻埕
Atayal	泰雅	Dajia	大甲
Bah-sin-a (Hokkien)	肉漬	Da-lu (noodles) /	大滷 /
Bai A-bian	白阿扁	Dar-lu	打滷
bando (Hokkien) /	辦桌 /	dangji liaoli	當季料理
banzhuo	辦桌	Dangwai	黨外
banxi	半席	danzi mian	擔仔麵
Baomei Lou	寶美樓	dingbiancuo	鼎邊銼
Beijingren	北京人	Donggang	東港
Beitou	北投	Donghuifang	東薈芳
benshengren	本省人	Dongpo	東坡
Bunun	布農	Dongyuan kanluan	動員戡亂時期臨時條款
cai	菜	shiqi linshi tiaokuan	
Chen Ben-tien	陳本田	douzhi	豆汁
Chen Cheng	陳誠	Dunmu	敦睦
Chen Shui-bian	陳水扁	Fan	番
Chen Tian-lai	陳天來	fan	飯
Chen Yi	陳儀	fangongkange	反共抗俄
Chiang Ching-kuo	蔣經國	fanshuren	蕃薯人
Chiang Kai-shek	蔣介石	Fu Pei-mei	傅培梅
<i>Chichibu Yasuhito</i>	秩父宮	Fushan	福山
chulocae (Hokkien)	手路菜	Fuzhou	福州
Chunfengdeyi Lou	春風得意樓	Gangshan	岡山

Gaoshazhu	高砂族	Jieyue liangshi xiaofei	節約糧食消費辦法
gaozha	糕渣	banfa	
geisha	芸者	Jieyue zhurou xiaofei	節約豬肉消費辦法
Genji monogatari	源氏物語	banfa	
Gentaro Kodama	兒玉源太郎	Jilong	基隆
gonggong jingji can	公共經濟餐	jin	斤
gonggong shitang	公共食堂	Jinbole	金伯樂
Gu Xian-rong	辜顯榮	jingji shitang	經濟食堂
Guang Hua	光華	Jingjunhua	敬軍花
Guanmiao	關廟	jiujia	酒家
guoyan xiaxiang	國宴下鄉	jiujia cai	酒家菜
Haidian	海甸	jiulou	酒樓
Hangzhou	杭州	Jiulou chashi gaishe	酒樓茶室改設公共
Heiwa Kinen	平和記念博覽會	gonggong shitang	食堂公共茶室實施
Hakurankai		gonggong chashi	辦法
Hirohito	裕仁	shishi banfa	
Hontô ryôri	本島料理	jixi liaoli	即席料理
Hsieh Chang-ting	謝長廷	Junyoushe	軍友社
Hua Xin	華新	Juying Lou	聚英樓
Hualian	花蓮	kaishô shoki	街庄書記
Huang De-xing	黃德興	Kejia/Hakka	客家
Huang Dong-mao	黃東茂	Kavalan	噶瑪蘭
Huangyan	黃岩	kecan	客餐
Hujimi	富士見	koumo	口蘑
inshokuten	飲食店	Kuni Asakira	久邇宮
Izumi Shikibu nikki	和泉式部日記	Langying	朗應
Jiangshan Lou	江山樓	Laozhengxing	老正興
jjiaozi	餃子	Lee Teng-hui	李登輝
Jiayi	嘉義	Lian Heng	連橫

Lian Zhen-dong	連震東	Penglai Ge	蓬萊閣
Liang Qi-chao	梁啓超	Pengyuan	彭園
Liang Shi-qiu	梁實秋	Pingdong	屏東
Lin Hai-yin	林海音	Pingleyou	平樂遊
Lin Han-ying	林含英	Pingpuzu	平埔族
Lin Wen-yue	林文月	Puyuma	卑南
Lin Xian-tang	林獻堂	qicengta	七層塔
Linbian	林邊	Qin	秦
longchang	龍腸	Qinabu	奇那步
Lugang	鹿港	Qinafu	奇那富
luroufan	滷肉飯	Qing	清
<i>Makura no sôshi</i>	枕草子	qingguonu	清國奴
manhan quanxi	滿漢全席	qingzhou xiaocai	清粥小菜
Meilidao	美麗島	Qionghua Lou	瓊華樓
Meinong	美濃	quanxi	全席
Miaoli	苗栗	Rukai	魯凱
migao	米糕	Ruichengchun	瑞成春
Minnan	閩南	<i>ryôriya</i>	料理屋
naibobo	奶餕飩	<i>ryôtei</i>	料亭
<i>naichi / neidi</i>	內地	Sakizaya	撒奇萊雅
<i>Naikoku Kangyo</i>	内国勸業博覧会	Saisyat	賽夏
<i>Hakurankai</i>		Sanhe Lou	三合樓
nailuo	奶酪	Sediq	賽德克
naiwuta	奶烏他	shanbao	山胞
Nanmen shichang	南門市場	shandi tongbao	山地同胞
Nantou	南投	Shandong	山東
Paiwan	排灣	Shanglinhua	上林花
Peng Chang-gui	彭長貴	shaomai	燒賣
Penghu	澎湖	Sheng Fan	生番

shengji	省籍	Tao Yuan-ming	陶淵明
Shimi xiaofei jieyue	食米消費節約辦法	Taoyuan	桃園
banfa		teshu liaoli	特殊料理
<i>Shina ryôri</i>	支那料理	Tezhong yingye guanli	特種營業管理規則
shishen	士紳	guize	
Shou Fan	熟番	Thao	邵
<i>Shôwa tennô</i>	昭和天皇	Tienjin	天津
shudie	豎碟	Tonghua	通化
<i>shû shoki</i>	州書記	Truku	太魯閣
Sichuan	四川	Tsou	鄒
sida zuqun	四大族群	Tuixing jieyue	推行節約運動實施
Siheyuan	四合院	yundong shishi banfa	辦法
Suzhou	蘇州	<i>Umeyashiki</i>	梅屋敷
Taicai	臺菜	waishengren	外省人
Taidong	臺東	Weiquan	味全
<i>Tainan Benmusho</i>	臺南辨務署	Wenxun	文訊
<i>Taiwanjin no</i>	臺灣人の食物	Wu Jiang-shan	吳江山
<i>shokubutsu</i>		Wu Xi-shui	吳溪水
Taiwanren de shiwu	臺灣人的食物	wuliuzhi	五柳枝
Taiwansheng Tezhong	臺灣省特種營業管理	Xiamen	廈門
Yingye Guanli Guize	規則	xiaochi	小吃
Taiwansheng	臺灣省行政長官公署	Xiaochun Yuan	小春園
xingzheng zhangguan		xiaoyecai	宵夜菜
gongshu		Xin Penglai	新蓬萊
Taiyu	臺語	Xin Zhonghua	新中華
Taizhong	臺中	Xinzhu	新竹
<i>Takasagozoku</i>	高砂族	Yami	雅美
Tan Yan-kai	譚延闓	Yanxi jieyue xiaofei	筵席節約消費實施辦
Tanchu	譚廚	shishi banfa	法

yiban liaoli	一般料理
yida	藝姐
yidajian	藝姐間
yifan zhongsui zhixu	一飯終歲之蓄
Yilan	宜蘭
Yinafei	以那駝
yingjing	硬頸
Yingshe	瀛社
Yinyi	銀翼
youtiao	油條
Yuanshan Dafandian	圓山大飯店
Yuanzhumin	原住民
Yuebin Lou	悅賓樓
Yunlin	雲林
Yunnan	雲南
Yuyuan	渝園
Zhanghua	彰化
Zhangzhou	漳州
Zhejiang	浙江
Zhonghua shangchang	中華商場
Zhongshan	中山
Zhou Hong-tao	周宏濤
Zhuangyuan Lou	狀元樓
Zhuhongxing	朱鴻興
Zhuofu	酌婦
Zuoying	左營



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### Internet Resources (All are Taiwanese websites)

Central News Agency: <http://www.cna.com.tw>

Council for Economic Planning and Development: <http://www.cepd.gov.tw>

Council for Hakka Affairs: <http://www.hakka.gov.tw>

Database of the Foundation of Chinese Dietary Culture: <http://ttsgroup.com.tw/newpage1/db16.htm>

Database of the National Repository of Cultural Heritage: <http://nrch.cca.gov.tw/ccahome/index.jsp>

Election Study Center of National Cheng-chi University:

<http://esc.nccu.edu.tw/newchinese/data/TaiwanChineseID.htm>

Miaoli County Government: <http://www.miaoli.gov.tw/index.asp>

Ministry of the Interior: <http://www.moi.gov.tw>

Office of the President: <http://www.president.gov.tw>

Taipei Beef Noodle Festival 2005: <http://www.tbmf.com.tw>

Taipei City Government: <http://www.taipei.gov.tw>

UDN news database: <http://udndata>



## Appendix

### Background Information on the Informants

#### Chefs/Restaurant Owners

Name	Interview	Background
A-du Male	10/25/2006, Taipei  Staying in the kitchen for further interviews: 10/25, 26, 27/2006	Born in 1945 in Taipei.  A Taiwanese restaurant owner in Taipei.  His restaurant started business in May 1977 and ended in 2009. It was known as a site where political rebels assembled before martial law was lifted.
Mr. Chang	10/26/2006, Taipei	Born in 1965.  A cook working in A-du's restaurant.  He has worked in several restaurants as a cook since his teenage years.
A-ming Male	10/26/2006, Taipei	Born in 1936 in Taipei.  The owner and chef of a Taiwanese restaurant in Taipei.  He started his dietary business with a stall selling beef soup when he was 17 years old and established his own restaurant in 1975. His restaurant is known for expensive and delicate seafood, attracting many entrepreneurs, celebrities, and politicians.
Mr. Wang	11/2/2006, Taipei	A cook working in the kitchen of a church.  He has worked in numerous restaurants around Taiwan as a cook.
Mr. Jian	11/14/2006, Taipei	Born in the 1950s in Taipei.  A Taiwanese restaurant owner in Taipei.  Some of his relatives were cooks for <i>bando</i> (outdoor banquets) when he was a child. Having been an indoor designer, he established a restaurant in 1993 in attempt to

		<p>“have a place to drink liquor and eat something with friends.” The name of his restaurant is the name of his hometown which was used during the Japanese era. Around 30% of his clients are Japanese working in Taiwan now.</p>
Mr. Lin	11/20/2006, Taipei	<p>Born in 1952 in Taoyuan.</p> <p>A Hakka restaurant owner in Taipei.</p> <p>He and his wife are both Hakka and his wife’s family had run a restaurant for several decades. Thus dishes served in their restaurant are quite similar to those in the restaurant run by Mrs. Lin’s family.</p>
A-jia Male	11/22/2006, Yilan	<p>Born in 1957 in Jiayi.</p> <p>The owner and chef of a restaurant in Yilan, the hometown of his wife.</p> <p>Working as an apprentice in kitchen aged 17, he had worked at the liquor houses in Beitou, Sichuan restaurants, and Guangdong restaurants; therefore his menu includes some Sichuan and Guangdong dishes now. He also serves local dishes from Yilan in his restaurant and particularly those local snacks served at state banquets.</p>
Mr. Liu	12/17/2006, Meinong, Kaohsiung	<p>Born in 1947 in Meinong.</p> <p>The owner and chef of a Hakka restaurant in Meinong.</p> <p>He dropped out of junior high school and worked during his youth. He has also run a “paper umbrella” business (a local specialty in Meinong) and one in antiques. Liu’s Hakka restaurant was established in 2001. As the leader of the Tourism Association of Meinong, Liu is quite enthusiastic about Hakka affairs in Meinong.</p>
Ms. Li	12/26/2006, Taipei	<p>Born in 1938 in Taipei.</p> <p>The owner of a famous Taiwanese restaurant chain</p>



		<p>founded in 1977 and with branches in Tokyo and Beijing. She has invested in restaurants since the 1970s. In addition to Taiwanese cuisine, she also runs Japanese and hotpot restaurants.</p>
<p>A-zhong Male</p>	1/2/2007, Taipei	<p>Born in 1947 in Yilan.</p> <p>The owner of a Taiwanese restaurant in Taipei.</p> <p>He has been private chef for the President Lee Teng-hui and participated in the preparation of several state banquets during the 1990s. Establishing a “State Banquet Restaurant” in 2001, he emphasizes that customers can enjoy dishes served at state banquets.</p>
<p>A-qin Male</p>	1/3/2007, Taipei	<p>Born in the 1950s in Taipei.</p> <p>A chef specializing in <i>bando</i> (outdoor banquets) in Taipei. He has worked in the Taipei City Council restaurant for eight years. His father was a famous professional <i>bando</i> cook in Taipei and established a restaurant in 1979. After his father passed away in an accident in Mainland China in 1994, he continued to run the Taiwanese restaurant, which remained popular. However, he closed the restaurant and currently only runs a <i>bando</i> business now.</p>
<p>Huang De-xing Male</p>	1/14/2007, Taipei	<p>Born in 1936 in Taipei. A retired chef.</p> <p>He was an apprentice in the famous Taiwanese restaurant <i>Peng-lai Ge</i> in 1948. After the closure of <i>Peng-lai Ge</i>, he started working as a cook at the liquor houses in Beitou. He has worked in numerous restaurants around Taiwan and has established several restaurants. He was the leading chef responsible for the state banquet in Taizhong in 2001.</p>
Mr. Lang	Participant observation and interview: in an	<p>Born in Yilan.</p> <p>An administrative chef of a restaurant known for its</p>

	occasion of <i>bando</i> . 1/16/2008, Taipei	seafood and Taiwanese cuisine.
A-wei Male	Participant observation and interview: in an occasion of <i>bando</i> . 1/16/2008, Taipei	Born in 1974 in Yilan. A cook in the team led by Mr. Lang. He has worked in several restaurants as an apprentice after graduating from junior high school.
Mr. Xue	4/24/2008, Kaohsiung	Born in 1947 in Kaohsiung. A professional <i>bando</i> chef. He learned cooking in the biggest restaurant in his hometown and cooperated with three chefs to organize a <i>bando</i> team since 1974.
Mr. Chen	4/24/2008, Meinong, Kaohsiung	Born in 1951 in Meinong. The owner of a restaurant in Meinong. He worked as an apprentice in a famous Hunan restaurant after graduating from junior high school. During the 1980s, he was selected as a chef working for the Representative Office of the ROC government in the U.S. He established a restaurant in his hometown Meinong in 1993, serving both Hakka and Hunan dishes.
A-nan Male	5/22/2008, Taipei	Born in 1952 in Taipei. The administrative chef at the Taiwanese restaurant owned by Ms. Li. He learned cooking at some liquor houses in Beitou during his teenage years and worked as a cook in Ms. Li's restaurant in his early twenties until now.
Ms. Liao	7/24/2008, Taizhong	Born in 1950 in Taizhong. A part-time <i>bando</i> cook. She started to cook after getting married. Because of the proliferation of <i>bando</i> during the late 1970s and early 1980s, she became an assistant at such banquets. Now she is a <i>bando</i> chef.

Mr. Tsai	Interview: in a trip to Miaoli for a certification of Hakka restaurants. He is one of the referees of this certification. 6/19/2008, Miaoli	An administrative chef at a grand hotel in Taipei. He has been the chef in a famous Taiwanese restaurant at another grand hotel. He learned at the liquor houses and restaurants in Beitou during his teenage years.
Mr. Huang	A short interview: after the certification of Hakka restaurants. 6/19/2008, Miaoli	Born in Miaoli. A Hakka restaurant owner.
Lin Hui-yao	1/9/2008, Taidong	Born in 1953. The owner of <i>Mibanai</i> restaurant.
Ms. Bai	1/10/2008, Taidong	One of the cooks of <i>Bunun Tribe</i> restaurant.
Mrs. Wu	2/22/2008, Tainan	The grand-daughter in law of the founder of a famous Taiwanese restaurant in Tainan. The founder, Ms. Wu, was born in 1925 and sold simple dishes on a stall after graduating from elementary school. She established the restaurant in 1983.
A-yi	2/22/2008, Tainan	Born in Tainan. A Taiwanese restaurant owner in Tainan. His father established this restaurant in 1980.

## Consumers

Name	Interview	Background
<b>Female</b>		
F1 Mrs. Cheng	12/16/2006, Kaohsiung	Born in 1946 in Penghu and moved to Kaohsiung for work during her teenage years. She became a housewife after getting married.
F2 Huang Xiu-mei	12/22/2006, Taipei	Born in 1966 in Taipei. A public servant.

F3 Mrs. Yang	12/28/2006, Tainan	Born in 1948 in Tainan. The owner of a laundry.
F4 Mrs. Peng	1/10/2008, Taidong	Born in 1937 in Xinzhu. A housewife.
F5 Shi Wen-yu	1/10/2008, Taidong	Born in 1930 in Taidong. A housewife.
F6 Mrs. Hsieh	2/16, 18/2008, Taipei	Born in 1951 in Zhejiang Province and lives in Taipei now. She worked in the Taipei City Government until her retirement in 2006.
M7, F7 Mr. & Mrs. Xu	4/26/2008, Penghu	Born in 1929/1931 in Penghu. Mr. Xu is a public servant and Mrs. Xu is a housewife.
M8, F8 Mr. & Mrs. Guo	4/26/2008, Penghu	Born in 1933/1934 in Penghu. Mr. Guo has studied at elementary school during the Japanese era and spent two years in high school after 1945. After dropping out, he engaged in fishery. Mrs. Guo is a housewife.
F9 Hong Hui-jun	5/13/2008, Taipei	Born in 1977 in Taipei. An English teacher.
F10 Chu Yu-chun	5/13/2008, Taipei	Born in 1977 in Taipei. Her parents came from Hubei and Shanghai families respectively and she is particularly familiar with Shanghai cuisine. Her father grew up in a village for military dependents in Tainan, thus she can cook many Chinese regional cuisines.
F11 Yang Qiu-yan	5/14/2008, Taipei	Born in Tainan in 1934. A housewife.
F12 Mrs. Huang	5/22/2008, Taipei	Born in 1947 in Taizhong. A retired teacher at a junior high school in Taipei.
F13 Ms. Ming	5/24/2008, Taipei	Born in 1967 in Taipei. A media worker in Taipei.
F14 Mrs. Ye	5/28/2008, Taoyuan	Born in 1948 at a Hakka town in Taoyuan. The owner of a shoe shop.
F15 Mrs. King	7/22, 8/11, 2008 Tainan	Born in 1932 in Tainan. She started to promote “the art of living” and teach

		cooking in 2001. She is known for her rich understanding of Tainan food.
Male		
M1 Jay	12/16/2006, Kaohsiung	Born in 1969 in Kaohsiung. A staff member at a private foundation.
M2 Marx	1/2/2008, Taipei	Born in 1983 in Taipei. He just completed his military service before the interview.
M3 Mr. Huang	1/5/2008, Taipei	Born in 1969 in Taipei. The host of several TV programs.
M4 Mr. Tan	2/20, 23/2008, Taipei (with his son)	Born in 1951 in Xinzhu, and moved to Taipei at the age of 13. He sells vegetables in a market and takes the main responsibility of taking care of his three children.
M5 Mr. Lin	3/4/2008, Shanghai	Born in 1956. A businessman. His father has migrated to Shanghai.
M6 A-de	3/20/2008, Taipei	Born in 1949 in Taizhong. A photographer.
M9 Mr. Li	6/23/2008, Taipei	Born in 1951 in Taipei. His great great grandfather was a renowned comprador engaging in foreign trade since the Qing Dynasty, and his family used to enjoy Western food during his childhood. He has run a Western restaurant for ten years.



## Samenvatting

Dit proefschrift onderzoekt de transformatie van de Taiwanese keuken, met het doel een beter beeld te krijgen over hoe het bestaan van een natie (*nationhood*) wordt belichaamd in de consumptie van voedsel. Het eerste deel van dit proefschrift geeft een historisch overzicht van de ontwikkeling van de Taiwanese keuken in de twintigste eeuw, en laat zien hoe tijdens drie verschillende politieke regimes verschillende ideeën over de Taiwanese keuken opkwamen. Onder het koloniale gezag van Japan maakte de Taiwanese keuken opgang als eten voor de elite en als *haute cuisine*. In deze periode verwees “Taiwanese keuken” naar de “gerechten van de koloniën” die op banketten geserveerd werden, en naar verfijnde gerechten die in restaurants voor de hogere klassen werden geserveerd. De aankomst van de Nationalistische regering van de Kuomintang bracht samen met grote aantallen migranten van het Chinese vasteland ook de Chinese culinaire landkaart in geconcentreerde vorm over naar Taiwan, door substantiële veranderingen in restaurants en symbolische veranderingen in de presentatie van kookboeken. Onder het autoritaire regime van de Kuomintang werd de Taiwanese keuken gereduceerd tot “kleine gerechten”, en gedegradeerd in de culinaire hiërarchie. In de jaren '80 maakte de politiek de overgang naar democratie, en kwam sterk de nadruk te liggen op lokale Taiwanese cultuur. Sindsdien is Taiwan steeds meer gepresenteerd als een land op zich, en lokale specialiteiten en hapjes worden beschouwd als kenmerken van de Taiwanese cultuur. De regering van de Democratische Progressieve Partij die in 2000 aantrad begon symbolische waarde toe te kennen aan de Taiwanese keuken, en deze werd steeds meer beschouwd als een zelfstandige nationale keuken.

Het tweede gedeelte van dit proefschrift concentreert zich op hoe consumenten denken over de Taiwanese keuken, en hoe zij deze toepassen (*bodily practices*), en laat daarmee het belang zien van het culturele en lichamelijke geheugen (*bodily memory*) in de belichaming van het bestaan van een natie. Door het onderzoeken van culinaire teksten die zich concentreren op de “smaken van thuis” toont Hoofdstuk Vier dat “thuis” een bron is van culturele herinneringen waarmee een individu zich identificeert, en dat groepsidentiteit wordt gevormd op basis van deze herinneringen. Als individuele personen zich identificeren met specifieke culturele herinneringen van een groep, fungeert deze identificatie als een schakel

die deze individuele personen met de groep verbindt. Het gevoel dat de groep zich onderscheidt van andere groepen en een eenheid vormt, kan haar versterken als gemeenschap. Als gebruiken en gewoontes veranderen of vermengd raken, kunnen nieuwe ervaringen en herinneringen aan de oppervlakte komen bij de leden van de gemeenschap. Deze opeenstapeling van nieuwe ervaringen en herinneringen kan worden omgevormd tot nieuwe culturele herinneringen door middel van tekstualisatie of intellectualisatie.

Waar Hoofdstuk Vier laat zien hoe tekstualisatie en intellectualisatie van het grootste belang zijn bij de vorming van cultureel geheugen, voert Hoofdstuk Vijf aan dat lichamelijk geheugen veel invloed heeft bij de vorming van “ontvankelijkheid” (*sensibility*), de referentiestructuur die mensen gebruiken om hun ervaringen begrijpelijk te maken. Dit hoofdstuk toont bovendien aan dat de “Taiwanese keuken” niet een categorie is waar alle Taiwanese zich mee verbonden voelen. De natie is alleen te bemerken in de context van voedsel voor degenen die zich de symbolische betekenis van de nationale keuken realiseren, of betekenis toeschrijven aan bepaalde gerechten. Bovendien hebben consumenten verschillende definities van de Taiwanese keuken, en interpreteren zij haar op verschillende manieren. De gevalsbeschrijvingen in dit hoofdstuk illustreren dat de groei van het Taiwanees nationalisme niet gelijkstaat aan een opkomst van de Taiwanese identiteit. Een voorkeur voor de Taiwanese keuken kan niet worden geïnterpreteerd als louter een uitdrukking van iemands Taiwanese identiteit. Op basis van dit onderzoek voer ik aan dat iemands ontvankelijkheid uit verschillende sociale categorieën bestaat, en dat individuele personen een verschillend belang kunnen hechten aan bepaalde sociale categorieën. Gezien de verschillende prioriteit die aan verschillende sociale categorieën gegeven wordt, is de natie niet noodzakelijkerwijs voor elk individu een belangrijke factor. Het concept van een “nationale keuken” heeft betekenis voor de consumenten die relatief sterk ontvankelijk zijn voor het idee van hun natie, en die voedsel zien als representatief voor de culturele waarden van deze natie.

Onderzoek naar de Taiwanese keuken laat zien dat een “nationale keuken” naast een commercieel product een concept is dat uitgedragen (*performed*) moet worden en bestaat in relatie tot andere zaken. De definities en kenmerken van een “nationale keuken” worden deels bepaald door haar relatie tot externe politieke entiteiten of groepen binnen de natie zelf. De manier waarop een “nationale keuken” in de praktijk functioneert hangt voornamelijk af



van politieke en marktactoren die de beweegredenen en de macht hebben om dit te bepalen. Een nationale keuken kan echter alleen vorm krijgen als zij ook als zodanig wordt gedefinieerd, geïnterpreteerd en gepraktiseerd door consumenten. Dit onderzoek voert daarom aan dat er drie stadia zijn die leiden tot belichaming van het bestaan van een natie in de consumptie van gerechten, waarbij deze stadia elkaar steeds op blijven volgen. Eerst wordt een specifieke keuken gesymboliseerd en uitgedragen als “nationale keuken”. Vervolgens wordt de tot symbool gemaakte keuken vercommercialiseerd. Tenslotte kan het bestaan van een natie belichaamd worden door haar keuken, maar alleen als consumenten deze keuken als nationaal beschouwen en als zodanig uitdragen.

Op basis van onderzoek dat is gedaan naar de Taiwanese keuken geeft dit proefschrift inzicht in de interactie tussen individuele personen en het bestaan van een natie. Een natie wordt belichaamd in verschillende materiële zaken, en is verbonden aan vele aspecten van het dagelijks leven. De politieke en culturele elementen van een natie functioneren in de tastbare grondslag (*corporeal grounding*) van het dagelijks leven door deze belichaamde vormen van de natie. Aangezien de tastbare grondslag van een natie verschillende zintuiglijke dimensies kent, kunnen individuele personen door hun zintuiglijke en lichamelijke ervaringen binnen deze dimensies een wisselwerking aangaan met de belichaming van de natie. De wisselwerking tussen de individuele en politiek-culturele elementen van een natie gaat in beide richtingen. Aan de ene kant beïnvloeden de politieke en culturele elementen van een natie de zintuiglijke en lichamelijke ervaringen van het individu in de tastbare grondslag van het dagelijks leven, en dragen deze ervaringen bij aan de vorming van de ontvankelijkheid van het individu. Aan de andere kant functioneert ontvankelijkheid als een mechanisme waarmee individuele personen binnenkomende informatie waarnemen en zelf betekenis toekennen aan deze informatie. Tijdens dit proces vormen verschillende vormen van de belichaming van het bestaan van een natie de ruimte waarin de ontvankelijkheid van een individueel persoon wordt gevormd. Individuele personen kennen op hun beurt op basis van hun ontvankelijkheid verschillende betekenissen toe aan de belichaming van het bestaan van een natie. Door deze wisselwerking tussen de belichaming van het bestaan van een natie en de ontvankelijkheid van individuele personen wordt de natie in het dagelijks leven uitgedragen en belichaamd.

Dit proefschrift laat zien dat een nationale keuken niet kan worden uitgelegd als enkel een kunstmatig politiek product dat wordt gedomineerd door politieke ideologieën, en ook niet als een toeristisch product dat is bedacht uit commercieel oogpunt. Beter is het om een nationale keuken te interpreteren als een product met symbolische waarde, dat commerciële mogelijkheden biedt. Dit product wordt echter pas compleet door de interpretaties en het gebruik ervan door zijn consumenten.

## **Curriculum Vitae**

Yu-jen Chen (陳玉箴) was born on June 16, 1977 in Taipei, Taiwan. She studied International Relations at National Taiwan University from 1995 to 1999. She received her BA degree in Political Science with a Minor in Foreign Languages and Literatures. After obtaining a Master degree in Journalism from National Cheng-chi University in Taiwan in 2002, she worked subsequently as a journalist for the China Broadcasting Company in Taiwan for three years. In September 2005, she started her dissertation project at Leiden University. She has been an affiliated member of the Research School of Asian, African and Amerindian Studies (CNWS) (2005-2008), and a visiting associate of the Institute of Taiwan History, Academia Sinica, Taiwan (2009-2010). Until 2010, she has translated four books on media, methodology, and food research from English to Chinese.

