

The Changes and Characteristics of the Exchange of Chinese and Japanese Food Culture—From the Perspective of the Acceptance of Japanese Food Culture^{*}

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This paper investigates the characteristics and evolution process of Sino-Japanese diet culture exchange in each historical period, analyzes the possible impact of globalization on Sino-Japanese diet culture exchange, and discusses the development direction of innovative mode of Sino-Japanese diet culture exchange under the background of globalization.

Keywords: Chinese and Japanese food culture, food culture exchange, innovation mode

Historical Division of Food Cultural Exchanges Between China and Japan

As the basis of religion, nationality, and national identity, the food culture of various countries in the world has played an important role. The diet culture of China and Japan came into being in the historical and terroir environment. Taking the history of Japanese food culture as the main axis, this paper investigates the food materials, cooking methods, and representative dishes of each era, analyzes its relevance to the communication of Chinese food culture, and identifies the communication characteristics of each era.

The age division of dietary life does not necessarily coincide with the political division. From the perspective of Japanese food culture's acceptance of Chinese food culture, this paper divides it into the following three stages:

The first stage: the exchange of ancient food culture between China and Japan. The cut-off point is the beginning of Meiji restoration in Japan. After the Meiji restoration, Japan fully accepted the western culture, and there was a watershed in the food culture exchange between China and Japan.

The second stage: the exchange of modern and contemporary diet culture between China and Japan. The cut-off point is the generation of the concept of globalization in the 1980s. At this stage, Japan adopted the eclectic attitude towards Chinese food culture and western food culture, and the communication between Chinese and Japanese food culture showed new characteristics.

The third stage: the exchange of food culture between China and Japan under the background of globalization. Under the background of globalization, the communication of Chinese and Japanese food culture shows the characteristics of diversification, and the concept of country is gradually broken.

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Characteristics of the Ancient Diet Culture Exchanges Between China and Japan

After the introduction of primitive rice-growing technology into Japan, food materials and cooking methods were mostly influenced by the Tang dynasty culture in China. The Nara era is also known as the era of Tang style imitation. For example, the ambassadors of Song dynasty and Tang dynasty learned Chinese pastry making and brought the technique back to Japan. The pastry was called “tougasi” (tang dim sum). According to the *Japan Postscript*, volume 11, heian court banquet “kyouou” is modelled on the relevant Chinese banquet ceremony.

By Japanese middle ages (11th to 16th centuries), the Japanese food culture was influenced by the food of the nobles in the capital city, the food of the local warriors, and the food of the monks. The diet culture of Japan in this period was greatly influenced by the diet culture of the Song dynasty in China. The Song dynasty was an era of great changes in Chinese diet. After entering the Song dynasty, the food life in China was suddenly enriched. With the prosperity of Sino-Japanese trade in Song dynasty, Japan took the temple as the center and spread and assimilated the food culture of Song dynasty. From the food culture-related books *Court Rraining Intercourse* and *Zen Forest Songs* recorded a large number of Chinese food culture related content. In terms of food materials, tofu was introduced to Japan during this period. After the introduction of Chinese dim sum custard into Japan, it also became popular among the local people. There is also a tea ceremony. Chinese tea has been introduced into Japan by the Japanese monk Kukai and the Saityou in 815, but due to the lack of tea planting technology, tea culture exchange between China and Japan remained suspended for 380 years. The Japanese Buddhist Eisai went to Tiantai mountain for exchange learning and took tea seed, tea processing technology, and related books to Japan until period of Southern Song dynasty. Eisai wrote the first tea book in Japan, *Taking Tea for Health*.

In the Edo period, the Tokugawa Shogunate’s closed-door policy did not affect the normal communication between Chinese and Japanese food culture. At present, there are more than 10 books about Chinese diet in this period. In this period, vegetables and food had been introduced into Japan as well as more than 120 kinds of cuisine, such as moon cakes, dumplings, meat dumplings, meat dumplings, and so on. Japan also learned from China how to make sugar.

Throughout this period, we can find the following characteristics of the food culture exchanges between China and Japan.

(1) the subject of communication: the dominance of the privileged class

According to the chronology of the history of Japanese food, most of the people involved are the emperor, generals, monks, and other privileged classes. At the beginning of the Edo period, ordinary people appeared, but in small numbers. As Sizuiti Tanaka (1987) points out in *A Strip of Water, A History of Chinese Culinary Customs*, “This period is the most assertive in Japanese history. The center of communication is the privileged class of the nobility, officials, scholars, monks and so on”.

(2) the form of communication: the full range of material and spiritual exchanges

During this period, the exchange of food and drink culture between China and Japan included tangible material exchanges and spiritual exchanges such as etiquette and food laws. The result is traditional Japanese cuisine with a sense of social decorum. Take the traditional Japanese cuisine, Honzen, for example, which is generally believed to have been influenced by the Tang dynasty wine ceremony. In addition, many traditional Japanese dishes such as Syoujin and Kaiseki during this period can be found to be influenced by Chinese food culture.

(3) communication means: personnel exchanges and books

As people moved, so did food. During the Yayoi period, a large number of Chinese immigrants entered Japan, bringing with them the advanced culture of the time. Since then, the personnel exchanges between the two countries have been continuous. Although there were three official wars, there has never been a fault line in the people-to-people exchanges. Personnel exchanges become one of the important ways of Chinese and Japanese food culture.

In addition to people-to-people exchanges, books have also contributed to the food and cultural exchanges between the two countries: 15 books about Chinese cuisine in the Edo period, 17 references to the Chinese sutra of food before the Heian period, three volumes of books related to the period from peace to Muromachi period (*Records of Kitchen Affairs*, *Court Training Intercourse*, and *Zen Forest songs*), 12 copies of books in Edo period (*Pictures of Places of Interest in Nagasaki*, *Journey of Tukusi*, *Record of Witness in Nagasaki*).

Characteristics of Modern and Contemporary Diet Cultural Exchanges Between China and Japan

Japan began to be influenced by western food culture after it entered the Meiji era. During this period, Japan actively absorbed western modern science, and food life ushered in a huge transition period. On the contrary, the diet culture exchange between China and Japan in this period was influenced by the times. Since the later period of Taisyo, the food culture exchanges between China and Japan have ushered in a new period of development. The number of Chinese restaurants has been increasing gradually, and at the same time, there are also cooking schools that teach Chinese cooking practices. Women are playing an increasingly prominent role in the exchange of food culture between China and Japan.

To analyze the communication characteristics of Chinese and Japanese food culture in this period, the paper will illustrate from following three aspects.

(1) the transformation of the subject: from the privileged class to cook, family women change.

Referring to the contents of modern family cuisine and chronology of modern Japanese drinking and eating culture, it can be found that in the communication of Chinese and Japanese food culture during this period, the privileged class gradually disappeared, and the figure of chefs and women could be seen everywhere. They have played an important role in popularizing the exchange of Chinese food culture.

In February 1882, Minekiti Akahone founded a cooking class for women in Tokyo, Japan. According to *The Guide Cooking* published on the 80th anniversary of founding, the school offered a course in “cooking lanes” to improve women’s upbringing. At the beginning of the program, Japanese cuisine and western cuisine are taught. Later, Chinese food was added to the course. In 1898, Japanese cuisine expert Jibei Ishii added Chinese dishes such as fried wild duck slices and clear soup and bright bone to his book *Japanese Cuisine Law* and promoted them.

(2) change of content form: from comprehensive communication to selective communication

The communication content of this period is not so much an all-round communication, but an exchange themed at the integration of Chinese cuisine into Japanese families. As a result, Japan’s unique washoku was created.

Seijo school is a girls’ school founded in 1899. In the *Journal of the Culinary Workshop*, the school notes that the existing diet of mostly Japanese and western-style Japanese people is not perfect without delicious Chinese food, and starts teaching Chinese food once a week (two hours). At the same time, the organizer of the

workshop, Takako Kaetsu (1907) published a book *Practice of Cooked Food*. All the menus in the book are combinations of Japanese, western, and Chinese dishes. It can be seen that in the daily life and diet of Japan during this period, the cuisine of various countries was freely combined, and Chinese food became one of the important components of “washoku” in Japan.

(3) The Transformation of Means of Communication: From People and Books to Culinary Schools and All Kinds of Media

People and books continue to function as important means of communication. However, compared with the previous stage, both quantity and quality have greatly improved. Human communication has been described above. As for books, even in the Meiji era, when China was despised, eight books on Chinese cuisine were published, and 12 were published in the Taisyo period. Chinese cooking books of that era, with their extensive use of color photographs, closely resemble modern cooking books.

In addition, new means of communication began to emerge in this era. That was the entrance of the culinary school and the media.

The culinary schools was born, such as the aforementioned Akahori Gakuen and Akiho Masumi’s private Tokyo culinary school for girls. Most schools are aimed at women in the upper middle class, and some, such as cooking rooms, are offered at relatively low cost.

Another new means of communication is new media. With the popularization of news and radio, the propaganda of cooking culture in the reports related to cooking and radio programs is also very popular. Beginning at the end of September, 1893, the current affairs new newspaper began to introduce three or four home-cooked dishes common in the family under the title “what to do”. This is the first time that the newspaper has serialized a cooking story. In 1926, the Tokyo Broadcasting Bureau (now NHK) began broadcasting cooking on the air, broadcasting the cooking programs of famous cooking teachers and chefs every morning. Thanks to the introduction of the new communication means of mass media and cuisine schools (education), the spread of Chinese cuisine culture is faster than that of the previous generation. The spread of dumplings from northeast China during the Taiyo period was directly related to the spread of new media from urban Japan to rural China in two or three years.

Reflections on the Exchange of Food Culture Between China and Japan in the Era of Globalization

Considering the development of food culture exchange between China and Japan in the background of globalization, the author puts forward three views.

First, the rapid economic development and the development of IT technology have brought about fundamental changes in people’s way of life. Fast food, fast fashion trends are emerging in both countries. In this social trend, the slow and integrated communication mode has its difficulties. Beyond the limitation of different countries, the cultural exchange form that maintains the characteristics of other countries’ food culture and makes it co-exist with the domestic food culture will become the mainstream.

Second, the importance of restaurants in the dissemination of food culture is increasingly prominent. With the fast pace of life, more and more people choose to eat in restaurants or order takeout. The food sold in restaurants is both a food commodity and a cultural carrier. The mode of “culture + economy” will play an important role in the communication of food culture in the future.

Moreover, modernization has brought about a convenient life and also resulted in many social problems, such as environmental pollution. China and Japan should take “wisdom” and “technology” as the focus of exchanges and aim to solve social problems related to diet in Asia and the world. This is the essence of “Japan-China diet cultural exchange” in the 21st century.

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