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Introduction

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INTRODUCTION

A variety of food cultures are developing in the world today. We recognize classifications such as Western food and Japanese food; Japanese cuisine, Chinese cuisine, Thai cuisine, French, and Italian cuisine (Udagawa 2018) or foods for which consumption has become global, including fried chicken and McDonald's. To grasp the reality of these various food cultures, we have studied using diverse disciplines: not only cultural anthropology¹⁾, but also history (Serventi and Sabban 2003; Rath and Assmann eds. 2010; Pilcher ed. 2012), geography, and so on. The study of food and eating has a long history in anthropology. Moreover, it is important because food is utterly essential to human existence (Mintz and Du Bois 2002). Anthropologists view food and foodways as tools with which to understand individual cultures and societies, especially when they are situated in the context of global and historical flows and connections (Tierney and Ohnuki-Tierney 2012). For the discussion in this volume, we mainly adopt a historical approach. Food cultures across the world have developed individually in their respective regions since prehistoric times, forming hybrid food cultures through their spread across regions or through mutual interaction of regional cultures (Phillips 2006: 38).

1. Research Trends in Food Cultural History

Investigation of globalized food cultures can be divided into three approaches. First, some studies are conducted to elucidate the origins and routes of cultivated plants. For instance, wheat, which was domesticated in western Asia about ten thousand years ago, has spread mainly across the temperate regions of the Eurasian continent to the islands of Japan. The same could be said of rice (Ishige 2015: 23-25). After its domestication in the Yangtze River Basin about four thousand years ago, it spread mainly across monsoon Asia and was finally introduced into Japan during the prehistoric Yayoi period (300 BC-300 AD).

Thereafter, it was not until the Age of Exploration, starting in the 16th century, that maize, presumed to have originated in South America, was brought to Africa; today, it is a staple food among the agricultural peoples in eastern and southern Africa and. Therefore, understanding how a food culture has been introduced and diffused from one area to another provides perspective in structuring the history of humankind and the world. Numerous studies examining the spread and diffusion of food cultures have been accumulated in different fields, including historical science, archaeology, cultural anthropology, ethno-history, and human geography.

Second, research has been undertaken to ascertain how local food cultures have changed by accepting foreign food cultures, a topic to which cultural anthropology, sociology, and geography have contributed (Farrer 2010; 2015). In the Amazon Basin, for example, cassava was domesticated and subsequently became a staple food; bananas originating in Southeast Asia were introduced at a later period. Today, cassava and bananas co-exist as staple foods in some areas, whereas in others either cassava or bananas dominant. Furthermore, in the case of sugar, demand has increased since the relations among sugar producers, distributors, and consumers have been viewed from a global perspective. Other interesting research themes include introduction of western food into Japan and the resultant change in food cultures. Despite the introduction of bread, consumption of rice has not declined. Rather a co-existing state of rice and bread consumption has been realized in Japan (Chapter 1). This volume discusses French food in China and Korea and German food in Japan as cases illustrating the influence of European food culture in east Asia and the world (Chapters 8–11).

Third, studies in the field of historical anthropology have specifically examined the histories of food cultural exchange across Eurasia. Since prehistoric times, the continent has been the stage on which many civilizations, such as the Roman Empire, Persian Empire, Chinese dynasties, and Indian dynasties, have risen and fallen. Above all, the existence of the Silk Road, which has been instrumental in cultural interchange between the eastern and western world, cannot be ignored. The road concept also includes a Maritime Silk Road, by way of which inland and coastal exchange between the east and the west was maintained. In this context, how have the food cultures of the east and west been spreading? The question remains an important research theme related to Eurasian food cultural history. For example, it turns out that watermelons, presumed to have originated in the Kalahari Desert, were introduced from Africa via Europe and Asia, specifically China, to Japan. Because watermelons are called *xigua*, meaning ‘western melons’ in Chinese, they are believed to have been introduced from central Asian regions west of China. The melons themselves are thought to be related to trade between the east and west via the Silk Road. Other topics include the international circulation of food products as commodities, transnational expansion of food-based corporations, and the global governance of food and food issues (Phillips 2006: 38). In this volume, Japanese food and Italian food are discussed as cases of international circulation of food products (Osawa 2018;

Chapter 1, Chapter 11).

Given the above, we can digest the existing trends of food cultural history research based on three perspectives with three keywords: ‘spread and diffusion’, ‘change’, and ‘interaction’.

2. Objectives, Methods, and Research Framework

This study was conducted to elucidate the spread and changes of local food cultures, primarily targeting the Eurasian continent from the 16th century to the present day. Concrete study regions include the Asian countries of Japan, Korea, China, the Philippines, and Malaysia, and the European countries of France and Italy and Germany. Time scales of interest vary from extremely broad, for example from the Yayoi era in Japan (300 BC–300 AD) to the present, to narrowly focused, for example the span of one hundred years in the modern era. Among its main disciplines the research includes historical science and ethnology, extending in scope to include geography and archaeology.

As a research framework, the following three perspectives can be described. First is interest in the players of key roles in a particular food culture. A wide range can be listed, from lords, kings, chiefs, merchants, explorers, and diplomats to common people. Second is interest in a food culture’s continuance and change. The introduction and effects of food cultures from more modernized western European countries on east Asia, such as German cuisine in Japan, western cuisine in Korea, or French cuisine in China, provide very illustrative examples. Third is interest in whether local original food cultures are maintained despite the progress of food culture globalization. In the study of global food cultures, a synthesized approach is required to comprehend the dynamism between globally spread and diffused food cultures and those that are locally maintained.

STRUCTURE OF CHAPTERS

This edited volume includes four parts. First, the research regions of the Eurasian Continent are shown (Figure 1).

Part 1 is a compilation of historical studies on human food culture according to four approaches: 1) comprehensive historical study of specific areas over a period of two thousand years; 2) sociohistorical study from the perspective of the dietary practices of diplomats; 3) global historical study specifically addressing links across areas; and 4) historical study of food culture as represented by museum exhibits.

Chapter 1 addresses the history of food culture in Japan from the perspective of cultural exchange, ranging from introduction of wet-rice cultivation to Japan to transfiguration of contemporary household culinary culture. Ishige classifies the historical eras history of food culture in Japan based on their properties, such as the ‘formative period of culinary culture’, the ‘formative period of dietary habits’, and the ‘completion period of culinary culture’. Naomichi Ishige also argues that

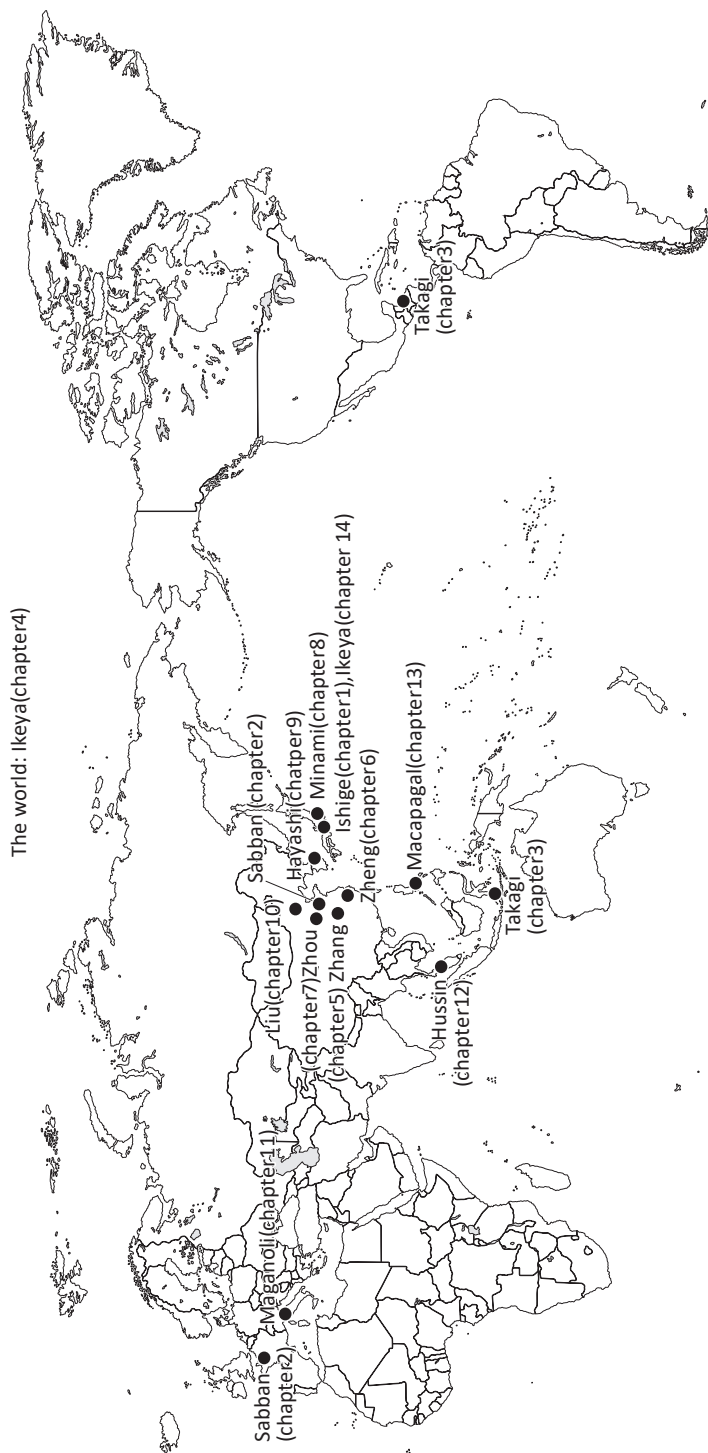


Figure 1 Distribution of the study areas in this volume

it is desirable to restructure the latest image of Japanese food culture when cultural exchanges with foreign food culture are activated.

Chapter 2 introduces dietary culture based on the foreign experiences of eastern and western diplomats in the 19th century. This includes western Europe as observed by Chinese visitors, and China as observed by European visitors. The authors compare images and practices of the food culture of that period, positioning this as the social history of culinary culture.

Chapter 3 provides a historical overview of human consumption of turtles. Hitoshi Takagi first describes and analyses historical change in distribution of turtle meat from the 17th century to the present. In the 17th century, the Miskito Indians of Nicaragua were known to capture turtles. Additionally, Britain promoted colonization of islands in the Caribbean Sea at that time; turtle meat attracted attention, exports to Britain began, and turtle meat soup came to be consumed ordinarily. Turtle meat was exported to Britain until the mid-20th century.

Chapter 4 reconstructs the history of food culture worldwide through a case study of the permanent exhibition at the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka, which presents exhibitions on world cultures allowing visitors to experience a virtual round-the-world tour. Accordingly, exhibition of the food cultures of the respective areas underscores both the diversity and similarity of food cultures worldwide. The author proposes classifying the human history of food culture into the following four periods: ‘initiation of dietary habits of humankind’, ‘invention of plant cultivation and livestock’, ‘development of food culture in various areas around the world’, and ‘industrialization of foodways’.

Part 2 presents a discussion of the history of Chinese food culture from ancient to modern times with respect to the propagation and inflow of food culture from outside the country and from the perspective of foreign visitors.

Chapter 5 discusses the important role of foreign traders in spreading culinary culture. The Southern Silk Road was active during the Qin, Han, and Jin Dynasties, during which time Chinese food culture spread continuously, improving people’s nourishment and standards of living.

Chapter 6 explains the social effects of the cultivation of 30 types of edible American plants, in particular corn, sweet potatoes, and potatoes, which were introduced to China beginning in the 16th century. It specifically addresses factors such as meal contents, population growth, ecology and environment, agricultural output, and so on.

Chapter 7 discusses European Christian missionaries who visited China in the mid-17th century and subsequently introduced the realities of Chinese foodways to Europe. They understood and absorbed the knowledge of Chinese foodways into European foodways by a unique method and maintained strong interest in the knowledge of Chinese foods. Consequently, these missionaries marked the start of knowledge of Chinese foodways in Europe in the evolution of mankind.

Part 3 addresses the introduction of European food culture and its influence in three east Asian countries and the world in the 20th century.

Chapter 8 discusses the introduction and establishment in Japan of German culinary culture, especially Baumkuchen and Loin ham, by Germans who arrived in the country during pre-war times. In particular, the behaviour and involvement of two instrumental Germans who were taken prisoner before World War II is addressed.

Chapter 9 explains the introduction process and influence of Western food with particular reference to Korea, which was at that time colonized by Japan. Characteristically, Japanized western food penetrated the Korean Peninsula via Japan. In addition, European foodways were introduced by the US after the war, beginning with the Korean War in 1950 and continuing until the present day.

Chapter 10 examines western restaurants in urban Tianjin, China, investigates the characteristics of French cuisine and some French-style food in contemporary China, and elucidates the influence of western food on the food culture of urban China. This chapter, with a case study of the development of western food in urban China, introduces the following five related elements: supplier quality, financier attitudes, chef training, consumers' cultural knowledge, and city government roles (Farrer 2010).

Chapter 11 examines the acceptance of Italian food culture in various areas throughout its global spread during the past several decades, and introduces that the food culture is expanding in a form that differs from the real Italian style. Specifically, this chapter adopts case studies of Italian-style food, such as *Parmigiano-Reggiano* cheese (Parmesan cheese), and Italian-style food that evokes an image of Italy

Part 4 presents the concept of contemporary food culture in the age of globalization, during which diverse information and numerous people move across national borders and their social influence increases at the nation-to-nation, within-nation, and village levels.

Chapter 12 discusses the relations between trans-border sightseeing and the image of each country's food culture in the age of globalization. The food culture of Malaysia is studied, and the social implications of advertising the diversified food culture of Malaysia as a nation-state is discussed. Malay, Chinese, and Indian foodways co-exist in Malaysia. It is said that presenting the diversified food culture as a symbol of the country appeals to tourists visiting Malaysia.

Chapter 13 addresses preservation of cultural landscapes in the age of globalization. UNESCO has lately designated Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) at various sites worldwide, aiming to establish a social system that permits sustainable use of food in the world. One such site is the landscape of the rice terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras in northern Luzon, designated in 1995. The Rice Terraces spread over the mountain slopes are actively used by the present residents. They are considered an appropriate heritage of cultural landscapes based on food.

Chapter 14 address the sustainable use and distribution of wild plants (for example *zenmai*, or fiddlehead fern) as food and commodities in northeast Asia,

focusing on Japan. The paper elucidates the contemporary circumstances of wild plant use throughout Japan. How have wild plants been used as foods and managed by the local people? Who has played the key roles in their exchange: traders, merchants, or ordinary people? Various cases in Japan covering such topics are presented (cf. Hamada 2018).

CONCLUSION

The history of Asian food culture can be comprehended through the four approaches described above, which introduce detailed cases from the history of Chinese food culture and allow comparison of the concepts of western food's introduction within East Asia. Consequently, the research verifies that food culture is commonly spread across borders in the recent age of globalization, but also that from historical periods to the present, Asian food culture has never remained isolated in any area; rather, it always been influenced by foreign food cultures and taken new action in response.

NOTE

- 1) Several academic journals are known throughout the world. For example, *Anthropology of Food* is an open access academic journal published in French, English, Spanish, and Portuguese. Started in 1999, this journal is supported by the French National Institute for Human and Social Sciences (CNRS). Nevertheless, the anthropology of food in Japan is not well known to English-speaking researchers, aside from several English-language papers and books (Ishige 2001, Umesao, Yoshida, and Schalow eds 2003). Naomichi Ishige has promoted food culture research with a global perspective in Japan (Nobayashi 2018).

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