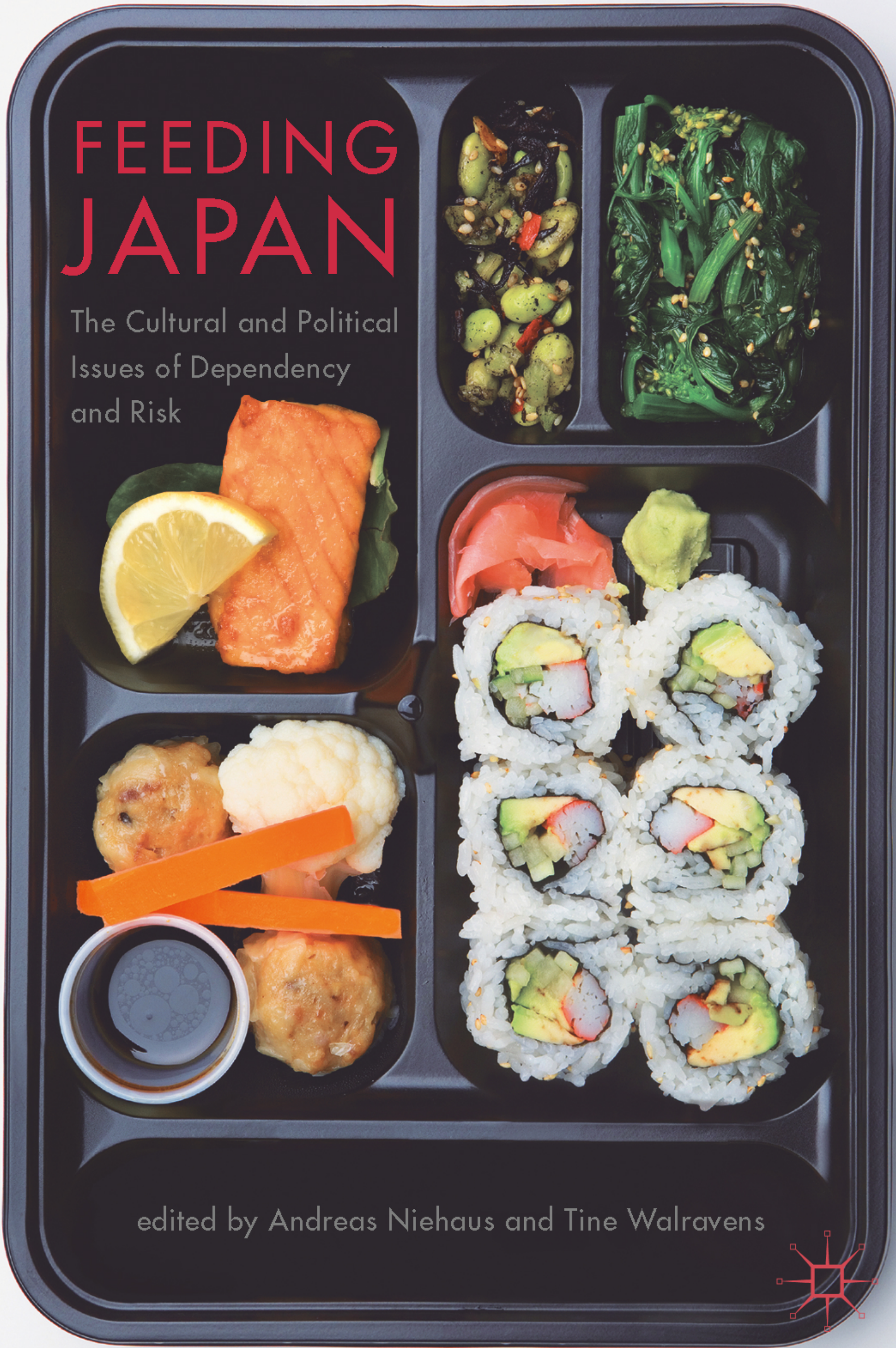
# FEEDING JAPAN

## The Cultural and Political Issues of Dependency and Risk



edited by Andreas Niehaus and Tine Walravens

Feeding Japan

Andreas Niehaus • Tine Walravens
Editors

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## The Cultural and Political Issues of Dependency and Risk

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*Editors*
Andreas Niehaus
Department of Languages and Cultures
Ghent University
Ghent, Belgium

Tine Walravens
Department of Languages and Cultures
Ghent University
Ghent, Belgium

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# Introduction: Reconsidering Japanese Food

Tine Walravens and Andreas Niehaus

In December 2013, *washoku* was added to the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage (UICH) list of the United Nations. The UNESCO defined *washoku* as a 'social practice based on a set of skills, knowledge, practice and traditions related to the production, processing, preparation and consumption of food'.[1] The accolade thus refers to Japanese food *culture*, rather than one food item, and stresses the fact that *washoku* provides the Japanese people with a sense of identity and belonging, based on healthy eating and respect for nature and the environment. Dietary patterns, attitudes towards and perceptions of food are certainly central to the experience

[1] UNESCO, '*Washoku*'. UNESCO, 'Nomination file'.

T. Walravens (✉) · A. Niehaus
Department of Languages and Cultures, Ghent University,
Ghent, Belgium
e-mail: tine.walravens@ugent.be; andreas.niehaus@UGent.be

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of everyday life and integral to the formation of local and national cultures. However, in times when young Japanese are turning to high-end Western cuisine and fast-food chains, annual rice consumption continues to fall, and demand for meat has exceeded that for fish, the UNESCO's praise for the role of *washoku* as a form of 'social cohesion' may be slightly overestimated. What is furthermore missing in the UNESCO's 'appreciation' is an understanding of the historical dimension, of political agendas and discourses of power that shape the notion of a 'national cuisine'.

The listing of *washoku* and its imprimatur of 'safeguarding measures' to protect the cuisine seem to have come at precisely the right moment for Japan. The UICH list is the product of an international organization recognized, sponsored and protected by member states, and its appraisal of Intangible Cultural Heritage, which promotes trade and tourism, generally results in a boost to both prestige and commercial potential. In the face of the waning popularity and status of Japanese food and cooking prompted by the rise of Western-style and Chinese-style culinary culture domestically, several cooking professionals have expressed their concern that traditional Japanese cuisine could be lost,[2] while Japan's food industry itself has suffered a series of safety-related scandals and incidents. Also the government understood the potential of the listing for its ongoing projects related to diet and health among the general public. The *shokuiku* programme, since its launch in 2005 considered the focal point of Japanese food policy, aims to teach the public about eating habits, health risks and a healthy lifestyle, triggered by a variety of pressing concerns related to food and nutrition, such as changing dietary habits, health-related diseases such as obesity, loss of traditional food culture and import dependency.[3] Furthermore, the ministries involved started preparing its application for the Intangible Cultural Heritage label just months after the March 11 Triple Disaster. When serious safety and security concerns regarding the food supply emerged in the wake of the nuclear meltdown, the government of Japan

[2] Foreign Press Center Japan, 'Press Tour'. Iwata, 'Head chef at Kyoto restaurant'. Kumakura, 'Interview'. Yoshida, 'Washoku served up as heritage'. Ichijo & Ranta, *Food, National Identity and Nationalism*, 151.

[3] MAFF, 'What is Shokuiku (Food Education)?', 1.

set out to rebuild the country, regain domestic consumer trust and restore the country's image abroad.[4] For the authorities, the UNESCO's recognition could therefore add impetus to the existing projects promoting food culture and dietary education and trigger other promotional initiatives and economic incentives. Converging interests between the private sector and the Government of Japan [and mainly its Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF)] thus led to the initiative for the UNESCO application. As such, Japanese national cuisine recognized by the UNESCO became not only a marketing tool for *washoku* abroad and the country's international image but also seems to have been appropriated as a response to a perceived crisis in national culture and identity domestically.

As many of the chapters in this volume will show, the construction, reconstruction, assertion and promotion of a national cuisine in Japan often reach beyond the aims of tourism and trade and are easily applied as a soft power instrument in the hands of those fostering nationalism. National and cultural identity is reinforced and reiterated by emotionally binding the nation and its food culture on a historical and cultural, as well as political and commercial level. Long before the UNESCO list came into existence, the narrative of a 'pure', natural, authentic and timeless cuisine successfully shaped a Japanese national and cultural identity, which centred on the ideas of homogeneity and uniqueness. As a commodity, food thus plays a significant role in national 'imagined communities'.[5] Once national consciousness is imagined, it is constantly reinforced through a unified 'national culture' constructed by the state and dispersed via education and bureaucracy.[6] However, as many scholars such as Hobsbawm (in general) and Cwiertka (for Japan in particular) have already pointed out, there is no such thing as a 'national cuisine'. The concept of alleged culinary traditions is a construction in itself, rendering pre-existing food customs into a national symbol, a flag

[4] http://www.japanpolicyforum.jp/archives/culture/pt20140130140607.html.

[5] One of the groundbreaking ideas in the scholarship of nationalism was the concept of a nation as an 'imagined community', which proposed that any community larger than a group of people who all know each other is imagined. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

[6] See Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, 177.

of identity for the nation.[7] In her historical account of Japanese culinary tradition, Cwiertka showed how the idea of modern Japanese cuisine is constructed on a 'Japanese–Western–Chinese tripod' combining pre-existing Japanese local food customs with Chinese and Western influences.[8] Furthermore, the invented discourse surrounding a Japanese national cuisine of rice, fish and vegetable side dishes is presented as pure, healthy and unique, allegedly due to the growing process in Japanese soil. According to Ohnuki-Tierney, this notion of 'purity' has always been integral to the concept of the Japanese Self, even long before the rise of nationalism.[9] Yet, as will be shown in this volume, this concept is, in practice, easily politicized domestically as well as internationally in claims of qualitative superiority or when aimed against an external Other, which is defined as 'impure'.

Food, as a metaphor of the nation, thus provides a promising referential framework through which a sense of belonging is communicated. As food and eating are intertwined with 'embodied sensations'[10] that affect our feelings, food helps to bind the people emotionally to the idea of the nation. Consuming and preparing 'Japanese food' means performing and incorporating an emotional home, be it a hometown, a region or the nation. Containing melancholic notions of rural nostalgia or *furusato*, the concept further refers to and idealizes a vanishing past or an endangered local environment.[11] In fact, the UNESCO's acknowledgement of *washoku* even contributes to the somewhat soothing idea of an unadulterated and timeless past of the Japanese nation. Carrying symbols of the homeland, food is used to articulate identity and identification, and as such becomes a source of inclusion and exclusion, national pride or xenophobia. In Japan, food has not only become a powerful conceptual image of the nation but has also turned into an influential psychological tool for positioning the Self in relation to the Other, or 'Us' versus 'Them'.

[7] Hobsbawm, 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions', 1–14. Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, 175–180.

[8] Ibid, 21.

[9] Ohnuki-Tierney, *Rice as Self*, 131.

[10] Lupton, *Food, the Body and the Self*, 36.

[11] Ivy, *Discourses of the Vanishing*; Robertson, *Native and Newcomer*, 30–32.

Conformity or unity seems to be achieved by contrasting Japanese food with the food of the 'Other', which is often perceived as polluted and unhealthy. National claims of the qualitative difference, significance and even superiority of Japanese cuisine – as opposed to 'foreign' food – are used to 'create unity' through identification.

The positioning of the 'Self' versus the 'Other' is definitely a key element determining narrative structures in a nation's collective histories and identities.[12] As this volume will demonstrate, practices of 'othering', which are based on generating differences, are not limited to one exclusive image of the 'Self', neither to one exclusive 'Other'. Hence, national identity construction is characterized by a high level of intersubjectivity through social interaction with multiple 'Others', which results in various changing and even overlapping self-identities.[13] A specific 'Self' will manifest itself, depending on the context and the particular 'Other'. There are 'Others' that one wants to identify with positively, while there are also 'Others' from whom one would prefer to distance oneself. In this volume, we thus consider identity as embedded in social relations and subject to change. Of course, when this identity negotiation concerns two nation states or entire populations, the context can also prove to be power-laden or contentious. By the end of the nineteenth century, for example, the forced opening of the country by the West and the unequal treaties that followed made Japanese policy makers and intellectuals realize that, on the one hand, they had to make sure that the country was not being confused or identified with China or Asia, and on the other, that a political and economic reform of the country was needed, based on the Western model.[14] This implies that the definition of the 'Other' is highly dependent on the contextual definition of the 'Self', and vice versa. In Meiji era (1868–1912) Japan, the binary Self–Other became conveniently expressed through the development of the terms '*wa*' and '*yō*' to differentiate Japanese food from the food of the 'Other'. Even now, rice, the often considered

[12] See Duara, 'Historical narratives and trans-nationalism in East Asia', 105.

[13] See Suzuki, 'The importance of "Othering" in China's national identity', 24–25.

[14] Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, 17.

'timeless staple' of the Japanese diet and core of Japaneseness, is used to set Japan apart from the bread-eating Europeans, or from other Asians, by juxtaposing the 'superior' Japanese-grown rice (*naichimai*) against 'inferior' foreign rice (*gaimai*).[15]

The inscription of *washoku* on the UICH list is thus an example of a political process, and the message portrayed on the UNESCO website fits in very well with the interests of those ministries (the MAFF and the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare) that advocate a return to (what is perceived or presented as) Japanese culinary traditions and the consumption of domestic foods. Indeed, while healthy diets and traditional food culture provide reasons for the state's promotion of *washoku*, the fact that Japan imports roughly 60% of its food points to other motivations. Furthermore, the promotion of the narrative of healthy domestic food as part of a broader policy aim has faltered in the aftermath of a recent series of domestic food scandals and the repercussions of the nuclear disaster at Fukushima. On a policy level, Japan's food system displays contrasts and disparities. The globalization of the food supply chain and Japan's dependency on imports are in contrast with the nostalgic return to the local and a rediscovery of the culinary roots of the nation. These conflicting spaces and narratives influence Japan's domestic policy making and politics which are based on and, more importantly, tap into pre-existing emotions of the Self versus the Other.

The outlined dynamics behind the recognition of *washoku* as intangible cultural heritage serve as a constructive entry point to explore the issues in this volume, in which food and food cultures in Japan are seen as a collective system of meanings shaped, produced, perpetuated and reproduced through cultural practices as well as political mechanisms.[16] The UNESCO listing, first of all, established the importance of viewing food cultures as a social practice. It is precisely the daily

[15] Ohnuki-Tierney, *Rice as Self*, 103–104.

[16] See Abbots and Lavis, 'Introduction', 1–12. For further reading, e.g. Abbots and Lavis (eds.), *Why We Eat, How We Eat. Contemporary Encounters between Foods and Bodies*; Counihan and Van Esterik (eds.), *Food and Culture. A Reader*; Watson and Caldwell (eds.), *The Cultural Politics of Food and Eating. A Reader*; and Wierlacher, Neumann and Teuteberg (eds.), *Kulturthema Essen. Ansichten und Problemfelder*.

individual performance of the nation through socially established food habits that anchors culinary nationalism and cultural identity on the community level. Food proves to be a medium through which national identity is articulated, experienced and performed, yet at the same time national cuisine and identity are constructed, reproduced and thus imagined. Who then are the actors that operate to create and maintain this idea of 'our Japanese food'? The UNESCO example has already shown that behind the scenes of the application process, a myriad of private and public actors, and their interests, were involved. By looking at the processes and patterns behind the construction of a timeless Japanese cuisine (and its inherent contradictions), our approach – secondly – seeks to identify the diversity of agents involved in these conflicting narratives and practices and their respective aims, thus unfolding a complex field in which different actors (multi-nationals, politicians, NGOs, activists, farmers and ordinary consumers) negotiate, contest, politicize and emotionalize what will appear on peoples' plates. This approach enables us to show that Japanese foodways, beyond top-down gastronationalism and discussions on self-sufficiency and food security, have been and still are also fuelled by real consumer concerns. Thirdly, the *washoku* enlisting shows how food, as a daily necessity and a global commodity, as omnipresent in media and a major policy area, represents a useful focal point for interdisciplinary research. An interconnected dialogue relating to food as an object of study in disciplines such as sociology, anthropology, history, literature or international relations leads to a more comprehensive insight into the dynamics of culinary nationalism in Japan, and to a conceptual understanding of the underlying patterns and processes of conflicting food identities in general. The contributions to this volume, ranging from the fields of history, cultural studies, food studies as well as political science, show that national cuisine 'happens' at the intersection of a diverse set of academic approaches and research areas, which – when applied separately – undoubtedly leave certain aspects uncovered. By bringing different fields of research together in one volume, we hope to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics behind evolving food identities and culinary nationalism, in Japan and beyond.

## Organization of Chapters

This book is organized into five parts, which guide the reader through topics that have been identified by the contributors as most timely and significant in ongoing discussions as well as crucial to the understanding of recent developments and future challenges of cultural and national food identities in Japan and beyond. Resonating across the papers is the notion of food and eating as an important aspect in cultural, national and individual identity formation. Yet, what are the mechanisms that govern food choices and foodways, and who actually decides what we eat, under what circumstances and why? In trying to find an answer to these questions, the contributors to this book address and reconsider what the 'Japanese food' we discuss actually is – and what it is not – focusing on the process through which it becomes or has become 'Japanese' food, how it is maintained as such and what it should be 'defended' from, internally as well as externally.

The four articles in the first part deal with the cultural background to the creation of a national cuisine, placing embodied food practices[17] within the theoretical framework of invented traditions.[18] In the first article, Andreas Niehaus takes a historical approach, drawing on the theoretical framework of Foucault's governmentality. He argues that already during the Edo period (1600–1867) individual food choices were linked to Neo-Confucian moral and ethical concepts. These concepts were then placed within the discourse of self-cultivation and health preservation and thereby defined as individual responsibility and duty towards the ruler and natural order. Covering the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Mitsuda Tatsuya focuses on conflicting narratives of Western (*yōgashi*) and Japanese (*wagashi*) style snacks. He shows the extent to which this contentious juxtaposition affected consumer behaviour and privileged *yōgashi*, by defining them as healthy, useful and rational. Through an analysis of restaurant reviews in the culinary magazine *Kuidōraku* in the first decennium of the twentieth century,

[17] Lupton, *Food, the Body and the Self.*

[18] Hobsbawm and Ranger (eds.). *The Invention of Tradition*; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

Eric Rath reveals another public debate, which remains valid to this day. On the surface, the discourse in *Kuidōraku* seems to centre on the value and quality of restaurant cuisine versus home cooking. However, ultimately, the reviews point at a contestation that still lingers in Japan, involving the state-induced virtues of the housewife preparing *washoku* versus the gourmand's continuous pursuit of ever more refined versions of Japanese cuisine in high-end restaurants. These topics are also dealt with in the following article by Stephanie Assmann, as she addresses questions of national food education (*shokuiku*) in the global as well as domestic context. While domestically, the governmental food education campaigns stress the importance of a pure and fresh Japanese diet and homemade food for a healthy lifestyle; on the international level, the focus is on the recognition of Japanese *haute cuisine* in a globalized world. The conclusion, however, shows striking similarities with the first article by Niehaus: the realization that the responsibility for good and healthy eating is increasingly being redirected to the individual. Bridging national culinary identity on the local as well as global level, Assmann's article guides us to the following section, which explores Japanese food identities in a globalizing world.

Each dealing with a different commodity – coffee, bread, sake and wine – the four articles in Part II single out certain products that are all, consciously or unconsciously, consumed as 'national' products and became part of Japanese culinary culture. Nevertheless, it can be argued that three out of the four products are fairly new to Japan and historically fit within the opposition between Japan and the West. Shedding light on the process behind this transformation, Part II thus addresses current dynamics of reinvention, appropriation and localization of these mainly un-Japanese products in Japanese national cuisine within the context of a globalized world. Helena Grinshpun's study on coffee as a cultural and culinary experience gives important insights into the 'Japanization' of coffee culture and coffee drinking. At the same time, this contribution breaks open the binary West/Japan pattern within the context of globalization that formed the theoretical starting point of this part. Similar dynamics can be seen in the historical process through which bread, originally associated with Western food, became a symbol of the nation. Sheng shows how Japanese bakers express their ideas of national identity to a global audience in their bread creations for international baking competitions. Also beyond this, in local bakeries around the country, bakers draw on traditions from the 'Other' in constructing the 'Self' through bread, anchoring it by adding Japanese references in the name, such as *nihon no pan* (Japanese bread) or by adding *wa* (Japanese).

The following two contributions address Japanese wine and sake cultures, which although seemingly unrelated at first, both became representatives of Japanese culinary soft power abroad as part of the *washoku* boom. Wang Chuanfei first tackles the dynamics behind the growing popularity of Japanese wine in Japan and abroad, explaining how the sector overcame struggles related to local grape agriculture and globalized consumer demands. Aside from assigning a clear role for the government in this process of globalization, it becomes apparent that recent successes are the result of the cooperative involvement of big private companies as well as small-scale engaged entrepreneurs, researchers and consumers. Turning towards a drink that is considered to be truly Japanese, Dick Stegewerns' article focuses on the ongoing campaigns of re-traditionalizing sake, by creating a new semantic field around established constituents of what is considered to be traditionally Japanese. He scrutinizes the various ways through which sake is linked to Japanese culture and Japanese national identity, and gives insights into the recent trends of turning drinking habits into heritage. The articles in Parts I and II of this volume thus reflect how the process of constructing a national cuisine and culinary identity is more than a conscious state-run project, but also strongly depends on the support and initiative of a wide array of actors such as intellectuals, the media and its audience, industry, cooks, specialists and consumers, in an often uncoordinated act.

In a world where not only the supply chain but also the consumer and their preferences are increasingly globalized, questions of hybridization and exclusivity arise that are related to domestic and international food identities. The third part of our volume crosses borders and addresses 'Japanese food identities inside-out', expressed through the consumption of foreign food in Japan, or Japanese food abroad. In the first article, Tine Walravens addresses the perception of foreign food within the context of an increasing exclusivity of Japanese food identities. The author analyses the ubiquity of a negative image of Chinese food in Japan and traces the changes in food perceptions correlated with both the statistical increase in food safety issues involving imported Chinese food and the development of the 'China threat' thesis. She unfolds the political as well as social processes and dynamics that link Chinese food imports to questions of national food safety and a seemingly endangered national and cultural identity embodied in 'Japanese' cuisine. From questions related to the quality and safety of food influencing consumer behaviour, we turn to religious patterns regarding the consumption and production of food. In his chapter on halāl food and Islam in Japan, Ono Junichi addresses a recently much discussed and disputed topic. He discloses how, in a country where Muslim Japanese cannot take the halāl-ness of their food for granted, the conscious and individual act of choosing what to eat becomes a manifestation of identity awareness and self-identification for the Muslim minority in Japan.

Crossing borders, James Farrer turns his gaze towards China, providing a historical as well as anthropological context to Shanghai as a centre of high-end Japanese cuisine amidst increasing bilateral conflicts, a negative perception of Japan and consumer concerns over Japanese food since the Fukushima nuclear disaster. He shows how, against a changing domestic background, the Japanese culinary field in Shanghai has come to be domesticated and sheds light on the dynamic agents – owners, suppliers but also importantly consumers – behind this phenomenon. Turning from the space of the restaurant to the spatial reality of the Japanese department store Shirokiya in Hawai'i, Jutta Teuwsen's anthropological study then analyses the importance of Japanese food, taste and eating within the Japanese diasporic communities of Hawai'i, revealing different identities that Japanese groups in Hawai'i construct through the means of food.

At 39% (2015) Japan's food self-sufficiency rate is the lowest among developed nations, and questions related to the consequences of this high import dependency on food safety and national cuisine are ample. In the fourth part of this volume, three contributions will turn heads to the issue of food security and agricultural politics, on the local, national and international level. Felice Farina starts off with a historical account of Japan's import dependency. Taking a novel approach to this much-debated issue in contemporary Japanese food politics, he analyses Japan's dependence on imported food not as a result of a change in dietary habits, but places the self-sufficiency rate within the framework of international food politics and national security interests. Staying within this international context, Paul O'Shea turns towards the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a trade agreement between states on both sides of the Pacific. In line with the preceding chapter by Farina, O'Shea concludes that the regional geopolitical context and national security issues seem to be key factors motivating Japan's entry negotiations, rather than the benefits of free trade and agricultural liberalization upon which the public discourse focuses. An outline of the potential consequences of the trade deal for agriculture, rural areas and food security in Japan forces upon us the dilemma Japan will face in the future, as increasing agricultural liberalization threatens to undermine its domestic producers and the country's efforts towards food self-sufficiency. Concentrating on the local, Hanno Jentzsch applies this pressing question, by focusing on hamlet-based agricultural collectives (*shūraku einō*). Based on extensive fieldwork, he shows how local authorities as well as farmers and agricultural networks negotiate and discuss the interpretation and implementation of changing agricultural policies. Thus addressing the interaction between informal village institutions and agricultural policy reform, this chapter sheds light on shifting social structures and new forms of farming in rural Japan.

Moving away from food security and focusing on food safety in the wake of the 3/11 Triple Disaster, the articles in Part V deal with a crucial turning point in Japanese foodways. The Fukushima nuclear meltdown came to challenge food practices as well as food politics and threatens Japanese food identities that are based on the aforementioned assumption that Japanese food is pure and healthy. The argumentative cracks and discursive conflicts in this belief increasingly come to the surface and are discussed from different perspectives. Against the backdrop of the nuclear accident of 2011, Kimura Aya's contribution draws on gender, as well science and technology studies, examining the role of women's mobilizations in contemporary food activism in Japan. Through the case study of the safe school lunch movement, she highlights the important context of post-disaster nationalism and neoliberalism in shaping the meaning of Japanese food. At the end of her contribution, Kimura opens a new direction of discussion on politicized food, a thread taken up by Takeda Hiroko who discusses food politics in the aftermath of the Fukushima incident. Following up on Kimura's neoliberal arguments, Takeda analyses the narratives and politics behind the national campaign that promotes the consumption of food from the disaster-stricken area. Takeda identifies how, by minimalizing the risk related to domestic consumption, this promotion of national solidarity links food practices with notions of national identity, mediated through different conceptions of food risk in post-3/11 Japan.

As precisely the risk related to the consumption of domestic foods is up for discussion, the above-mentioned dilemma regarding imports and trade liberalization surfaces again. The Japanese discourse on agriculture inherently links food safety with food security. Whereas in Part IV, Paul O'Shea analysed the TPP from a food security perspective; in the next chapter, Cornelia Reiher focuses on the food safety issues in the negotiation process. Through an analysis of the anti-TPP discourse, Reiher discloses how over time, the discursive focus changed from concerns related to agriculture, farmers' livelihoods and food safety towards a discussion on tariffs and economic feasibility. Moreover, trapped in their Us versus Them dichotomy directed towards the US, the TPP opponents analysed overlook real problems regarding scientific value, GMOs (genetically modified organisms), the dominance of the private sector or transnational corporations.

The articles in the last two parts of this volume thus address issues of dependency and risk as expressed through food safety and food security concerns. Within the context of free trade negotiations and uncertainty regarding radioactive contamination of the food supply, Japanese food identities are challenged and contested. The government's promotion of Japan's culinary identity as manifested in fresh and pure *washoku* has failed to convince the public in the aftermath of the 2011 nuclear disaster. Its focus on food self-sufficiency seems irrelevant in light of the ongoing trade negotiations. These chapters aim to show how a changing domestic and international situation forces us to reconsider culinary identities that are built on notions of purity or self-sufficiency, and brings to the surface real consumer concerns. Japan's food conundrum is more than the discussion of *washoku* versus imports, or Us versus Them, couched in terms of gastronationalism or national cuisine, but shields pressing issues regarding the concrete safety of domestic as well as imported foods, food education, family life, antiglobalism, local farmers' survival, trust and motivations.

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**Tine Walravens** has been a MEXT scholarship guest researcher at Keio University and is currently a Ph.D. candidate and research assistant at the Institute of Japanese Studies at Ghent University. Her doctoral research is on

the politics of food and food safety in East Asia, in particular Japanese consumer trust and food risk. She has published on a variety of topics including food scandals and agri-food trade in Sino-Japanese relations, Japanese national identity and culinary nationalism, and the Japanese diaspora. Her most recent publication is a research article on the Japanese regulatory framework for food safety since the BSE scandal in Contemporary Japan, while she is working on a number of topics including alternative agri-food movements, bioterrorism and genetically modified foods.

**Andreas Niehaus** Studied Japanese language and culture, English and German literature as well as sports history in Cologne and at Keio University in Tokyo. He has been appointed professor for Japanese Studies at the University of Ghent in 2004. Currently he acts as the Head of the Department of Languages and Cultures and Head of the International Office at the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy. His research focuses on Japanese body culture, especially Japanese sports, martial arts, health and ideas of the body in early modern and modern Japan. At the Institute of Japanese Studies he mainly teaches Classical and Modern Japanese, Japanese Society, Japanese Literature as well as research seminars on MA level. He is also appointed adjunct professor for Japanese at the University of Eastern Finland and collaborative professor at Kanazawa University.

# Part 1

## Inventing Japanese Food Identities

# ‘They Should Be Called Gluttons and Be Despised’: Food, Body and Ideology in Kaibara Ekiken’s *Yōjōkun* (1713)

Andreas Niehaus

## Introduction

Eating habits and choice of food are generally considered to be an individual’s choice. Yet, they very much depend on geography, culture and time, are subject to cultural politics and are thus subjugated to and formed by power relations. This also holds true in cases where food consumption and eating habits are related to the discourse of the healthy body. The obsession with health, with dietary lifestyle and with controlling and regulating food intake as a means to attain health is not exclusively limited to modernity, but can also be found in pre-modern societies. In the early eighteenth and nineteenth century, Japan witnessed a boom in health manuals, books on life nourishment (*yōjō*) and house books, which brought basic medical and dietetic knowledge into the households of the

A. Niehaus (✉)
Department of Languages and Cultures, Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium
e-mail: andreas.niehaus@UGent.be

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general public.[1] Certainly one of the earliest and most influential treatises on health of that period is the *Yōjōkun* ('Regulations for Life Nourishment') written in 1713 by the Neo-Confucian scholar, physician and botanist Kaibara Ekiken (also Ekken 1630–1714). It combines elements of pharmacopoeia (materia medica, Chin. *bencao*, Jap. *honzō*), *kampō* (Chinese medicine) and Neo-Confucianism. The text must be situated in the Chinese tradition of *yangsheng* or cultivation of life and can best be characterized as an educative dietary health manual; dietary in the sense of Greek dietetics as being 'an intimate combination of health, medicine and philosophy of living'.[2] As a guide to a healthy lifestyle, this educational treatise accordingly touches on a variety of topics, including body exercise, sleep, sexual intercourse, general hygiene, bowel movement, urination, treating minor diseases at home (which should not be necessary when following the dietetics rules), choice of physician etc. Eating and drinking, however, can be isolated as the single most important element within life nourishment. The food regulations in the *Yōjōkun* focus on the therapeutic properties and the effects of food on health, and as such medicalize, de-sensualize and functionalize food as well as eating as a means of self-cultivation.

In this chapter, I firstly argue that the *Yōjōkun* can serve as an example to show how food choices and eating habits during the Edo period (1600–1867) can be linked to social, political and economic changes. Furthermore, I will analyse some of the mechanisms that bind eating, body and ideology as prescribed in the text. The *Yōjōkun* provides the knowledge and techniques for leading a long and healthy life, by generating and transmitting an understanding of the body. Yet, this knowledge, which gives the individual a 'self-disciplining' or 'self-governing'

[1] With respect to the popularity of nourishment of life (*yōjō*) literature during the Edo period, see Kinski, '*Admonitions Regarding Food Consumption*', 140 as well as Kinski, '*Materia Medica in Edo Period Japan*'. Kinski's well-researched and very thorough work on Takai Ranzan's *Shokuji kai* also highlights the parallels between both works. Kabayama finds more than 100 publications on life nourishment (*yōjō*) since the eighteenth century. Ibid., '*Yōjō ron no bunka*', 435–436 as well as the *Kokusho Sōmokuroku* (General Catalogue of National Books); for house books, see especially Rotermund, *Säcke der Weisheit*.

[2] Coveney, *Food, Morals, and Meaning*, 26.

capability, also has to be contextualized and addressed within Edo period Neo-Confucian philosophy. Although introduced to Japan as early as the Kamakura period (1185–1333), this rationalist ethical philosophy with its strong metaphysical foundation did not leave the monasteries until the Edo period, when it was utilized to strengthen Tokugawa rule and legitimize the stratification of society.[3] Making the 'right' food choices and nurturing the 'right' eating habits are, in Ekiken's work, established as moral categories and individual responsibilities, which on the one hand serve the individual's goals of living in health, but on the other hand serve the objectives of state and society. Incorporating food, it will be argued, is, therefore, a political act, by which the subject subjugates himself/herself within the given order of the Edo period.

## Understanding the Body

In order to understand Ekiken's food regulations, it is necessary to introduce the text as well as the foundations within the context of medical ideas of the body. The *Yōjōkun* is divided into eight thematic chapters, which are then categorized into rather redundant paragraphs. The first two chapters entitled 'Introduction' (*sōron*, 108 paragraphs) are dedicated to Neo-Confucian metaphysics and the medical basics of life nourishment (*yōjō*).[4] This thematic introduction is followed by two chapters on food and drinking (*inshoku*, 144 paragraphs), which also include paragraphs on sexual austereness (*shikiyoku wo tsutsushimu*). The remaining four chapters of the book are significantly shorter and are entitled: 'Five senses' (*Gokan*, 52 paragraphs), 'Avoiding illness' (*Byō wo*

[3] For Neo-Confucianism, its transmission to Japan and especially Ekiken's understanding of Neo-Confucian thought, see Tucker, *Moral and Spiritual Cultivation in Japanese Neo-Confucianism*.

[4] The division into chapters (Roman numeral) and paragraphs (Arabic numerals) is based on Ekiken, *Yōjōkun, zen gendaigo-yaku*. This edition includes the classical text as well as a translation into modern Japanese by Itō Tomonobu. Also consulted Ekiken: *Yōjōkun, Wazoku dōjikun* and the Nakamura Gakuen Daigaku *Kaibara Ekiken Ākaibu* online version. For translation, I rely on the annotated German translation by Niehaus and Braun, *Regeln zur Lebenspflege (Yōjōkun)*, as well as to the partial English translations of Watanabe '*Edo Precepts for Health*', Wilson, *Cultivating Ch'i*, and Kunihiro, *Yōjōkun. Japanese Secret of Good Health.*

*tsutsushimu*, 58 paragraphs), 'Using drugs' (*Kusuri wo you*, 60 paragraphs) and 'Correct ageing' (*Rō wo yashinau*, 54 paragraphs). The extensive elaboration upon food and eating in two chapters as well as its significance and recurrence in other chapters establishes nutrition and cultivation of life through food (*shokuyō*) as the single-most important component in keeping a healthy body. This approach reflects the contemporary saying that 'illness comes through the mouth' (*byōki wa kuchi kara*, Ekiken III, 2), and it is this relevance of food and eating for health that leads Ekiken also to suggest the introduction of a (at least for Japan) new profession: the food doctor (*shokui*); a dietician that 'by food could cure hundreds of diseases' (Ekiken IV, 4).

The first two chapters of the *Yōjōkun* provide the reader with an introduction into the basic ideas of body and causes of illness and establish the logic behind dietetic rules and techniques elaborated upon in later chapters. Ekiken authorizes his dietetics by references to a well-established dietetic discourse within the tradition of *kampō* medicine.[5] The explanations of body and body processes also allow the reader to diagnose symptoms and self-medicate to a certain degree.[6] However, medical treatment is generally regarded as a last resort: 'Only

[5] Chinese medical texts mentioned by Ekiken include, e.g. *Bencao, Nanjing, Jinkui yaolüe, Jiayi ching, Bingyuan houlun, Qianjin fang Waitai biyao, Weisheng baojian, Sanyin fang,* [*Taiping*] *huimin heji-ju fang Bencao xuli, Dan-xi xinfa, Yijing xiaoxue, Yuji weiyi, Yishu daquan, Xiuzhen fang, Yifang xuanyao, Yian, Yilin jiyao, Yixue gangmu, Yixue zhengchuan, Yixue rumen, Mingyi leian, Mingyi fangkao, Shushuzhong, Yixue yuanli, Zhenzhiu quying, Yizong bidu, Yisheng weilun, Yaoxing jie Neijing zhiyao, Yitung zhengmai*. His critical discussion of Chinese texts and especially of Gong Ting-xian and Dan-xi (Zhu zhen-heng) characterizes him as a physician and intellectual with a detailed knowledge of the Chinese medical tradition and also gives the *Yōjōkun* an authoritative character. In 1709, Ekiken presented the *Yamato honzō*, a translation of Li Shizhen's popular and influential *Bencao gangmu*. The *Bencao gangmu* came to Japan in 1607 via the port of Nagasaki. The city housed a large Chinese community and was still the centre for the import of Chinese books and other products during Ekiken's lifetime and he regularly visited Nagasaki to purchase books or plants. For the Chinese tradition of medicine, life nourishment and dietetics, see esp. Unschuld, *Medicine in China. A History of Ideas* and ibid., *Medicine in China: A History of Pharmaceutics*.

[6] The *Yōjōkun* is to some extent specialized, and although reading aids are generally provided, it requires prior knowledge of Chinese medical terms and even training, to add meaning to certain passages and to actually apply them in daily practice; this holds true especially for the chapter on drugs (VII) and also – albeit to a lesser degree – chapter VI on how to prevent illness. These two chapters seem to rather address a specialist audience within the profession of physicians as they built on specialized medical knowledge and also directly address the reader, who can be identified as a

in the case of an illness should drugs be used and should the illness be attacked by acupuncture and moxibustion' (I, 10 also 1, 15 and 16).

The *Yōjōkun* represents a holistic approach to the body. The microcosm of the human body corresponds to the macrocosm of heaven and earth (*tenchi*). Microcosm and macrocosm are both permeated by the universal force of 'vital energy' (chin. *qi*, jap. *ki*), which is 'essential to medical thought in two respects. This energy animates a human being and flows through the body. On the other hand, the body exerts influence from the outside, in the form of climatic aggregates as well as substances consumed for nourishment'.[7] Humans are born with 'congenital energy' or 'primordial energy': *genki* (元気), which in Modern Japanese just means 'healthy':

> The *genki* of people is a vital energy that brings forth all things in the universe. It is the foundation of the human body. No human is born without this vital energy. [...] *Genki* is bestowed on the human by heaven and by the parents and is thus a congenital energy. After birth, we receive support from things outside (*gaibutsu*) in form of clothing, food, and shelter. Those nurture the congenital energy and thus preserve life. Food, clothing, and shelter are also bestowed upon us by heaven. (Ekiken I, 8)

Next to this primordial energy, there are acquired manifestations of energy including orthopathic energy (正気, *seiki*), which supports physiological processes and pathogenic energy (邪気, *jaki*), which disrupts processes within the body. Other manifestations have different functions within the body, including essence energy (精気, *seiki*), which is linked to reproduction or spirit energy (神気, *shinki*), which supports mental powers, or refer to manifestations of energy that are incorporated from

physician (e.g. 'If one comes to a sick person who had been treated by another physician, one should not criticize that physician, even if his treatment was wrong.' VI, 55). In these chapters, Ekiken elaborates on the training of a physician, on the canon of medical texts, on the main elements of the medical profession: pathology (*byōron*), pulse diagnostics (*myakuhō*) and therapy (*yakuhō*), and sums up a considerable number of drugs as well as medical plants, giving also detailed instructions for mixing certain drugs, be it pills, decoction or powder, even to enable self-medication.

[7] Kinski, 'Admonitions Regarding Food Consumption', 135.

the outside like food energy (食気, *shokki, shokuki* or *shokuke*). Life nourishment accordingly addresses the proper functioning of different forms of vital energy:

> There are seven aspects in life nourishment that should be followed: First, one should nurture one's inner energy (内気, *uchiki*) by speaking little. Second, one should nurture one's essence energy (精気, *seiki*)[8] by suppressing sexual desires. Third, one should nurture blood energy (血気, *kekki*) by frugality concerning tasty food. Fourth, one should nurture the energy of the five viscera (臓気, *zōki*) by swallowing one's saliva. Fifth, one should nurture the liver energy (刊気, *kanki*) by suppressing anger. Sixth, one should nurture one's stomach energy (胃気, *iki*)[9] by eating and drinking adequately. Seventh, one should nurture the heart energy (心気, *shinki*) by not brooding too much. (Ekiken II, 55)

Vital energy and essence, together with blood and body fluids, are considered to be the basic life substances and guarantee proper functioning of the inner organs (*zōfu*), which are the five viscera (*gozō*): heart, liver, spleen, lung and kidneys, and the six organs (*roppu, rikifu*): gallbladder, stomach, small and large intestines, urinary bladder and the triple burner (*sanshō*); where the five viscera are considered to be yin and the six organs are considered yang. Both systems are connected by vessels that either carry vital energy or blood.[10] Ekiken follows Li Kao in stressing the importance of spleen and stomach (*hii*) within dietetics as they digest and transform nourishment into the essential fluids (*seieki*) and distribute those to the other inner organs:

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[8] With respect to 'essence', Wiseman and Feng state: 'That which is responsible for growth, development, and reproduction, and determines the strength of the constitution, and is manifest physically in the male in the form of semen. Essence is composed of earlier heaven essence (congenital essence), which is inherited from the parents and constantly supplemented by later heaven essence (acquired essence) produced from food by the stomach and spleen. [. . .] Essence is often referred to as essential *qi*, and because it is stored in the kidney, it is also called kidney essential *qi*.' Wiseman and Feng, *A Practical Dictionary of Chinese Medicine*, 178–179.

[9] Stomach energy is accordingly of major interest for Ekiken and considered to be a synonym for *genki* (II, 23).

[10] Hsia, *The Essentials of Medicine in Ancient China and Japan* Vol. 1, 16–19.

> After being born, spleen and stomach are the fundament of the five viscera. They digest and transform food and drink first. The generated essential fluids (*seieki*) are distributed to the other organs. Nurturing spleen and stomach can be compared to the growth of plants that take vital energy from the soil. For the way of the cultivation of life, therefore, it is most important to nurture spleen and stomach. Nurturing spleen and stomach is most important in nourishing the human body. As the sages say: 'Eating and drinking in moderation nourishes the body.' (III, 1)

By using the terms like *shukun* (主君, 'lord'), *tenkun* (天君, 'heavenly ruler') or *tsukasadoru* ('to control', 'to govern') to describe processes within the body, the text places organs in a semantic field of governance and also seems to establish a hierarchy within the body. Yet, in Chinese medicine this hierarchy is not absolute, but dynamic, depending on processes within the body.[11] This approach also generally holds true for Ekiken, who refers to kidneys, spleen and stomach as governing certain processes (e.g. III, 1; IV, 61; VII, 58). However, special attention is given to the heart,[12] which is considered to be the ruler (*shukun*) of the body, controlling the five senses (*gokan*, V, 1) and already the first book stresses the role of the heart:

> The heart is the ruler of the body. It should be calm and quiet. The body is the servant of the heart. The body should move and work. When the heart is calm and quiet, the heart as heavenly ruler (*tenkun*) will be pleased and be without suffering. When the body moves and works food and drink will not stagnate, blood and energy circulate and there will be no illness. (I, 18)

Vital energy is imagined as a substance that flows and circulates within the body and the stagnation of energy flow is seen as the main cause of

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[11] See Kuriyama, *The Expressiveness of the Body*, 161.

[12] The heart (心jap. *shin*) partially corresponds to Western ideas of the heart as a blood pumping organ, but it is also linked to spirit and mind: 'The heart's principal functions are summed up in the phrases the "heart governs the blood and vessels" and the "heart stores the spirit", i.e. the heart is responsible for moving the blood around the body and is the seat of consciousness and mental vitality.' Wiseman and Feng, *A Practical Dictionary of Chinese Medicine*, 260.

disease. When vital energy stagnates in the upper part of the body, ailments such as headache and dizziness can occur. Stagnation in the centre of the body could cause stomach ache as well as repletion and blockage (*himan*) in the abdomen. When vital energy is blocked in the lower parts of the body, this will result in pain of the loins, beriberi (*kakke*), abdominal pain (*rinsen*) and anal fistula (*jirō*) (see I, 33). To give one example: saliva (*shin'eki*) is transported from the intestines to the mouth and transformed into blood. However, it turns into sputum (*tan*) when it stagnates and in turn causes stagnation of vital energy. Sputum in contrast to saliva should thus be spat out. Also poor nutrition and too much alcohol increase sputum and cause illness (Ekiken II, 27 and II, 28). An obstruction in the flow of vital energy and body fluids would eventually result in the depletion of the congenital energy. Ekiken's dietetics accordingly aim at preserving congenital energy whilst enabling the different manifestations of energy and body fluids to flow unobstructed within the body.

In order to further understand the mechanism of food choice and how eating influences the body, it is also important to understand the significance of the 'complementary and opposing principles' of *yin* (Jap. *in*) and *yang* (Jap. *yō*),[13] as an imbalance of these forces is the cause of vital energy stagnation. The main focus of diagnosis should, therefore, be on the balance of *yin*/*yang* within the body.

> The forces of *yin* and *yang* permeate the cosmos and ceaselessly flow, without stagnation. Thereby, the four seasons are regular and all things are born. The way of the flow would be blocked, should *yin* and *yang* be imbalanced and stagnate. Then winter would be warm and summer cold, changes like strong storms and heavy rainfall would occur and catastrophes would happen. The same holds true for the human body. When vital energy and blood flow without stagnation, one will be strong and will not fall ill. However, when vital energy and blood don't flow, one will become sick. (I, 33)

[13] See Wiseman and Feng, *A Practical Dictionary of Chinese Medicine*, 705–708.

Ekiken actually further specifies the cause of illness as a lack of yang energy: 'The human body always lacks yang, which therefore is precious, and always has an abundance of yin, which therefore is of no value'[14] (II, 68). Imbalance in turn can be caused by 'inner desires' (*naiyoku*) and by 'outer evils' (*gaija*), which are wind, cold, heat and dampness.[15] As disease and death caused by outer evils are considered to be the result of the mandate of heaven (*tenmei*), Ekiken's only advice against these outer evils is to fear and protect oneself against them. Life cultivation consequently concentrates on controlling and on disciplining one's inner desires and asks for moderation with respect to eating and drinking, sleep, sexual activities, loquacity, and the seven emotions (*shichijō*).[16]

> Vital energy must permeate the entire body and should not accumulate in the chest. Anger, grief, sorrows and pondering are a result of vital energy accumulating in the chest and of a stagnation of the flow. Many diseases originate from an excess of emotion and blockage of vital energy. (I, 39)

Or the following paragraph:

> Drinking too much, or at the wrong time, or eating cold food or food of bad quality will lead to diarrhea and vomiting (*sessha*). Thereby stomach energy will decrease. If this happens over and over again, one's congenital energy will be affected and one's lifespan will be shortened. One should be careful. (II, 48)

[14] This has also been argued by Li Gao, Xue Ji and Zhang Zhen-bin. Zhu Zhen-heng's and Dai Si-kong's theory, in which a lack of *yin* is identified as a source of disease, is strongly rejected by Ekiken.

[15] Ekiken also uses the term 'evil energy' or 'heteropathic energy' (*jaki*), which can refer to forces that cause disease from within or without. Ekiken refers to protecting oneself against the heteropathic energy but only twice specifies the *jaki* as being 'wind, cold heat, and dampness' (Ibid. VI, 9, VII, 57).

[16] The seven emotions are joy, anger, sorrow, brooding, grief, anxiety and astonishment, pleasure, love, hate and lust. See Ekiken I, 4 and I, 3.

Ekiken bases his arguments on a binary reward/punishment logic – not adhering to food admonitions would result in severe ailments and early death:

> The disease 'centre wind' (*chūbu* / *chūfu*) is not caused by outer winds, but by inner winds. It affects pale, obese people beyond 40, whose energy is decreasing. The disease is triggered by the condition of the seven emotions and damage through eating and drinking. By constantly drinking, people destroy their stomach and intestines, their *genki* decreases and heat, which produces wind, arises inside of the body. Hands and feet become shaky or numb and paralysis is evoked. The mouth deforms and one is not able to speak. [ . . . ] People that are obese and drink must therefore take care every day. (VI, 11)

Fear thus makes the dietary rules palatable and becomes a significant motivation for the individual to follow the dietary rules. The *Yōjōkun* primarily aims at providing the knowledge and techniques to prevent disease, but it also gives the reader the means to recognize – (self) diagnose – certain symptoms, identify potential causes and techniques to cure oneself.

## Staying Healthy: Food Regulations and Eating Practices

In the dietetics of life cultivation, food and medicine are closely interrelated, as food is seen as medicine and eating accordingly as medical practice. Food consumption, in other words, can cure or cause disease. Just to give some examples: Roasted *mochi* and roasted meat can cause adenopharyngitis (*kōhi*), when not dipped into water after roasting, and the consumption of eggplant can lead to malaria and dysentery (*gyakuri*) as well as heat (febrile) disease (*shōkan*) if not prepared correctly (e.g. IV, 10 and IV, 11). Upon which foundation, then, should the adherent to life cultivation and nourishment base his/her food choices?

Given that Ekiken established the control of inner desires as the main technique for the cultivation of life, this approach is also applied to eating. He repeatedly advises adherents to strictly control the amount of food consumed at every meal: only two or three mouthfuls of rice and one or two bowls of side dishes (Ekiken III, 45). In another passage, Ekiken admonishes the reader to eat no more than seven-eighths of the amount one considers adequate (Ekiken III, 16) or to even reduce it to half of the amount one could eat or drink (Ekiken I, 9). In yet another passage, we read:

> In the morning and in the evening one side dish should be sufficient. Additionally, one can choose to add *hishio*[[17]], fermented meat (*shishi-bishio*), or pickles (*tsukemono*). Also wealthy people should only prepare one soup per meal. If you entertain guests, you may prepare two soups: if the first one does not meet the taste of the guests, you can still serve the other one. But generally that is not necessary. The Tang period poet Kao Shi-liang said, that he and his siblings never prepared soups or meat but were content with one dish. It is said that he only ate *hokuhō* [*daikon* and *yūgao* (bottle gourd)]. Even the wealthy and respected Fan Zongxuan didn't eat meat every day. (Ekiken IV, 2)

The most important rule in food regulations is thus frugality. The link between the ideal of frugality, life nourishment and Neo-Confucian ideology within the context of the Edo period will be touched upon later, but on the level of medicine, overeating is considered to cause imbalance, stagnation and depletion (e.g. III, I, 2). One, therefore, has to control one's desire to overeat and drink too much.

Making the 'right' food choices is, therefore, a rather complicated process, which depends on a broad variety of factors and requires knowledge about medicine, metaphysics, philosophy, and one's body. First of all, it is important to know whether the food to be prepared and consumed is *yin* or *yang* and whether it is ascribed 'cold' or 'warm'

[17] *Hishio* is considered to be an early form of soy-sauce and used for seasoning. It is made from either a meat, wheat or soya bean base to which salt is added.

properties.[18] As the body lacks *yang*, food with *yang* properties is in general healthier than *yin* food:

> All foodstuffs that have *yin* energy are poisonous and should therefore not be eaten. In the *Xiang Dang* chapter of the Lunyu it is said that the sages didn't eat food that had lost its *yang*-energy and had adopted *yin*-energy. (IV, 7)

Food must be eaten fresh, as the *yang* energy in fresh food is strong, whereas the *yin* energy increases the older food gets (Ekiken IV, 6). But even food that has too much *yin* energy, and is thus categorized as being unhealthy, can be turned into a healthy meal by preparing it in a certain way. One example would be *nashi*-pear, which as fruit is considered to be of a cold (*yin*) character: '*Nashi* are very cold fruits. But their cold properties are reduced when steamed or cooked. However, people with a weak stomach should not eat them at all' (IV, 15). Ekiken also comments on tofu, which he considers to be poisonous and to block the flow of energy. However, it can be consumed without harm when cooked and eaten warm (IV, 17). Cooking, steaming, drying and roasting are mentioned most frequently as methods to change the basic *yin* or *yang* properties of food, but spices and even the way food is cut is said to also change the food's character: 'People that have a weak stomach may eat radish, carrots, taro when cut into thin slices and well cooked. Pieces that are cut too thick and not cooked sufficiently will damage spleen and stomach' (Ekiken IV, 12 also IV 14, 20, 26; for adding spices, see e.g. III, 29).[19] Spleen and stomach digest and transform food into 'essential fluids', distribute nutrients and 'food energy' (*shokki*/*shokuki* also *shokuke*) to the body, which – as acquired essence – also nurtures the *genki*.

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[18] These properties can also be linked to a disease called *shōkan* (*cold damage*). Based on the Chinese classic *Bencao*, Ekiken considers, e.g. eggplants as harmful for the body as they can cause cold damage. 'Cold' as a cause of disease is a recurrent topic in the *Yōjōkun*. Given that Ekiken also quotes the *Shang Han Lun*, he will have been acquainted with cold damage also from this source. For more on cold damage, see Mitchell, Feng and Wiseman, *Shang Han Lun. On Cold Damage*.

[19] For different schools of cutting, e.g. ceremonies and for presentation, see Rath, *Food and Fantasy*, 38–51. Nishiyama, *Edo Culture*, 151–155.

Spleen and stomach should, therefore, be given the 'right' foodstuffs to 'fuel' the body:

> One should know what kind of food spleen and stomach like and what kind of food they don't, and eat accordingly. But what do spleen and stomach like? They like food that is warm, soft, ripe, not sticky, light in taste, cooked, pure, fresh, aromatic and balanced, as well as dishes that do not tend towards one of the five tastes. (III, 46)

Choice of food is also connected to the seasons. Yet, the relation between human and environment in *kampō* (Chinese) medicine is never static, but characterized by change. Most influential in this context is the cyclical change of the seasons. Each season has its specific *yin* or *yang* character, which will in turn effect the *yin* and *yang* balance of the body, and food intake must be adapted accordingly.[20] Winter is considered to be *yin* and summer *yang*, and both are then also respectively characterized by the qualities 'cold' and 'warm'. In general, one should prefer food with cold properties in summer and with warm properties in winter, to counter the dominance of either *yin* or *yang*: melon therefore should not be eaten on cold and windy days, but is recommended during the extreme heat of the summer (IV, 9). However, as cold is connected to *yin*, one always has to be cautious and cold drinks are in general bad for spleen and stomach (III, 4).[21] The fourth month is considered to be the month of 'pure *yang*' (*jun-on*), and during that month one should refrain not only from sexual intercourse but also from eating food that has a warm (*yang*) character like pheasant and crane (VI, 14), as adding *yang* to the body would lead to imbalance. When the *yang*

[20] Food that is only *yin* will do harm to one's body (IV, 7), as it will lead to stagnation of the *ki* flow. However, *yin* and *yang* properties are not fixed, but in motion. The older the food gets, the more it loses its 'vital energy' (*seiki* 生気), and the more it loses its *yang* character, which will result in an increase of damaging *yin* (e.g. IV, 7).

[21] However, in another paragraph Ekiken advises not to consume cold and raw food, as well as cold noodles and cold water during the summer months, as the *yin energy* (*inki*) during these months retreats to the inner organs, where this 'hidden *yin*' (*fukuin*) can cause constipation (Ekiken VI, 13).

element is too strong, 'heat' symptoms will occur, whereas a person with an abundance of *yin* would show signs of 'cold'.[22]

Ekiken's dietary food regime further implements a number of regulations that deal with the proper mixture of ingredients as well as instructions concerning foodstuffs that, due to their properties, should or should not be consumed together (*kuiawase*) in one meal.[23] His rather encyclopaedic categorization of incompatible foodstuffs certainly follows earlier Chinese and Japanese texts on dietetics.[24] In paragraph 41 of chapter IV, Ekiken provides a long list of such food combinations:

> Pork does not go well with ginger, soba, coriander, parched beans (*iri-mame*), plum, beef, deer, snapping turtle, crane, and quail. [ . . . ] Hare should not be eaten together with ginger, the paring of lemon (*narabana*), mustard, chicken, deer or otter. [ . . . ] Duck may not be eaten with walnut and Jew's ear. [ . . . ] Meat of the sparrow does not go well with apricot and mackerel. [ . . . ] When one eats mung bean together with the seeds of the nutmeg-yew, one will die. (IV, 41)

Although meat was certainly eaten during the Edo period despite laws that banned meat consumption, it would not have been on the menu in the cities on a regular basis.[25] Yet, Ekiken rather frequently comments on meat consumption in his treatise. How can that be explained? First of all, meat consumption in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century was considered to be a rather luxurious treat. Extensive meat eating would therefore contradict the Confucian ideal of frugality. Accordingly, Ekiken is critical of eating too much meat and argues

[22] In Chinese medicine 'cold and heat' (*kannetsu*) are major categories to describe a patient's health condition and are already mentioned in the *Nanjing*. See Wiseman, *A Practical Dictionary of Chinese Medicine*, 77. For a description of cold and heat symptoms, see Eberhard, *Leitfaden Kampo-Medizin*, 96–99.

[23] For *kuiawase* during the Edo period, see Kinski, '*Admonitions Regarding Food Consumption*', 143–144.

[24] An early Japanese source that categorizes foodstuffs in a systematized way is, e.g., Hitomi Hitsudai's *Honchō shokkan* (*Mirror of Foods in this Dynasty*) from 1695.

[25] On meat eating, see especially Ishige, *The History and Culture of Japanese Food*, 52–58, 146–153; Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, 24–34 and Shimizu, '*Meat-Eating in the Kōjimachi District of Edo*', 92–107.

that the frugal lifestyle of the mountainous regions, where – reportedly – hardly any meat is consumed (whether that is true is another question), should likewise become the guiding principle for people living in coastal areas and big cities (III, 20). Ekiken lived in Fukuoka, and the 'bowls' on Kyūshū certainly contained meat more regularly than those on Honshū. One reason was the influence of European meat-eating culture through Christianity in the South, while contemporary Japanese also admired the physical strength of Europeans, which was ascribed to meat consumption.[26] Ekiken also regularly travelled to Nagasaki to buy Chinese books on Confucianism and medicine, plants and medicine. During his trips, he would have met with the Chinese residents and merchants in Nagasaki, whose diet included considerably more meat. But most importantly, Ekiken's frequent reference to meat also has to be linked to the medical characteristics assigned to meat in *kampō* medicine and Chinese medical treatises, where meat eating is referred to as *kusurigui* ('medicinal eating'). Meat – in modest quantities – is thus considered to have a positive influence on the human body and to support the body's recovery when weakened: 'It is not necessary to abstain from eating meat; a little bit of meat will support your appetite and nurtures one's vital energy' (III, 21).

As shown, Ekiken's advice on food intake is far from being generic. Besides depending on the combination of different foodstuffs according to their *yin/yang* properties and the influence of seasons, he also includes rather individual criteria such as body, geographic origin, age, gender and health condition to determine a person's 'right' diet.[27] As such, Ekiken advises old and weak people, for example, to avoid raw, cold, sticky, and greasy food, cold and dry *mochi*, whale, sardine, tuna, barracuda and fresh fruits (Ekiken IV, 38). People, then, with a weak spleen or stomach should only eat cooked vegetables and also fried fish is recommended for people with a weak spleen.

[26] Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, 27.

[27] As Ekiken considers Koreans and Chinese to have stronger stomachs and spleens, their diet can include more rice and meat than that of the Japanese (IV, 32 and VII, 39).

Special attention is dedicated to the character of rice as a staple food.[28] Rice is considered to be very nutritious, but again overeating was thought to block the circulation of energy and negatively affect spleen and stomach. Rice can lead to constipation and should therefore be prepared according to a person's health condition:

> Steamed rice (*takiboshi*) is good for healthy people. Steaming rice twice (*futabi ii*) is good for people whose vital energy is blocked or stagnates. Steaming rice in a lot of water (*yudori ii*) is good for people with weak stomachs and spleens. When rice is cooked until it becomes sticky like glue or paste, it will obstruct one's vital energy. Hard-cooked rice is difficult to digest. New rice has a strong character and is not good for people in a weak condition. In particular, the variety of rice that ripens early agitates one's vital energy and is not good for sick people. Late-ripening rice has a light character and is fine. (Ekiken III, 5)

In this context, Ekiken also directs his concern towards the correctly balanced intake of the five tastes (*gomi*), which are sour, sweet, salty, bitter and hot. Within *kampō* medicine the five tastes correspond to the five phases (*gogyō*), which on the level of the interior body are, in turn, linked to the abovementioned five organs: liver (wood), spleen (earth), kidneys (water), heart (fire), and lung (metal). Overeating one of the flavours would thus adversely affect the proper function of the respective organ.

> Partiality in the five tastes (*gomi*) means that one eats too much of a certain flavour. If one eats too many sweet things, one's belly will bulge painfully. If one eats too many hot, sharp tasting things, one's vitality will rise too much and will be reduced, and one will suffer from eczema and bad eyesight. If one eats too many salty things, blood and throat will dry up. Drinking too much water will lead to dampness, which will affect

[28] While rice was readily available in the cities, rice-growing peasants rather based their diet on millet or sweet potatoes as most of their rice harvest was taken as tax. As a money economy developed in the cities, rice that had not been taxed could also be cashed. See Ishige, *The History and Culture of Japanese Food*, 106–107.

> spleen and stomach. Consuming too many sour things will result in the stagnation of vital energy. (III, 9; see also II, 50)

The time when a meal is consumed is significant in life cultivation, as the wrong time could lead to the stagnation of vital energy followed by diarrhoea and vomiting, which in turn will shorten one's lifespan (III, 48). As was common by the end of the seventeenth century, Ekiken considers three meals per day as the ideal regimen for all classes; with breakfast and dinner as the main meals. Lunch is of no concern to Ekiken, indicating that he considered midday meals to be no more than a snack, which was a common notion around 1700. However, the correct time of eating a meal very much depended on whether the food eaten before had already been digested. A meal could thus be taken later or could even be skipped entirely if one were still digesting or bloated. Breakfast is regarded as the most important and substantial meal of the day, while the evening meal should be light with only a few side dishes, taken right after sunset (III, 18, 19, 27, 71). Evening meals would therefore be taken later in the summer than in the winter. The meal itself should not be greasy or have a strong taste, with the exception of fish or certain birds for dinner. Additionally, Japanese mountain yam (*yamaimo*), ginseng (*ninjin*), Chinese cabbage (*hakusai*), taro (*imo*), and three-leaf arrowhead (*kuwai*) should be avoided or eaten with care in the evening (III, 19). During the night one should not eat, with the exception of cold winter nights when eating and drinking would protect the body against the cold. The length of the day also has an impact on the in-between meals (*tenjin*). In general, snacks should be reduced to a minimum, but during the winter, one should entirely refrain from in-between meals, as the days are shorter (III, 19, 27, 70).[29]

[29] Ekiken also comments on a certain state of mind in which one should eat, which not only includes the recommendation to only eat when calm, but to concentrate on the five thoughts (*goshi*): 1. Thinking about the origin of the food, 2. Thinking about the hardships of the farmers, 3. Thinking about one's luck to have ample delicious food despite one's imperfection, 4. Thinking about the fact that one has not to starve, 5. Thinking about the past, when the five grains (*gokoku*) were not yet cultivated (III, 18).

Although Ekiken comments on how to prepare certain dishes, how to cook rice, how to slice meat and fish and how to correctly wash vegetables, he is not concerned with developing a delicious meal, but a dish that will benefit the eater's health. Taste – and the act of consuming – in the sense of enjoying a delicious meal is thus of no concern for Ekiken, and tasty food even constitutes a problem, because it is much harder to resist and to exercise self-control.

So far, I have focused on how medical ideas and the materiality of the body regulate and steer food choice and eating habits in the *Yōjōkun*. Although drinking and eating seem to be 'natural', they are in fact culturally encoded techniques – as are ideas of the body – that construct the body as a social fact.[30] In the following passage, I will focus on life nourishment and dietetics as 'techniques of the body'[31] in the context of power. The abovementioned elements of food choice must thus be interpreted not only within the framework of *kampō* medicine and ideas on the materiality of the body, but have to be seen as techniques of regulating and disciplining[32] and therefore be analysed within the political context of the time and the ethics of Neo-Confucianism.

## Performing the Ethical Body

The Edo period certainly marks an era in which the state increasingly tried to control public and cultural life as well as to manage its population. Neo-Confucianism became the dominating ideology by which these goals could be achieved. In order to describe this new political and social development in Japan, it seems helpful to apply Foucault's concept of governmentality.[33] What makes Foucault's understanding of

30 Sarasin, *Reizbare Maschinen*, 15.

31 Mauss, 'Les techniques du corps', 3–4.

32 Sarasin, *Reizbare Maschinen*, 20–23.

33 Foucault understands the term government in a rather broad way as explained in the afterword of Dreyfus' and Rabinow's volume *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*: 'This word [government] must be allowed the very broad meaning it had in the sixteenth century. "Government" did not refer only to political structures or to the management of states; rather, it designated the way in which the *conduct* of individuals or of groups might be directed – the

governmentality interesting in the given context is that it is not limited to the state, which exercises its power to control its subjects, but that the state expands the concept of power to social control and the control of oneself. The concept of governmentality does not, therefore, focus on laws, but on the techniques of power and control, and on how 'actions' and 'conduct' are controlled by embodiment, or as Lemke states: 'In addition to the management by the state or the administration, "government" also signified problems of self-control, guidance for the family and for children, management of the household, directing the soul, etc. For this reason, Foucault defines government as conduct, or, more precisely, as "the conduct of conduct" and thus as a term which ranges from "governing the self" to "governing others".'[34]

The early Edo period is marked by the consolidation of Tokugawa power. It was only during the late seventeenth and eighteenth century that Neo-Confucian thought came to dominate political discourse and influence the Japanese way of life and thinking. The *Yōjōkun* can thereby also serve as an example of the 'naturalization' process of (Chinese) Neo-Confucian thought in Japan and thereby serve to analyse the mechanisms by which state ideology was spread and implemented in the daily lives and cultural practices of the urban population.[35] Ekiken himself served not in the centre of power, but in the periphery as a domain scholar to three generations of Kuroda lords in Fukuoka on Kyushu. Here, he was able to 'meet what he felt was his Confucian responsibility to bring ethic-religious values into the sphere of political and social decision making'.[36] Towards the end of his life, Ekiken became increasingly concerned with education and his ethical texts include titles such as *Kunshikun* (*Precepts for Nobles*, 1703), *Wazoku dōjikun* (*Precepts on Japanese Customs for Children*, 1710), *Yamato-zokkun* (*Precepts for Daily Life in Japan*, 1708), *Gojōkun* (*Precepts of the Five Cardinal*

government of children, of souls, of communities, of the sick [ . . . ] *To govern, in this sense, is to control the possible field of action of others*.' Ibid., 221.

[34] Lemke, '*Foucault, Governmentality and Critic*', 2.

[35] Concerning Neo-Confucianism and Ekiken, see esp. Tucker, *Moral and Spiritual Cultivation in Japanese Neo-Confucianism*.

[36] Tucker, *Moral and Spiritual Cultivation in Japanese Neo-Confucianism*, 50.

*Confucian Virtues*, 1711), *Kadōkun* (*Precepts on the Way of the Family*, 1711). In these texts, Ekiken broke down complex metaphysical and spiritual speculations into pragmatic and functional guidelines that could give individuals the knowledge to exercise self-control (self-governing) and the means to implement Neo-Confucian ethics in their daily lives. In contrast to Ekiken's earlier dietary health treatise, the *Isei shūyō* (*Compilation of Sayings on Health Care*, 1682), which is penned in annotated Chinese writing (*kambun*) and thus would only address a small and highly educated segment that had received an education in the Chinese classics, the *Yōjōkun* is written in rather vernacular Japanese and also adds *furigana* reading aids. The *Yōjōkun* would thus be accessible to a broader readership.[37] An Edo period advertisement for the book suggests that it aimed at a broad readership:

> Those who read this book will learn the art of cultivating vitality. And thus they will be strong and healthy, samurai, farmers, artisans, and merchants will each be able to pursue their family calling without hindrance; and because they will be able to work happily at their family calling they will prosper and enrich themselves.[38]

However, having food choices became possible only during the Edo period solely as a result of increasing urbanization, technical development, a new market economy and the development of an effective trade infrastructure. These developments meant not only an increase in production but also a better distribution of goods. That increasingly allowed larger segments of the population to actually choose their daily food and not just eat what was available due to geographical conditions, season and financial means.

Kuriyama Shigehisa as well as Juhn Ahn have shown how the *yōjō* discourse reflects a new attitude towards labour (*rō*) during the Edo period, which stressed diligence (*kinben*) and in which hard work and

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[37] For readership and literacy during the Edo period and Ekiken's texts, see Kornicki, *The Book in Japan*, 258–269. Yokota, '*Ekiken-bon no dokusha*', 315–353. For literacy in the Edo period, see Rubinger, *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan*.

[38] Inoue, *Kaibara Ekiken*, 299; quoted from Kuriyama, '*The historical origins of katakori*', 136.

active life became key virtues.[39] Stagnation would thus be in opposition to the focus on the new activity ethos. This development also meant that the body could, as Juhn – referring to Kuriyama – states, 'on a personal level be imagined and experienced in a manner quite unlike before'. He continues: 'Although nourishing life was still associated primarily with the old ideal of storing up and guarding primordial energy against depletion in peace and tranquillity, escalating anxieties about stagnation seem to have made hard work and constant movement a desirable alternative to this old ideal.'[40] Yet, ideals and reality rarely match. The moral obligation of controlling one's body, which resulted in an idealized image of the healthy body and a constant call for movement and labour, must have felt disruptive. Can Ekiken's warning of over-exercising, therefore, be understood as a reaction to the pressure to move? 'As the implicit expectation with regard to labor was that it is never enough, ever complete.'[41] The two forces of quietude and movement are major concerns for Ekiken. But they are also of equal importance to him, as both have the capacity to feed and strengthen vital energy (and in that way, he writes himself back into the contemporary discourse): where the heart has to be quiet and calm, the body has to move and work.

> The art of life nourishment is not to be idle and do nothing. One should calm the heart and move the body. [. . .] When the body is idle the congenital energy will stagnate and one becomes ill. While working one should not eat, as it leads to the wish to sleep. (IV, 34 see also I, 14, 16, 17)

The shift in the Edo period work ethos is also echoed in the following quote: 'The art of life nourishment is to fulfil the duties one is supposed to do, to move the body and let one's vital energy circulate. One should under

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[39] Both connect the 'anxiety of stagnation' also to labour (*rō*) and exhaustion (*rō*). See Juhn, '*Zen and the Art of Nourishing Life*'; Kuriyama, 'Katakori kō', 52, and Kuriyama, '*The historical origins of katakori*'. It has been stressed before that the circulation of vital energy was one of the main concerns in health care and Kuriyama convincingly connects the metaphor of 'circulation' to the rise of a new economy based on the flow and circulation of money, wealth and good. Ibid., 134–137. For circulation as a metaphor, see also Sarasin, *Reizbare Maschinen*, 74–75.

[40] Juhn, '*Zen and the Art of Nourishing Life*', 182.

[41] Ibid., 218.

no circumstance rest or sleep after eating' (I, 24). But why should sleep and rest – which are also referred to as the 'desire to sleep' (*suiga no yoku*) – be bad, especially as rest, tranquillity and withdrawal were considered so important in the Chinese tradition of life nourishment? First of all, as has been shown, too much sleep and rest in Ekiken's view lead to the depletion and stagnation of vital energy, which in turn will give rise to ailments (e.g. I, 13). In order to prevent these, Ekiken stresses the necessity of small walks after eating, regular exercises (*dōin*) and movement through work. Yet, Ekiken actually adds another important element of life nourishment here: time management. Activities are ascribed a 'proper' time: there are times of activity and times of rest and both spheres must clearly be separated. A fixed schedule or a routine lends a structure to one's life and makes it easier to withstand individual desires concerning sex, sleep and overeating. However, the means to control time can also be translated into political as well as economic power; separating rest and work, including the regulation and control of mealtimes, gives the workday a clear structure and guarantees productivity.

During the early years of the Edo period, a new culinary culture developed in Edo, which included the opening of restaurants, street vendors providing the increasing population with (fast) food from different regions and cookbooks becoming increasingly popular (although first as manuals for professionals).[42] Food became a commodity and generous spending on food and banquets was no longer limited to the upper classes. The *Yōjōkun* was written right after the Genroku era (1688–1704), a time in which excessive consumption, luxury, the growth of an amusement industry and the rise of rich merchants marked life in Edo. To countermeasure these 'excessive' developments, the government repeatedly issued sumptuary laws to restrain and control consumption.[43] Promoting frugality and austerity, the attempt to actually de-emotionalize and de-sensualize daily nutrition and to ingrain

[42] See Ishige, *The History and Culture of Japanese Food*, 107, 117–128, and Kikkoman Institute for International Food Culture. http://www.kikkoman.co.jp/kiifc/foodculture/pdf_12/e_002_006.pdf.

[43] See, e.g., Francken, *The Japanese Consumer*, 42–43; and Shively, 'Sumptuary Regulations', 123–164.

eating within the Chinese medical tradition thus all mirror the 'moralist' Zeitgeist, resembling Protestant or Calvinist ethical approaches to the pleasures of food and eating.[44] In life nourishment, a choice of food and pleasure derived from eating became antagonistic since pleasure undermined the ethical dimension of food choices. The significance of Neo-Confucian ethics for life nourishment is already established in the opening paragraph of the *Yōjōkun*:

> Our body has father and mother as foundation, and heaven and earth as beginning. It does not belong to oneself as we are born and raised by the favour of heaven and earth and through father and mother. Our body is a gift from heaven and earth, a parental keepsake. One should be prudent and take good care of it to make sure it is not abused and lasts the full span of years with which it is heavenly endowed. This is the very basis of dutifulness to providence and parents, for how can they be served without it? [ . . . ] Especially if one considers life as one's possession and abuses it by excess in eating, drinking or sexual intercourse, one will harm one's congenital energy. (Ekiken I, 1)[45]

Whereas filial piety (*kō*) is the main focus in the above quote, Ekiken further builds on Neo-Confucian ethics by linking eating and drinking to key concepts of Tokugawa rulership and warrior ethics, which are duty and loyalty towards one's lord and ruler:

> The purpose of eating and drinking is to satisfy hunger and thirst. One, therefore, should not let one's greed get the upper hand and eat and drink as much as one wants even after one's hunger has been satiated and one's thirst has been quenched. People that don't control their greed for food

[44] As mentioned before, Ekiken considered rice to have a positive effect on the body and as a staple food that should be the main ingredient of every meal, accompanied by soup and side dishes. Also, for these three components of a meal, Ekiken introduces a correct order of eating: first rice, then soup, followed by vegetables. Eating rice before other dishes meant that the individual would be saturated by rice and could not eat as much of the side dishes. The order in which food is eaten thus aims at supporting a frugal lifestyle, especially as meat and fish were rather expensive (III, 68).

[45] Ekiken also states: 'To harm unnecessarily one's slightest piece of skin or thread of hair is an act of impiety against the cosmos and one's parents' (I, 25).

> and drink tend to forget their duty. They should be called gluttons and be despised. (Ekiken III, 7)

Yet, when Ekiken wrote the *Yōjōkun*, following a dietetic lifestyle was far away from being considered an ethical activity, through which the individual could better himself for the sake and well-being of the state. In contrast, life nourishment seemed to be regarded as an idle activity of people who had the means and the time to follow strict dietetic rules. Also Ekiken is aware of this criticism and defended his dietetics:

> Some people say: 'The art of life nourishment might be well suited for old people, for hermits, or young people that turned their back to the world and just live into the day as they like. But life nourishment is difficult to realize for a warrior, who is faithful and loyal to lord and father, studies the martial arts and works with his body. The same is true for farmers, craftsmen and merchants, that are working day and night for their livelihood and neither have spare time nor do they know idleness.' [ . . . ] The art of life nourishment, however, is entirely different from a life in idleness and easygoingness. On the contrary, one has to calm the heart and move the body. If the body is passive, one's congenital energy will stagnate and diminish and that will result in illness. (I, 26)

More serious, however, was the accusation that life nourishment should contradict Neo-Confucian ethics as one would 'selfishly think only about one's own body and about preserving one's life' (I, 27). This accusation, which reminds us of Foucault's (basically dietetic) model of *souci de soi* ('concern of oneself'), touches on the moral concept of loyalty (*gi*), which was central in the creation of stability within the Tokugawa ruled state and society: Would a warrior sacrifice his own life in fulfilment of his duty, or would he abandon loyalty and save his own life? Also Ekiken realized the significance of this argument, but argues that under normal circumstances (*tsune*) one should follow the rules of life nourishment and protect one's body, whereas in exceptional times (*hen*) one has to be loyal and sacrifice one's life for one's master. If handled that way, he further argues, life nourishment will, on the contrary, strengthen the stability of the loyalty pact as only a strong and healthy body can fulfil one's duty, fight for one's lord and 'be brave in times of exception' (I, 27). For Ekiken, consciously ignoring the dietary rules therefore means ignoring one's obligations (*giri*) towards the lord, thus showing a lack of proper conduct and decency (*reigi*; e.g. Ekiken I, 10). The text creates a semantic and metaphoric field in which dietetics are defined as warfare and the control of one's desires as an art of war (*heihō*). Desires are 'inner enemies' (*naiteki*) that one has to fight against with patience (*nin*), and the one who emerges victorious from the fight against one's desires is compared to a 'brave general crushing his enemies' (Ekiken I, 20). In his book *The Civilizing Process* (1939), Norbert Elias has shown that language is an embodiment of social or inner life,[46] but speaking about the body also has a lot to do with political history.[47] By metaphorically placing self-control within the discursive field of warfare and bravery on the battlefield (or better, semantically transferring the meaning from one field to the other), Ekiken takes individual health care out of the private sphere and into the public and political sphere.

Health care in this sense is not an individual choice, but rather a life path and a duty. By making the 'right' food choices, which are in essence moral choices, the individual could form and materialize him – or herself as an ethical subject, making the body a medium onto which the ethics are inscribed. Yet, that also means that the sick person could easily be stigmatized and 'be despised.' Given that not all strata within society had the means to follow the strict rules of dietetics due to a lack of access to knowledge, financial means or time – despite Ekiken's claim that everyone could – dietetics would reassure and reinforce existing social stratifications.

Eating, drinking, sexual intercourse and sleep are the main concerns of health preservation. These elements are considered to be especially dangerous to an individuals' moral formation as these are innate inner desires (*naiyoku*) which test one's steadfastness:

[46] Elias, *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation*, 244.

[47] Sarasin, *Geschichtswissenschaft als Diskursanalyse*, 115–116; on metaphors esp. ibid. 191–230.

> Each part of our body has its desire. The ears hear, the mouth eats and drinks, and the body enjoys sex. When one has no self-control over one's desires and latches onto pleasures with greedy abandon, one will exceed the given limits, damage one's body, and therefore show a lack of common decency (*reigi*). All evil comes from following one's desires. By practicing self-control one can overcome one's uncontrolled desires. Good influences surface when one exercises self-control. Therefore, self-control and gluttony are the foundation of good and evil. In order to correctly apply the techniques of the way of life cultivation, one must be fully aware of one's desires and learn to control them. (I, 10; also I, 4 and 20)

Proper moral conduct can thus be achieved by moderation, self-control of one's desires and emotions. 'Control' can be seen as one of the main themes of Edo period warrior culture, as Ikegami has argued, including two elements: '[c]ontrol on the personal level, that is, regulation of one's own short-term desires in order to achieve long-term goals. The second element relates those corporate aspects of control that harmonize individuals' drives and desires with socially and organizationally defined objectives.'[48] Ikegami is referring to samurai culture, but these warrior class ideals of (self-) control trickled through to other strata of society. Moreover, they were not just detached philosophical thoughts or speculations, but had immediate impact on the embodiment and the performance of daily life duties. Books like the *Yōjōkun* and other vernacular publications on dietetics served as media to – in a comprehensible and accessible way – disseminate ideas and techniques of control: 'If all four classes [warriors, peasants, craftsmen and merchants] fulfil their ascribed tasks, they will follow the way of life nourishment' (Ekiken I, 24). During the Edo period, these rules accordingly placed an individual at a pre-determined position within society and created 'a mental climate conducive to individuals harmonizing their sense of personal identity with institutionally prescribed roles and responsibilities.'[49]

[48] Ikegami, *The Taming of the Samurai*, 330.
[49] Ibid., 329.

## Conclusion

Ekiken elucidates the moral principles of health preservation, the human body and the techniques of everyday self-cultivation, touching on topics like eating and drinking, sexuality, sleeping, bathing and physical exercise, establishing food and eating as the main concern of a dietary lifestyle. The readers also learn why and how food choices will affect organs, digestion, blood pressure, flow of energy etc. The *Yōjōkun* in this sense creates knowledge about the body and the way it functions, and also shapes the way of thinking about the body. Food regulations in the *Yōjōkun* are firmly rooted within *kampō* medicine, but are to the same degree techniques of self-control and self-cultivation based on Neo-Confucian ethics, through which a definition of the appropriate or 'right' food and dietary habits is established. The main concern in Ekiken's dietetics is moderation and frugality with respect to eating and drinking. The dietary regime mirrors and disseminates ideas of the ruling warrior class, and by following the established regulations, which are based on control of desires and emotions, the individual becomes an ethical subject by subjugating himself/herself to an existing political, social order, which is based on cosmological principles. By failing to follow the given rules of a healthy diet, the individual violates his/her obligations to ruler, parents, family and society in general. Like other Edo period health manuals, the *Yōjōkun* transfers responsibility for the food choices made to the (informed) individual and the decision to follow food regulations is defined as a moral choice. The consequences of a refusal to adhere to dietetic rules are immediate: disease. Dietetics in this sense is an appeal to the fearful and ethical subject. The sick subject, however, is also stigmatized as his/her body visibly displays the individual's doubtfulness in terms of morals and work ethics. Ideas and ideologies are thus imprinted onto the body or even actively shape the body as a social fact,[50] as the ideas of the body are translated into performative acts of life cultivation and nourishment.

[50] See especially Sarasin, *Reizbare Maschinen*, 11–12.

Kuriyama Shigehisa already observed that 'the Japanese experience of embodiment still retains some of the core features that crystallized in Edo times'. He is referring to the 'cultural memory in the body' – but certainly also *of* the body – 'in which, despite the passage of several hundred years, the past remains palpably present'.[51] The notions of the body and health presented in the *Yōjōkun* equally still reflect culturally established body techniques and experiences of embodiment. Recently, the book has regained popularity in Japan within holistic medicine, lifestyle magazines and books as well as within the ecological movement.[52] Undoubtedly, the rediscovery of the *Yōjōkun* also needs to be seen within the context of the 'Edo boom', which, in a process of nostalgic romanticization, establishes the Edo period, or Edo manners (Edo *shigusa*), as a remedy for the 'illnesses' that afflict modern Japanese society. In this nostalgic notion, the Edo period is seen as an ideal past of a 'pure/unadulterated Japanese' culture or tradition, which has been lost and needs to be recovered. This idea is also mirrored in an article entitled 'The Wisdom Behind Foods Developed in Edo' published by the *Bulletin of the Kikkoman Society of International Food Culture*, where the question is asked: 'Are we, however, preserving and maintaining the wisdom of Edo? Perhaps we need to review the wisdom of Edo regarding food and incorporate it into the practical science of our daily lives.'[53] But, there is also another level on which the increasing influence of a neoliberal worldview – supporting nationalistic tendencies of creating a, using the term Abe Shinzō coined, 'beautiful country' (*utsukushii kuni*) – surfaces. This model also takes hold in food education, which as Stephanie Assmann will argue in this volume, embraces an approach of neoliberal governmentality and accordingly creates mechanisms of social and self-disciplinary regimes. The 'wisdom of Edo' in terms of health care and food thus comes at a price: Health may never have been a private matter, but now it has definitely become a public one.

[51] Kuriyama, '*The Historical Origins of Katakori*', 146.

[52] E.g. Shimokata, *'Yōjōkun' ni manabu!*; Tatsukawa, *Yōjōkun ni manabō*; Shōji, *Shōji kun no Yōjōkun* and Obitsu, *Horisutiku Yōjōkun*.

[53] Kikkoman Institute for International Food Culture. http://www.kikkoman.co.jp/kiifc/foodculture/pdf_12/e_015_018.pdf.

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**Andreas Niehaus** studied Japanese language and culture, English and German literature as well as sports history in Cologne and at Keio University in Tokyo. He has been appointed professor for Japanese Studies at the University of Ghent in 2004. Currently he acts as the Head of the Department of Languages and Cultures and Head of the International Office at the Faculty of Arts and Philosophy. His research focuses on Japanese body culture, especially Japanese sports, martial arts, health and ideas of the body in early modern and modern Japan. At the Institute of Japanese Studies he mainly teaches Classical and Modern Japanese, Japanese Society, Japanese Literature as well as research seminars on MA level. He is also appointed adjunct professor for Japanese at the University of Eastern Finland and collaborative professor at Kanazawa University.

# 'Sweets Reimagined': The Construction of Confectionary Identities, 1890–1930

Tatsuya Mitsuda

## Introduction

In 1900, Japanese confectioners participated in the Exposition Universelle in Paris, an experience they would never forget.[1] Following a rigorous selection process that took several years, the Meiji period (1868–1912) government decided to send sweets makers Takahama Heibei (1861–?), Taniguchi Heizaburō and Tanaka Heikichi to Europe from Kyoto, the heartland of traditional confectionary. Those who missed out on financial support, such as Fūgetsudō's Yonezu Tsunejirō (1867–?) and Tsuboya's Yamada Ryūjiro, made their own way, a reflection of the importance of the event. At the world fair the Kyoto confectioners crafted high-end, artistic sweets. One exhibit, *unpei-kashi*, replicated a vase of flowers, while another, *kago-mori*, impressed

[1] For a useful analysis of this event, see Sugawa, 'Hana Tachibana'.

T. Mitsuda (✉)
Faculty of Economics, Keio University, Tokyo, Japan
e-mail: tmitsuda@z8.keio.jp

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with an assortment of elaborately decorated sweets. For what must have been their first time, these Japanese confectioners also came into close contact with the exhibits of their Western counterparts. At the French pavilion, they witnessed the chocolate manufacturer Menier, exhibiting a large ship in which the industrialized process by which cocoa was transformed into chocolate was replicated. At the British pavilion, they were equally struck by the size of the exhibit put on display by the world's largest biscuit manufacturer, Huntley and Palmer, which proudly re-constructed the inside of its factory, complete with railroads that linked the manufacturing facility to the national train network.[2] In contrast to the aesthetical, hand-made and small-scale nature of Japanese confectionary, Western confectionary appeared purposeful, machine-manufactured and large-scale.

For the confectionary sector the experience of Paris proved formative: it provoked contrasting responses and paved the way for the construction of two relatively distinct confectionary identities that differentiated between Western-style (*yōgashi*) and Japanese-style sweets (*wagashi*). In the view of the Meiji government, at least, the future seemed to lie in the modernization of the sector: shifting the emphasis away from craftsmanship to the employment of machines. Traditional confections, the official report of the Exposition judged, had limits because production took time – only a limited number could be made in a day. Machines, however, could churn out 'hundreds'; the even temperatures that they replicated meant products could be of equal and predictable quality; and they would also help replace unreliable human labour to carry out the task of pouring in the exact amount of sugar each time.[3] Traditional confectioners were less sure. Reflecting on his experience of the Exposition, Taniguchi quipped that Japanese and Western confections were essentially incompatible – 'promiscuously mixing' the different methods of preparation was 'wrong' and could lead to 'compromising the strong points of both'.[4] More enthusiastic were Japanese confectioners of Western-style sweets such as Yonezu Tsunejirō. His impression of Paris was that while the Japanese confections

[2] For Japanese confectioners at the World Fair in Paris, see Ikeda, *Nihon yōgashi*, 684–97.
[3] Ibid., 689.
[4] Taniguchi, 'Kashi shinsa no hōshin ni tsuite', 15.

put on display were pleasing to the eye, they came up short when it came to taste. Because of sweets' traditional subordination as accompaniments to green tea drinking, 'there was no need to give the confection itself a particular flavour'.[5] Impressed not only with the machines that were employed, Yonezu also expressed admiration for the way in which Western confectioners experimented with a variety of ingredients – even spices imported all the way from colonial India were incorporated. Rather than limit themselves to the basics of flour and sugar, Western confectioners were thus free to show off their originality, adding and subtracting ingredients at will to produce a variety of gustatory experiences. For Yonezu, the appeal of Western-style sweets lay in how sweets could be liberated from their supportive role in tea drinking and elevated to independent status as 'proper' food.

To be sure, 1900 was not the first time Japanese confectioners had ventured abroad. In 1873, several confectioners made the long haul to the Vienna World Exposition, exhibiting artistic sweets that replicated the golden dolphins of Nagoya castle, the Great Buddha of Kamakura and the gates of Sensōji temple in Asakusa.[6] Despite common experience, the context in which the Paris Exposition took place was decidedly different. First, the 1900 fair took place just a few years after victory in the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895), which had helped establish the country as a serious regional power in East Asia. In the view of the Meiji government, the Paris event became an opportunity for showcasing the country's soft power. As the top bureaucrat of the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce put it, the Exposition was tantamount to 'reliving' the victory of the War through 'peaceful competition'.[7] Second, the Exposition took place following the politicization of the confectionary sector. In 1885, the Meiji government implemented a confectionary tax, imposing on makers (both large and small) a manufacturing and sales tariff. Sweets makers, who had essentially been a loose and disparate grouping of independent operators, came together: they formed national and regional associations, filed 7numerous petitions and campaigned vigorously for the tariff to be

[5] Quoted in Ikeda, *Nihon yōgashishi,* 693.
[6] Ibid., 327–8.
[7] Quoted in Ikeda, *Nihon yōgashishi,* 684.

rescinded.[8] One major reason why the Meiji government decided to tax sweets was because confections were regarded as non-essentials whose consumption, it seemed, did little to contribute to the development of either the economy or the nation. Confectioners, however, begged to differ, pointing out that 'sugar helped digestion and warmed the body'.[9] They also explained that eggs and milk – a reference to Western sweets – elevated the nutritional value of sweets. Placed within this dual political context, sweets became charged with broader significance. Those involved with the making, the selling and the eating of sweets needed to demonstrate to broader society that they were contributing to nation-building. No longer was it acceptable to continue to think of sweets in lofty terms – a more practical rationale had to be invented. Perspectives also needed to be reformed to view sweets in terms of wider markets – not just local ones. Finally, the impact of sweets on the body needed to be taken more seriously – the focus on sight and smell had to make way for a focus on health. The period with which this chapter deals was characterized by an intense debate over the role sweets should play in society, with progressives the most vocal in arguing that sweets, were they to be of relevance in a modernizing society, should be manufactured not made, marketed not sold and consumed not eaten.

In her history of modern Japanese food, Katarzyna J. Cwiertka has shown how different categories of food were formed during the Meiji period, out of which the terms 'Japanese cuisine' (*washoku*) and 'Western cuisine' (*yōshoku*) emerged.[10] Both categories have been traced back to Noguchi Hokugen, who wrote a treatise in 1880, in which he contrasted Japanese, Western and Chinese cuisines. '[Emphasiz[ing] the aesthetic value of Japanese cuisine', Cwiertka has noted, he 'praised Western cooking for its nutritional qualities, yet regarded it as inferior to the former in terms of taste and appearance'.[11] For Noguchi, Japanese cuisine had much to learn, and it was through adopting Western and Chinese styles that

[8] See, for example, Katagiri, *Kashizei sokuhaishi*.
[9] Quoted in Kobayashi, *Kashi 30-nen shi*, 171.
[10] Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, 21.
[11] Ibid.

Japanese eating would eventually triumph. As part of this wider debate on food, discussions about sweets followed a similar but belated trajectory, exhibited similar characteristics and generated calls to reform the diet that would make the country stronger. According to Eric Rath, 'the term "Western sweets" (*yōgashi*) was coined in the early 1870s to refer to the recipes inspired by American and Western confection', and the term *wagashi* emerged in tandem with this development.[12] By the beginning of the early twentieth century, the two terms entered the vernacular, and the relatively distinct identities that emerged during the three decades after the Paris Exposition are the focus of this chapter.[13]

## Making/Manufacturing

One of the first Western-style confections to achieve fame, if not popularity, was biscuits. First recorded in 1842, these 'biscuits' were a far cry from what they are now, produced as hardtack and grudgingly incorporated into military rations. Threatened with the spectre of invasion from Western imperial forces, Egawa Tarōzaemon (1801–1855), a military scholar, summoned a cook from Nagasaki to re-create the biscuits that had seemingly powered British military might in the Opium War.[14] For Egawa, who envisioned guerrilla warfare, rice balls posed a danger because of the vapours that would be emitted when making them.[15] Biscuits, however, held no such risks, and by the late 1860s, military leaders came to hold them in high regard.[16] In 1868, Fūgetsudō, the early pioneer of Western-style confectionary, delivered large quantities of black sesame-filled biscuits to the Satsuma clan.[17] Only a decade later, in an ironic twist, the Imperial Army ordered an unprecedented amount of biscuits to help put down the rebellious Satsuma

[12] Rath, 'Japanese baked goods', 374.

[13] For a focus on sugar, however, placed in its imperial context, see Kushner, *Sweetness*.

[14] Adachi, *Nihongata shokuseikatsu no rekishi*, 189.

[15] Ibid., 190.

[16] Shōwa Joshi Daigaku, *Kindai Nihon shokumotsushi,* 10.

[17] Ibid.

samurai during the country's last civil war. More confectioners, sensing military demand, joined the bandwagon. Ten years after Fūgetsudō purchased biscuit-making machinery from English makers Huntley and Palmer, Tsuboya began manufacturing biscuits en masse, having installed a steam-powered machine made in Liverpool.[18] When the Sino-Japanese War erupted, Fūgetsudō was quick to respond to orders: it delivered 150 tonnes of biscuits in the first year of conflict, and 90 tonnes were dispatched during the second and last year of fighting.[19]

In truth, of course, soldiers preferred Japanese-style confectionary. They were brought up on rice cakes and resented the taste of the biscuits that formed part of their rations. Such reluctance would explain why biscuits failed to achieve a wider public before the turn of the century. Within the military context, however, biscuits were preferred because preserving rice cakes proved tricky. In an effort to surmount this problem, Fūgetsudō tried to freeze them; a different confectioner experimented by placing them in cans[20]; neither attempt succeeded. In the case of canned rice cakes, moulds developed within a few weeks of delivery and had to be condemned. It was no wonder, then, that biscuits continued to enjoy favour, recording spectacular increases in production as a result of demand created by the Boxer Rebellion (1900–1901) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905). Despite attempts by Japanese-style confectioners such as Toraya to muscle in on increased imperial demand, the Ministry of War (*Rikugunshō*) had difficulty accepting Japanese-style confectionary.[21] Western-style confectionary appeared to play, at least technically, a more useful role than the indigenous offering, which struggled to prove its worth in changing imperial times.[22]

There is little doubt that the imperial context threw up questions about the difference between sweets in Japan and the West, sensitizing observers to the role played by the ingredients. Notwithstanding the

[18] Ikeda, *Nihon yōgashishi,* 538–9.
[19] Shōwa Joshi Daigaku, *Shokumotsushi*, 163.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Toraya, *Toraya no go seiki*, 91.
[22] For the success of canned beef in the military, see Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, 64–65.

shared use of sugar, Western-style and Japanese-style sweets seemed to differ because the latter relies typically on plant ingredients while the former owes much more to animal-derived ones. Milk and eggs are central to Western confectionary while *azuki* red beans, agar–agar and rice flour dominate the making of Japanese confectionary. At the end of the nineteenth century, medical men trained in Western science fastened on to this difference. They declared that the choice of ingredients was no simple matter: it had grave consequences for the health of the population. In 1890, Tsuboi Jirō (1863–1903), Associate Professor of Hygiene at the Imperial University (*Teikoku Daigaku*) in Tokyo, took to task indigenous confections – the term *wagashi* was not yet used – for their harmful impact on the body.[23] Through a nutritional lens, Tsuboi focused on confectioners' excessive use of sweet red beans. Both red beans and sugar did not, he pointed out, lack nutrients: they contained a certain amount of protein. Only when these otherwise healthy ingredients were transformed into products such as *manjū* did the nutritional values plummet.[24] Typically, *azuki* would be cooked, sweetened and turned into a paste (*anko*), which would end up as filling in a wide variety of sweets. Yet the problem with this method of preparation, Tsuboi pointed out, was that it led to a significant reduction in the amount of protein while it resulted in an inadvertent increase in the amount of sugar. Sweets makers should, he urged, merely increase the amount of *azuki* and hold back on the amount of sugar. Given the preference for all things sweet among purchasers, he dimly predicted, a change in mind-set among makers would be hard to implement.[25]

During this period, physicians agitated for the reconceptualization of sweets in chemical terms. Soon after Tsuboi's intervention, Mikamo Kōtarō, a medical practitioner in Numazu, stressed the importance of evaluating the worth of confections based on their nutritional content.[26] Most important, he argued, were the 'interior components' (*naiteki-kōsei*)

[23] Anonymous, 'Nihon no kashi', 536.
[24] Tsuboi, 'Kashi no setsu', 8.
[25] Anonymous, 'Kashi no hanashi', 17–21.
[26] Mikamo, 'Kashi ni tsuite', 46–49.

of them; less important were attributes such as taste and beauty. Shape, colour or scent – characteristics that marked out *wagashi* – were unreliable markers of sweets' true self. Traditional confectioners felt the heat of this growing medical discourse. At the Fourth Domestic Industrial Exposition, held in Kyoto in 1895, they protested against the nutritional view expressed by Tsuboi who presided as judge. Taniguchi Heizaburō criticized the professor for deliberately prioritizing the scientific properties of sweets to the detriment of all other attributes.[27] For Tsuboi, there was little worth in the artistic exhibits that Kyoto makers presented because they served no apparent purpose. Due to the emphasis on appearance, colouring was used to excess, putting off potential eaters.[28] Sweets' impact on health, he reminded confectioners, should be a central concern of makers but was not.[29] Such early medical re-appraisals of sweets were powerful, serving as the basis on which modern dietary practices were later recommended to families. Continuing to eat sweets like *yōkan*[30] could, a magazine warned in 1907, adversely affect children's digestion and lead to chronic stomach and bowel problems.[31] In 1912, Nagai Iwao, a paediatrician, strictly advised mothers to avoid sweets that contained *azuki* and sugar.[32] In 1913, a food education journal called on sweets makers to use *tsubuan*[33] instead of *koshian* in their products because of the nutritional benefits of the former.[34] Others suggested that jam or milk should be used as replacements.[35] Far better than seek reforms to *wagashi*, so the general paediatric consensus went, was to choose *yōgashi*. Mothers were encouraged, for example, to feed their infants raisins, wafers, biscuits and chocolates.[36] Eating Western-style confections was better for digestion and for

[27] Taniguchi, 'Kashi shinsa no hōshin ni tsuite', 14.
[28] Ibid., 16.
[29] Anonymous, 'Nihon no kashi', 536.
[30] Thick, jellied sweet made from red bean paste, agar and sugar.
[31] Anonymous, 'Kashi to shōni byō', 32.
[32] Nagai, *Ikuji no shiori*, 172.
[33] *Tsubuan* are whole read beans boiled with sugar as opposed to *koshian* which have had their skins removed and passed through a sieve.
[34] Murai, 'Okashi no zenaku', 52.
[35] *Kashi Shimpō*, April 14, 1907, 1.
[36] Nagai, *Ikuji no shiori*, 169.

general health. A biomedical focus on the chemical components of sweets helped further re-cast Japanese-style confections in negative terms.

One major feature of *yōgashi*, ever since military demand precipitated the mass production of biscuits, was the use of machines. Imported from advanced Western countries, machines impressed with their sophistication, scale and productivity. These aspects were a far cry from the making of *wagashi*. Following the Iwakura Mission's visit to Menier's Parisian factory in 1873, which manufactured 4,000 tonnes of chocolate a year, the connection between *yōgashi* and machines became inseparable.[37] When Fūgetsudō installed large machinery to manufacture 'what are called biscuits' in order to deliver 'nutritious confectionary' for the navy in 1881, the Tokyo Illustrated Newspaper took note.[38] Reports from abroad confirmed how machines were central to the making of sweets. 'In the United States', a correspondent for a children's magazine declared, 'candy manufacturers invent machines at the same time as thinking about the product'.[39] Rather than rely on manual labour, which had limitations with regard to power, machines could do more. For this to happen vast amounts of capital had to be invested to set up factories capable of producing sweets in large quantities. Pointing to Western examples, the *Asahi Shimbun* remarked with interest that confectionary companies were becoming highly specialized, suggesting that Japanese confectioners should move in this direction, too.[40] In Britain, Huntley and Palmer concentrated on the production of biscuits alone, employing 7,000 workers – numbers enough to fill a small town. Only Morinaga, who had taken over from Fūgetsudō as the pioneers of Western-style confectionary during the early twentieth century, came close to replicating the kind of scale that European and American confectioners had achieved. In 1915, the *Yomiuri Shimbun* reported on a tour of the company's Tokyo manufacturing facility in Tamachi.[41] Profoundly impressed by the scale of production, the newspaper took particular liking to the 'large devices' in action, noting how

[37] Mitsuda, 'From reception to acceptance', 180.
[38] Quoted in Kobayashi, *Kashi 30-nen shi*, 93.
[39] Mori, 'Beikoku no kashi', 4.
[40] Anonymous, 'Kashi kai zatsuwa', 7.
[41] Anonymous, 'Kōjō meguri 1', 5.

work was evenly distributed between machines and humans. Such scenes were a world away, it was intimated, from those that took place at *wagashi* makers around the corner whose insistence on the use of hands appeared embarrassingly out of date.

For the increasing numbers who visited Morinaga's factories, the exacting levels of cleanliness were equally a sight to behold. In 1906, a correspondent for the confectionary trade magazine *Kashi Shimpō* went to Akasaka to see what all the fuss was about. On the tour of the 'factory', the correspondent was struck by the amount of hygienic care. Prior to setting foot in the factory, everybody had to wash their hands. Once inside, he marvelled, the place resembled a hospital. Female workers wore white clothes and donned white caps, looking more like nurses. Even their hands were covered as these workers, looking as though they were standing at an operating table, proceeded to wrap up chocolate cream in almost surgical fashion.[42] Such cleanliness, an image *yōgashi* makers were keen to foster, contrasted starkly with levels of hygiene encountered among *wagashi* makers. One of the worst culprits were makers of cheap Japanese sweets (*dagashi*) that were sold in small corner shops (*dagashi-ya*); more respectable makers, as this chapter will later show, could also be implicated. In 1900, the *Yomiuri Shimbun* reported on the small makers clustered around Rukangawa-chō in the Kanda district of Tokyo.[43] Many of these makers operated in cramped and stinking working conditions, and it was not uncommon to witness 'craftsmen using dirty hands kneading flour'.[44] By the time sweets, which had been readied for shipment in the morning, were delivered to shops, they had already turned stale. In 1928, the police took 37 *dagashiya* to court; the following year it investigated 600 wholesalers/makers, discovering that the majority fell short of acceptable hygienic standards.[45] Problems of hygiene also bedevilled reputable *wagashi* makers. In 1934, following food scares, the police invaded the kitchens of 20 traditional *wagashi* makers in Ginza and

[42] Anonymous, 'Morinaga shōten 2', 5.
[43] Annonymous, 'Dagashiya wa fuketsu', 4.
[44] Ibid.
[45] *Asahi Shimbun*, April 5, 1928, Evening edition, 2.

announced that just one had passed hygiene tests.[46] *Yōgashi* manufacturers were rarely implicated, and Morinaga's reputation rose to starry heights until the powdered milk poisoning scandal of 1955.

In 1913, the owner of Fūgetsudō in the Kanda district boasted that his factory had switched from using coal to gas, which prevented the accumulation of soot and dust.[47] Even though initial investment in gas was not insubstantial, he remarked, it rendered the manufacturing environment clean and hygienic, with one additional advantage: gas took up less space, freeing areas that had been occupied by stockpiles of coal.[48] By this time, Fūgetsudō was no longer the leading maker of *yōgashi*; Morinaga had taken over this mantle, achieving scales that Fūgetsudō found difficult to match. Yet the impression that Western-style confectionary was large-scale, mechanical and useful was undoubtedly forged at a time when Fūgetsudō was the foremost pioneer. Military demand from imperial wars was crucial to the construction of this image; but it was arguably medical men trained in the Western tradition who helped extend discussions of the difference between Japanese-style and Western-style sweets into a more domestic and civilian setting. By revealing the inner nature of sweets through a chemical and nutritional lens, they forced broader society to consider the impact of sweets on health. Practices such as bringing sweets for the sick – confections placed alongside pillows were a common sight – were to be abhorred. Pointing out the damage sweets caused to digestion, Tsuboi warned that recovery could be severely set back because of this custom.[49] Compared to alcohol, sweets caused less nuisance but in terms of the 'damage wrought on health, sweets are equally out of the question'.[50] More needed to be done at the level of production, it was argued, to effect a shift away from appearance, which was deceptive anyway, to a focus on nutrition. More than any other manufacturer, Morinaga was arguably the most receptive to this medical discourse, creating a factory

[46] *Asahi Shimbun*, February 22, 1924.

[47] Fūgetsudō, 'Watashi no mise', 18–19.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Tsuboi, 'Kashi no setsu', 9.

[50] Anonymous, 'Nihon no kashi', 536.

that resembled a hospital rather than a workshop, adding a hygienic component to the image of *yōgashi* as advanced and useful. The image of *wagashi* suffered as a result, appearing to be not only backward but also dirty and harmful for the body.

## Selling-Marketing

Confections assumed different identities when sold. Nowhere was this difference more prevalent than in advertising – a new medium through which an imagined space opened up between seller and buyer. Most of the adverts for confections that appeared in newspapers during the 1890s tended to be makers of Japanese sweets. Despite the large numbers of confectioners in operation, only a handful embraced this new marketing tool; and of those that did the adverts tended to be very small, reflecting in part the limited capital that traditional confectioners could harness to support their marketing activities. They were also characterized by an emphasis on the products' appearance, rarity or seasonality. One of the most prominent was the Ginza maker Kogetsudō who advertised its 'novelty sweets' (*chingashi*) in various guises throughout the year. Each month its advert would announce a different-themed product. In June, it would be 'a beautiful and rare confection' that reflected the rainy season; in August, the theme would be changed to the lingering summer heat.[51] As Western influences became more marked, Kogetsudō effortlessly incorporated Christmas as part of its advertising tactics, adding biscuits to its line of products in an attempt to offer them as gifts for the New Year.[52] Gift-giving was thus also an important role accorded to confections. In 1896, for example, Toraya advertised its *chimaki* – traditional confectionary wrapped up in bamboo leaves – in time for gift-giving in mid-summer.[53] Made with selected ingredients and sought-after Kyoto bamboo leaves, Toraya explained the confection was a tasty and aromatic product that

[51] *Yomiuri Shimbun*, June 13, 1892, Morning edition, 4; August 12, 1892, Morning edition, 4.
[52] *Yomiuri Shimbun*, December 22, 1893, Morning edition, 3.
[53] *Yomiuri Shimbun*, July 12, 1896, Morning edition, 5.

would be perfect for mid-summer greetings and as gifts for convalescents. Medical warnings about sweets had, it seems, little impact on how traditional confectioners sold their wares at this time.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, as *yōgashi* became more widely available, adverts for Western-style confectionary proliferated, eventually outnumbering those for *wagashi*. Even so, the content and style of adverts retained the flavour of what had gone before. Between 1905 and 1913, Morinaga published relatively small newspaper adverts, which essentially adhered to the traditional convention of associating sweets with the seasons and the custom of gift-giving. For example, one advert placed in the *Yomiuri Shimbun* encouraged readers to buy sweets either as winter gifts (*seibo*) or for Christmas.[54] During a similar period, Fūgetsudō, which only used adverts to announce a new line of products, also encouraged the purchase of their sweets for gift-giving purposes. Both companies also plugged the health benefits of their products, touting their sweets as nutritional and hygienic, benefits that did not accrue to *wagashi*. Similarly absent were references to the importance of appearance or rarity – which had been a distinctive part in the selling of *wagashi* – but these omissions did not represent a paradigmatic shift in the way the two styles of confectionary were marketed.

After 1914, however, Morinaga's advertising strategies changed. For one thing, newspaper adverts became more frequent. Rather than concentrate on July and December – traditional occasions for the exchange of gifts – adverts became a daily onslaught. Consumers were encouraged to buy more regularly and throughout the year. Second, as instances became frequent, the focus shifted to individual products, especially those that promised better sales, not on a panoply of products. During the 1910s, milk caramel became the main target. Later in the 1920s, the focus shifted to chocolate. Third, more money was injected, resulting in larger, more elaborate and visual representations. For example, in 1915, Morinaga placed on the front page a large advert that contained a visual report on the achievements of a Japan naval air force commander.[55] It depicted

[54] *Yomiuri Shimbun*, December 18, 1912, Morning edition, 3.

[55] *Yomiuri Shimbun*, May 18, 1915, Morning edition, 1.

scenes of a cheering crowd celebrating the lieutenant breaking the 500-mile record – a feat that only Western powers had previously recorded. Such an achievement was thanks to Morinaga's pocket caramel that provided lieutenant Umagoshi with energy.

Thanks to its success, other companies joined Morinaga in the expanding market for *yōgashi*. Established in 1916 as Tokyo Confectionary (*Tōkyō Seika*), Meiji, which quickly became Morinaga's rival, employed similar tactics. Injecting the vast amounts of capital it had generated through its erstwhile operation as sugar refiners, Meiji made a name for itself through the marketing of its chocolate products. Many of the adverts depicted men as well as women engaged in non-domestic pursuits. High jumpers, businessmen, women about to embark on vacation and female tennis players were some of the 'consumers' that made appearances (Fig. 1).[56]

It was thanks to chocolate that high jumpers broke records, businessmen could succeed at work, female travellers were able to carry large amounts of luggage and female tennis players recovered from fatigue. Both Morinaga and Meiji created an advertising discourse, which powerfully marketed their sweets as sources of productive energy that helped support consumers' public activities. Consuming them was to become modern citizens.

In contrast to the advertising onslaught kick-started by Morinaga, *wagashi* makers remained sceptical – some downright hostile – to the marketing of sweets. In 1907, *Kashi Shimpō* reported on entrenched attitudes among traditional *wagashi* makers who expressed 'no need to rely on newspaper adverts to spread [their] name' because their clientele, built up over a century, would continue to ensure that business remained brisk.[57] Modernizers criticized this stance, commenting how these makers were blind to the wider world and stubborn to changes in the twentieth century. Shops continued, the *Asahi Shimbun* charged, to rely on *noren* – or fabric dividers hung out in front of shops – and patronage.[58] This, of course, does not mean *wagashi* makers refused to place adverts in newspapers. It was perfectly

[56] *Yomiuri Shimbun*, November 1, 1926, Evening edition, 10; June 2, 1928, Morning edition, 6; October 25, 1928, Morning edition, 3; March 18, 1928, Evening edition, 2.

[57] Anonymous, 'Shinise', 2.

[58] *Asahi Shimbun*, December 22, 1908, Morning edition, 6.


**Fig. 1** A large advert by Morinaga selling its hugely popular pocket milk caramels

*Source*: *Yomiuri Shimbun* (18 May 1915), Morning Edition, 1

common, for instance, for traditional confectioners to advertise their wares. Founded in 1850, Tokyo-based Baikatei Morita, for example, was one of the few *wagashi* makers who embraced adverts. Between 1897 and 1916, it regularly bought advertising space – over 300 adverts were printed – in the

*Asahi Shimbun*. Even so, in contrast to *yōgashi* makers, *wagashi* makers were less conspicuous. Their adverts concentrated on the seasons and gift-giving, tended to be small and contained little imagery. There was also less verbosity. Their adverts were intended to be subtle, gentle reminders to customers that the time had arrived to place orders – not the in-your-face and colourful razzmatazz that the likes of Morinaga and Meiji increasingly deployed. As the popularity of *yōgashi* grew, however, *wagashi* makers felt under increased pressure. Waiting for customers to visit was no longer a luxury they could afford. Despite the fact that it had rarely relied on newspaper adverts, Toraya came to embrace them in the 1920s as part of a wider shift towards 'aggressive' tactics that included home delivery.[59] Yet Toraya, as the owner Kurokawa Takeo (1893–1975) boasted, did not need to be so uncouth. Small adverts were enough – the strength of the brand would do the rest. So it was that in 1926 the *wagashi* maker brought out *monaka*[60] in the shape of a golf ball; but there was very little attempt, as *yōgashi* makers were apt to do, to link the properties of the new confection with a modern sporting lifestyle.

One reason why *wagashi* makers viewed newspaper adverts with suspicion was that it did not make much sense targeting a large market of consumers. Traditional confectioners, reflecting custom among small-scale producers, catered to local, or at best, regional demand. Even the early pioneer of Western-style confectionary, Fūgetsudō, which had built up a network of affiliated stores numbering 16 by the mid-1910s, maintained its regional base in Tokyo.[61] Most of the time, however, confectioners operated small, independent shops whose fame spread more by word of mouth than by image garnered through media campaigns. This allegiance to smaller markets received criticism from modernizers. One focus of their attack was 'novelty sweets' (*chingashi*) made manifest in the queues that would snake around shops early in the morning. For customers the attraction of novelty sweets lay in their scarcity. Only so much could be made and sold, and it could only be bought at a particular place, further elevating its appeal.

[59] Kurokawa, 'Yōgashi ni osare gimi', 28–29.

[60] Sweet red beans sandwiched between two thin wafers.

[61] Tōkyō Fūgetsudō, *Fūgetsudō shashi*, Appendix.

The *soba-manjū* sold at Nomura or the golden *bottan*[62] sold at Matsuya, for example, could only be bought at their premises to the devoted few who had invested the time and energy to make the trek and wait outside.[63] Yet critics asked – rhetorically – whether these 'novelty sweets' served a wider purpose beyond satisfying a limited and local demand. They may be novelties; they may taste good; they may be famous. These niceties, however, contributed little to the development of 'the national economy'.[64] Nor did small-scale production, they pointed out, have potential as exports. For *yōgashi* manufacturers, who shared this view, local markets were an inconvenience because they presented an obstacle to their increasingly ascendant model of mass production. Most manufacturers of sweets in the United States had the power to dictate the prices at which their products would be sold. Regardless of where sweets were made available – 'at the candy store or in milk halls or in any town in America' – prices would be the same.[65] Despite the fact that 'manufacturing is more important than selling', Morinaga charged that makers of sweets in Japan were subordinate to wholesalers who dictated prices to small shops.[66] Such an observation reflected frustration at creating a national market in which machine-made *yōgashi* could be sold regardless of place or season at a price convenient to manufacturers.

Not only were complaints made about advertising, they were also levelled at the shop floor. More attention should be paid; it was urged, on how sweets should be displayed. In Japan sweets were placed haphazardly in boxes, displayed without regard to hygiene and handed over to customers wrapped up in old newspapers and magazines.[67] In the United States, it was pointed out that sweets were displayed in glass containers. Not only was the place of sweets changed from time to time but the contents of these containers were also refilled on a regular basis. In 1906, *Kashi Shimpō* criticized the old habits of shopkeepers, especially the lack

[62] Penny sweets resembling the petal of flowers.

[63] Anonymous, 'Shosen chingashi', 2.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Mori, 'Beikoku no kashi', 6.

[66] Kobayashi, *Kashi 30-nenshi*, 339.

[67] Mori, 'Beikoku no kashi', 6.

of care they took in displaying fresh confections such as *mochi*.[68] Just like other sweets, it remarked, *mochi* sellers would leave fresh confections exposed to the elements throughout the day.[69] Oblivious to changes in climate and in the weather, the trade journal charged, shopkeepers remained unconcerned as long as their products looked fine. By the same token, *Kashi Shimpō* took to task confectioners for packing sweets into wooden boxes.[70] In the West, it noted, it was common to seal sweets in steel containers to prevent moulds from developing. Continuing to use wooden boxes represented, it concluded, 'a serious hygienic problem' and called on shops to do away with this practice. Responsibilities of the seller also extended to the area of transactions. For it was at the moment in which sweets changed hands from seller to buyer that was important. Much of this gaze on the interaction between the two grew out of medical advice. Appropriating medical advice, Amano Seisai wrote in his housekeeping manual that *wagashi* was a 'massive' problem because of hygienic issues.[71] He directed his readers' attention to the common everyday practice of shopkeepers using their filthy hands to pick up and pack sweets. Regardless of whether the shopkeeper was dealing with fresh or baked confections, it was the same – this was unthinkable with Western sweets. He thus suggested that shopkeepers at least use chopsticks – not their hands – when sales were being conducted.[72] There existed between fingers and nails a multitude of bacteria which, when eaten by the customer, could lead to 'grave' consequences.[73] In the United States, customers would be presented with their purchase in boxes wrapped up in paper and tied up so that they could be easily carried.[74] Clearly this remained a problem well into the 1930s and beyond. In 1930, one housekeeping journal wrote about the use of hands to put sweets into bags.[75] One

[68] Murai, 'Mise uri no kashi ni tsuite', 4.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Anonymous, 'Kashi no orizume wo haishi seyo', 6.
[71] Amano, *Meiryū risō katei shumi*, 175.
[72] Ibid., 176.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Mori, 'Beikoku no kashi', 6.
[75] Niizu, 'Kodomo to kashi ni tsuite', 9.

extreme example the correspondent witnessed was a vendor who exhaled into the bag to make it easier to pack sweets.[76]

## Eating-Consuming

Confections assumed different identities when eaten. Most *yōgashi* were about extending the spaces in which they could be consumed. Ever since the military embraced biscuits, *yōgashi* were preferred because they lasted. They could be exported, taken on long journeys and survive the vagaries of the weather; but it was not necessarily easy to make this advantage count on the confectionary market. As late as 1907, *Kashi Shimpō* expressed disappointment about the drops exhibited by Matsumoto-ya and Fūgetsudō at the Domestic Industrial Exposition.[77] During the summer they would melt, and the trade journal called upon makers to conduct research that would make it possible for sweets to withstand the heat. In the West, it noted, consumers would carry around drops in their pockets. They would take them out and munch on them 'in between work'; but Japanese makers did not have the skills to manufacture such a lifestyle-changing product until Morinaga in 1914. Shortly after setting up shop in Akasaka in 1899, Morinaga made milk caramel that was sold individually based on weight; but it was only when a pocket-sized version entered the market that its portability dramatically increased. Pocket milk caramel was invented to occupy the liminal spaces that other consumer goods struggled to penetrate. One of the product developers, Ōgushi Shōji, recounted his visit to the Imperial Theatre, a Western institution, where spectators' movement appeared restricted.[78] They were forbidden from smoking and eating out of their lunchboxes. Nor did these theatregoers feel they could snack on sweets in view of the nuisance rustling would arouse. For Ōgushi, a cardboard container, which contained individually wrapped pieces of milk caramel (kami-sakku), had the potential to penetrate these liminal spaces

[76] Ibid.

[77] Anonymous, 'Kashi daikan', 5.

[78] Kobayashi, *Kashi 30-nen shi*, 455.

and liberate eaters from their discomfort. Pocket milk caramel had wider implications than the theatre: it could be consumed at home, in the office and on the train. No longer did commuters need to feel concerned about the welfare of fellow passengers. Milk caramel could be enjoyed on crowded trains; taking it out was easy and caused minimal offence. Similar consumer practices were envisioned for chocolate, which was also wrapped in distinctive silver foil to aid portability.[79] It could be carried to cinemas, picnics, zoos and the seaside. Skiers, golfers, hikers also benefited from snacking on chocolate on the go. Even though hot summers imposed limits on movement, the identity of *yōgashi* as being portable became more pronounced as products like milk caramel and chocolate achieved commercial success.

In contrast to the supposedly liberating nature of *yōgashi*, which supported and extended the spaces in which snackers moved, the movement of *wagashi* was frowned upon. One of the main spaces in which *wagashi* eaters, especially children, were feared to tread was the *dagashiya*. In 1907, Sasano Toyomi, in a manual on raising children, noted with massive concern the extent to which children, even from respectable backgrounds, fell under its spell.[80] In one episode, the book recounts how a young boy named Shintarō, accompanied by a female servant, enters a *dagashiya* to buy *daifukumochi*.[81] Once inside, Shintarō is tempted. Children are pan-frying *bottarayaki*, the precursor to *okonomiyaki* (a type of pancake), which was still classified as a snack in this period. Such a sight common to *dagashiya* terrified hygiene-conscious educators and mothers. Eating from the same, filthy cooking plate was one thing; sharing the same utensils with 'non-respectable' children was on a different level of abhorrence. Not only could germs be communicated, but uncivilized behaviour could also be brought back home. During a similar period, Hara Seichirō, in his book about everyday hygiene, recounted how middle-class children, with whom he had spent time living, spurned the offering of biscuits as part of their

[79] Mitsuda, 'From reception to acceptance', 196.
[80] Sasano, *Kodomo no shitsukekata*, 150–1.
[81] Small round rice cakes filled with red bean paste.

snacks (*oyatsu*).[82] After successful pleading with the mother to hand over money, the children – three boys and two girls who attended the prestigious Gakushūin (Peers) school – would walk all the way to a seedier neighbourhood in search of *dagashiya*. Once there, they would munch on *konpeitō*,[83] potato *yōkan* and flavoured water, all of which, Hara commented, damaged the digestive system; the consequences of which had to be borne when children returned home.[84] Concerns were also raised by schools. Even though the time after school did not fall strictly under the responsibility of the elementary school, Sasano, writing in as headmaster of Kyōbashi primary school, expressed concerns that children were bringing in *anpan* – sweet rolls filled with red bean paste – to school, instead of lunch boxes.[85] One in four pupils, he reported, was doing so. Not only did this engender problems of hygiene – *anpan*, it was thought, was prepared a day before it was sold so that it could have turned stale by the time children ate it – it also meant *wagashi* was infiltrating spaces that it should not enter. Caramels were in contrast fine, and Sasano raised no eyebrows at the large number of children bringing them on school outings.[86]

Due to the control families could exert on children, sweets generated fewer fears at home. One major exception was the behaviour of lower class households, which were criticized for handing out pocket money to children all too easily. In the pages of the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, Sakamoto Ryūnosuke, a headmaster at a primary school, fretted about the broader impact of this practice on children from upper and middle-class families, for he could see that well-to-do children could not easily turn down an offer from lower class friends to go to sweet shops.[87] To solve this problem, he suggested, families needed to agree on a course of action. Similarly, parents saw that unified action was needed in relation to snacks offered to children visiting the homes of their friends. In 1914, women's magazines broached this topic, asking readers how a balance could be

[82] Hara, *Doku no hanashi,* 269–70.

[83] Small and colourful candy made mostly from sugar.

[84] Ibid., 272.

[85] *Wayōgashi Shimbun*, November 3, 1916, 15.

[86] Ibid.

[87] *Yomiuri Shimbun*, September 19, 1909, Morning edition, 3.

struck between hospitality and health. For Shimoda Jirō (1872–1938), a professor of Education at Tokyo Women's School (Tōkyō Joshi Kōtō Shihan Gakkō), the answer to this question was straightforward.[88] Parents should instruct children visiting the homes of friends not to turn down the gesture of sweets but politely ask their hosts to wrap them up. Back at home parents would then be able to inspect the contents to see if they could have any adverse effect on the child's digestion. 'Without knowing the child's stomach condition', he concluded, '*mochi-kashi* and the like should not be given'.[89] Most parents, it seems, were in reality unwilling to go that far. When friends came to visit, snacks (*oyatsu*) should be served, but only when the visit coincided with the time when sweets were usually given – at 3 pm. Should visits fall outside this time, hospitality, it was agreed, should be held in check. By doing so, parents could instruct their children to leave before or arrive after 3 pm and thus avoid both causing offence and damaging health. One fundamental solution to all these problems was, however, to create an environment in which children would want to come straight back home after finishing school. Writing in the *Yomiuri Shimbun* in 1913, Kimura Rineko, who taught at Joshibi High School of Art and Design (*Joshibijutsu Daigaku Fuzoku Kōtōgakkō*) in Tokyo, expressed confidence that making something 'unusual' and 'delicious' at home would do the trick.[90] To this end, she recommended simple Western sweets such as pudding, cakes and apple pies. Even here, Western sweets were preferred.

Important to these discussions was, as Shimoda's fear about *mochi* reveals, the kinds of snacks that were offered to children, especially infants. During the period under review, child-rearing manuals, reflecting mainstream medical views, generally recommended *yōgashi* over *wagashi*. In one of the first articles that broached the relationship between children and sweets, the journal *Eisei Shimpō* observed that one-year-old should be fed wafers, bolo (small round biscuits) and biscuits.[91] Only rice crackers,

[88] *Wayōgashi Shimbun*, October 15, 1917, 3.
[89] Ibid.
[90] *Yomiuri Shimbun*, September 21, 1913, Morning edition, 5.
[91] Ishihara, 'Byōnin oyobi shōnoyō no okashi', 4.

the journal concluded, were an acceptable *wagashi*. Nagai Iwao, a paediatrician, went further in declaring that *wagashi* had little to offer.[92] There was a distinct lack of concern, he pointed out, over how Japanese confections impacted on children's bodies. Nor was there much attention paid to digestion or nutrition. For Nagai, *yōkan*, steamed sweets, and rice crackers were therefore to be avoided. 'Confections with *azuki* sweet red beans, sugar, and agar agar, with lots of sugar, should not be given to children,' he warned.[93] What Nagai recommended instead were overwhelmingly Western confections. For snacks, he listed imported products: ladyfingers, sponge cakes, Osborne biscuits, Florida biscuits, rusks and cream crackers.[94]

There was, of course, scepticism about this general preference for *yōgashi* over *wagashi*. In 1916, the renowned paediatrician Takeuchi Kunpei (1883–1973) expressed concerns over the extent to which *yōgashi* was touted as superior.[95] Chocolate was too stimulating, he argued, and would deprive young children of sleep.[96] He thus recommended that children should not be given chocolate until they reached the age of four. Milk caramel, the other representative Western-style confection, should also be selected with care.[97] Due to a boom in sales, products were appearing in which off milk had been used. Even so, these warnings did not mean Takeuchi endorsed *wagashi* instead; his caveat about milk caramel, it bears pointing out, was more about adulteration and less about critiquing the actual ingredients. Sweets typically sold at the *dagashiya* – regardless of whether they were Western or Japanese style – were out of the question. In the end, sweets that 'did no harm', as he conservatively put it, were wafers, cheese cakes and bolo.[98]

[92] Nagai, *Ikuji no shiori*, 172.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid., 169.
[95] Takeuchi, *Jikken kodomo no sodatekata*, 74.
[96] Ibid., 77.
[97] Ibid., 76.
[98] Ibid., 74.

Many of the fears fuelled by the informed discussions of sweets had at their roots the vulnerability of children, especially Japanese children, who were seen to be incapable of making proper choices. In 1909, one magazine reported on the difference between sweets in the United States and Japan, remarking that American children based their judgments on proper notions of health.[99] That stood in stark contrast to Japanese children who would eat 'indiscriminately'. Not only was the problem about sweets per se; it was also about the eater. Despite the fact that children attracted most attention, adults, especially women, were not spared criticism. One of the first customs placed under the spotlight was the hospitality of serving guests the combination of tea and snacks. In 1893, the *Jogaku Zasshi* saw no reason why confectionary should accompany the drink, imploring Meiji housewives to 'rethink this custom'.[100] Above all, it was a health hazard. Snacking meant that the stomach gained little rest; it would be forced to work throughout the day digesting food; there would be 'no summer vacation, no Sunday'.[101] No wonder, it remarked, why a love of confectionary could result in early deaths: the custom of snacking weakened the body. More importantly, offering sweets as an accompaniment to guests resulted in innumerable hours of useless banter. In his manual for women, Tagawa Daikichirō (1869–1947), a journalist, charged that this custom should be abolished.[102] In the interests of money, work efficiency and health, snacks should not be served. Conversation remained 'unaffected' without the presence of snacks.[103] As both these examples serve to show, women and children became easy targets because they were seen to be weak, succumbing to temptation. To become more responsible eaters, they needed to become consumers acting in a more rational manner.

[99] Mori, 'Beikoku no kashi', 6.
[100] Joshi, 'Chagashi haishi no setsu', 256.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Tagawa, *Fujin no shūyō*, 92–3.
[103] Ibid.

## Conclusion

During the first three decades of the twentieth century, distinct confectionary identities emerged in relation to Western and Japanese-style sweets. First, at the level of production, *wagashi* was 'made' while *yōgashi* was 'manufactured'. *Wagashi* making was characterized by a reliance on manual labour conducted in small-scale operations, creating individualized sweets for limited markets. In contrast, *yōgashi* manufacturing was distinguished by its machines operating in large factories, producing similar sweets en masse. Second, at the level of sales, *wagashi* was 'sold' while *yōgashi* was 'marketed'. Characterized by an attachment to direct modes of selling, *wagashi* sellers targeted local markets and remained more or less wedded to clientele built up over generations. In contrast, *yōgashi* companies marketed their products with a broader and national market in mind, embracing newspaper adverts through which an image of sweets could be generated. Third, at the level of practice, *wagashi* was 'eaten' while *yōgashi* was 'consumed'. Eating *wagashi*, especially among children and women, was frowned upon. It was seen as unhealthy, and practices associated with it were criticized as irrational and even dangerous. There was very little foresight, little concern about the broader impact of eating sweets in terms of the snacker's longer term individual welfare. Consuming *yōgashi* was, however, seen to be a more advanced and useful act, helping to improve health and contributing to the wealth of the nation.

In 1914, Shibusawa Eiichi (1840–1931), the eminent industrialist, penned an article in the (confectionary) trade journal, the *Wayōgashi Shimbun*.[104] Looking back on the progress confectioners had made, he applauded the developments in technology and research that had contributed to elevating the sector into an 'industry'. Within the pages of the same journal, Ōkuma Shigenobu (1838–1922), shortly before his return as Prime Minister, also offered his political blessings.[105] Compared to 20 years ago, he reflected, the varieties on offer had increased exponentially so that the sector was now poised to take on the world. Neither of them

[104] *Wayōgashi Shimbun*, February 15, 1914, 2.

[105] *Wayōgashi Shimbun*, March 15, 1914, 2.

explicitly mentioned which type of confectionary they had in mind, but it was obvious where their allegiance lay. Just when *yōgashi* was taking off, the *Asahi Shimbun* wrote about the need for 'confectionary for the Great Powers' (*taikokuteki no kashi*).[106] By this, the newspaper meant that sweets should seek to expand sales overseas. Pointing to the need to combat foreign imports, it encouraged the export of factory-made sweets to places like Hong Kong and Shanghai, and had nothing but praise for Morinaga's intentions to reach beyond Japan. For the *Asahi Shimbun, wagashi* was almost an embarrassment. Ensconced in 'incomplete methods of manufacturing' and trapped in 'narrow fields of operation', the daily saw little promise in *wagashi*'s future. Compared to *yōgashi* manufacturers, *wagashi* makers did not even meet the criteria of a 'serious business' and their goods could not be regarded as 'products'.[107] In short, *yōgashi* was modern, advanced, sophisticated and sublime; *wagashi* was traditional, primitive, vulgar and abject. And it was clear to modernizers which direction the confectionary sector should take.

Despite the national pride expressed in Japanese food today – its benefits for health, aesthetic beauty, attention to detail and seasonality – the example of sweets reminds us how only a hundred years ago, in which industrial catch-up with the West was prioritized, almost the opposite emotion was generated. It was argued that Japanese-style sweets were detrimental to health, placed too much emphasis on appearance rather than the ingredients and were unnecessarily about satisfying local or regional demand that shifted and changed throughout the year. As a result, *wagashi* was increasingly turned into the 'Other' while *yōgashi* became the 'Self'. To be sure, the contrasting identities are not meant to imply any truth or support for either *wagashi* or *yōgashi*. There was also some mixing of styles, and more research into the phenomenon of hybridized confectionary, which attempted to incorporate both 'Western' and 'Japanese' aspects, would no doubt show more overlap. Furthermore, the public discourses that informed these identities, it should be borne in mind, emanated mainly from supporters of *yōgashi*, whose loud voices should

[106] Anonymous, 'Kashi no hanashi (1)', 6.
[107] Ibid.

not be taken to indicate that, in terms of popularity, *yōgashi* was favoured. During the period under review, the proportion of *yōgashi*, while increasing, was constantly inferior to that of *wagashi*. In 1938, the share of *yōgashi* in the overall confectionary market stood at 34.4 per cent in contrast to that of *wagashi* which stood firm at 65.6 per cent.[108] Nor did Western-style confectioners have much success overturning consumer habits. As late as 1933, the *Hōchi Shimbun* indicated that buying Japanese confectionary was relatively easy because it involved an outing to a familiar locale; but shopping for Western confectionary was a lot more complicated because 'it must be produced in large factories. That is why one has to carefully examine both the trust and quality before choosing superior products'.[109] To appreciate the impact of the process set in motion by the Paris Exposition, it would be necessary to extend the period of investigation to the 1960s when *yōgashi* becomes dominant.

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**Tatsuya Mitsuda** is an assistant professor at Keio University. He was educated at Keio, Bonn, and Cambridge universities, and received his Ph.D. in History from Cambridge. His research interests broadly cover the history of food and animals in Japan and Germany. His most recent publications are: 'From Reception to Acceptance: Chocolate in Japan, c, 1870–1935', 'Food & History 12/1 (2014), 175–200' and 'Entangled Histories: German Veterinary Medicine, c. 1770–1900', Medical History 61/1 (2017), 25–47.

# For Gluttons, Not Housewives: Japan's First Gourmet Magazine, *Kuidōraku*

Eric C. Rath

Restaurant reviews specialize in providing information about dining out locally, and they can also contribute to national discussions about culinary identity. When the globally famous Michelin Guide affirmed in late 2015 that Tokyo had more starred restaurants than any other city in the world for the ninth year straight, the story was breaking news and a matter of national pride in Japan.[1] Five years after the launch of the first Michelin Guide in France in 1900, the earliest regular restaurant reviews started appearing in print in Japan; these too, sought to place dining out in a larger national – if not international – context. More than simply offering reports on where to go and what to eat, the magazine that printed Japan's first restaurant reviews framed the ephemeral and personal experience of dining out as part of a

The author appreciates the comments of Benjamin Uchiyama and Alexy Simmons on this chapter.

[1] 'Tokyo Retains Gourmet Crown in Global Michelin Rankings', *Japan Times*, 1 December 2015, accessed online from www.japantimes.co.jp.

E.C. Rath (✉)
Department of History, University of Kansas, Lawrence, USA
e-mail: erath@ku.edu

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national debate about the definition of good food. Today, the 'traditional Japanese dietary cultures' (*washoku*) included in the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage listing celebrate the customs and knowledge of the home chef, and yet, a century ago the first popular monthly about Japanese cuisine valued restaurant meals much more than home cooking.

The first recurring column of restaurant reviews in Japan appeared in *Culinary Magazine* (*Kuidōraku*), a monthly published from May 1905 to August 1907. Launched in the month of Japan's military defeat of Russia in the Russo-Japanese War, *Culinary Magazine* embodied a new sense of confidence in the nation's dietary culture as one deserving exhibition in a monthly publication. The publication briefly included an English-language table of contents as if to assert an international readership, but its targeted market was a wealthy urban middle- and upper-class audience accustomed to newspapers, magazines, and to dining out.[2] *Kuidōraku* took an eclectic approach to '*Pleasures of the Way of Eating*', which is a literal translation of the magazine's title. An advertisement for the debut edition heralded the monthly as 'a must read for people who want to eat delicious food, those who wish to create meals economically and those who seek to improve their health'.[3]

But, eating delicious food was not necessarily the same thing as cooking economically. *Culinary Magazine* struggled between trying to appeal, on the one hand, to a wealthy male readership eager to dine out but less willing – or able – to cook themselves, while on the other hand, it sought to support a female readership taxed with preparing healthy and thrifty food at home, but largely unable to dine out themselves. Writers for *Culinary Magazine* occasionally challenged the elitism of fine dining and acknowledged the barriers of wealth, social background and gender that prohibited many – if not most – of the monthly's readers from eating at the best restaurants. On several

[2] From issue number 1.5 (September 1905) to 2.2 (February 1906) *Kuidōraku* included an English table of contents, which used the title 'Kui do Raku or Culinary Magazine'. Advertisements in the magazine make use of some English words, but the remainder of the monthly was in Japanese, so the value of the inclusion of the English table of contents was probably to make the journal look more cosmopolitan and international rather than appeal to English readers who would not otherwise be able to make sense of it. *Kuidōraku* magazine was revived from 1928 to 1941.

[3] *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 15 May 1905, morning edition, 1.

occasions, the editors professed an equal balance between coverage of restaurants and home cooking, but in practice the magazine published seven times more articles about dining out than about the world of the housewife.[4] Thus, restaurant reviews, found in an ongoing column and in occasional feature stories, were a defining feature of *Culinary Magazine*. Most of the published readers' letters to the publication were about restaurants. The monthly even created a club where staff and readers could dine out together, critique the meals they shared and the magazine would publish the findings. As this chapter describes, the lopsided coverage given to restaurant dining not only contributed to a break between the monthly and the person who had originally inspired the publication but it also limited the monthly's potential wider appeal, a reason why the magazine lasted less than 3 years. Despite its short lifespan, *Culinary Magazine* initiated a national debate about where to find the best food and how to eat well, topics that remain central to Japanese culture to this day.

## Restaurant Reviews Before *Culinary Magazine*

The restaurant reviews and accounts of dining out in *Culinary Magazine* were innovative because they had little historical precedent. Despite hundreds of culinary publications in the early modern period (1600–1868), none of the corpus of books featuring menus, recipes and ritual uses for food included reviews of restaurants.[5] There was no Japanese Grimod de la Reynière (1758–1837) who published the yearly *L'Almanach des gourmands* offering reviews of restaurants in Paris from 1803 to 1812. A few Japanese restaurateurs wrote cookbooks. The most prominent example is Kuriyama Zenshirō (d. 1839), the fourth-generation owner of Yaozen, who authored

[4] Imai, 'Ryōri zasshi', 198.

[5] A few travellers commented on the food during their journeys. Yamazaki Eizan wrote *Soba Road Diary* (*Soba dōchūki,* circa 1830), a narrative of his visits to soba shops along the Tokkaidō and Nakasendō roads. With only a brief description of each establishment that included a poem, Yamazaki's unpublished manuscript was more a testimony to the author's love of soba than a review of the quality of noodle restaurants. Yamazaki, *Soba dōchūki*.

*Edo's Fashionable Gourmands* (*Edo ryūkō ryōritsū*), which featured recipes from his noted establishment, published over the course of four volumes in 1822, 1825, 1829 and 1835.[6] The illustrated text advertised the type of cuisine Yaozen provided, but the book could hardly be called an objective report of dining there. *Morisada's Voluminous Sketches* (*Morisada mankō*) by Kitagawa Kisō (Morisada), completed around 1853, provides some comments about the prepared foods for sale in major cities, but the author did not weigh in on the quality of these eateries, and his observations were never published in his lifetime. Nisshinsha 'Soba Lover' (Yūkyōshi) did pass judgement on the many buckwheat noodle restaurants in Edo in his *Encyclopaedia of Soba* (*Soba zensho*), dated 1751, but his work also remained in manuscript form, which limited its dissemination in the early modern period.[7] The names of other eminent restaurants in Edo are known through their listings on topical fight cards (*mitake banzuke*), inexpensive, anonymous broadsheets that were based on the format of sumo fight cards to cleverly rank people or objects in an imagined contest. *Comparison of Restaurants* (*Oryōri kondate kurabe*), published in 1853, is a typical example of the genre.[8] The venerable restaurant Yaozen is placed above the fray in the role of a fictional sponsor of the match between eateries, which are listed on two panels on each side of the broadsheet. Following the convention of sumo fight cards used even today, the size of the font and the position on the page delineated a restaurant's putative ranking. But the reason why the name of one restaurant is printed larger and higher on the broadsheet than another is not explained, since the enjoyment in reading any topical fight cards was to puzzle out how the comparisons were determined.[9]

When the first daily newspapers appeared in Japan in 1871, restaurant owners quickly grasped the potential of modern advertising. Advertisements for the restaurant Kyōkaen, which offered customers a meal that included

[6] Yaozen is arguably one of Japan's most famous and exclusive, traditional restaurants. It opened around 1763 in Asakusa in the Edo period and remains in operation to this day.

[7] Regarding the discussion of restaurants in *Soba Encyclopedia*, see Rath, '*Food Fights, But It's Always for Fun in Early Modern Japan*'.

[8] *Oryōri kondate kurabe*.

[9] For a discussion of culinary versions of parody fight cards and an image of one, see Rath, '*The Tastiest Dish in Edo*'.

sake for 70 *sen*, appear in January 1875 in the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, a little over 2 months after that newspaper began printing. A few months later, the Western-style restaurant Nagasaki-tei appealed for business in the same daily.[10] The Kyoto restaurant Hiranoya-tei advertised in the *Asahi Shimbun* in the year of the newspaper's establishment in Osaka in 1879.[11]

But the same dailies rarely commented on restaurants except when something extraordinary or notorious happened.[12] The closest article to a review appears in the morning edition of the *Asahi Shimbun* on 27 December 1883, describing the popularity of a newly opened restaurant Koi-tei, which combined elegant food and serving ware with inexpensive prices that caused a continual line of customers.[13] But such notices are rare, indicating that restaurants might pay to advertise in papers, but that did not translate into coverage about dining out.

## *Culinary Magazine* and Murai Gensai

*Culinary Magazine* was the first publication to include restaurant reviews as a regular feature, but it was not the first Japanese magazine dedicated to food. *Kitchen Knife and Seasoning* (*Hōchō anbai*), published from 1886 to 1889 and revived briefly in 1891, was produced by and for

[10] One hundred *sen* was equivalent to one yen. *Yomiuri Shimbun*, 14 January 1875, morning edition, 2 and 19 June 1875, morning edition, 2. The cost of a 70 *sen* meal was quite high compared to a serving of *sukiyaki* advertised for four *sen* at a restaurant in Shiba Hamamatsuchō in Tokyo in the same year. A steak at the same establishment cost five *sen*. See Ehara and Higashiyotsuyanagi, *Nihon no shokubunkashi nenpyō*, 157–158.

[11] *Asahi Shimbun,* 12 November 1879, morning edition, 4.

[12] Restaurants made the news for the events that took place there, rather than their daily operations, which were not considered newsworthy. Since these incidents varied, it is hard to find typical examples, but some stories from *Yomiuri Shimbun* include how a restaurant in Ueno specializing in bird dishes decided to close for the day after a crow flew inside and died, which was considered an ill omen (18 May 1875, 1); in 1883, a woman was arrested in a restaurant in Shiba in Tokyo for running away after failing to pay her bill at a grilled eel restaurant (15 September 1883, morning edition, 2); on 24 February 1894, four British sailors ate and drank their fill at a restaurant in Yokohama, caused a disruption and then fled, injuring six policemen who tried to apprehend them (26 February 1894, morning edition, 3); in another incident someone sustained light injuries during a fight at a restaurant in Asakusa when they were struck on the head with a sake flask (17 March 1901, morning edition, 4).

[13] *Asahi Shimbun,* 27 December 1883, morning edition, 3.

professional chefs. Women's magazines, such as *Ladies' Pictorial* (*Fujin gahō*), founded in 1905, and *Ladies' Friend* (*Fujin no tomo*), established in 1906, also featured discussions of home cooking and recipes, but with the upper- and middle-class housewife in mind.

Other publications offered advice about cooking to the professional or home cook, but only *Culinary Magazine* could boast of its connection to Japan's most noted food writer, Murai Gensai (1863–1927), author of the original *Kuidōraku*, a wildly popular novel that served as the monthly's inspiration.[14] Murai was a newspaper reporter and author of fiction who studied Russian and lived in California for a year. His novel first appeared as a year-long series in the *Hōchi Shimbun* newspaper in 1903. When he expanded his tale into a four-volume book, the novel enjoyed tremendous success with more than 38 re-printings in just 2 years exceeding more than 100,000 copies. Adaptations for the Kabuki stage followed, which confirmed Murai as a household name – to the point that some spoke of a 'Murai-style of cooking'.[15] In 1905, a magazine borrowing the title of Murai's bestseller, based on his ideas, and featuring him as an occasional contributor, seemed like a sure bet.

For Murai, food was not only something pleasurable and necessary to sustain life: the quality of prepared food was also an international measure of a nation's development. In the same way that the Meiji government had adapted ideas from Europe and North America to modernize laws and institutions including the armed forces and education, Murai contended that Westernizing home cooking was needed to advance Japanese civilization. Murai's protagonists, Nakagawa and his sister Otowa, were both educated in the best traditional and latest culinary techniques. In a series of short episodes harkening back to the novel's origin as a daily newspaper column, the pair conveyed their knowledge to their unenlightened acquaintances: a gluttonous man

[14] The title of Murai's novel was pronounced *Kuidōraku* when it first appeared in 1903, but he later advocated a different reading for the same initial kanji, calling his work *Shokudōraku*. See Kuroiwa, *Shokuiku no susume*, 19. Since the magazine chose the former reading for its masthead, that will be the one used here.

[15] Iida, '"Kuidōraku" ni okeru seiyō ryōri', 34; Saitō, *Nihon shokubunka jimbutsu jiten*, 319; Ishida, '"Kuidōraku" sakka', 45–46.

from the countryside named Ōhara, and his uncouth and obese fiancée, Odai. Murai's preferred English rendering of the novel's title was '*Pleasures of House-keeping*', which points to the locale where he envisioned the best food to be prepared.[16] Men like Nakagawa could assist in improving cooking by demanding high standards and liberally sharing their knowledge of cuisine, but culinary success according to Murai depended on a housewife's scientific management of the kitchen, which made Otowa a main actor in the drama. Popularly, Otowa was the recognized hero of the novel. *Kuidōraku*-themed restaurants and makers of aprons borrowed her name for their establishments and products, as described below. Despite the fact that she remains unmarried throughout the novel, Otowa's frugal management of the household and high level of cooking skills embody the qualities of a 'good wife and wise mother', the idealized role for women that the Meiji government heavily promoted after the turn of the twentieth century. Women were denied the right to vote or even discuss politics in public, but the Meiji regime sought to mobilize the important service to the state that wives and mothers performed in the home. Murai's novel endorsed the view that a woman's most important duty was as a homemaker.

Murai's contributions to *Culinary Magazine* continued the emphasis on home cooking that made him famous. On the first page of the monthly's second edition, he editorialized the need to develop new methods to prepare rice, lamenting the fact that there were only five or six new rice dishes in Japan in contrast to the 400 varieties said to be found in the United States alone.[17] The December 1905 edition offered daily recipe suggestions drawn from Murai's novel, which received a full-page advertisement in the same edition.[18] Murai's presence in the magazine was felt beyond his few contributions to early issues. The September 1905 issue

[16] The title, *Pleasures of House-keeping,* appears in an authorized biography of Murai written by Unkichi Kawai as preface to his translation of Murai's novel *Hana, A Daughter of Japan*. See Murai, *Hana, a Daughter of Japan*, XL. Murai biographer Kuroiwa Hisako observes that this translation of the title of *Kuidōraku* expresses Murai's goals that his novel was more than just an appreciation of gourmet food. Kuroiwa, *"Kuidōraku" no hito Murai Gensai*, 21.

[17] Murai, 'Kome ryōri no kenkyū'.

[18] 'Jūnigatsu no ryōri koyomi'. The advertisement for Murai's book appears in *Kuidōraku* 1.8 (1905), iii.

contained Murai's list of aphorisms about home cooking on a large centrefold. The other side featured an advertisement with a detailed table of contents for his new book on tips for home cooking, *Treasury of the Kitchen* (*Daidokoro chōhōki*), published that year.[19] The same issue featured a flattering story from the magazine's editorial staff about Murai and his wife Takako's cooking at home, which was far better fare than a Western restaurant according to the reporter who ate there.[20] The January 1906 issue printed two conversations with Murai, one about New Year's cuisine and another about the contents of the sequel to his novel *Kuidōraku*, appearing as a daily column in *Hōchi Shimbun* newspaper that year.[21] A few pages later in the same issue, readers find Murai's remarks in a debate about the nature of Japanese cuisine and then directions on how to make an apron, designed by Murai Takako and named for Otowa from Murai's novel. The inside back cover of the issue showcased a full-page limited offer for purchasers of the four-volume expanded version of Murai's novel, which provided a complimentary foreign postcard and the chance to win a cook's outfit of Murai's design.

Murai's involvement with *Culinary Magazine* appears to have lasted a little over 6 months from the time that the monthly first appeared in print to his final contribution in the March 1906 issue, the year he joined the editorial board of a new magazine, *Ladies' World* (*Fujin sekai*). At *Ladies' World*, Murai offered practical advice for the housewife and Takako wrote the column, 'Gensai's Wife Discusses Cooking'.[22] Since Murai's contributions to *Culinary Magazine* ended abruptly, it is probable that Murai's move resulted from a difference of opinion about the direction of the monthly, a point we shall now consider.

Murai's focus at *Ladies' World* was instructional information about cooking for women, but *Culinary Magazine* hoped to educate eaters of

[19] Murai, 'Daidokoro kokoroe uta'.

[20] Henshūshi, 'Murai Gensaishi no katei to ryōri', 50–55.

[21] The sequel, *More Pleasures of House-keeping* (*Shokudōraku zokuhen*), failed to win the same popular acclaim as the original.

[22] The column lasted for 6 years and was later republished as a series of four books under Murai's wife's name with a co-author. See Murai and Ishizuka, *Gensai,* vols 1–3; Murai and Ishizuka, *Gensai fujin no ryōridan*. Vol. 4. The co-author, Ishizuka Gettei was a relative who transcribed the conversation. See Kuroiwa, "*Kuidōraku" no hito Murai Gensai,* 252.

both sexes who may or may not cook themselves. In its debut issue, the monthly announced that it would give the same emphasis to eating as it would to preparing food:

> Food and meals are the most important factors to a successful life: they are neither a frivolity nor a diversion, but should instead be given serious attention. That being said, one cannot focus myopically on the practical and the utilitarian, because one cannot very well forget what is interesting and diverting. One must keep faith in both the edifying and the pleasurable. Ultimately that is the way of pleasurable eating (*kuidōraku*), and the approach that will be attempted to be maintained at this magazine.[23]

If home cooking fell into the category of the 'practical and utilitarian', then that made it less 'interesting' and 'diverting' than meals in other contexts. The 'way of pleasurable eating' led outside the home to the restaurant, and provided a rationale for publishing restaurant reviews.

There is evidence to suggest that Murai was critical of the view that restaurant food deserved equal attention to home cooking. In Murai's novel, devoted to elevating the art and science of cooking at home, the authoritative Nakagawa pronounces, 'the typical Western-style restaurants one goes to produce dishes that no one could possibly put in their mouth'.[24] Rather than learn from eating out, Nakagawa proposes the creation of a culinary club (*kuidōrakukai*) to teach young women from good families how to cook Western cuisine at home. As described below, *Culinary Magazine* adopted this idea and the name *kuidōrakukai* for one of its own food clubs. However, the monthly reinterpreted Murai's notion of a study group for women cooking at home into an association largely of men focused on dining out at expensive restaurants. Murai may have been the person who dubbed these groups disparagingly the 'Glutton's [sic] Meeting'. The inclusion of an English-language table of contents for the magazine where that term appears ended in the same month that Murai's articles stopped appearing in the publication.

[23] 'Gekkan kuidōraku no hakkō', *Kuidōraku* 1.1, 1.

[24] Murai, *Kuidōraku, aki no kan*, 271.

In October 1906, 7 months after Murai's work stopped appearing in *Culinary Magazine*, the editors published an essay about the magazine's focus, which explained the decision to include even more articles about dining out. After recapping the monthly's initial goal of providing information about eating, nutrition and cooking, the article stated: 'Besides being the kind friend to the housewife, kitchen consultant, and guide, another aspect of our responsibilities will be as the companion to the food connoisseur and the weathervane to the world of fine dining.'[25] Again the magazine staff differentiated between the meals prepared at home and the ones in restaurants, implying that the former, however healthy or frugal, were not as elevated or as pleasurable as the latter. Thus, Murai's departure only solidified the view at the magazine about the importance of covering fine dining. A survey of the monthly's contents finds that less than 19 per cent of the articles were about home cooking. In contrast, more than 72 per cent of the articles were on topics such as dining out and the activities of the 'Glutton's Meeting(s)', food companies, historical essays and articles by prominent chefs.[26]

Irrespective of Murai's departure, *Culinary Magazine* could still call upon a list of luminaries in the food and cultural world to write for it. Frequent contributors included the noted food writers and chefs Ikama Masaki and Ishii Taijirō (1871–1953), who headed the centuries-old Ikama and Shijō schools of traditional ceremonial cuisine (*hōchō shiki*), respectively. Articles by other food educators appeared in the magazine such as by the cookbook author Akahori Minekichi II (1885–1956), who operated the first cooking school for women in Tokyo, which had been established by his father. *Culinary Magazine* further raised the profiles of these celebrity chefs by featuring both their writings and their portrait photographs as front pieces for the publication. Akahori's cooking school with students and instructor appears on the front page of the September 1905 edition, and 2 months later a portrait photo of Ikama Masaki adorned the November issue. Other prominent chefs who wrote for *Culinary Magazine* are simply known by the name of their establishment;

[25] 'Honshi no kairyō', 3.
[26] Imai, 'Ryōri zasshi', 198.

thus we find articles by the Master of [the restaurant] Yaozen and Master of [the confectioner] Fugetsudō (see also Mitsuda's article in this volume). Cookbook authors, Saitō Rokusan and Asai Denzaburō, contributed essays as did experts in a wide range of fields including Sonobe Shikyō, author of children's literature, Matsuoka Tobako, a specialist in etiquette, and novelist Maeda Shozan (1871–1941).[27] Their writings are joined by articles from a surprising number of visual artists including Tashiro Gyōshū (b. 1881), Fukuta Shōgei (1869–1909), Mishima Shōsō (1856–1928) and Kubota Beisai (1874–1937). The names of these authors usually appeared without introduction indicating that they were well known to the magazine's readers. Many of these writers may also have written under pennames because one finds works by authors named Willow-Moon (Ryūgetsu), Bunny-Deer (Toroku) and someone who wrote under a far less poetic nom-de-plume: Pseudonym (Kuregashi). Among these, Bunny-Deer was especially prolific, producing some 20 articles, including four in the same issue (Fig. 2).

## Restaurant Reviews in *Culinary Magazine*

Restaurant reviews exemplify *Culinary Magazine*'s emphasis that pleasurable dining meant eating out. Most of the 78 articles about restaurants appear as individual essays. Someone under the pseudonym Rokusanjin authored a guide to Tokyo restaurants near Ueno for visitors to the sixth national industrial exposition that occurred in 1907. That essay includes notes about what one might generally expect from all restaurants in the capital, so that readers unaccustomed to dining out would know what they should expect to pay. The author explained that a multi-course *kaiseki* meal usually cost about two yen with drinks included, but that payments to the servers and female entertainers were also required, adding another 50 *sen* (half a yen) to the bill. In sum, dining out at a finer establishment should not cost more

[27] The chefs collaborated on a cookbook from the same publisher as *Culinary Magazine*. See Asai and Saitō, *Miso ryōri nihyakushu*.


**Fig. 2** Cover of *Kuidōraku* (*Culinary Magazine*)

than three yen – an amount 8.5 times the cost of a year's subscription to the magazine. But for readers with more limited resources, the author introduced a range of eateries near Ueno: a Western restaurant best for its coffee; two places specializing in tofu; two soba shops and two chicken restaurants. One of these establishments, he warned, turned 'damned awful' when the main chef was not cooking. Others he found only notable for their views of surrounding scenery.[28] The article, which appeared in April 1907, must have been well received, because it was followed by a three-part series on the eateries within the industrial exhibit for the issues of May, June and August of that year. Besides restaurants, reviewers profiled the noted products of confectioners. Mishima Shōsō lent his artistic expertise to a two-part essay on the sweets from famous shops in Tokyo for the first and second issues of the magazine.[29]

## 'Peculiar Nice Food'

Besides these occasional pieces, the magazine featured a monthly column on dining out titled 'Guide to the Unusually Delicious' (*Myō na umai mono annai*), or what the translator of the English table of contents rendered as 'Peculiar Nice Food' and alternatively, 'Peculiar Dainties'. The column remained at a familiar spot near the end of each issue. Sei Kyūrō debuted the column in the first issue and continued it for almost a year through March 1906. After a 2-month hiatus, Okamoto Rokusen took on the column and continued it to the termination of the publication. Very few of the articles in *Culinary Magazine* introduced the authors, so we do not know the backgrounds of Sei and Okamoto, who restricted their personal information to their dining preferences.[30]

[28] Rokusanjin, 'Tōkyō no ryōri annai (1)', 77–82.

[29] Mishima, 'Kashi hyōbanki'.

[30] Someone by the name of Sei Kyūrō published theatre reviews in 1904 in the literary monthly *New Currents* (*Shinchō*) and in 1908 in *Letters Magazine* (*Tegami Zasshi*), published by Yūrakusha, the same company that printed *Kuidōraku*; Zasshi Kiji Sakuin Shūsei Dētabēsu. Sei admits in one article that he hailed from Nagato, the northwest part of Yamaguchi prefecture. Sei, 'Myō na umai mono annai (sono shi)', 33.

Sei Kyūrō introduced the rationale for the column in the debut issue in which he tried to explain the meaning of the phrase in the title 'unusually delicious'.

> It is my intention to introduce only the most unusually delicious eating-places. There are many things that can be called unusual. There is the unusual cuisine of Yaozen that makes one lick one's lips, and everyone would say that was unusual. Then there are certainly the unusual things that cause us to raise our eyebrows saying 'are you really going to eat that? That is unusual!' But from such a standpoint, ultimately everything could be called unusual. So what type of unusual is the truly unusual? Since this question could devolve into a situation where the unusual becomes impossible to apprehend, exactly what is being called unusual will be announced right at the start [of each review]. The things that I intend to introduce are those that are not generally known to people; those that are unobserved; specialty products; those only available at one shop in Tokyo; products that might be similar but establishments where the techniques are different; places that are unorthodox and unusual . . . and so on. However, even if they are unusual, if the food tastes bad, I will not introduce it. I have no use at all for causing distress over rotten tofu.[31]

By introducing the unusual, Sei sought to broaden his readers' knowledge about the types of prepared foods available, while bearing in mind the maxim that the unusual must also be delicious.

Over the course of the series, the two authors introduced a variety of eateries, from cheap beef on rice establishments that charged a few *sen* to places that specialized in loach soup, blowfish, seafood, chicken, grilled eel, fried tofu, soba, boiled tofu, sushi and cod. Tempura restaurants were the most frequently listed. The columnists also covered confectioners, spotlighting the shops selling the best or most unusual dumplings (*dango*), rice crackers, barnyard millet cakes, plum candy and rice cakes in sweet azuki syrup (*shiruko*). They mentioned the best places for vegetables pickled in sake lees (*kasuzuke*) and where to buy good *amazake*, the warm beverage made from rice, hot water, and *kōji* mould. All of their reviews followed the

[31] Sei, 'Myō na umai mono annai', 42.

same format of providing exact directions to the establishment, listing the prices, and frequently naming and quoting conversations with the chefs or owners. The fact that the writers interacted with the stores' management begs the question of how they selected the businesses and whether or not they were compensated for doing so and by whom.

In December 1905, Sei Kyūrō reviewed Mitsuboshi, the third branch of Otowa-tei, which opened in 1904, the restaurant named after the female protagonist from Murai Gensai's novel, as noted earlier. Sei reported that Mitsuboshi's customers could order Western-style dishes priced between 7 and 20 *sen* or simply have milk with bread. Beer and whiskey were also available. He noted that the price was inexpensive given the quality and taste of the food, but the portions were small. Mitsuboshi exceeded the quality of the original Otowa-tei, which Sei found disappointing even after making several visits to it.[32] In July 1905, Sei reviewed a Korean restaurant, which he declared 'truly unusual', using the column's buzzwords. He described Korean food as a blend of four parts Western and six parts Chinese, but his report offered little more than the restaurant's menu.[33]

Okamoto provided a more voyeuristic expedition in his penultimate column where he wrote up his visit to a 'one *sen* meal shop', the lowest category of eatery that usually featured recycled food such as the leftover rice from box lunch shops. 'In a word, one *sen* meal shops are extremely bleak, but that does not mean that all of them serve particularly dreadful food.' With that preamble, he described entering the door of an unnamed establishment in Udagawabashi in Shibuya, where he discovered, 'a long narrow wooden table with seating places on either side. The kitchen was visible off to the side, and four or five older men and youths worked there'. Okamoto had a hard time following the rapid speech of the server, but he and his companion ordered tofu soup and a squid stew. Looking around at the other customers, Okamoto was relieved to see reputable people, men who appeared to be shop hands, someone who seemed like he was in the lumber trade and another who was probably a streetcar driver. A man in a uniform, either a train conductor or

[32] Sei, 'Myō na umai mono annai (sono go)', 47.
[33] Ibid., 51.

postman, lent an air of respectability to the place. When the steaming bowl of food arrived, Okamoto tried it with suspicion, but found it much better than he had feared. He declared the fare far better than the worst restaurant. Okamoto's unnamed companion observed, 'for breakfast one can finish off two bowls of soup, three bowls of rice, and some pickles. And that would be five or six *sen*. I don't understand how people can tolerate reheated rice from a lodging house or rotten grains from a box lunch shop'.[34] Readers of *Culinary Magazine* paid double the amount of a six *sen* meal for the price of a single issue, and so were not the typical customers of such establishments. Okamoto's report provided them with the vicarious pleasure of gazing at what the sturdy working class ate. He may have intended his review to grant some prestige to the lowest rank of eatery, but he succeeded in making a spectacle of the only dining experience that some could afford.

*Culinary Magazine*'s emphasis on restaurant reviews – and in particular the column '*Guide to the Unusually Delicious*' – captured readers' attention judging from the letters included in the monthly's 'Readers' Column', which identified the letter writers only by pseudonyms. One reader complained when the magazine omitted the monthly column of restaurant reviews.[35] In the October 1906 issue, a low ranking sumo wrestler bragged about the amount of food he recently consumed at a restaurant and asked Okamoto Rokusen to take him along with him the next time he reviewed a restaurant. 'Not only do I eat a lot, I know what tastes good and bad.'[36] A writer identified as 'Foodie in Training' (*shoku shugyōka*) asked the magazine to publish a portrait of Sei Kyūrō. One wonders if that letter came from a restaurant owner who wanted to know what the reviewer looked like when, and if, he visited their establishment.[37] Readers frequently offered other suggestions for fine dining.[38] Two letters praised the eatery Mugitoro for its good food and

[34] Okamoto, 'Myō na umai mono (sono nijū san)', 72–73.
[35] 'Dokusha ran', 2.13, 87.
[36] 'Dokusha ran', 2.11, 86–87.
[37] 'Dokusha ran', 2.3, 51.
[38] 'Dokusha ran', 2.13, 87.

inexpensive prices. The first letter, which appeared in the October 1906 issue, used the word unusual (*myō*) six times in a single sentence, adopting the catch phrase from Sei and Okamoto's column to try to rank Mugitoro among the other establishments featured in their reviews. The second letter published 4 months later referenced the first letter and confirmed the restaurant's quality and fair prices.[39] Other readers adopted the Reader's Column as a forum for airing their complaints about restaurants. One revealed that the restaurant Iroha in Asakusa, which advertised game hunted by falcons, in fact sourced its meats by other means. A reader named 'North-Country Born' (*Hokukokusei*) boldly stated: 'If one is asked about what tastes awful, there is nothing that tastes as bad as the dreadful food at the Hanagoya in Tokyo.' Another lamented that the chicken restaurant Torimasu had fallen in quality and employed rude servers. Conversely, the best beef steak could be found at the restaurant London, but the writer who offered that opinion, and challenged others to go to the establishment to judge this for themselves, rated the rest of London's fare to be of ordinary quality: other venues sold tastier stew and beef with cabbage dishes.[40] Readers of the column would learn to avoid the tempura restaurant Tendora in Ginza, which 'is not only utterly disgusting and run down but also an establishment of bad taste'. Another writer claimed that the beef sold in a small establishment in Ueno was actually horsemeat.[41]

Whether they reflect the actual views of readers or those of the magazine's staff, the contributions to the Readers' Column most often addressed restaurants rather than home cooking. Only one reader wrote for recipes. A person identified as 'Born as a Mountain Monkey in Gifu prefecture' (*Gifu-ken yamazaru umare*) asked the magazine to publish more chicken recipes since beef was unavailable in his locale. The derogatory nickname may have been used to show humility, but it confirmed an association with that rural locale and backwardness.[42]

[39] 'Dokusha ran', 2.11, 87. The second letter appears in 'Dokusha ran', 3.2, 89.

[40] 'Dokusha ran', 2.14, 94–96.

[41] 'Dokusha ran', 3.2, 89–91.

[42] 'Dokusha ran', 2.3, 50.

People from Hida, the mountainous northern part of Gifu, were often compared disparagingly with monkeys.[43] The magazine's staff and its erudite readers may have quietly chuckled at another letter from a reader from a rural area. In the October 1906 issue, someone who also identified himself as hailing from a remote mountain village, asked for directions on how to hold a fork, use a knife and properly eat Western meals.[44]

## 'Glutton's Meeting' and Cooking Clubs

The tension between dining out in posh surroundings and frugal home cooking was also evident in two organizations *Culinary Magazine* founded in January 1906. As noted earlier, the inspiration for these groups came from a scene in Murai Gensai's novel where the character Nakagawa envisioned a group called the *Kuidōrakukai* consisting of

> An organization limited to 30 people that would meet at an aristocrat's mansion. These followers of the pleasures of house-keeping (*kuidōraku*) would commence a club of the finest foodstuffs. It should be noted that it would be important to find candidates for that purpose among women of good families, but the main goal would be to initiate a familial association whose purpose was to research food. Membership fees would cost two yen per person, and all of that two yen would go toward ingredients for making delicacies and the costs of cooking.

Thinking aloud, Nakagawa proposed guest visits by professional chefs who would demonstrate cooking techniques. He promised to devise elegant menus for these gatherings, and he imagined forming different monthly groups based on the membership fees of one yen or two yen. Alternatively, one group could focus on Western cooking and another

[43] Ema, *Hida no onnatachi*, 1.
[44] 'Dokusha ran', 2.11, 86.

on eclectic cooking. And Nakagawa suggested that groups could be established in different parts of Tokyo.[45]

The January 1906 issue of *Culinary Magazine* proposed the creation of two different food groups, and both deviated from the organizations described in Murai's story. One association, called the 'Food Trends Group' (*Shoku shikai*), preserved Murai's vision of a meeting of people to research cooking, but without restricting membership to wealthy young women; indeed, it is uncertain if any women ever attended the meetings of the Food Trends Group. The second group, called the *Kuidōrakukai*, took its name from the aforementioned scene in Murai's novel – as well as the title of his novel and the masthead of the magazine. However, the magazine's *Kuidōrakukai* departed from Murai's vision even further because it was not a cooking circle, but rather a dining club that met monthly in the better restaurants in Tokyo, hence the English translation 'Glutton's Meeting' rather than one that referenced the '*Pleasures of House-keeping*', Murai's authorized translation for *Kuidōraku*.

The Food Trends Group was closer in spirit to Murai's vision of a culinary research club, but comprised a different membership than upper-class women. Two principles guided the new group: first, it was restricted to readers of the magazine; and second, members had to pay 25 *sen* in fees each time and bring ten *sen* worth of prepared foods as 'homework'. The first meeting was slated for the Otowa-tei in Hongyoku, named after the heroine in Murai's novel, thereby reinforcing the purpose of the group in line with Murai's ideas on home cooking, but also highlighting an internal tension in the magazine since the critic Sei Kyūrō had panned that restaurant in his column only a month earlier, as noted above. The first homework assignment was to bring a horsemeat dish valued at least 10 *sen*. In addition to the opportunity to discuss cooking in a convivial atmosphere, the announcement promised that participants would enjoy three different Western-style dishes prepared for them and that they could bring their own alcohol.[46] Horsemeat was less expensive than beef, which gave rise to

[45] Murai, *Kuidōraku, Aki no kan*, 270–271.
[46] 'Shoku shikai', *Kuidōraku* 2.1, 58–59.

the fact that unscrupulous establishments often substituted one for the other as a writer to the Readers' Column had observed. The fact that the readers also brought their own drinks suggests that the event was intended for the more budget conscious than the participants of the magazine's other food group.

The announcement for the Food Trends Group, which appeared in a small column near the back of the January 1906 edition, made a stark contrast to the article on page three proposing the Glutton's Meeting, which would, 'provide for the possibility of a most delightful organization of people with similar interests who would gather and talk while trying things to eat'. The editors planned monthly meetings at Tokyo restaurants and required advanced reservation and the payment of two yen to the publisher, the same amount prescribed for the culinary group described in Murai's novel, and more than five times the cost of a year's subscription to *Culinary Magazine*.[47]

The next edition, February 1906, contained write-ups about the meetings of both groups, beginning with the Glutton's Meeting on 13th January at the restaurant Iyomon. The article mentions in passing *Culinary Magazine*'s stated purpose of providing information about hygiene and home economics, but the focus of the piece is on the visit to the restaurant and the food consumed. The author, writing under a pseudonym, provided the *kaiseki* menu for the event and then critiqued the quality of the dishes served. The fish salad featured excellent fishcake, but the cod soup was deficient and the miso sauce overwhelmed the shrimp. The magazine's advertisers also appeared at the gathering to win new customers. Higeta Soy Sauce, a company that usually took out a full-page colour advertisement in *Culinary Magazine*, gave away free bottles of soy sauce, and everyone received a container of tooth cleaning powder from the Andō Izutsudō Company.[48]

The first meeting of the Food Trends Group received more coverage in the February issue in two articles, but what is more striking is the populist tone. The first article begins with a diatribe against elite

[47] 'Kuidōrakukai'.

[48] 'Kuidōrakukai (shinnen hakkai)', 6–10.

gourmandism as antithetical to 'pleasures of the way of eating' (*kuidōraku*):

> Will the pleasures of the way of eating (*kuidōraku*) be restricted only to foods of the upper classes? Those who chase after rare tastes are simply devouring money and creating a decadent form of the pleasures of the way of eating. Do they know the compelling words about the love of [simple] chicken and onions? In the pleasures of the way of eating high or low status and wealth or poverty are not an issue. People with the pure motivation of researching food came together toward developing close friendship for the future; they joined hand in hand and commenced the first Food Trends Group for the purpose of studying foodstuffs.

The anonymous author indirectly challenges ownership of the term *kuidōraku*, used by the Glutton's Meeting, the masthead of the magazine, and synonymous with Murai's legacy of home cooking and housekeeping. But the author's brave call to arms proves to be an overstated preamble for the disappointing turnout for the first meeting, which only five people attended. Unlike the culinary studies group that Murai Gensai had envisioned for elite women, all of the five attendees were men. But, the men came prepared to talk about the horsemeat dishes they had brought, although some had obviously purchased the foods rather than cooked them themselves. One guest revealed inexpensive horse-shaped candies, which elicited appreciation from the group. Another showed off a dish of simmered squid, and asked 'is the squid delicious? (*umai ka*)' – a pun on the expression 'is this a horse? (*uma ka*)'. Plans were announced for a second meeting in February on the theme of love, appropriate for Valentine's Day, which would doubtless offer similar material for culinary word play.[49]

Inspired by the first meeting of the Food Trends Group, one of the attendees identified by the nickname Sakura ('cherry tree', a word sometimes used as a euphemism for horsemeat or bystander), wrote a separate short article that appeared in the same issue. Titled '*Ditch Eating and*

[49] 'Shoku shikai (koi no ryōri)'.

*Bug Miso*', Sakura described the reminisces of an attendee named Matsuda who hailed from Kumamoto. As a youth, Matsuda and his friends would head off into the countryside on 'ditch eating forays' daring each other to consume anything that they came across in their path such as wild herbs, snails and other creatures not usually considered edible, which they covered in soy sauce or miso and swallowed. Matsuda swore off such expeditions after having to eat a small river crab covered in miso. When he told his father about the events, his dad confessed to once eating a small live carp.[50] Sakura's account can be read as a parody of the practice of dining out on unusual foods, which had become both a staple of the *Culinary Magazine*'s food writing and the rationale behind the rival Glutton's Meeting. He demonstrates the absurdity and potential risks of looking for unusual things to eat outside of the home when that pursuit is taken to an extreme.

The next issue, March 1906, included only a terse write up about the Food Trends Group. Gone is the elevated language of purpose: the article merely lists the location and the foods brought by the members. No mention was made of plans for future meetings and the club disappears from the pages of *Culinary Magazine*.[51]

Coverage of the Glutton's Meeting, in contrast, was much more extensive in the same issue and thereafter. The March 1906 edition devoted four articles about the Glutton's Meeting: one that recounted the appetizers served at the first meeting, which were omitted from the previous description of the event; a brief write-up of the second meeting; an announcement of the French menu to be served at the Metoropōru Hotel for the third meeting and a lengthier synopsis of a regional Glutton's Meeting, the newly formed 'Eating and Drinking Club of Osaka'. The esteemed restaurant Tsuchida, where that event occurred in Osaka on 18 February, could only seat 40 people in one place, so the large group took over three rooms in the establishment. According to the article, participants included leaders in the pharmacy industry and transportation business, government officials, sake brewers, soy sauce

[50] Sakura, 'Dotegui to kawamiso', 25–26.

[51] 'Dai ni kai shoku shikai'.

makers, confectioners, restaurant owners, soldiers, tradesmen, *rakugo* performers, construction business people and advertisers. After a brief talk by the group's convener on how the new organization brought together individuals seeking their own path as gourmets, the chef of the Tsuchida appeared and introduced himself and the meal the group was to enjoy. The anonymous author praised the meal overall and drew particular attention to the whale miso soup, sea bream sashimi and the parboiled and pressed cucumbers with shiitake and octopus in a sesame dressing. Those assembled agreed that such a repast was inexpensive for the price of just two yen, especially since they too, received free containers of soy sauce, bottles of Sapporo and Kirin Beer, and samples of Japanese confectionery and Western digestive biscuits.[52] In other issues, *Culinary Magazine* reported similar activities by regional Glutton's Meetings in Kanazawa, Kyoto and Hakodate.

Wealthy women able to afford the cost of a meal for two yen may have read *Culinary Magazine*, but they only rarely attended the Glutton's Meeting in Tokyo, a fact noted by an author using the name Rokusanjin.[53] Written after the Tokyo group's sixth gathering, the author observed:

> Originally this group did not have a profound purpose at all; simply put, it allowed us to eat around consecutively at fashionable restaurants in the city once each month, and collect the comments about what and where we had eaten from gourmands for the purpose of researching fine dining. It was a social gathering for like-minded individuals. The first meeting was at Iyomon in Shitaya and there were eleven people; the second was at Hashimoto in Yanagishima and there were 24 people; the third was at the Metoropōru Hotel in Tsukiji and there were 35 people; the fourth was at Okada in Yokohama and there were 36 people; the fifth time was at Kuratayya in Nihonbashi and there were 26 people; and last month at the sixth meeting at Mikawaya in Akasaka there were sixteen people.

[52] 'Ōsaka Nomikuidōrakukai', 49–51.

[53] The author may be Saitō Rokusan. Articles about the club meetings included a list of names, but omitted magazine staff. Saitō was a frequent contributor to the monthly; so although his name did not appear, he may have attended.

The author then came to the reason for recounting the activities of the group: 'Up to now only one woman has attended the second and fifth meetings, but at the recent sixth meeting three women attended . . . and this is something that the group should be pleased about.' The modest growth in female attendees, identified as wives by name (*fujin*) and context in the article, facilitated the notion that the group had an educational purpose, to wit, that exposure to restaurant cooking would serve as an example to improve home cooking. Wives should not rely solely on their husbands to learn about restaurants, explained the author: women themselves needed to dine out. The author assured readers that he did not mean that husbands should take their wives out for a night of indulgence in a geisha house, but rather that women should engage in the equally rare and 'somewhat irregular' practice of dining out both for the sake of pleasure and to improve what they served at home. The author went so far as to suggest that the monthly meetings would be much better if women took them over entirely, 'so that women will be happy and home cooking will improve'.[54] Lest women have too much fun and forget their familial duties that justified the edifying experience of dining out, an article on the opposite page reminded women that a way to a man's heart was through his stomach, and that in the words of the article's title, they 'should feast' their husbands at home.[55] Even if women did not attend these events, the magazine staff and those who participated in the culinary clubs could rationalize that the accounts of the club's luxurious meals might somehow provide a way for wives and other readers to learn vicariously. However, the same articles also reinforced the exclusivity of these events restricted to the men who could afford them and the few women with enough social prestige or bravado to challenge the prerogatives of male-dominated dining rooms.

Less charitable comments about the Glutton's Meetings appear in the Readers' Columns. In November 1906, a self-identified participant at one culinary club meeting voiced displeasure at having to pay three yen for the outing to Mikawaya when the cost of other gatherings was less.[56]

[54] Rokusanjin, 'Kuidōrakukai to fujin', 3–5.
[55] Yūraku, 'Gochisō nasai', 2.
[56] 'Dokusha ran', 2.13, 87.

The previous month, a reader complained that, at the group's eighth meeting, the chef not only served sashimi differently from what was listed on the menu but he also did not bother to greet the club members.[57] Other readers resented the fact that they felt excluded from these gatherings. One urged for the establishment of a culinary club with a limit of just 30 *sen*.[58] Three months later, someone sought to contact the person who proposed the idea of a 'commoners' culinary club.[59] A third letter denounced the very idea that someone who simply ate at different restaurants could call himself a gourmet.[60] As much as readers might learn about the activities of the culinary clubs, many felt excluded from them and the 'way of eating' they espoused.

The participants in the 'Glutton's Meetings' could be called the most enthusiastic supporters of *Culinary Magazine*, but their numbers, which never amounted to more than a few dozen at each session in Tokyo, proved too small a demographic to sustain a monthly publication. In 1907, the last year of *Culinary Magazine*'s existence, food remained a popular subject. That year, Murai Gensai published the final volume of his sequel to his opus, *Kuidōraku*, which prompted the opening of yet another restaurant based upon his book.[61] But *Culinary Magazine* proved unsustainable. In the last issue the publisher Yūrakusha announced that *Culinary Magazine* would fold together with two other publications, *Global Generation* (*Seikaiteki seinen*) and *Global Youth* (*Sekai no shōnen*), creating a new magazine called *Four Directions* (*Tōzai nanboku*). *Four Directions* was to be 'like a newspaper' with sections on politics, economics, science, art, literature, religion, education and home economics – in short, everything but fine dining.[62] Dining out was no longer newsworthy.

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[57] 'Dokusha ran', 3.2, 87–88.

[58] 'Dokusha ran', 2.13, 87.

[59] 'Dokusha ran', 3.2, 89.

[60] 'Dokusha ran', 2.14, 95.

[61] 'Toku ni honshi no dokusha ni tsugu', i–ii.

[62] As noted in *Asahi Shimbun*, the restaurant was slated to open in Kyōbashi near the Kabukiza theatre, and was a branch of an earlier establishment in Shiba-ku. *Asahi Shimbun*, 12 April 1907, 7.

When it began, *Culinary Magazine* did not face competition from other monthlies about food, but that quickly changed with the appearance of women's magazines that provided advice to the home cook. Among these was *Ladies' World*, which Murai Gensai had joined to edit and write. *Ladies' World* and the publications that followed such as *Housewife's Friend* (*Shufu no tomo*), founded in 1917, and *Ladies' Review* (*Fujin kōron*), established in 1916, provided information about food but in the context of home cooking, not dining out.[63]

The gender imbalance between the masculine world of eating out and the feminine sphere of cooking at home persisted in magazines about food in Japan for more than six decades after the demise of *Culinary Magazine*, lasting until the debut of the monthlies *An'an* in 1970 and *Nonno* in 1971 – some 25 years after women won the right to vote. *An'an* and *Nonno*, which targeted women aged 18–24, demonstrated to their readers how food could be more than the obligation to cook for the family: eating out was fashionable and definitely fun. *An'an* and *Nonno* reported where to buy the best cheesecake, crepes or pizza; and it was these new Western foods that bespoke progress and enlightenment in these monthlies rather than the latest apparatus for the home kitchen.[64]

For all of its elitism and male chauvinism, *Culinary Magazine* was the first Japanese monthly to point the way to the pleasures and significance of eating out, although it took more than 60 years, Japan's post-war economic miracle, and improvements in the economic prospects and status of women – to make dining out and magazine writing about gourmet restaurants more egalitarian. *Culinary Magazine* can be faulted for taking the losing side in a public debate it had initiated over whether restaurant cuisine was better than home cooking, but ultimately, that discussion is one that cannot be resolved and endures to this day in Japan where government ministries still proclaim the virtues of the housewife preparing *washoku* and gourmands continually pursue ever more refined versions of Japanese cuisine in Michelin-starred restaurants.

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[63] From 1928, Murai Takako wrote a cooking column for *Ladies' Review*. Ishida, '"Kuidōraku" sakka', 47.

[64] Hatanaka, *Fashon fūdo, arimasu*, 60, 77–78, 81.

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**Eric C. Rath** Professor of History, University of Kansas, author of Japan's Cuisines: Food, Place and Identity (2016) and Food and Fantasy in Early Modern Japan (2010).

# Global Recognition and Domestic Containment: Culinary Soft Power in Japan

Stephanie Assmann

## Introduction

Globalization can be described as a form of complex connectivity[1] in which even the most remote localities are linked through the forces of globalization such as advanced communication technologies, media technologies, and travel options. Globalization can result in the homogenization and standardization of mundane and cultural items through detachment from a locality and its distinct characteristics. Cultural practices are subject to constant change, hybridization, indigenization, and forces of re-territorialization, which is an attempt to re-confirm the link to a locality.[2] This process has been

[1] Tomlinson, *Globalization and Culture*.

[2] Sakamoto and Allen observe as follows: 'As the de-territorialization of culture progresses with globalization, dislocating cultural artifacts from their place of "origin" and reinserting them into a new location and context, the nation-state and national subject are attempting to

S. Assmann (✉)
Hokkaido University, Sapporo, Japan
e-mail: stassmann@aol.com

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addressed by Anthony Giddens as a constant push and pull between forces of dis-embedding and re-embedding,[3] whereas John Tomlinson has described the phenomenon of globalization as an entwined process of de-territorialization and re-territorialization.[4]

In the analysis of globalization, food has played a marginal role, however, this has gradually been changing in recent years. A number of academic works have addressed the accelerated globalization of the twentieth century through the lens of food and culinary styles.[5] Globalization often occurs through the travelling of cuisines that are delinked from their place of invention and production and taken to another place for consumption, which might involve change and adaptation.[6] In this context, the idea of a national cuisine, which firmly links place and taste and ties this entwined concept to a geographical location, remains contested since multiple foodways exist within nation-states and make the determination of one national cuisine difficult.[7] But culinary styles and food items continue to serve as powerful images of globalization and also as symbols of everyday life that are routinely enforced and attach the citizens' identity to the nation-state as Michael Billig has pointed out in his study on banal nationalism.[8]

The phenomenon of globalization and re-territorialization of food has been discussed in the context of culinary nationalism[9] and gastronationalism.[10] In her study on *foie gras* – fattened duck liver or goose liver – Michaela DeSoucey discussed gastronationalism as

re-establish their claims of ownership of culture.' Sakamoto and Allen, 'There's Something Fishy About that Sushi', 116.

[3] Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, 21.

[4] Tomlinson, *Globalization and Culture*.

[5] Nützenadel and Trentmann, *Food and Globalization*; Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, Rath and Assmann, *Japanese Foodways. Past and Present*; Farrer, *Globalization, Food and Social Identities in the Asia Pacific Region*; ibid., 'Introduction: Traveling Cuisines in and out of Asia'; Watson, *Golden Arches East. McDonald's in East Asia*.

[6] Farrer, 'Introduction: Traveling Cuisines in and out of Asia'; Bestor, 'How Sushi Went Global'.

[7] Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*; Sternsdorff-Cisterna, 'Food and Place'.

[8] Billig, *Banal Nationalism*.

[9] Ferguson Parkhurst, 'Culinary Nationalism'; Ferguson Parkhurst, 'A Cultural Field in the Making'.

[10] DeSoucey, 'Gastronationalism'.

the appreciation of a morally contested food, which remains a powerful symbol of French culinary and national identity. DeSoucey has argued that nation-states resist the forces of globalization by utilizing the homogenizing powers of globalization. In doing so, nation-states initiate new forms of identity politics, protectionist policies, and local culinary identities that re-position the boundaries between national foodstuffs and foreign foodstuffs and re-emphasize distinct localities.[11]

Taking Japan as an example, this chapter analyses the efforts of a national government to engage in the process of re-territorialization on two levels, the global and the domestic level. Globally, the Japanese government makes use of culinary soft power[12] and internationally recognized institutions such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to gain recognition for a pristine national *haute cuisine*. As Priscilla Ferguson Parkhurst has shown, the origins of *haute cuisine* lie in nineteenth-century France and are characterized by the existence of abundant foodstuffs, and experienced food producers who prepare food at a specific site – the restaurant – for affluent and knowledgeable consumers in a secular cultural tradition.[13] The emergence of a modern culinary tradition and a culinary discourse as a cultural practice led to the cultivation of a national identity which included foodways as part of national identity, and to a 're-definition of haute cuisine as a national cuisine'.[14]

Domestically, the Japanese government aims to contain the realities of culinary globalization through a state-led food education campaign, which emphasizes the responsibility of the individual for a healthy body and good eating. This two-fold approach involves different representations of Japanese food; whereas an elaborate cuisine represents a form of culinary soft power globally, a mundane culinary style focuses on the consumption of rice and locally produced food.

[11] Ibid.
[12] Farrer, 'Introduction: Traveling Cuisines in and out of Asia'.
[13] Ferguson Parkhurst, 'A Cultural Field in the Making', 603.
[14] Ibid., 624.

## Culinary Politics and Nation-Building

Within Asia, Japan offers an intriguing example of state-led politics that fosters recognition of cultural heritage as a strategy of nation-building. Long before strategies of nation-building included culinary politics, governmental efforts to identify and protect cultural heritage properties were prevalent in Japan. As Akagawa Natsuko asserts, a concern for establishing national identity in Japan was initially a response to a process of rapid modernization and industrialization and the encounter with the West at the beginning of the Meiji period (1868–1912).[15] Japan was among the first countries worldwide to establish a normative instrument for acknowledging and protecting cultural heritage. In 1871, the Meiji government legislated the preservation of ancient objects (*koki kyūbutsu*) such as Buddhist temples and Shintoist shrines in light of the rapid onset of modernity.[16] Also in the Meiji period, Japan began to present Japanese arts and crafts at international exhibitions such as the Paris International Exhibition in 1867 and the Vienna International Exhibition in 1873 (see also Mitsuda in this volume). Efforts to safeguard a national cultural heritage extended to the protection of cultural objects in Korea, a colony of Japan from 1910 until 1945.[17] Through a state-led politics of asserting cultural heritage, Japan strengthened its role as a major cultural and colonial power at the beginning of the twentieth century, which also found a different expression in Japan's imperial expansion politics. Eating practices played a significant role in the state-led politics of nation-building as Katarzyna Cwiertka asserts in her account of an increased consumption of meat during the Meiji period. The practice of eating meat had been a clandestine custom prior to the Meiji period, but was encouraged in order to strengthen the military and prepare the military expansion of Japan prior to World War II.

[15] Akagawa, 'Intangible Heritage and Embodiment', 73.

[16] Kurin, 'Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage', 47; Suzuki, 'The Buddha of Kamakura'.

[17] Akagawa, 'Intangible Heritage and Embodiment', 74.

Post-war Japan witnessed a period of rapid economic growth and re-construction between 1955 and 1973.[18] During this time period, heritage preservation and legislation continued. The Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties (*Bunka-zai hogo-hō*) was enacted in 1950, and replaced the imperial decree of 1871, which had previously legislated the preservation of ancient objects.[19] This law was also the first legislation that distinguished between tangible and intangible cultural properties. Intangible cultural heritage covers five broad domains: Oral traditions, performing arts, social practices such as rituals and festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature, and traditional craftsmanship. Japan increased its presence in international discourses on cultural heritage preservation. For instance, in 1994, Japan co-hosted with UNESCO the International Council on Monuments and Sites International Conference on Authenticity. This conference resulted in the Nara Document on Authenticity,[20] and brought a significant change in the perception of authenticity in heritage and conservation theory. Authenticity came to be understood 'as a relative concept that must be understood within its own cultural context'.[21]

The country aimed to represent its own national system of heritage preservation, which inspired the UNESCO's 'Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage'. This convention was enacted in 2003 with the objective of expanding the definition of cultural heritage from places and monuments to include intangible cultural heritage practices.[22]

Heritage politics needs to be seen in the context of major historical transformations such as the Meiji period and the post-war period of re-construction and economic advancement. In contemporary Japan, recent efforts of the government to gain recognition for items of

[18] Haghirian, 'The Historical Development of Japanese Consumerism', 5.

[19] Kurin, 'Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage', 47; Akagawa, 'Intangible Heritage and Embodiment', 73.

[20] Akagawa, 'Intangible Heritage and Embodiment', 77.

[21] Cameron, 'UNESCO and Cultural Heritage: Unexpected Consequences', 324.

[22] UNESCO, 'International Convention'; Kirschenblatt-Gimblett, 'Intangible Heritage as Metacultural Production', 61.

popular culture such as manga, anime, and more recently food, as a means to counter major changes such as population shrinkage and economic decline mirror the use of soft power. The phenomenon of advancing national identity through strategies of state-led culinary politics and branding that include the efforts to re-establish the link between food and place has received particular attention. In this context, the term culinary soft power offers a useful tool for analysing state-led efforts of re-territorializing culinary styles. Culinary soft power can be defined as 'the acknowledged attractiveness and appeal of food culture that adheres to a nation, region, or locality'.[23] While culinary practices are not specified as a domain of their own, 'culinary practices' are acknowledged as a sub-domain of intangible cultural heritage.[24] Japan has not only had an impact on the formation of a normative instrument, which acknowledged intangible heritage, but the Japanese government also searched for recognition for its foodways from UNESCO, which yielded successful results. On 5 December 2013, the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage acknowledged *washoku*, and in particular *o-sechi ryōri*, the elaborate New Year's cuisine, as an intangible cultural world heritage.

The culinary foundation of *washoku* – which is also the foundation of the food education campaign to be discussed later – is Japanese-style dietary life (*Nihongata shoku seikatsu*, JSDL), which can be defined along the following three characteristics: Firstly, rice – Japan's major staple food – is a component of every meal. A meal without rice is not considered to be a full meal but rather a snack. Secondly, the presentation of a meal is based on the composition of *ichijū sansai* – which refers to the composition of a meal in the form of a soup and three side dishes served with rice and Japanese vegetable pickles.[25] Thirdly, Japanese cuisine is a hybrid cuisine and consists of Chinese, Japanese and European culinary components. *Washoku* has now found its entry into

[23] Farrer, 'Introduction: Traveling Cuisines in and out of Asia', 10.
[24] UNESCO, 'What is Intangible Heritage?'; Kurin, 'Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage', 10.
[25] Harada, *Washoku to wa nani ka*, 11.

the list of culinary practices along with the Turkish coffee culture and tradition, and the Mediterranean diet – shared by Cyprus, Croatia, Spain, Greece, Italy, Morocco, Portugal – that were acknowledged by UNESCO in the same year. In 2010, the gastronomic meal of the French and the gingerbread craft of Northern Croatia were both acknowledged as an intangible cultural heritage.

Prior to the recognition of *washoku* in 2013, Japan started the promotion of food as a symbol of culinary soft power in 2005 as part of the government's *Intellectual Property Strategic Programme* (*Chiteki zaisan suishin keikaku*) under the Koizumi Junichirō administration.[26] This led to the formation of the Committee for the Advancement of Research on Food Culture (*Shoku Bunka Kenkyū Suishin Kondankai*) in the same year, whose objective was to promote food as part of the creation of a 'Japan Brand'. The aim of this committee was to analyse Japanese restaurants abroad in terms of number and restaurant type, their food preparation techniques, and their customers.[27]

The close collaboration between the Prime Minister's Office and various ministries is one characteristic of Japan's powerful ministerial bureaucracy. With regard to the use of food as soft power for creating a Japan Brand, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) obtained a key role and established its own advisory council a year later in 2006, which became known as a restaurant certification system with the objective of maintaining the authenticity of Japanese restaurants abroad.[28] The spread of Japanese restaurants worldwide was given as a reason for the establishment of this organization as was the fact that adaptations of Japanese food had emerged such as the California Roll, which is one of the most prominent examples of an adaptation of *sushi*. This attempt by the MAFF to monitor and 'authenticate' Japanese restaurants outside Japan was soon mocked as the 'sushi police'. For instance, Mariko Sanchanta, a journalist for the *Financial Times*

[26] Sakamoto and Allen, 'There's Something Fishy About that Sushi', 110.

[27] Shoku bunka kenkyū suishin kondankai, 'Nihon shoku-bunka no suishin', 9.

[28] Sakamoto and Allen, 'There's Something Fishy About that Sushi', 110; Farrer, 'Introduction: Traveling Cuisines in and out of Asia', 11.

remarked that the attempt to authenticate food ‘is outmoded in a globalized world where McDonald’s in Tokyo serves teriyaki hamburgers and Pret a Manger in London sells sushi’.[29] In response to such reactions, MAFF decided to resort to a less patronizing system and initiated a non-profit organization called the Organization to Promote Japanese Restaurants Abroad (JRO) (*Nihonshoku Resutoran Kaigai Fukyū Suishin Kikō*) in 2007.[30]

JRO places an emphasis on the dissemination of knowledge about Japanese food and culinary preparation techniques. Based on the popularity of Japanese food in a given country, JRO also conducts research on the use of Japanese food products and the number of Japanese restaurants; and it launches events to promote the positive image of Japanese cuisine. For example, in Taiwan, Japanese food enjoys a high reputation. At a promotion event in Kaohsiung in February 2012, a Japanese chef gave a brief introduction to the preparation of sushi rice and tempura, which was followed by the preparation itself and the opportunity to taste samples of an ‘authentic’ and refined cuisine. By June 2015, JRO had established 22 branches worldwide.

## Representation of Food in Japan’s Culinary Politics

The choice of foods that are represented as part of Japan’s national cuisine is decisive in this context. Whereas the Japanese government chose to apply for the safeguarding of the New Year’s cuisine, a foodstuff served on special occasions, the activities of the JRO focus on a mundane and globalized food, namely sushi. The elaborate presentation of sushi as a way to re-claim ownership of sushi as part of *washoku* received particular attention at the abovementioned JRO promotion event in Kaohsiung, Taiwan.

[29] Sanchanta, ‘Japan’s “Sushi Police” Are on a Roll’.

[30] Sakamoto and Allen, ‘There’s Something Fishy About that Sushi’, 112; Farrer, ‘Introduction: Traveling Cuisines in and out of Asia’, 11; Organization to Promote Japanese Restaurants Abroad (JRO) [Nihonshoku resutoran kaigai fukyū suishin kikō], http://jronet.org.e.rl.hp.transer.com/restaurant/.

Globalization of food in Asia is not a new phenomenon, but has accelerated in the twentieth century. Migration flows during the Meiji period, both within Asia and to the United States of America, contributed to the dissemination of Japanese food. With the rise of Japan as a colonial power, Japanese communities in East Asia, in China, Manchuria, Taiwan, and Korea grew rapidly. In 1885, Japanese workers were hired to work on sugar plantations in Hawai'i. By the 1940s, the Japanese population in the United States amounted to nearly 130,000 people, most of whom resided on the West Coast in California. Katarzyna Cwiertka has differentiated between two sushi waves in the United States. Whereas the consumption of sushi during the 1970s and 1980s was a sign of sophistication, with increasing globalization during the 1990s, sushi became widely available in various adaptations as an affordable fast food to a larger clientele from different socio-economic groups. The globalization process not only affected the transformation of sushi itself, but also had an impact on food makers. In sushi eateries around the world, it became common for sushi chefs not to be Japanese by origin but Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese. Whereas the early spread of sushi occurred as a result of migration, the second wave of globalization created the image of sushi as an exotic and healthy food.

## The Concept of Authenticity in Japan's Culinary Politics

Sushi symbolizes a de-territorialized and globalized food whose connection to place remains firm. Despite the existence of numerous adaptations, sushi is known worldwide as a food of Japanese origin. However, sushi has also become a hybrid food whose adaptations are characterized by fusions with elements of different cuisines. In the context of culinary styles that have been changed, adapted, hybridized, and indigenized, a discussion of the term authenticity is timely. The term authenticity is often used with regard to foodways and tourism, but remains contested among sociologists.[31] A very basic definition of the term is as follows: 'The concept of authenticity evokes a range of meanings – that which is original, genuine, real, true, true to itself.'[32] The originality of the food itself and the authenticity of the food maker are equally important, both of which Jeff Pratt has identified with specific reference to foodways as two themes in the concept of authenticity:'First there is food specific to a location; second, these food products are the result of a craft process.'[33]

Japan's culinary politics claims ownership of a hybridized food, and in doing so, provides a lens towards the paradigm shift of authenticity. Authenticity in a modernist sense is seen as an essential concept, which pre-supposes the existence of genuineness, accuracy, originality, or even truth.[34] On its website, the organization JRO states that a Japanese restaurant provides an opportunity for people living overseas to come into contact with Japanese culture. In this context, the organization avoids using the term authenticity but instead resorts to a vague description of the transmission of Japanese food culture. The Japanese restaurant is a point of transmission and a 'showroom' of Japanese foods made by locally available ingredients and prepared by Japanese chefs.[35] The actors of the JRO claim ownership of a globalized food, and showcase its appropriate preparation techniques and adequate presentation, which is reminiscent of Dean MacCannell's concept of staged authenticity – one of the early attempts to approach the concept of authenticity as part of research on tourism. Alluding to Thorstein Veblen's famous work on the conspicuous consumption of a

[31] I am grateful to Fukutomi Satomi for drawing my attention to the scholarly debate on authenticity. Authenticity has been discussed from the perspectives of sociology (MacCannell, 'Staged Authenticity; Reisinger and Steiner 'Reconceptualizing Object Authenticity'; Lu and Fine, 'The Presentation of Ethnic Authenticity', and Molz, 'Tasting an Imagined Thailand'), in heritage and museum studies (Cameron, 'UNESCO and Cultural Heritage: Unexpected Consequences'), and more recently in consumer theory (Zukin, 'Consuming Authenticity'; Pratt, 'Food Values. The Local and the Authentic').

[32] Pratt, 'Food Values. The Local and the Authentic', 293.

[33] Ibid., 294.

[34] Reisinger and Steiner, 'Reconceptualizing Object Authenticity', 69.

[35] Organization to Promote Japanese Restaurants Abroad (JRO) [Nihonshoku resutoran kaigai fukyū suishin kikō], http://jronet.org.e.rl.hp.transer.com/restaurant/.

new leisure class, MacCannell borrows Erving Goffman's concept of the structural division of social establishments into front stages and back stages. This approach includes a belief in the existence of 'real' events and 'pseudo' events that are performed in designated front stages 'where locals perform a limited range of activities for tourist audiences'.[36] In the presentation of sushi, the actors of the JRO offer an educational performance demonstrating the genuineness of sushi to a targeted audience, which marks the distinction between 'real' sushi as a unique, traditional, and carefully crafted Japanese food in opposition to mass-produced adaptations of sushi.

Whereas the JRO claims ownership through staged authenticity, the hybridization of sushi is much closer to the constructivist approach, which defines authenticity as fluid, relational, always constructed, and highly contextualized: 'Authenticity is flexible; it takes different forms depending on the tourist type and his/her own definition of it and its interpretation.'[37] In a similar way, Sean Beer proposes to look at authenticity as a 'triumvirate relationship between the individual (the self), what is being experienced (the thing), and the way in which society defines the authenticity of the thing (the others)'.[38]

Taking the fluidity of authenticity one step further, the post-modernist perspective has dismissed the concept as altogether irrelevant: 'If the products transformed by the commoditization process maintain characteristics that satisfy tourists, they will remain authentic in their eyes.'[39] The post-modernist perspective does not equate a touristic experience with a search for an authentic experience as MacCannell took for granted in his account of authenticity in tourism.

[36] Reisinger and Steiner, 'Reconceptualizing Object Authenticity', 68. MacCannell describes the tourists of modernity as 'motivated by a desire to see life as it is really lived, even to get in with the natives, and, at the same time, they are deprecated for always failing to achieve these goals'. (MacCannell, 'Staged Authenticity', 592). In this context, '[t]he term "tourist" is increasingly used as a derisive label for someone who seems content with his obviously inauthentic experiences.' MacCannell, 'Staged Authenticity', 592.

[37] Reisinger and Steiner, 'Reconceptualizing Object Authenticity', 71. See also Beer, 'Authenticity and Food Experience', 158.

[38] Beer, 'Authenticity and Food Experience', 161.

[39] Reisinger and Steiner, 'Reconceptualizing Object Authenticity', 72.

Rather, the post-modern tourist recognizes the concept of authenticity as a construction of a marketing device for commercial purposes.[40] This is not, however, viewed in a pessimistic way, in fact, post-modernist tourists might deliberately look for an inauthentic, imagined, and fantasized experience, as is experienced in spaces of consumption such as Disneyland or perhaps in the form of sushi made of chocolate instead of fish and rice.[41]

In the de-territorialization and re-territorialization of sushi, different approaches towards authenticity become evident. The hybridization of sushi allows for a subjective and relational experience of authenticity, sometimes even a deliberately inauthentic and playful experience. In contrast, Japan's cultural diplomacy reveals a fixed approach towards authenticity, which involves control and ownership.

## *Shokuiku*: The Domestic Reflection of Culinary Politics

Cultural diplomacy through the promotion of Japanese food outside Japan involves education through staged events such as those conducted by the JRO. Education about foodways and nutrition is also an essential component of culinary politics towards the containment of globalization domestically. Whereas, globally, the Japanese government aims to counter the globalization of popular and hybridized foods through an authenticity campaign, at home, the Japanese government seeks to counter the

[40] Ibid., 'Reconceptualizing Object Authenticity', 67; Beer, 'Authenticity and Food Experience', 158.

[41] Another approach locates authenticity firmly in consumer theory as a concept, which is defined against mass culture and suggests a romantic tradition, which opposes modernity (Pratt, 'Food Values. The Local and the Authentic', 293). In his study on alternative food movements and authenticity, Pratt argues that alternative food movements seek to reconnect production and consumption which takes place in 'a kind of pre-set discursive field, that of the natural, the organic, the local, the rooted, the distinctive, the authentic, this field being precisely that of romantic tradition' (Pratt, 'Food Values. The Local and the Authentic', 287). Here, local food is being equated with authentic food in opposition to the artificial, adulterated, and mass-produced food of modernity. Sharon Zukin defines authenticity as 'consumption spaces outside the standardized realm of mass consumption' (Zukin, 'Consuming Authenticity', 735–736).

spread of hybrid culinary styles through a renewed emphasis on *washoku*, Japanese food. The food education campaign pursues two objectives: The first agenda of the food education campaign is to improve the eating habits of Japanese citizens. The second objective of the food education campaign is to support ailing economies through the promotion of local food products.

To achieve these entwined objectives, the administration of prime minister Koizumi Jun'ichirō under the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP, 2001–2006) enacted the Basic Law on Food Education (*Shokuiku kihon-hō*) in 2005 and initiated a nationwide food education campaign. One characteristic of the *shokuiku* campaign is the participation of multiple actors. The state-led campaign is jointly organized by the Cabinet Office of the Japanese government, the MAFF, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW), and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). In addition, a number of non-governmental organizations support the *shokuiku* campaign through volunteering activities such as organizing cooking classes or regional food fairs.

Similar to the efforts of the Japanese government to gain recognition of a cultural heritage, food education has historical roots in the Meiji period. The term *shokuiku* consists of the Chinese character for *shoku* (which can mean to eat, food, or diet) and the character *iku* (which can mean to educate, to nurture, or to cultivate). The term *shokuiku* appeared for the first time in the year 1896, when the nutrition expert Ishizuka Sagen (1850–1909) conceptualized *shokuiku* as part of a four-dimensional educational concept, which consists of intellectual education (*chiiku)*, moral education (*tokuiku*), physical education (*taiiku*), and food education (*shokuiku*).[42]

Efforts to educate citizens with regard to their eating habits were also prevalent in the Edo period as Andreas Niehaus asserts in his contribution to this volume. In the post-war period, a former official of MAFF and founder of the Consumers Union of Japan (CUJ,

[42] Iwasa, 'Ishizuka Sagen', 20; Iwasa, 'Shokuiku no so', 46; Kojima, 'Responsibility or Right to Eat Well?', 49.

*Nihon Shōhisha Renmei*), Takeuchi Naokazu advocated a return to native eating habits in response to a nutritional shift towards a diet based on wheat and dairy products, which had occurred as part of the food aid programme issued by the US government. Takeuchi encouraged Japanese citizens to eat domestically produced food, in particular rice, which should be eaten for breakfast every day.[43]

The first reason for starting the current food education campaign is based on concerns over the decay of eating habits and the increase of lifestyle-related health problems that were revealed by the results of the Survey on Health and Nutrition of the Japanese Population (*Kokumin kenkō eiyō chōsa*). In this survey, the MHLW accumulates data on weight control, breakfast habits, dining out, sleeping habits, the consumption of local food products and the consumption of alcohol and tobacco. Weight control is given particular attention. The 2013 survey has revealed the alarming result that almost 35 per cent of all male respondents between the ages of 40 and 49 years and almost 15 per cent of all female respondents in the same age group are perceived to be obese (in Japanese: *himan*).[44] The metabolic syndrome – defined as a group of risk factors such as abdominal obesity, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol that may result in the development of health problems such as heart disease, diabetes, and strokes – has also received attention in the *shokuiku* campaign. According to a health survey conducted by the MHLW in 2013, 26.2 per cent of all male respondents between the ages of 40 and 74, and 9.4 per cent of all female respondents in this age group are considered to be affected by the metabolic syndrome.[45]

[43] Maclachlan, 'Global Trends vs. Local Traditions', 250.

[44] MHLW, 'Heisei 25 nen kokumin kenkō chōsa kekka no gaiyō'. Obesity is defined differently in Japan than in the United States or in Europe. The body mass index (BMI), a person's weight in kilograms (kg)/height in metres squared, is also used in Japan as a standard measuring device, but according to the Japan Dietetic Association (JDA) [Nihon Eiyōshikai], a person with a BMI between 25 and 30 who would be considered overweight in 'Western' countries, is considered obese in Japan. This rigid definition of obesity explains the higher rates of obese people in Japan. The JDA [Nihon Eiyōshikai], 9. http://www.dietitian.or.jp/assets/data/learn/marterial/vol4-No1.pdf.

[45] MHLW, 'Heisei 25 nen tokusei kenkō shinsa – tokutei hoken shidō no jisshi jōkyō'.

In response to the results of the Survey on Health and Nutrition of the Japanese Population, MAFF and MHLW have jointly introduced the Food Guide Spinning Top (*Shokuji baransu gaido*), which is an inverted pyramid-shaped diagram featuring nutritional components. Rice is being emphasized as a major source of nutrition at the top of the food pyramid, followed by side dishes such as vegetables, eggs, fruits, and milk products.[46] The Food Guide Spinning Top is the best-known visual component of the *shokuiku* campaign, and its effectiveness is being monitored by the ministries. In 2012, the Distribution System Research Centre conducted the Survey on Food Life and Experiences of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (*Shokuseikatsu oyobi nōrin gyogyō taiken ni kansuru chōsa*). The survey measured awareness of the Food Guide Spinning Top and the degree of adherence to its guidelines. Among the 4,000 participants, 61 per cent of the respondents were either familiar with the guide to some degree or were knowledgeable about it and its content. Furthermore, this survey revealed that 60 per cent of the respondents followed the nutritional suggestions put forward in the guide.[47]

Another channel used in the implementation of the *shokuiku* campaign is the school lunch program. The School Lunch Program Act (*Gakkō kyūshoku-hō*) of 1954 established food education as part of a compulsory curriculum in 1956 and adheres to the four educational principles of *chiiki, tokuiku, taiiku, and shokuiku* mentioned earlier. Currently, 94 per cent of all schools participate in the school lunch program. In accordance with the enactment of the Basic Fundamental Law of Food Education in 2005, the School Lunch Program Act was revised in 2008 with the objective of promoting the *shokuiku* campaign. MEXT increased the number of nutrition educators from merely 34 teachers in 2005 to 3,853 teachers as of April 2011.[48]

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[46] MAFF, 'Shokuji baransu gaido ni tsuite'.

[47] Distribution System Research Centre.

[48] Tanaka and Miyoshi, 'School Lunch Program for Health Promotion Among Children in Japan', 156.

Proper nutrition is firmly rooted in school education. At a later age, food education embraces an approach of governmentality, which draws on the Foucauldian notion of creating a mechanism of self-reflexivity through social and self-disciplinary regimes that expand their control into all areas of life, including intimate areas such as sexuality and body size, shape, and weight.[49] In a similar vein, Kimura has defined the term *responsibilization*, which has become an integral part of the current food education campaign as a process whereby the government demands that individuals and communities take responsibility for their own health, and makes them accountable for risk management and rational choices.[50] This approach, which emphasizes the educational ideals of a previous historical period, downplays the challenges of contemporary life such as the increased participation of women in the workforce, an ubiquitous presence of fast food and pre-packaged foods, and time constraints that make the preparation of fresh foods and familial conviviality at dinner increasingly difficult. Instead, the responsibility for an appropriate nutrition and a healthy body is being directed at the individual.

The second agenda of the *shokuiku* campaign is to foster an awareness of food self-sufficiency (*shokuryō jikyū*) in support of declining rural economies. MAFF advocates and promotes the consumption of locally available food products. This connection between food education and local food products has historical roots. Ishizuka Sagen, the abovementioned founder of *shokuiku*, discussed the significance of eating foods that are available in one's vicinity in his work *Chemical Theory of Diet for Longevity.* Through using the term *nyūgō jūgō*,[51] Ishizuka described the consumption of foods available in one's vicinity as natural and emphasized the nutritional value of locally available foods and their freshness.[52] Domestically produced foods are portrayed as safe foods of well-known production origins that evoke trustworthiness.

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[49] Guthman and DuPuis, 'Embodying Neoliberalism', 443.

[50] Kimura, 'Nationalism, Patriarchy, and Moralism', 205.

[51] The term *nyūgō jūgō* derives from the proverb 'gō ni iritewa, gō ni shitagae', which can be translated as: 'When in Rome, do as the Romans do'. However, in using this term, Ishizuka Sagen referred to the health benefits of eating locally.

[52] Iwasa, 'Ishizuka Sagen', 22.

One reason for the renewed emphasis on the consumption of locally produced food products is Japan's low food self-sufficiency rate of only 40 per cent (see also Farina in this volume). Japan depends heavily upon food imports, primarily from countries such as the United States of America, Australia, Canada, and China. A high dependency on food imports is a particular problem of urban areas in Japan. According to data accumulated by MAFF, in 2014, Tokyo had a food self-sufficiency rate of merely one per cent, followed by Osaka, which had a food self-sufficiency level of only two per cent. In response to this dire situation, MAFF seeks to implement a protectionist policy in support of rural economies whose primary industry remains agriculture, and which therefore have high food self-sufficiency rates. In 2014, for instance, Hokkaido had a food self-sufficiency rate of 198 per cent, Akita prefecture had a food self-sufficiency rate of 181 per cent, and Niigata prefecture reported a food self-sufficiency rate of 104 per cent.[53] However, rural economies face a number of challenges; among these are small-scale agriculture, population decline, the aging of farmers, and the decreasing popularity of farming as a profession among younger generations.[54]

Within Japan's protectionist policy, a critical discussion about the significance of low levels of food self-sufficiency remains absent. Instead, merely the necessity to make the country more self-reliant is being conveyed with a sense of urgency, as is reflected in Japan's agricultural policy. Japan's contested decision to participate in the Transpacific Partnership (TPP) in 2013 – a multilateral free trade agreement under the leadership of the United States of America – has added to concerns among farmers, their 'umbrella organization' JA and MAFF, that the dependency on food imports will increase and the livelihoods of farmers will be further endangered.[55] Rice

[53] MAFF, 'Heisei 26nen (gaisan-chi)'.

[54] Assmann, 'Food Action Nippon and Slow Food Japan'; see also chapters by Farina and O'Shea in this volume.

[55] Elms, 'The Trans-Pacific Partnership Trade Negotiations'; see also chapters by Reiher and O'Shea in this volume.

farmers are particularly worried about the arrival of the TPP, since rice remains a highly subsidized food despite a decline in the consumption of rice since the 1960s. The food self-sufficiency rate of rice is 100 per cent, and Japan maintains high import tariffs of 778 per cent for this commodity.[56] Rice is not only a culturally loaded but also a highly political food. In the early modern period, rice served as a currency unit for tribute payments and officials' salaries.[57] The significance of rice is reflected in the usage of the Japanese word *gohan,* which is an honorific term for *cooked rice,* which at the same time also means 'meal'. Rice features at the top of the Food Guide Spinning Top.

However, other local food products are also highlighted in the campaign and educational measures to raise awareness of local food products are reflected in the school lunch program. One example for this is a vegetable cuisine called *Dewa sanzan no shōjin ryōri* (The Vegetable Cuisine of the Three Mountains of Dewa) in Tsuruoka City in Yamagata prefecture.[58] According to the *Second Basic Plan for the Advancement of Shokuiku* (*Dai-2-ji shokuiku suishin kihon keikaku*), which the Cabinet Office released in December 2013, one objective is to use more than 80 per cent of domestically produced food in school lunch programs.[59] An interview, which I conducted in November 2010 with representatives of MAFF in Sapporo, confirms the significance of local food products in the current *shokuiku* campaign. The interview revealed that one way to implement education about food self-sufficiency in schools was to encourage school children to calculate the food self-sufficiency rate of the food they were offered at home.[60] In other words, the *shokuiku* campaign equates a 'healthy' nutrition with locality and a distinct culinary heritage.

[56] Yamashita, 'Ensuring Japan's Food Security Through Free Trade Not Tariffs'.

[57] Rath, 'Rural Japan and Agriculture', 481.

[58] Cabinet Office, Shokuiku Hakusho, 128.

[59] Cabinet Office, Shokuiku Hakusho, 3.

[60] The food self-sufficiency rate is defined as the ratio of daily per capita caloric supply from domestically produced food to per capita daily caloric supply from food.

Another way to raise awareness of the low level of food self-sufficiency and the significance of local food products is through the organization Food Action Nippon (FAN), which was initiated by MAFF in October 2008 to improve Japan's low level of food self-sufficiency through the promotion of domestic foods. FAN sees itself as an NGO but can more accurately be described as a state campaign that aims to encourage Japanese citizens to consume local food through introducing food producers from the vicinity and their products to a wider audience. In doing so, the organization acts as a mediator between producers and consumers and helps to organize food markets in semi-urban settings or in cosmopolitan areas. The initiative cooperates with various collaboration partners, and as of October 2008 already had 150 collaboration partners, among them farmers, food distributors, tourism enterprises, NGOs, prefectural governments, and universities. Since then, this number has increased significantly; as of May 2015, FAN has built relationships with 8,702 organizations.[61] FAN's partners act as mediators between the government and consumers who are supposed to learn more about food production and reconnect with local producers in their immediate neighbourhood. The organization appears as a sponsor of lectures, food fairs, and urban markets that promote local food products and establish a closer relationship between food producers and food consumers. One example is a two-day food fair in Yokohama, which FAN co-hosted with the prefectural government of Kanagawa in April 2009.[62]

In their emphasis on local food products, the actors of the *shokuiku* campaign are extending the approach of governmentality whilst highlighting the consumption of locally available food products as a patriotic duty of Japanese citizens. The individual is responsible for maintaining a strong and healthy body through an appropriate diet, whilst dietary habits need to be based on local food products.

[61] Food Action Nippon Website. http://syokuryo.jp/fan/.
[62] Assmann, 'Food Action Nippon and Slow Food Japan'.

## Two Sides of Globalization: Global Recognition and Domestic Containment

Based on the use of culinary soft power and the recognition of culinary styles by internationally recognized institutions such as UNESCO, globally, the Japanese government pursues a strategy of cultural diplomacy, which couples the re-territorialization of popular globalized foods such as sushi with an emphasis on a culinary heritage and a quest for authenticity. Domestically, the Japanese government couples an approach of governmentality with a protectionist agricultural food policy, which encourages Japanese citizens to maintain a healthy diet based on local food products. This two-fold approach of culinary politics is deeply rooted in historical concepts of heritage preservation and educational principles of *shokuiku*. The objective of this two-fold approach is the containment of globalization through firm state-led culinary politics, which emphasizes a controlled form of authenticity, governmentality, and agricultural protectionism.

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**Stephanie Assmann** is a specially appointed professor in the Research Faculty of Media and Communication, Hokkaido University, Japan. She holds a Ph.D. in Sociology of Japan from the University of Hamburg, Germany. She is the author of Value Change and Social Stratification in Japan: Aspects of Women's Consumer Behaviour (Institute for Asian Affairs Hamburg, 2005) and the co-editor of Japanese Foodways, Past and Present (University of Illinois Press, 2010, co-edited with Eric C. Rath). Her research interests include the study of consumer behaviour with a focus on foodways.

# Part 2

## Feeding the Nation: Japanese Food Identities in Times of Globalization

# Deconstructing 'Kokushu': The Promotion of Sake as Japan's National Alcohol Drink in Times of Crisis in the Sake Industry

Dick Stegewerns

## Introduction

Whereas sake was only termed '*Nihonshu*' (Japanese alcoholic drink) in the late nineteenth century, as a translation of the English 'Japanese rice wine' that foreign traders used to promote the export of this new exotic alcoholic drink, sake occupied such an overwhelming share of alcohol production and consumption in Japan that most Japanese ignored the newly coined term and continued to use the word '*sake*', which is the generic term for all alcoholic drinks.[1] In sharp contrast, the recently coined term '*kokushu*' (national alcoholic drink) has come about under the very different circumstances that the sake industry had been decimated and most Japanese no longer drink sake.[2] In a situation where

[1] Suzuki, *Nihonshu no kingendaishi*, 1–4.

[2] This used to be especially true of younger generations and women, but a sake boom recently occurring in Tokyo and other urban centres in Japan seems to be changing this, although it is still

D. Stegewerns (✉)
University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway
e-mail: dick.stegewerns@ikos.uio.no

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sake can thus hardly any longer be termed Japan's nationally consumed alcoholic drink, the Japanese government and the sake brewing industry have jointly started promoting the use of the term '*kokushu*'. However, in the related discourse the dire situation in which Japan's 'national alcoholic drink' has been for almost half a century is not acknowledged. Moreover, when it is acknowledged, the Japanese people at large are blamed for forgetting their cultural roots, while the decimation of the sake industry was primarily the result of ill-advised decisions by the government and the sake brewing industry in the post-war period.

Before the war most of sake was pure and organic, in the sense that no alcohol was added after fermentation and no chemical fertilizers were used in the cultivation of the rice. However, wartime conditions and post-war mass production did away with the pure and organic qualities of sake. In Manchuria the army needed sake that would not freeze in the cold climate, and around 1940 local breweries experimented successfully in making alcohol-added sake with a higher alcohol percentage. Not long afterwards breweries in the Japanese homeland were confronted with government demands to decrease their use of the strategic ingredient of rice, and make as much alcoholic liquid out of as few rice grains as possible. Now a new way of post-production (interventions in the brew after fermentation) was started, in which alcohol, and subsequently more water, sugar, acid, etc. were added to the sake in order to increase volume. It will hardly need mentioning that this type of sake with 'minimal rice and maximal external elements and intervention' was not a high-quality product. However, even when the dark wartime and occupation periods gave way to high-speed economic growth, the short-sighted tax bureaucracy and sake industry continued to give priority to volume and easy money over quality, thus ensuring that all sake remained impure, and most breweries completely forgot how pure pre-war sake was made. As consumers became increasingly affluent and had more choice, they gave up en masse on the inferior product that sake was, thus bringing about a

too early to analyse whether this boom will produce any long-term effects. Numbers for 2013 showing the very low percentages of women in general and young people in their twenties with a habit of drinking alcohol can be found in the graph 'Inshu shūkan no aru mono no wariai (sei – nenrei kaikyūbetsu)' in Kokuzeichō Kazeibu Shuzeikyoku, *Sake no Shiori*.

decimation of the consumption and production of sake, and the number of breweries. It was only with the rebirth of pure sake with no added alcohol from the 1980s onwards, the reform of the rigid three-class categorization of sake, and the liberalization of the alcohol market in the 1990s, that regular small-size breweries were faced with the need to turn their product into a brand in order to survive. In the new century, this has led to a remarkable increase in the quality and variety of sake. Accordingly an ever-increasing proportion of the product is pure sake – currently accounting for more than 25%. This development has now even resulted in a sake boom, where, for the first time in decades, restaurants are trying to lure people in by placing bottles of quality sake outside, and we find a new and young generation tuning into this 'new and hip drink', whereas previous generations had given up on what they saw as 'that awful booze your granddad used to get drunk on'.

This chapter will analyse the introduction of the term '*kokushu*' and will scrutinize the various ways in which it is linked to Japanese culture and Japanese national identity. In doing so, it will also analyse the extent to which the discourse on sake promoted by government and industry as Japan's national alcoholic beverage is in line with the facts, data and common interpretations of the post-war and contemporary history of the sake industry.

## Sake as Japan's National Alcoholic Drink?

Especially in the Japanese language variety, 'Nihonshu wa kokushu de aru' or 'Japanese sake is the national alcohol beverage' appears to be a form of pleonasm. However, when one knows that the share of sake in the annual consumption of alcoholic beverages has decreased from more than 80% in the 1930s to less than 7% nowadays and the sake industry was decimated during the latter half of the twentieth century, it is clear that rather than being a pleonasm it is, in fact, closer to being a misrepresentation.[3] One may even wonder why the Japanese *shōchū* (Japanese spirit) distillers and

[3] 'Shurui hanbai (shōhi) sūryō no suiihyō' and 'Shurui seisei sūryō no suii' in Kokuzeichō Kazeibu Shuzeikyoku, *Sake no shiori*. In terms of production sake's share is even lower, at 5.7% of total

beer brewers do not openly refute this statement, as their share is larger than that of sake, accounting for 10.4 and 31.2%, respectively.[4] Most likely, it is the strong awareness of the foreign roots and the related lack of unicity of their products, and in the case of *shōchū* its more regional character, that have made them remain humbly silent.

Whereas the brewing of a fermented alcoholic rice-based beverage happens in almost all rice cultures in the world, and this tradition was definitely not indigenous to Japan but imported from the Asian continent together with the main ingredient of rice itself, it is a fact that the brewing method that was developed and completed in Japan during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is completely unique.[5] There is no other fermented alcoholic rice beverage in the world that can boast the quality, solidness, and complexity of sake. And, moreover, through the unique process of multiple simultaneous fermentation, sake is also the fermented beverage with the highest alcohol percentage in the world. So, on the basis of this sixteenth to seventeenth century 'sake revolution', there is no need whatsoever for the Japanese to restrain themselves in declaring sake 'the Japanese alcoholic beverage/*nihonshu*' or 'national alcoholic beverage/*kokushu*'. In this sense, it seems rather more astonishing that they have only recently started promoting the unique qualities of Japanese sake so vociferously.[6]

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alcohol production in Japan in the fiscal year 2014. See 'Shurui seisei sūryō no suii' in the same report. More recent numbers can be calculated – but only in terms of taxed volume – on the basis of monthly figures made public by Japan's National Tax Agency. The most recent numbers available at the time of writing (April 2016) give a share of 6.1% for sake in the fiscal year up to December 2015. See 'Tangetsu no kazei sūryō (Kokuzeikyoku oyobi kanzei no gōkei)' in Kokuzeichō, *Shuzei kazei jōkyōhyō (sokuhō – maitsuki kōshin)*.

[4] 'Kakushurui no hanbai (shōhi) sūryō kōsei hiritsu no suii' in Kokuzeichō Kazeibu Shuzeikyoku, *Sake no shiori*.

[5] For the revolutionary development of a rather common fermented rice-based alcoholic drink of the Middle Ages to the unique sake of the early modern period, please refer to the various works by Yunoki such as *Nihonshu no rekishi*; Katō, 'Nihon no sakezukuri no ayumi', in *Nihon no sake no rekishi*, 168–260; and Yoshida, *Edo no sake: Sono gijutsu, keizai, bunka*.

[6] A good marker may be the reports of and posters for the big sake fair 'Nihonshu Fair', organized in Ikebukuro every June since 2007 by the Nihon Shuzō Kumiai Chūōkai. It is only at the time of the seventh edition in 2013 that the term 'kokushu' pops up in a corner on the first page of the report. By the ninth edition in 2015, the term is found very prominently on both the Japanese and the English posters publicizing the event. On the English poster no attempt has been made to translate the term as the foreign audience is endorsed to 'Taste the Kokushu'.

On the other hand, how solid is one's position in promoting the unique qualities of one's national drink when only a minor proportion of annual production can bear the 'pure rice sake' (*junmaishu*) label on the bottle?[7] Although the other bottles need not be labelled quite so prominently as 'distilled alcohol, sugars, etc. added sake', let alone 'impure sake', when promoting their product, the addition of elements alien to the natural fermentation process will most likely become increasingly evident to both Japanese and foreign consumers, and accordingly the mission of promoting sake may easily backfire.

## Sake Samurai: Selling Sake as the Crystallization of Japanese Culture

It is merely some 10 years ago that the sake industry, in the form of the Japan Sake Brewers Association Junior Council (*Nihon Shuzō Seinen Kyōgikai*), launched various initiatives to lend sake a higher and respected status. These initiatives were to a large extent aimed at the outside world, although it is hard to ignore that the ultimate objective was to strengthen sake's standing inside Japan on the back of Western – mainly West European – authority. In this sense, it smacks of the so-called *gaiatsu* (foreign pressure) strategy the Japanese government has often implemented to sell controversial policy changes to the Japanese people.

In the formation statement of the Sake Samurai project of October 2005, the Junior Council presents its motivation and aim as follows:

[7] Whereas almost all sake before the Second World War was pure sake, clinging to the new 'wartime tradition' of adding so-called 'brewer's alcohol' and other elements caused the extinction of pure sake in post-war Japan. However, through the combined efforts of a few 'heretic' sake brewers and sake dealers, pure sake was reintroduced from the 1980s onwards and at present the pure sake categories are the most successful in the sake industry. See Stegewerns, 'The Three Waves (and Ways) of Sake Appreciation in the West', in *Devouring Japan: Japanese Cuisine and Foodways*. In the 2015 fiscal year, the pure sake categories accounted for a record 26.9% of total sake production in Japan and boasted a 63% share of the so-called six designated sake categories. 'Tokutei meishō no seishu no taipu-betsu seisei sūryō no suiihyō' in Kokuzeichō Kazeibu Shuzeikyoku, *Sake no Shiori 2017*.

> The Japan Sake Brewers Association Junior Council, fearing that the pride of the Japanese people was in danger of being lost from Japan, formed the Sake Samurai [ . . . ] as a gathering of those who share a love of sake and the desire to nurture it, to restore the pride of sake and to spread sake culture not only within Japan but throughout the world.[8]

Their self-identification as samurai fighting for the cause of sake is based on a rather romantic definition of samurai as 'those who are pure of heart, defending what is precious to them with passion and resolve'. The practice of sake brewing is also presented in an ahistorical way, which hardly touches upon the very modern practice of brewing sake in sake factories and breweries:

> In ancient times, Japan was known as 'the land of abundant reed plains and fresh ears of rice.' Water and rice. Indeed, these two elements are at the very heart of Japan. Nurtured over a long history in a beautiful land, Japanese sake made from such simple ingredients merges timeless wisdom with sophisticated craft.[9]

Like most people with a mission, they point out that at present the drink is in a critical state of crisis, which calls for urgent measures:

> Yet this 'national drink' is no longer an ordinary part of our everyday lives. Particularly in recent years, various changes in the social milieu have pushed sake, together with traditional foods and customs, toward the periphery of the Japanese lifestyle. We fear that the pride of the Japanese people is being lost from Japan.[10]

The above analysis is consciously vague, not even trying to detail such abstract terms as 'in recent years' and 'various changes in the social milieu', let alone doing some soul-searching on the brewers' side. The crisis in the

[8] This is the English version of the October 2006 Sake Samurai project introduction as provided on the official Sake Samurai website. See: Japan Sake Brewers Association Junior Council. *Sake Samurai – Prospectus*.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.

sake industry has been around for half a century and the decimation of consumption, production, and the number of breweries is to a large extent a result of the lack of quality control of a mass product that in a very untraditional way was distorted by elements external to the natural fermentation process such as distilled alcohol, sugars, MSG, etc. On the whole, the Japanese cuisine recently bestowed with the status of intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO is not an industry in crisis, as Japanese people have, to a larger extent than many other modern nations, held onto their own cuisine.

But luckily the situation across the ocean is a lot brighter:

> Meanwhile, Japanese food and sake have made remarkable inroads overseas, growing in estimation with each passing year. Japanese food and sake convey the beauty of Japanese culture to the world with the wisdom and knowledge of the Japanese people, and the world in turn has recognized Japan's culture as an outstanding one.[11]

Thus, a picture is painted of an outside world that is becoming more and more overawed by the brilliance of Japanese food culture, whereas the Japanese themselves have forgotten 'the pride of Japanese culture' and 'the pride of Japanese sake'. In this state of what we may term a crisis of national culture and identity, the Japan Sake Brewers Association Junior Council has gallantly imposed upon itself, as an heir to Japan's tradition, the challenging task of changing the long-term tendency of the Japanese to become un-Japanese:

> As bearers of Japan's sake culture, we must act now to revive the pride of Japanese sake now being lost. As 'samurai' who love and protect sake, we are determined to spread the word about Japanese sake, a world-class culmination of Japanese culture and traditional craft, around the world. Pledging that those of like mind will broaden the circle of Sake Samurai worldwide, we hereby declare the formation of the Sake Samurai.[12]

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.

Out of an acute awareness of the diminishing pride of the Japanese in their own culture and sake as the crystallization of that culture, a pure-hearted group of people within the sake industry has resolved to save sake, Japanese culture, and their own incomes and their family tradition of brewer ownership from extinction.

I cannot help but be bewildered at this group of brewery owning scions who, dependent on the toils of rice farmers and sake brewing artisans, and themselves in essence being merchants, identify themselves as representatives of the pre-modern military and bureaucratic ruling class. Nonetheless, in most cases foreigners will be unaware of the connotations of social hierarchy that come with the term 'samurai', and in this sense it must be admitted that 'sake samurai' sounds a lot cooler than 'sake merchant' or 'brewery owner'. Moreover, as sake professionals, they are very well aware that the sake they are making nowadays is worlds apart from the sake that was made before the Second World War, let alone more 'traditional' sake. On that same basis, they should be able to come to a more plural definition of Japaneseness, Japanese culture, identity, and tradition, which does not merely incorporate The Tale of Genji and samurai, but also more modern phenomena such as pachinko, manga, and anime. Just as they know that the direct path to bankruptcy is to change their complete line-up into pre-war-types of traditional sake, which most Japanese no longer recognize and appreciate as sake, and that the way out of the crisis is rather dependent on modern concepts such as quality control, innovation, PR (public relations), and marketing.

The Sake Samurai project of the Japan Sake Brewers Association Junior Council concentrated on two activities. Since 2006, they have bestowed the title of Sake Samurai upon half a dozen people every year, 50% of them foreigners, and organize a Shinto conferral ceremony at Kyoto's Shimogamo Jinja (although one can only wonder why they do not use Kyoto's Matsuo Taisha, the shrine of the god of sake).[13] Apart from this, they function as the Japanese front desk of the International Wine

[13] A Japanese list of all persons awarded the Sake Samurai title since 2006 can be found at http://www.sakesamurai.jp/person06_2.html.

Challenge (IWC), an internationally acclaimed annual wine competition in London, which introduced a sake division in 2007 (the director of the IWC incidentally became a sake samurai soon after).[14] Although the results of the sake part of the competition hardly make any waves in the West, the related stickers on the bottles of the prize-winning brands are directed at the Japanese audience, who do not know that there may be as many as 10 gold prizes in one sake subdivision, many more silver prizes, and that the sticker with the text 'commended' rather means that the sake was only considered mediocre. Another more recent feat is the establishment of sake level 1, 2, and 3 courses at the Wine and Spirits Educational Trust (incidentally, the representative of this institution, which is better known under the abbreviation WSET, immediately also became a sake samurai). WSET is a highly respected institution in the wine world with its headquarters in London, but has dependences organizing officially approved courses all over the world. Although the content of the sake courses and the related demands are not yet on a par with WSET's wine courses, it is nonetheless a far cry from the pay-much, success-guaranteed 2-day crash courses that various dubious institutions provide both in Japan and other countries, and which have completely corrupted the title of 'sake sommelier'.[15]

This first project by sake brewery owners to overcome the crisis in the industry on the one hand links their product strongly to Japanese culture and tradition and on the other hand invokes the authority of foreigners who subscribe to the Council's aims. It is very instructive in the sense that many characteristics of their message have been copied by almost all other industry and government projects to stimulate the internal consumption

[14] The fact that this accounts for the main part of the Sake Samurai's activities is evident from the 'news' part of its website, which is dominated by IWC-related news. See: http://www.sakesamurai.jp/nwes.html.

[15] The Japan Sake Brewers Association tried to introduce an officially designated title of sake sommelier but fell out with the institute to which it had outsourced this project, which was thus primarily led by commercial motivations. It has even implemented a system in which you have to pay the institute an annual fee to be able to hold on to your title. In the West, sake sommelier titles are being awarded to people who have never had any sake in their lives and only tasted a dozen sake during their 2-day course. Although it must be said that the Japan Sake Brewers Association Junior Council has neither shown any qualms in awarding the highly respected title of sake samurai to people who have no knowledge of sake at all.

and export of sake, such as: (1) Not blaming the breweries and/or the government for corrupting sake by continuing the wartime experiment of adding alcohol and other external elements, but instead blaming the Japanese consumers for straying from their roots. (2) Strutting tradition while most sake breweries and sake factories make outspokenly modern sake, which in many cases can hardly be called 'rice wine' anymore. (3) Hushing up the pure sake movement and not honouring any *junmaishu* advocates, as if their contribution is non-existent or negligible. (4) Although many of the activities and policies are aimed at the West or make use of West European (wine) authority, the ultimate aim is the home market.[16]

Apart from this, it is also quite telling that in the above-cited formation statement of the Sake Samurai project the term '*kokushu*', here in the English translation of 'national drink', is only used once. In all other cases, and in all other Sake Samurai-related texts, either *nihonshu* or *sake* is used.

## The Official Decree to Toast with Sake: Local Endeavours to Support the Sake Industry

At Japanese receptions, all tables are generally provided with beer bottles, usually from the big producers Kirin, Suntory and Asahi, and one struggles to find sake or the Japanese distilled drink *shōchū*. One is not supposed to start drinking before the speech by the host, followed by a toast – *kanpai no ondo* – often conducted by a guest of honour. By this time, all attendees are supposed to have been provided with a glass of beer, and after the '*Kanpai*' call by the honoured guest, they take some sips, put down their glasses, and end this part of the ceremony with a round of applause, after which the more informal part of the meeting can finally commence.

Those involved in the sake industry have always been chagrined by the fact that the many receptions in Japan have been a strictly beer affair.

[16] This is also abundantly clear from the fact that the English part of the Sake Samurai website has not been updated since 2007. ('It is editing. Please wait for a while.')

Especially in the case of official receptions organized by national, regional, or local institutions of government, why promote the Western drink of beer instead of the Japanese drink of sake? Nonetheless, due to the bad image of sake for most of the post-war period and the fact that many attendees would most likely refuse to drink sake, the disgruntlement of the sake industry did not go any further than silent resignation.

This was until the city of Kyoto, the symbol of almost everything that is regarded part of traditional Japanese culture, and the Fushimi sake factories, constituting the second biggest sake-brewing centre in Japan, joined forces and were successful in having the city assembly decree on 15 January 2013 that at all receptions organized or sponsored by Kyoto City would include sake not beer as the alcoholic beverage to accompany the toast.[17] This '*Nihonshu de Kanpai-Jōrei*' (Ordinance to Toast with Sake) was successful in garnering a lot of media attention, and before long other prefectures and municipalities joined in. At the moment, toast ordinances have been implemented by more than a hundred cities and prefectures, although these also include such 'heretic' examples as Yamanashi Prefecture ordaining a toast with local Koshu wine (Jap. *kōshū* see also Wang's article in this volume), municipalities on Kyūshū prescribing *shōchū*, and the city of Nasu-Shiobara using milk instead.[18]

Initially, the national government made a conscious decision not to get involved in this movement amongst local government institutions, most likely because it did not think it opportune to take sides in what in essence is a competition between the interests of the beer industry and the sake industry. However, in the wake of the 2011 Triple Disaster it changed its neutral stand. Under the motto of supporting and revitalizing North-East Japan, and with the strong motivation to show that Japanese agricultural products were not contaminated by

[17] The ordinance is available at: http://www.city.kyoto.lg.jp/sankan/cmsfiles/contents/0000150/150907/seisyujourei.pdf.

[18] A list of municipalities and prefectures that have implemented toast ordinances updated until January 2014 can be found at: http://www.nippon.com/ja/column/g00147/. By late July 2015, the number had increased to 108. The newspaper Asahi Shimbun has established a special webpage with a handy overview of related news under the title 'A toast ordinance, also in this municipality', at: http://www.asahi.com/topics/word/%E4%B9%BE%E6%9D%AF%E6%9D%A1%E4%BE%8B.html.

nuclear radiation, it made a case of providing sake from the affected regions, especially Fukushima Prefecture, at government receptions and requested that all other government institutions followed suit. Japanese embassies and consulates, formerly notorious for spending their entire budget remaining at the end of the fiscal year on expensive French wines, were dictated to spend a certain part of their budgets on sake from North Eastern Japan. The government even actively indicated which brands and which types to buy, probably out of (the very realistic) fear that their diplomats had hardly any knowledge about sake.[19]

Not long afterwards, as part of the 2012 'Enjoy the Kokushu' campaign, sake was prioritized, no longer for rather negative reasons such as relief-purchases and enacting food safety, but on the more positive basis of export promotion. Government-sponsored receptions, dinners, etc. are now regarded as venues for promoting sake. Together with this more positive and prominent treatment, sake has been raised to the position of 'the national alcoholic beverage' that accordingly needs to be showcased as the drink that accompanies toasts at government-linked receptions (at least at events ranked minister-class or above).[20] Perhaps, just as revolutionary, diplomats now need to take a crash-course in sake before they are sent to foreign countries.[21]

So when, during his April 2015 visit to the United States, Prime Minister Abe Shinzō was prominently promoting a bottle of sake, it was not so much because he wanted to push this particular brand which happens to be from his election district (since Dassai is probably already one of the most successfully exported sake brands made in Japan), or that he wanted to support a campaign to drink more sake from Yamaguchi Prefecture, but it was rather to profess the Japanese

[19] This part is based on conversations with ambassadors and other officials of various Japanese Embassies in Europe and observations at receptions and dinners organized by these embassies.

[20] See the report by the government-instated Advice Committee for the Promotion of 'Enjoy Japanese Kokushu' entitled 'Seifu ga shusai suru kokusai kaigi nado de no nihonshu shōchū no katsuyō ni tsuite ("Enjoy Japanese Kokushu" Suishin Kyōgikai to shite no kangaekata)'.

[21] 'Enjoy Japanese Kokushu' ('Kokushu wo tanoshimō') Suishin Kyōgikai, *Kokushu-tō no yushutsu sokushin puroguramu*.

government's full support in putting sake on the map as one of Japan's main export products.[22]

Regrettably the sake served at municipal, prefectural, and national receptions is not selected on the basis of quality and variety. Government institutions have to be impartial, so they end up serving sake equally from all breweries in the city or the prefecture, no matter how mediocre the product of some breweries may be. On the national level, they cannot, of course, serve sake equally from all breweries in the country, so institutions are upholding neutrality by serving sake from breweries that pick up awards at the annual sake competition in Hiroshima, thus serving only heavily polished *daiginjō* and *ginjō* sake,[23] and regrettably neglecting the full variety of sake.[24]

## The Formation of a New National Government Policy: Changing Sake into *Kokushu*

The very recent character of the promotion of '*kokushu*' and the related unfamiliarity of the Japanese people with this term are evident from the fact that a wikipedia.jp search conducted in August 2015 resulted in zero hits. It is rather ironic that the first close hits actually lead one to China, because adding the character 中 turns '*kokushu*' into '*chugokushu*', which translates as 'Chinese alcoholic beverages', a term that thus seems much more familiar in the Japanese language than '(Japanese/our) national alcoholic beverage'. Although a pure sake activist used the slogan '*Sake wa kokushu de aru*' in his writings as early as the 1990s, the sake industry

[22] Prime Minister Abe brought Dassai 23 to serve at the state dinner hosted by President Obama. When the latter visited Japan the previous year, Abe had presented him with two bottles of Dassai sake after the two had drunk Kamotsuru sake from Hiroshima during their visit to the Jiro sushi restaurant.

[23] *Daiginjō* and *ginjō* are terms that have been incorporated in the new way of legally categorizing sake in Japan since 1989. These terms limit the rice variety, the temperature, the tank volume, etc., but the most prominent criterion is the polishing rate (*seimai buai*), which is a percentage that indicates how much of the grain is left after polishing. In the case of *ginjō* at least 40% has been taken off, making the polishing rate 60% or lower. In the case of *daiginjō* at least 50% has been taken off, making the polishing rate 50% or lower.

[24] 'Enjoy Japanese Kokushu' ['Kokushu wo tanoshimō'] Suishin Kyōgikai, 'Seifu ga shusai suru'.

and the government hardly took notice. This is not that strange considering that at the time more than 90% of the annual output comprised sake with added alcohol, and the industry looks upon advocates of pure sake with no added alcohol as troublemakers, who are best ignored. However, in the new government-led policy to increase the production and consumption of sake the promotion of sake as Japan's national drink is central, as is evident in both the English name ('Enjoy Japanese Kokushu') and the Japanese name ('*Kokushu wo tanoshimō*') used in the related project and campaign.[25]

The government definition of sake rather derives from the definition by the Sake Samurai project of the Japan Sake Brewers Association Junior Council, although in the former case the term '*kokushu*', written with the archaic character 國, is used in related writings whenever possible. Both the Cabinet Secretariat's website on the state strategy to promote *kokushu* and the final report of the Advisory Committee for the Promotion of 'Enjoy Japanese Kokushu' start out with this definition of *kokushu*:

> Japanese sake and *shōchū* (including *awamori*), Japan's national alcoholic beverages (*kokushu*), are made of the ingredients rice and water etc., which are representative of Japan. Moreover, they symbolize Japan's climate and landscape, and the perseverance, politeness and delicateness of the Japanese. In other words, they are 'the crystallization of Japaneseness'.[26]

The above definition is from the final report of the advisory committee. The almost identical definition on the Cabinet Secretariat's website omits *awamori*, which is a fairer representation of the fact that in all the related discussions and documents *awamori* is completely absent. However, although *shōchū* is mentioned in both definitions, it should not conceal the fact that in most cases it is rendered invisible by using the term *kokushu-tō* (national alcoholic drink, etc.). In the practical

[25] See, for example, the document on the establishment of this 'state strategy' project of 11 May 2012; 'Nihonshu shōchū no kokka senryaku suishin'.

[26] 'Enjoy Japanese Kokushu' ['Kokushu wo tanoshimō'] Suishin Kyōgikai, *Kokushu-tō no yushutsu sokushin puroguramu*.

deliberations there is hardly any mention of *shōchū* and no specific strategy for the promotion of this distilled drink is seriously contemplated. On the advisory committee, there was only one member with vested interests in the *shōchū* industry who accordingly focused his contribution on this drink, but all the other members remained mostly silent about this 'second *kokushu*'.[27] Moreover, Prime Minister Abe has not been seen promoting bottles of *shōchū* in his encounters with foreign statesmen.

The above is hardly different from the stance of the Japan Sake Brewers Association Junior Council. Its mother organization, the Nihon Shuzō Kumiai Chūōkai, nowadays goes under a new English title, namely the Japan Sake and Shochu Makers Association, and accordingly the abbreviation and logo of the association also changed from JSBA to JSS. However, there is no sign whatsoever that the organization's Junior Council is ready to include the promotion of the sister product into its activities and also award Shochu Samurai titles. Another similarity with the Sake Samurai project is that within the framework of the 'Enjoy Japanese Kokushu' project, the cause for the crisis in the sake industry is also found in the diversification of tastes of the Japanese consumers, together with the decrease in, and the ageing of Japan's population.[28]

Classified as a state strategy (kokka senryaku), the 'Enjoy Japanese Kokushu' project started out in 2012 and, judging by the information provided by the Cabinet's Secretariat, considerable government attention and activity were concentrated in this area in a year that was to be the last in the reign of the cabinets led by the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ). On 11 May 2012, the launch of the government campaign was proclaimed by Furukawa Motohisa, the Special Minister in Charge of State Strategies. From 28 May 2012 onwards, the government-instated Advisory Committee on the Promotion of 'Enjoy Japanese Kokushu' ('Kokushu wo tanoshimō',

[27] See the outline of the presentation on 22 May 2012 by committee member Watanabe Shinichirō, Director of the Shōchū Distillery Kyōya Shuzō. Watanabe, Shinichirō. 'Watanabe iin teishutsu shiryō'.

[28] 'Enjoy Japanese Kokushu' ['Kokushu wo tanoshimō'] Suishin Kyōgikai, *Kokushu-tō no yushutsu sokushin puroguramu*.

Suishin Kyōgikai) was convened four times.[29] Concomitantly, on 31 July 2012, the government campaign was positioned as a model project to stimulate internal and external demand within the 'Revitalization of Japan Strategy' of the Japanese Cabinet. The meetings of the advisory committee resulted in the 'Programme for the Export Promotion of Kokushu Etc', which was officially presented on 4 September 2012, the day of the committee's last meeting. Two weeks later, the committee's activities and recommendations were inherited by the Inter-Ministerial Meeting on the Export Promotion of Kokushu Etc (Kokushu-tō no Yushutsu Sokushin Renraku Kaigi).[30] Whereas the advisory committee consisted of industry representatives and other informed specialists, the combined meeting was an internal government affair, manned by five officials from the Cabinet Office and one official from each of the ministries involved.[31] After the ousting of the DPJ-led cabinet and the second rise of a Liberal Democratic Party-led cabinet by Abe Shinzō at the end of 2012, the name of the inter-ministerial meeting was minimally changed to Inter-Ministerial Meeting on the Export Promotion of Alcoholic Drinks Made in Japan (Nihon-san Shurui no Yushutsu Sokushin Renraku Kaigi) on 11 January 2013. Apart from this name change deleting the keyword of kokushu, it is also interesting to see that the government activities were no longer within the framework of 'state strategies' but part of 'the promotion of Cool Japan' and fell under the jurisdiction of the Special Minister in Charge of the Cool Japan Strategy.[32] For the sake of brevity, I will limit myself in this chapter to the opinions vented within the Advisory Committee on the Promotion of 'Enjoy Japanese Kokushu'. An analysis of the discussions within and the activities

[29] For the names and affiliations of the committee members, see 'Nihonshu shōchū no kokka senryaku suishin: "Enjoy Japanese Kokushu" (Kokushu wo tanoshimō) purojekuto no tachiage ni tsuite'. The agenda and the minutes of the four meetings and the contributions by the committee members can be found at: http://www.cas.go.jp/jp/seisaku/npu/policy04/archive12.html.

[30] Only the minimal agenda of the first and only meeting of this Inter-Ministerial Meeting has been made public on the Cabinet Secretariat's website at: http://www.cas.go.jp/jp/seisaku/npu/policy04/archive12_001.html.

[31] The ranks of the government officials supposed to attend the Inter-Ministerial Meeting are listed at: http://www.cas.go.jp/jp/seisaku/npu/policy04/archive12_001.html.

[32] The agendas and minutes of the five meetings of this new Inter-Ministerial Meeting up until March 2016 can be found at: http://www.cas.go.jp/jp/seisaku/syurui/.

by the still existent 'Inter-Ministerial Meeting on the Export Promotion of Alcoholic Drinks Made in Japan' will be the focus of a separate publication.

Painfully aware of the fact that the following will make for rather terse reading, I nonetheless consider it important to give an overview of the basic ideas shared by the Advisory Committee on the Promotion of 'Enjoy Japanese Kokushu' and the concrete policies it recommends, compiled in its 19-page final report entitled 'Programme for the Promotion of Export of Kokushu Etc'.[33] The basic ideas are as follows:

1. On the bandwagon of the global popularity of Japanese food, there is increasing potential for the export of *kokushu,* etc.[34] Concomitantly, we can also expect increasing demand for traditional artefacts such as sake and food utensils. 2. Hopefully, the increasing overseas recognition of *kokushu* will encourage the Japanese to rediscover the value of *kokushu*. 3. Moreover, sake breweries have a central function in regional society. Together with other tourist attractions in the region, they can attract lovers of *kokushu,* etc. from both inside and outside Japan, and provide the stimulus for the revitalization of the countryside. Sake brewery tourism will result in a direct experience of Japanese culture.

The concrete policies recommended come in seven categories and are as follows:

A. Marketing Strategy: (1) Collecting and sharing market data. (2) Conceiving of different strategies for different markets. (3) Focusing on the major (wine) hubs of New York, London, Paris, and Hong Kong;

B. Branding of *kokushu*: (1) Using diplomatic venues for the promotion of *kokushu*. (2) Making a special *kokushu* logo. (3) Organizing *kokushu* events

[33] For the complete report *Kokushu-tō no yushutsu sokushin puroguramu*, see: http://www.cas.go.jp/jp/seisaku/npu/policy04/pdf/20120904/20120904_kokushu.pdf.

[34] The Japanese policy makers, in their strategy to promote sake whilst being careful not to offend the *shōchū* industry, constantly use the term *kokushu*, etc. (*kokushu-tō*). Thus, in a somewhat contradictory way, they play along with the politically correct game of window-dressing as if *kokushu* should be seen as plural 'national alcohol drinks' while hardly mentioning *shōchū* and *awamori*.

aimed at foreign journalists and other opinion leaders. Promoting *kokushu* as Japanese culture. Government awards for foreigners contributing to the spread of *kokushu*. Further participation in international competitions. (4) Creating a uniform and easy to understand system of labelling;
C. Creating an export infrastructure: (1) Breaking down import restrictions in other countries (partly Fukushima-related). (2) Lowering alcohol taxes in other countries. (3) Protecting the sake trademark. (4) Streamlining inter-ministerial cooperation;

D. Expansion of sales channels on foreign markets: (1) Linking of sake producers and traders. (2) Development of products and ways of drinking aimed at foreign markets. Suggesting pairings with local cuisine. Co-operating with famous local chefs. (3) Using the JETRO network. Fairs, business matching. (4) Developing ways to use E-commerce to target foreign customers;

E. Promoting the correct understanding of *kokushu*: (1) Making textbooks. (2) Implementing education. Organizing seminars for foreign professionals. Establishing sake programmes at foreign wine and spirits education institutions. Guaranteeing the quality of education. Providing breweries with staff that can communicate with the outside world. Educating Japanese government officials. (3) Establishing a unified sake connoisseur/sommelier qualification;

F. Strengthening the industrial infrastructure supporting the export of *kokushu*. Linking sake exports to the increase in rice production, and the revitalization of agriculture;

G. Vitalization of the countryside through sake brewery tourism. Turning sake breweries into professional tourist attractions. Linking with other tourist facilities and creating tourist courses. Making sake breweries accessible to foreigners. Using resident foreigners as transmitters of information.

Notwithstanding the government's new and very proactive stance towards the promotion of sake and the production of a related programme of recommendations within the relatively short time span of less than half a year, the sake industry has proven to be a slow player. It was more than 2 years after the presentation of the advisory committee's programme of recommendations and the establishment of the combined meeting within the government for the export promotion of *kokushu*, etc. that the Japan Sake and Shochu Makers Association finally sprang into action. In September 2014, it formed a 'Committee for the Export of Sake' (*Nihonshu Yushutsu Kyōgikai*), including representatives from the distribution industry, as a counterpart to the government institution of the inter-ministerial meeting. It was not until January 2015, almost 2.5 years after the recommendations by the government-instated advisory committee, that this committee for the sake industry presented its 'Fundamental Strategy for the Export of Sake'.[35] One can only wonder what caused the delay in reacting to the government overtures, because the content of the industry's report does little more than reiterate the policies and aims of the government committees. Apart from the global Japanese food boom, one of the few additions was a mention at this later moment in time of the upcoming Tokyo Olympics which is seen as a second golden marketing opportunity. In addition, compared to the government recommendations there is a stronger focus on the dissemination of the correct understanding of sake, on branding, and on the introduction of a unified JSS mark for all Japanese sake. Moreover, their marketing policies seem more realistic as they propose a more detailed and diversified strategy towards established sake markets such as the US, Canada, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and South Korea and potential sake markets such as Thailand, Singapore, France, UK, Brazil, and Russia. However, the report stands out most in its almost complete disregard of the term *kokushu*, so much endorsed by the sake promoters on the government side. And the concept of Japanese culture is also hardly mentioned. It strongly suggests that there is a considerable gap between government and industry in the enthusiasm to stress sake as part of the country's national identity.

Although the leaders of the sake industry, probably also in contrast to their self-proclaimed Sake Samurai scions, seem more down-to-earth and evidently lack a strong inclination to think in terms of *kokushu* and treat their products first and foremost as a form of national identity and culture, they are sufficiently keen to make optimal use of the

[35] For the 17-page report and a handy outline, see Nihonshu Yushutsu Kyōgikai, *Nihonshu no yushutsu kihon senryaku*, January 2015.

government's new commitment to the product, and show no qualms in joining the 'Enjoy Japanese Kokushu' promotion campaign. As described in endnote 6, the term *kokushu* was introduced in the report on the Tokyo Sake Fair of 2013 and given an increasingly prominent position on the posters for this annual event. And whereas the 2005 brochure of the then Japan Sake Brewers Association was neutrally titled 'Welcome to the World of Japanese Sake' and the content was mainly factual, the new 2014 brochure by the Japan Sake and Shochu Makers Association has the far more poignant title of 'Sake and Japanese Culture' and is markedly concluded by a chapter on 'Sake as the National Alcoholic Drink of Japan'. It also gladly co-operated in the 2015 production of the anime '*Kanpai!*' broadcast through NHK World, in which a Japanese woman living on Mars in the year 22xx rediscovers her Japanese roots at the sake brewery where she was born, through the genuine interest for sake culture by her Western friend Edward.[36] But it seems that the industry was most eager to act on the shared programme point of the branding of sake. Already in early 2014, it posted on its website stickers featuring the JSS logo in conjunction with 'Japanese sake', 'Japanese shochu', Japanese awamori', and 'Japanese mirin'. This national branding of these drinks did not have a cultural but a protectionist background. The conditions for adorning sake bottles with the JSS sticker are that the sake is made in Japan from Japanese rice, thus forbidding all sake made outside Japan from using the words 'Japanese sake' on their labels. Up until now, the association has been successful in bringing about a rule for the geographical indication of 'Japanese sake'. In a very swift case of law enactment, the Japanese government quickly implemented this protectionist regulation on 25 December 2015.[37]

[36] The 26-minute anime can be viewed at http://www.jibtv.com/programs/kanpai2015/. It was aired on 6 March 2015.

[37] 'Shurui no chiriteki hyōji ni kansuru hyōji kijiun' in Kokuzeichō Kazeibu Shuzeikyoku, *Sake no shiori*.

## Conclusion

Judging by the very marked difference in the frequency of the use of the term *kokushu* and the invocation of the concept of (traditional and/or national) culture in publications and minutes of meetings by the government on the one hand and the sake industry on the other, there is a clear *ondosa* (difference in temperature) between the two parties. Nonetheless, policies are identical, although the industry seems more pragmatic and down-to-earth. Moreover, irrespective of the vocabulary and ideology, it all ultimately comes down to export promotion rather than gastro-diplomacy: the government-instated Advisory Committee on the Promotion of 'Enjoy Japanese Kokushu' has finally evolved into the Inter-Ministerial Meeting on the Export Promotion of Alcoholic Drinks Made in Japan, and the industry has established its Committee for the Export Promotion of Sake and has produced its 'Fundamental Strategy for the Export of Sake'. There is no room for culture in the names of the committees in charge of policies on the international promotion of sake, and in 2013 even the government seems to have let go of its erstwhile insistence on having the term *kokushu*/national alcoholic drink in the name of all its sake-related committees and reports.

However, there is a strong, shared tendency in the reports, minutes, and programmes on both sides, which from the point of view of long-term observers of the sake industry may easily look like mere wishful thinking. Sake, the product of an industry that has been in crisis for almost half a century and that was one of the industries in which banks were least willing to invest, has all of a sudden turned into a panacea. It will be beneficial to stimulating Japan's exports, increasing demand for Japanese rice, invigorating the countryside, increasing tourism within and to Japan, gaining a renewed appreciation of Japanese culture and identity (albeit via the West), and generally re-vitalizing Japan.

As a long-term observer of the Japanese sake industry and the Japanese and Western sake markets, I would like in conclusion to offer some critical but well-meant observations with the mere intention of making people in the industry and others aware of what may happen if one does not take heed of the lessons history can teach us. Why did the Japanese sake industry end in a crisis that decimated it, and what can this tell us about policies to be followed in the future, both with regard to the internal and external markets? How should sake be positioned in relation to other fermented alcoholic beverages, especially wine? How should sake be positioned on a market that is increasingly becoming environment- and health-conscious? Will stressing the inherent unique Japanese character of sake not merely limit its spread and eventually be counter-productive? These fundamental questions are seldom asked in the relevant reports and programmes, such that the basis of the various policies seems weak.

These may be unconscious omissions, but there are also omissions of a different category. In all the sake or *kokushu*-related documents compiled both by the government and the industry, the word *junmaishu* is nowhere to be found, whereas the division between pure sake and sake with added alcohol has become one of the most crucial issues in the sake world, and among an increasing number of brewers, retailers, importers, shops, restaurants, and bars implementing a strictly 100% pure sake policy. This is nothing but a conscious cover-up of the awkward fact that a 'pure rice sake' label is needed in the sake industry and, moreover, that the vast majority of sake on the market would not even qualify for this label. The only exception to this 'don't-use-the-*junmaishu*-word taboo' on the various committees is Hasegawa Kōichi, director of the big and successful sake retail chain Hasegawa Saketen, who has also had a less successful experience expanding into the foreign sake market. He starts his contribution as a member of the Advisory Committee on the Promotion of 'Enjoy Japanese Kokushu' with the painful observation that most of the sake available on the Japanese market contains all sorts of added ingredients and will thus be counterproductive to the promotion of sake, especially in terms of Japan's national alcoholic drink.[38] In relation, the focus of the Japan Sake and Shochu Brewers Association and others on national branding by means of stickers with the text 'Japanese sake' seems out of place. Would a carton-pack of sake with added alcohol and sugar, etc. made in a Japanese factory be better promotion for sake than a traditional pure sake made in a brewery in Norway? One may also

[38] See the hand-out of his presentation at the advisory's committee meeting on 28 May 2012 at: http://www.cas.go.jp/jp/seisaku/npu/policy04/pdf/20120528/shiryo7.pdf.

wonder whether it is a good idea to export sake with added alcohol to Western markets, where apart from a steady demand for organic sake there are now even increasing calls for sake without added yeast. Suffice to say that the various committees' stress on the importance of increasing a correct understanding of sake in the outside world is a farce, considering there is no consensus whatsoever in the Japanese sake industry itself as to what 'correct sake' actually is.

And one may also wonder whether the basic stance that the promotion of sake is best carried out by stimulating exports is correct. Is this not merely motivated by the government's need for yet another string to its bow in its general export promotion policy? And as far as the industry is concerned, is it not merely opting for a very costly detour to stimulate demand on the internal market, in a situation where it does not know how to deal directly on the home market with the half-century long crisis in the sake industry, the long-term trend of a decreasing Japanese population, and the continual decrease in alcohol consumption? The Japanese market is still by far the largest market and the breweries stand far more to gain on the Japanese market than on foreign markets, something which is clearly proven by the recent sharp increase in demand and media attention for quality sake (mainly *junmaishu*). There are not many foreign success stories such as Dassai's, whereas in the last decade there have been more and more internal success stories of rejuvenated breweries expanding on the Japanese market. Sake brewers with no experience in foreign markets may easily oversee the fact that the relatively high price of sake overseas is a huge obstacle to the further spread of sake, and that they are far more competitive on their own market. The present sake boom in Japan may very well provide new options and alternatives, especially when one considers that many of the new consumers on the sake market are young and/or female, a completely new phenomenon. However, the almost complete lack of young and/or female perspectives in the all-senior-and-male government and industry committees does not give high hopes that the present group of people in charge of formulating policy to promote sake will be able to use these new opportunities and lead the overall sake industry successfully to better times.

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**Dick Stegewerns** is associate professor at Oslo University's Department of Cultural Studies and Oriental Languges. His main research interests are political, intellectual, social and diplomatic history of modern and contemporary Japan, Japanese popular culture, Japanese views of the outside world and Western views of Japan and the history of Japanese cinema.

# The Drink of the Nation? Coffee in Japan's Culinary Culture

Helena Grinshpun

## Introduction

In the opening to his *The Essence of Japanese Cuisine,* Michael Ashkenazi recreates a refined Japanese meal, concluded with a chic dessert and [ . . . ] a cup of coffee, which, he notes, 'by now has become one of the national drinks of Japan'.[1] Coffee – Japan's national drink? This statement may evoke bewilderment among appreciators of Japanese culture and perhaps even undermine the fundamental cultural equation between Japan and green tea. The ordinariness of coffee in contemporary Japan and its peculiar historical trajectory make this statement worthy of further exploration.

The history of coffee stretches across continents and civilizations. For centuries, coffee was grown by Ethiopian tribes. By the end of the

[1] Ashkenazi, *The Essence of Japanese Cuisine*, 5.

H. Grinshpun (✉)
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Israel
e-mail: helena.grinshpun@mail.huji.ac.il

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fifteenth century, it was widely consumed in Mecca, first taken as a medicinal substance, but soon becoming a drink popular at social encounters. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, coffee drinking as a communal ritual gained a foothold in Turkey, where it was discovered by the Europeans. Associated with the exotic culture of the Orient, coffee soon came to be perceived as a fashionable new product. By the end of the seventeenth century, coffee houses became an integral part of the urban landscape in Venice, London, Vienna, and Paris.

Like the commodity itself, the coffee house began its journey across Europe as an exotic transplant into Western civilization. The coffee houses offered their customers a mediated experience of exotic cultures, wherein the coffee ritual became a setting to enact the fantasy of the Orient. The proliferation of coffee houses in Europe of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries provided a locus of interaction based on a new kind of bourgeois sociability, making them the new social centres of the era. The coffee's path into the everyday routine can be traced through European colonial expansion to the Americas, the New World's anti-colonial sentiment, the incorporation of coffee into the mass culture of the United States, and its further dissemination throughout the rapidly globalizing world. Over the course of centuries, coffee's taste evolved from a muddy substance to a carefully brewed drink, with European, mainly Italian coffee formats serving as a major inspiration.

By the time it infiltrated Japan in the latter half of the nineteenth century, coffee had become one of the most recognizable icons of European culture. Ever since, coffee and coffee shops have been linked to economic, political, and socio-cultural transformations undergone by the Japanese nation. Coffee was adopted as an artefact of Western civilization along with Western food, dress, technologies, and other innovations that took root on the everyday level, nevertheless reaching far into the national consciousness. The successful implementation of these novelties was not only about cultural borrowing and adaptation (for which Japan is famed), but also about a process through which mundane substances are charged with meaning – mainly those substances related to various readings of modernization and national transformation. Drinking coffee was, therefore, a matter of national decision with implications for the building of national identity. In this sense, coffee's path into Japanese culinary practice resembles that of meat and wheat, both bearing far-reaching connotations not only for nutrition but also national imagination. Today, Japan is among the largest importers of coffee in the world. Coffee occupies a massive niche in Japanese consumption and has been integrated into the daily routine. Despite its ubiquity and accessibility, however, coffee in Japan still leaves a place for a dialogue on cultural appropriation, identity, and imagination.

This essay is organized along the following lines: first, I will briefly outline the place of coffee in Japanese culinary culture and raise a number of questions that will be addressed through this investigation. I will then explore the place coffee has come to occupy in Japan's national agenda and collective memory. Next, coffee's cultural 'Otherness' and ritualization will be discussed as modes of its appropriation. Finally, I will examine the process of acquisition of taste in coffee by focusing on coffee education enacted by global coffee chains in Japan.

## Placing Coffee on Japan's Culinary Map

In Japan, quite a few substances have been providing the grounds for national discourses that can be framed by the term 'gastronationalism' – that is, the use of food to demarcate and sustain the emotive power of national attachment.[2] This type of nation-making is usually based on a more or less fixed set of substances adopted as markers of national heritage and is exploited to market both the food and the culture it signifies. A signboard welcoming the tourist at Narita airport features a picture of Hiyoko confectionary (see pic. 1) – a baby chicken-shaped sweet bun, with a line reading 'Nihon no oishii katachi' (Japan's tasty shape). The line gives culinary embodiment to Japanese culture: it is delicious (Fig. 3).

The image of green tea could have done a similar job, but not of a cup of coffee – this, despite the fact that in contemporary Japan, making and drinking coffee is no less common than making and drinking green tea.

[2] DeSoucey, 'Gastronationalism'.


**Fig. 3** *'Nihon no oishii katachi'* (Japan's tasty shape)

Green tea is perceived as 'unavoidably Japanese'[3]; Japan's infatuation with coffee more often than not comes as a surprise to a visitor.

Japanese tea is a complex substance, however. It can be the 'ordinary' tea, *ocha* – the one to serve after a meal, to quench thirst with, to be consumed either hot or cold, from a *chawan* or a pet bottle; and the special tea, *macha* – performed as a national ritual, a quintessence of tradition. Coffee in Japan represents a continuum almost as broad, stretching from a skilfully crafted cup prepared by a coffee master to the cold or hot caffeinated substance in a can bought from a vending machine. Nevertheless, tea has been adopted as a nationally unifying image and practice, while coffee occupies a niche much less defined, but certainly no less interesting.

Tea defines Japan in terms of long-standing tradition; this definition often involves a measure of nostalgia for a fading cultural heritage.[4] How

[3] Surak, *Making Tea*, 17.

[4] Ivy, *Discourses of the Vanishing*.

does coffee define the nation? Is national identity defined by the banal or the exclusive? Can nationhood be claimed through a commodity that is not among the customary markers of local tradition? In other words, how is the Japanese nation performed through substances that do not assert Japanese culture? The following exploration will address these and several other questions, focusing on one of the most mundane yet powerful customs – coffee drinking. I will use tea as a point of reference, as it represents one of the most established metaphors of Japan's cultural identity.

Having infiltrated Japan in the Meiji era, coffee can be paralleled with other substances incorporated as part of Japan's culinary transformations, such as meat and wheat. There is something about beverages, however, that distinguishes their nation-work from that of foods. Less nutritional and therefore less critical for matters of physical sustenance that often become politicized in national projects (as discussed by others in this volume), beverages seem to occupy a more subtle ground in the process of identity-building. Meat became internalized through the Meiji period's (1868–1912) agenda of national health and nourishment, reinforced by the revered figure of the Emperor consuming the previously banned substance. Bread was adopted in the context of humanitarian aid aimed at physically sustaining the undernourished Japanese population in the post-war years.[5] The recent national campaign of *Shokuiku* (education for nutrition and correct eating), despite its broadly defined scope and references to national identity, hardly relates to beverages. Performing the nation through beverages may therefore be viewed as a more subtle, culture-bound, and symbolic process than that revolving around food.

In her recent work on tea making as nation-making in Japan, Surak points at two types of nation-work that forge the sense of collective experience she refers to as 'nationness': that of definition and that of embodiment/cultivation. The former type designates characteristics that identify the nation and usually rely on implicit or explicit comparison with external Others. The latter type enacts and sensually performs,

[5] Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*.

often through the body, the defined characteristics.[6] These two modes will serve us in the exploration of coffee as an axis of Japan's juxtaposition with its cultural 'Other' and as a ritualized performance with connotations for taste, knowledge, and identity. I add to these another mode of forging nationness – that of incorporating coffee into ordinary spaces of shared national being. But let us first discuss the place of coffee in Japan's collective memory and imagination.

## From Exotic to Banal: Coffee in Japan's Collective Memory

Coffee's path into Japan's national scene and national consciousness can be conceived along the continuum between the exotic and the banal. Coffee was first brought to Japan by Dutch traders in the seventeenth century, but did not become a familiar commodity until the end of the nineteenth century, when, after more than 200 years of seclusion, Japan was forcibly opened to Western trade. In contrast to Europe, where the Orient provided material for exotic fantasies, in Japan, it was the Occident that possessed appeal. In 1888, the first Japanese coffee house, named Kahiichakan, opened in Tokyo. The man who founded it was Tei Ei Kei (1859–1895), an adopted son of a Taiwanese secretary in Japan's foreign ministry. Tei Ei Kei developed a taste for coffee in America, whose people took up coffee as a way to renounce the tea of the Empire,[7] and picked up the love for coffee shops in London, where coffee had already lost its foothold to tea.[8] He envisioned Kahiichakan to become a place of cultural exchange where knowledge would be absorbed along with coffee, and invested heavily in equipping it with

[6] Surak, *Making Tea*, 4.

[7] Britain's attempt to push the limits of economic domination through the Tea Act of 1773 turned tea into the flashpoint of rebellion; coffee was promoted by the Revolution's leaders as a sign of anti-colonial patriotism, eventually taking over as America's national drink ('Boston Tea Party – Why Was Tea So Important?', The Historic Present) online resource: https://thehistoricpresent.wordpress.com/2011/11/17/the-boston-tea-party-why-was-tea-so-important/.

[8] White, *Coffee Life in Japan*, 9.

Western facilities and refined paraphernalia.[9] Having aspired to more than it could accomplish without a solid financial foundation, the coffee house went bankrupt five years after its opening. Tei Ei Kei moved to the United States and died, rather ironically, in Seattle, the cradle of contemporary global coffee culture. His grave is visited by Japanese coffee aficionados; a monument, erected in his memory at a spot where his coffee house once stood, demonstrates the power of coffee in Japan more than it does the success of the coffee house.[10]

Although Tei Ei Kei's endeavour had failed, his vision proved long-lasting. During the Meiji era, coffee shops gained popularity and became a symbol and a major site of Japan's modernity. The earliest forms of these establishments were modelled on the English coffee house or French salon. The coffee shops served as entry points for foreign products, and shaped new local fashions and trends that resonated with the wider international context. They offered customers coffee along with Western architecture and décor, Western seating, and Western food, served by waitresses dressed in Western clothing. Most were concentrated in Tokyo's Ginza – a district that was designated by the Meiji government as a model of modernization, and carried European-sounding names, such as Café Printemps, Café Lion, Café Paulista, and Ginza Palace, among others.

Rapid urbanization and modernization produced the need for public spaces where newly urbanized and modernized people could practice being urban and modern. Modernity was a powerful national narrative in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Japan. The early Japanese coffee shops provided a space for both gathering and displaying new identities. To some Japanese commentators of the era, in their promotion of an air of liberalism and internationalism, the cafés ranked in significance with the establishment of the National Diet.[11] The first decades of the twentieth century further strengthened the association between coffee and modernity. The already established link between

9 Takai, *Nihon Kafe Kōbōki*, 93.

10 White, *Coffee Life in Japan*, 8.

11 Tipton, 'The Café', 119.

modernity and material culture – along with a consensus that the West was a desirable model – set the scene for the appeal of coffee shops.

In the 1920s and 1930s, coffee shops represented an increasingly visible segment of urban life, and offered an accessible space to accommodate various public expressions of *modan seikatsu* (modern life). The coffee shops provided one of the few public settings for *moga* and *mobo* (modern girls and boys) to meet and mingle socially. The 'modern girl' in particular is to be seen as one of the most predominant, even if contested, protagonists of those years. A debated equivalent of the Western flapper, *moga* was made an emblem of female eroticism by the media[12]: the *moga* was modern, independent, provocative, and appealing – and she was to be found, along with other sites of new consumerist sociability, in a café.

The fact that the era's coffee shops became one of the most commonly mentioned sites of Japan's modernity should be linked to the controversial figure of the *jokyū* – the café waitress. The young lower-class women hired as *jokyū* had come to the big city to find work, and as such they were part of the broader shift of urbanization that shaped the identity of modernizing Japan. Due to their active presence in the public space of the café, their independence, and their often provocative behaviour, *jokyū* became the working-class embodiment of the *moga* and a powerful image around which the discourse on gender and modernity was revolving.[13]

The cafes' role diversified along with their proliferation: a growing number no longer catered just to the elite, but served a wider clientele. Coffee was no longer revolutionary modern but ordinarily modern, entering the mindset of Japan's gradually expanding new middle class. Its persisting association with Westernization, however, was one justification for increasing restrictions in the late 1930s, when the attractiveness of the café was criticized as a demoralizing aspect of modernity. Some of these places indeed had a subversive agenda, providing a place

[12] Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense*, 51.
[13] Ibid., 73–74.

for intelligentsia, students, artists, and labour activists to rail against Japan's building militarism.

The import of coffee stopped towards the 1940s – during the war, few coffee shops were able to offer their clients anything other than a coffee surrogate made from substitute ingredients. However, the post-war era witnessed a proliferation of coffee shops. Japanese society as a whole had undergone numerous social, political, and economic transformations, in which the United States served as a frame of reference. One manifestation of the American cultural influence was jazz, which was introduced in the pre-war era, but did not gain widespread popularity until the 1950s. This trend facilitated a propagation of so-called 'jazz cafés' (*jazu kissa*), which became highly popular among the younger generation and aspiring intelligentsia. The *jazu kissa* were part of Japan's music scene, urban scene, and cultural scene, fulfilling different functions in the course of the following decades. The *jazu kissa* of the 1950s were educational institutions, with the café master functioning as the music teacher; in the 1960s, they came to resemble temples, as jazz culture came to resemble a cult; the 1970s witnessed the *kissa*'s struggle for survival, pushing them into expansion of services and making them more similar to supermarkets; the 1980s' technological developments – such as the invention of portable music players and CDs – turned them into jazz museums.[14] And the coffee? A recent guide to jazz cafés, published online by the Jazz Association (*JAZU Kyodo Kumiai*), advises first-timers not to make facial expressions if the served coffee is disgusting. The same, however, is also advised where the coffee is unexpectedly good.[15] Although the jazz cafés were never a mainstream phenomenon, they clearly were cultural centres addressing the various needs emerging throughout Japan's modern evolutions.[16]

The coffee shops of the 1960s and 1970s hosted expressions of trends as diverse as artistic *avant-garde*, protests against the US–Japan security treaty, feminism, and sexual revolution. Many of them became sites of

[14] Derschmidt, 'The Disappearance of the Jazu-Kissa'.

[15] Jazu Kyodo Kumiai website, 'Jazz Café Manners': http://www.jazzsoda.com/manner.htm.

[16] Molasky, *Sengo Nihon no Jazu Bunka*, 202.

political activism where Japan's civil society was being moulded. The cafés continued to evolve in response to changes in urban life, offering their patrons a variety of spaces as diverse as their clientele. Coffee became commonplace and part of national lifestyle. One key development behind the transformation of coffee into an accessible and banal drink was the invention of canned coffee.

The man behind the can was Miura Yoshitake (1901–1980). Almost a century after Tei Ei Kei opened his Kahiichakan, Miura brought Japan's coffee to a major turning point that changed the face (and the taste) of Japanese coffee culture – the invention of a coffee can. Miura graduated from Waseda University and managed a green tea store while pursuing his studies of coffee. He dreamt of getting people everywhere to enjoy his coffee, even in Europe. Miura partnered with a canning factory and spent several years developing Mira Coffee, a can of sweetened coffee that went on to the market in 1965. An advertising pamphlet from the time read: 'In painting we take pride in Tessai Tomioka and in ceramics [Sakaida] Kakiemon.[17] In coffee we can boast of [Miura] to the world.'[18] Due to financial difficulties, Mira Coffee went off the market three years later; in 1969, Ueshima Coffee Corporation released canned coffee with milk, which has been a staple ever since. To commemorate the world's first canned coffee's 50th anniversary, Miura's hometown erected a memorial in 2015 and created a certification system for making 'Yoshitake coffee', to be sold at local cafés and restaurants. Through these and other measures, the town is trying to revive Yoshitake's brand and to promote itself on the regional map.

The 1980s witnessed a coffee shop boom, as coffee shops competed among themselves, offering not only different styles of coffee but also various gimmicks, atmospheres, and styles of décor – from

[17] Tomioka Tessai (1837–1924) was the pseudonym of a painter and calligrapher in imperial Japan. He is regarded as the last major artist in the Bunjinga tradition and one of the first major artists of the Nihonga style. Sakaida Kakiemon (1596–1666) was a Japanese potter who invented the style known after him as Kakiemon.

[18] Yomiuri Shimbun, Japan News, October 2015: http://the-japan-news.com/news/article/0002501174.

mom-and-pop cafés, where coffee was served along with home-made curry, to *no-pantsu kissa* (no-pants cafés), where waitresses served the customers, while walking on a mirrored floor, without underwear beneath their skirts.[19] Cafés became intertwined with local history; many of them have accumulated memories of several decades, lending coffee its localized flavour. The 1990s brought new forms, new styles, and interpretations drawing from new circumstances of Japanese life. Behind the abundance of the coffee shops, however, there are still stories that link coffee with individual visions and collective memory.

One of these is the story of a tiny coffee shop in Tokyo's trendy neighbourhood of Shimokitazawa. Although the café's history does not go back any further than several years, its owner sees himself continuing the legacy of the early coffee shops that introduced culture through music. In the café, named after his favourite rock band's album 'Bookends', he displays vinyl records from the 1970s and sells good coffee at surprisingly reasonable prices. Since the café is physically small (a counter with a couple of extra seats cramped along the wall), customers often start talking to each other, creating exactly what the owner had envisioned – a place where people gather, talk, and listen to good music. Born in the late 1950s, he himself grew up into coffee culture watching his parents drink coffee – not green tea – and learning that coffee was important for communication. He remembers how in his youth the cafes were the hubs of town, like small communities, many of which played music and were a place to hang out and talk. And for that, one needs good coffee. Today, when everything is digitalized, people no longer have access to real music and real places to listen to it. That is why Bookends is open until late and hosts live music events despite the lack of space. Places like his, its owner believes, are small but important sites where culture really takes shape.[20]

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[19] White, *Coffee Life in Jap*an, 65.

[20] Based on a private interview and an interview for Flamingo website: http://flamingogroup.com/an-interview-with-cafe-owner-mr-tanabiki#.

Places like this are also a legion in Japan. They have become a stage for the making of culture (or, rather, cultures) envisioned by their owners – the culture of rock music or jazz, art deco, or local crafts, all framed by the culture of coffee. Coffee and cafés were part of Japan's national agenda in its formative years, helping to claim the identity of a modern, urban, and civilized nation. Having become part of people's lived experiences throughout the following decades, coffee became embedded in Japan's collective memory. The controversial figure of the coffee waitress located the café in the realm of national imagination. The commemoration of people whose endeavours had an effect on Japanese coffee culture bears witness to their place in national consciousness. The exploitation of coffee as a means to revitalize local culture and economy points at its appropriation as a local asset. Nation is often enacted in commonplace routines of ordinary lives[21]; coffee's integration into Japan's changing commonplaces made it an embodied medium for enacting national sentiments, from the drive of modernization to serene nostalgia for the lost community.

In fact, it could be claimed that coffee has become more integrated into the banal spaces of Japan's everyday life than the 'unavoidably Japanese' *matcha*. Along its path, however, coffee has not lost its cultural odour by becoming '*mukokuseki*' (having no nationality, or culturally odourless),[22] neither has it been naturalized as Japanese. At the turn of the century, coffee, along with other imported products and fads, served as a venue for emulating the West. Despite its acquired ordinariness and its integration in Japan's national consciousness, coffee has retained this association with foreign culture. The connotations behind this association evolved in the course of 150 years, making the coffee's 'Otherness' a matter of cultural branding rather than cultural emulation. The following section will discuss this seemingly paradoxical positioning of coffee in Japan's relationship with its cultural 'Other'.

[21] Surak, *Making Tea Making Japan*, 2.
[22] Iwabuchi, 'Marketing "Japan"'.

## The Banal Ritual: Exploring Coffee's 'Otherness'

In modern Japanese consumption there has been a prevalent practice of incorporating foreign products as a means to infuse enchantment into everyday life. Moreover, there has been a tendency to contrast foreign entities with Japanese ones, thus reproducing the symbolic distinction between *wa* (Japan) and *yō* (the West), the Self and the Other, and reinforcing the air of authenticity around both. Consumption of foreign commodities can therefore be regarded as a twofold process through which the imaginary West is constantly reconstructed and, simultaneously, the notion of 'Japaneseness' crystallized through juxtaposition with the cultural 'Other'.[23]

Modern Japanese cuisine has been accommodating the distinction between Japanese and non-Japanese as one of the main principles of delineating national culinary identity – a principle reinforced recently by the recognition of *washoku* by the UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage. The culture-bound construction of meanings around various components of *washoku* – we may include green tea in this category, despite its being a beverage rather than a '*shoku*' (a meal) – turns them into metaphors of Japan's nationhood. This construction's most visible manifestations are in the material culture created around these substances. The material world constructed around tea and its ceremonial order – the physical space of the tea room, the utensils (bowls, whisks, scoops, kettles, containers, cloths), the clothing of the participants, are all designed to assert tea's embedment in Japanese tradition. Various components of the décor refer the viewer to the physical and aesthetical world outside the tea room (cherry blossoms, bamboo, maple leaves, and foggy landscapes), comprising a lexicon of traditional images employed as markers of Japan's cultural distinctiveness. Seasonality plays a central part in this culturally appropriated natural landscape.

[23] Goldstein-Gidoni, *Packaged Japaneseness*; Iwabuchi, 'Complicit exoticism'.

The material culture of coffee, on the other hand, is comprised of an entirely different lexicon. Coffee utensils, related vocabulary, and the design of the coffee spaces – the café – usually carry a distinct foreign stamp. Rarely does one come across coffee served in a Japanese traditional vessel – although fusion forms exist, they are to be found mainly at the more sophisticated among the coffee establishments. The coffee served at the highly elegant café of Adachi Art Museum comes in a chic porcelain cup with a charcoal stick instead of a spoon; café Mo-an, one of the most refined coffee houses in Kyoto, uses Japanese-style ceramic cups, with a bamboo stick spoon placed on a stylish *hashioki* (see pic. 2).[24] In most cases, however, the dishes are suited to the non-Japanese profile of coffee, garmenting the beverage with porcelain cups, mugs, saucers, silver teaspoons, milk jugs, sugar bowls, and other attributes of a Western table. There is a vast use of foreign terms and slogans in the coffee business, written either in English or *katakana*. While a Chinese character compound (*kanji*) exists for the word 'coffee', the use of its *katakana* version predominates. For coffee-related vocabulary (terms such as 'roast', 'blend', 'shot', and 'aroma' as well as more specialized terminology referring to types of roasts, blends, and coffee equipment), foreign terms are commonly used (Fig. 4).

The Japanese coffee shop (a *kissaten* or *kissa*) represents today a distinctive genre whose most common style has come to include a set of features, such as an emphasis on manually brewed coffee, a small pool of regular clients, and a relatively small store space. More often than not, however, the décor and general atmosphere of the *kissa* incorporate cultural images referring to 'Other', mainly Western cultural contexts. The musical background, decorative patterns featuring non-Japanese visual motifs, European tableware, the formal outfit of the coffee master, and the waiters create a microcosm somewhat remote from the actual location. Over the course of the decades, the *kissa* developed a special food menu perceived to be appropriate for coffee, most of which is firmly associated with Western cuisine. Japanese cafés rarely serve Japanese dishes; although local tastes and cooking techniques are incorporated into various café foods, their foreignness is

[24] *Hashioki* is a chopstick rest used to keep chopstick tips off the table.

**Fig. 4** Coffee served in café Mo-an in Kyoto (picture taken by the author)

nevertheless clearly marked – for example, by referring to rice as '*raisu*' in order to distinguish it from the same rice (*gohan*) served at local eateries.[25]

The factor behind this seemingly contradictory place of coffee as both banal and enchanting, nationalized and foreign, is to be seen in the ritualization of coffee. Coffee is no longer exotic and can be as banal as a coffee can; however, it may also constitute a refined experience in which expertise, sophistication, and high attention to detail are involved.

Ritual is defined as a complex of objects, performances, and meanings that create a symbolic space contrasting with everyday life. The microcosm of the *kissa* accommodates not only references to 'Other' cultural contexts but also an emphasis on coffee preparation, often translated into an elaborate 'taste regime' centred on the performance of the coffee

[25] White, *Coffee Life in Japan*, 123.

master. Merry White (2012) insightfully describes how the coffee masters exercise authority and affectionate obligation to the customer through acting, both as performers and teachers. Many of the *kissa* are characterized by intense *kodawari* (attention to detail) in everything that has to do with coffee making. The coffee experience is designed by the coffee shop master according to his (rarely, her) individual vision. But, perhaps more importantly, it is framed by an attitude to coffee as a complex of ritual, expertise, and taste.

The coffee ritual comprises several dimensions, all aimed at crafting a perfect cup of coffee. The material dimension of the ritual implies specialization in particular coffee blends (often created by the coffee master), the choice of utensils appropriate for various types of coffee, and the use of manual brewing and roasting equipment, often put on display when not in use. The immaterial dimension is constituted by the scripted performance by the coffee master of a complicated set of tasks and the maintenance of a silent contract between the master and the customer. The performance is often carried out in front of the customer, not only enabling him or her to appreciate the master's skill but also turning coffee preparation into a somewhat theatrical aesthetical experience. The silent contract implies a high level of mutual trust, reaffirming that the master will do his best to produce the most satisfactory result possible, and that the customer will do his or her best to adequately appreciate it.

Finally, the space of the coffee shop, designed in accordance with the owner's vision, often implies a certain theme translated into elements of décor and atmosphere. Shinshindo student café in Kyoto features long wooden tables designed for studying and discussion (the tables were built by a craftsman who also made the Meiji Emperor's throne)[26]; Honyarado café (also in Kyoto) is adorned with photographs of its owner, a passionate photographer; Bookends Coffee Service (Tokyo) is decorated with record covers, old American posters and cartoons. All these create a physical setting for the coffee ritual and contrast everyday

[26] Kyoto University website: http://www.kyoto-u.ac.jp/en/about/profile/campus_scenery/shinshindo.html.

life by inserting the customer, even if only temporarily, into the particular 'small culture' envisioned by the owner.

Secular rituals are often discussed as mechanisms of performing the nation.[27] This brings us back to the analogy with tea, for in Japan the tea ceremony represents an embodied practice engendering national identity and 'moulding the private body as a national body'.[28] This 'national body', by virtue of tea's associations, is also a traditional body and a static body. By reinforcing the framework of tea tradition as static tradition, tea ceremony creates the imagined reality of shared memories and collective history. The notion of tea ceremony (*chanoyu*) as a static construct is indeed in the realm of the imaginary. In reality, *chanoyu*'s representation has undergone some dramatic changes since its development in the sixteenth century: having suffered from neglect during intense Westernization, further redefined as an expression of Japan's moral universe and recruited to foster the spirit of patriotism during pre-war military mobilization. It finally became what it is today only during the post-war era – a powerful symbol of national heritage emphasizing the tranquil nature of Japanese aesthetics. Tea ceremony can be seen as a 'mythscape' – the temporally and spatially extended discursive realm in which the myths of the nation are forged, transmitted, negotiated, and reconstructed constantly.[29]

A question that should be raised in this context is what kind of mythscape is constructed around coffee? Rituals connect the present and the past through enacting linkages with either real or imagined events or people; collective memory plays a central role here. As we have observed, the national myths in which coffee was a part encompass Westernization, modernization, civil activism, urban communality, along with smaller myths revolving around specific niches such as music. To these, more recent myths are added, rooted in Japan's transformation into an affluent consumerist society – the myths of

[27] See Reed, *Dance and the Nation*; Siskind, 'The Invention of Thanksgiving' and Tsang and Woods, *The Cultural Politics of Nationalism and Nation-Building*, among others.

[28] Surak, *Making Tea*, 13.

[29] Anderson, 'Japanese Tea Ritual', 2.

individual self-cultivation, self-expression, and indulgence. This growing engagement in consumption-based identity projects underlines the role of institutions that are capable of forging new myths and enabling their enactment through everyday practices and banal rituals.

This statement brings me to the last issue of our exploration – the role of global coffee chains in the realities of Japan's coffee culture. It is rather easy to dismiss coffee chains as a post-modern phenomenon not quite related to the authentic world of coffee culture. Seen mainly as agents of hegemonic economic expansion, the chains have been criticized for their lack of cultural sensibilities. As the next section will demonstrate, however, the chains have a key role to play in the contemporary coffee landscape and the creation of new coffee myths. I will discuss how the chains fit into the contemporary discourse on coffee, identity, and self-cultivation through their 'coffee education'.

## Global Coffee and the Education for Taste

The chains entered the Japanese market in the 1990s, as speed and convenience became a crucial life factor. The first chain, Doutor, was founded by a Japanese entrepreneur inspired by Brazilian coffee culture[30]; the second was the American Starbucks. Recently, the number of independent coffee shops decreased, while the number of chains has seen a slow but steady rise, inevitably dictating the character of the contemporary coffee landscape.

One of the main effects of the coffee chains in Japan has been the fact that they made coffee more visible. The ubiquitous chains expanded the coffee consciousness to include those who would not normally drink coffee – mainly members of the younger generation who were born to affluence, an unprecedentedly broad consumer choice, and taste for novelty, which the *kissa* could not address. The chains redefined coffee from an older men's drink taken at a *kissa* (often with a newspaper and

[30] Doutor was founded by a Japanese entrepreneur Toriba Hiromichi, and today is the largest coffee chain in Japan.

cigarette) or an accessible, yet hardly refined coffee can to a trendy beverage suiting diversified tastes. This was carried out through several means: the incorporation of a uniform visual language that has come to signify global coffee culture; expanding the menu to include a wide variety of sweetened caffeinated beverages; and the general staging of an accessible, hip urban coffee experience. Most components of this experience represent a standardized set of ritualized procedures, structured in a way that necessitates familiarity and allows for little improvisation. All this is maintained and reinforced by the marketing power of global branding. This power also asserts the global chains' role as an authority and arbiter of taste. Taste is central to the process of cultural production, as the acquisition of taste translates into acquisition of culture, often in its most mundane expressions.[31] Moreover, as taste becomes increasingly central to individual self-cultivation, the notion of authority becomes particularly significant. While *kissa* establish small-scale 'taste regimes', the chains enact an entire system of socialization into coffee.[32]

Starbucks Japan launched its coffee seminars at the beginning of the 2000s. A similar system was soon taken up by another American-based chain, Tully's Coffee. Both chains enact today three levels of coffee education, comprised by standard 'coffee seminars' and several seasonal or product-oriented events. There is also a notion of graduation, whereby a customer who completes all three levels is granted a certificate (which grants no formal licence and therefore has no practical application). The courses are taught by coffee instructors: chain employees who hold the rank of a 'coffee master'. The official aim of the coffee education is to enable the customers to expand and deepen their knowledge of coffee in order to enjoy the beverage at its best. The seminars take place inside the stores during regular business hours; usually a separate corner is allocated to them. The intensity of the coffee training is partly determined by the fact that the main site of practice is the body: the

[31] Bourdieu, *Distinction*.

[32] The following description is based on the author's participant observations and interviews conducted at coffee chains' educational events during the years 2009, 2011, and 2014.

participants' smell, taste, and prepare coffee by mimicking the instructor, and internalize the learned actions through repetition.

Similar to other forms of education, a coffee seminar begins with knowledge, whereby the basics of coffee science (types of beans, growing regions, roasting levels) are explained in detail. The instructor's explanations are accompanied by colourful posters and charts that display the taught material. The explanations are followed by coffee tastings. The instructor prepares several samples and the participants practice tasting according to the main principles, namely, smelling, sipping, spreading, and describing. They then report their insights while trying to recognize the special features of the brew. The tasting is followed by the actual practice. Once again, the instructor prepares the brew, this time demonstrating the learned technique step by step. The participants take turns in performing the sequence. The nature of the practice varies according to the theme of the seminar, and can include the use of several coffee-making devices, such as a hand-drip pot, a French press, or a home espresso machine. The individually prepared samples are then passed along, tasted, and commented upon by all the participants. Sometimes, an incorrect technique is demonstrated, such as pouring water into a hand-drip device in a non-circular manner or over-filling the espresso scoop, in order to emphasize the correct procedure. By being shown the 'wrong' way, the customer learns how the lack of proper training undermines the adequate pleasure of coffee drinking. The practice requires not only the practical understanding of how to make coffee but also the knowledge of the contexts in which the practice is embedded. Coffee culture is related to its European origins and various attributes of Euro-American lifestyle, such as the globally recognizable holidays of Christmas or Valentine's Day. The 2-hour seminar is concluded with a session of Q&A. Most of the participants' questions relate to the domestic consumption of coffee, such as the optimal storage of the beans, coffee grinding techniques, or the purchase and operation of coffee devices. The participants are then given a gift kit comprised of a small bag of coffee beans and a souvenir from the chain's merchandise line-up.

Throughout the seminars, coffee is presented as a complicated science, an expertise which can signify not only an ability to make a tastier coffee but also the acquisition of taste in its broader sense – of sophistication and cultural capital. The post-modern myths of self-cultivation and self-expression through consumer practice are addressed through coffee education, whereby coffee becomes a channel to pursue individual identity projects. Moreover, the use of cultural references re-creates the culinary experience as a cultural experience, and links coffee to the world of symbols and imagination. Through prescribing the framework for practising coffee as an elaborate cultural substance and infusing it with meanings beyond the practical, this educational system in effect ritualizes coffee. In contrast with the *kissa* discussed above, the mythscape created by the global chains does not place coffee in the context of modernity or nostalgia, but of a globalized taste and individualized lifestyle.

## Conclusion: Coffee's Complexities

Is coffee Japan's national drink? As we have seen, Japan became familiarized with coffee in the first half of the twentieth century; the appropriation of coffee was closely linked to issues of national choice and national imagination. In the second half of that century, coffee became part of the national lifestyle. Today's older generation – those born in the post-war baby boom – grew up into coffee drinking together with the rapidly internationalizing nation. Coffee shops played a part in the development of the Japanese city, the making of the urban middle class, and the shaping of taste in music, food, and general lifestyle. It is therefore of no surprise that coffee and coffee shops became integrated into Japan's personal and collective memory. Japanese coffee-related expertise, coffee preparation techniques, and coffee 'taste regimes' have become elaborate and sophisticated enough to comprise an entirety defined as 'coffee culture'.

Coffee could have been 'unavoidably foreign' (in contrast with the 'unavoidably Japanese' green tea), if it were not for its incorporation into Japan's changing realities. Representing a substance that cannot be indigenized due to its stable association with Japan's cultural 'Other', coffee has nevertheless been appropriated and integrated into the shared spaces of Japanese nationness, resonating with major transformations of modern Japanese society. As such, coffee can be regarded as a site of Japan's 'banal nationhood'.[33]

There is a prevailing perception that the power of Japanese culture lies in its ability to 'Japanize' non-native substances by refining them 'the Japanese way'. Although it may explain some of the strategies of cultural appropriation, this perception does not sufficiently address the complexity of this process. The ritualization of coffee may be regarded as borrowing from the cultural realm of tea, with its refined aesthetics and subtle nostalgia for the bygone past. Coffee served in Japanese utensils lends coffee some of the refinement and prestige associated with Japan's traditional crafts, creating a somewhat playful synergy between *wa* and *yō*. As *kissaten* become distinguished as sites of Japanese coffee culture, the media praise the power of tradition in Japan's cultivation of a refined coffee experience. *Discover Japan* magazine of 2013, for example, is dedicated to green tea and coffee and points to the symbolic connection between the two as a means to rediscover the magic of Japan. The references to tea – the acquired taste, the ceremonial nature of tea practice, and its long-standing cultural heritage – define coffee in terms of a novelty anchored in a long tradition, and fit into the nostalgic narrative of returning to the roots of the nation.

Intriguingly, the word *kissaten*, which today exclusively denotes a coffee shop, translates from the Japanese as 'tea house'. Coined in pre-modern Japan, the term '*kissa*' was used to refer to tea-drinking facilities; in the late nineteenth century, however, its meaning was stretched to include coffee, soft drinks, and other modern beverages. *Kissaten* recreate the air of a tea ceremony through the ceremony of coffee, substituting one civilized stimulant with another and shifting the emphasis from Japan's 'Own' culture to an 'Other' culture skilfully appropriated by Japan. Coffee is therefore not Japanized, but inserted into a framework of cultural linkages that interact with each other in various, often unpredictable ways. Appropriated via its inclusion into Japan's collective memory, coffee has been constantly reinvented as a secular ritual – whether it is a ritual of performing modernity, learning about music, or engaging in prescribed 'taste regimes'.

[33] In accord with the notion of 'banal nationalism', coined by Billig in *Banal nationalism*.

The cultural construction of taste around various components of *washoku* builds an image of Japan as a culturally homogeneous entity. The exclusivity of the tea ritual fits into this process of nation-making by re-enacting the notion of Japan's uniqueness. The ceremonial dimension of coffee creates a much less homogenous image, in which banality coincides with enchantment, and spaces of nostalgia – with spaces of innovation, highlighting the plentitude of Japan's cultural myths and their dynamic nature.

If green tea can provide people with a metaphor for the nation, can coffee serve as a metaphor for the nation's participation in global culture? Coffee has been successfully localized; on the other hand, its foreign cultural baggage still frames the coffee experience inside Japan. In its ability to address both the global and local systems of meanings, coffee epitomizes the complexity behind the cultural dichotomy of *wa* and *yō* in the age of globalization and standardization of taste.

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**Helena Grinshpun** is currently a Research Fellow at the Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel. In 2009 she completed her doctorate in anthropology and Japanese studies at Kyoto University, Japan. Her PhD thesis dealt with the incorporation of global cultural commodities in Japan. Since 2010 she has been teaching courses on Japanese contemporary society and culture at the Asian Studies Department of the Hebrew University. Her main research interests are cultural representation, structuring of public space, urban culture, consumer behaviour and consumer education in Japan. She is currently working on a book focusing on public space and global coffee chains in Japan.

# Forging Ahead with Bread: Nationalism, Networks and Narratives of Progress and Modernity in Japan

Annie Sheng

## Introduction

In the northern outskirts of Paris, a standing audience comprising people from around the world waves various national flags as ovens blaze, trays clatter gently onto white counters and an emcee's booming voice fills the arena. In the midst of the din and the fast-moving bakers' arms under startling bright fluorescent lights, several life-size statues stand prominent in front of the audience. These statues gleam under the lights and look surprisingly life-like, but are in fact made of bread, and rules that dictate they should be entirely edible. Hiroyuki Chinen of Team Japan crouches in front of a bread statue and with

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A. Sheng (✉)
Cornell University, New York, NY, USA
e-mail: as2696@cornell.edu

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surgical precision attaches a long piece to the bottom half of his creation. He shoots a steady stream of edible coolant from the spray can in his right hand, while adjusting the long flat bread piece with his left hand. The piece he is attaching is a swooping banner that goes across the mannequin-like torso of his bread-based athlete: a sumo wrestler crafted in dough. He affixes the banner to the *shime-nawa*, a white rope, which signifies the wrestler reaching the highest rank in the sport, *yokozuna*. The bread-based banner illustrates some common motifs of Japan: *sakura* (cherry blossoms) and *koi* (carp) fins spread out in mid-swim, images as delicate as if painted on silk with a brush. The onlooking supporters in the audience of Team Japan sport bright red *happi* coats.[1] One of the supporters holds up a large signed Japanese flag (*hinomaru* flag), with messages of encouragement and motivation, written in the white area outside the red circle symbolizing the sun.

The event I describe here is the prestigious Bakery World Cup (*Coupe du Monde de la Boulangerie*), the premiere baking competition for top-bakers from around the world. Thirteen national teams are chosen to compete in this event that occurs every four years, also likened to the Olympic Games or (FIFA) World Cup in its scope and timing.[2] Since its inception in 1992, Japan and Taiwan have challenged the presumption of Western predominance in the field of bread baking by achieving gold, silver and bronze in numerous years by submitting what the judges have evaluated to be exceptional examples of baked loaves and pieces, including the bread sculptures such as those I have just described.

I draw attention to these crafted pieces to demonstrate ways in which bread – often referred to in sweeping terms both by informants and the media as the staple food of the so-called West[3] – is used as a medium to

[1] *Happi* coats are mainly worn during festivals, and often bear crests of shops and organizations.

[2] Bakery World Cup or Coupe du Monde de la Boulangerie in French, translates to 'Kūpu dyu mondo do ra būranjurī/ Bēkarī wārudo kappu' in Japanese. The following two webpages are examples in which Coupe du Monde de la Boulangerie is referred to as the Olympics of Baking: Douglas J. Peckenpaugh, 'An inside look at the 2016 Coupe du Monde de la Boulangerie'; Jeff Yankellow, '2016 Coupe Du Monde de la Boulangerie'.

[3] One example of the media mentioning cultural eating habits in the framework of East and West: The Economist, 'Culture and psychology: You are what you eat'.

construct, reshape and ultimately propagate notions of national and local identity in the cultural context of Japan, often considered a rice-eating country. This brandishing of the notion of bread as a means of iterating national and local identity also stems from the materiality of the loaves: the tactile, palatable, olfactory and visual presence of bread, made possible through the transformative properties of fermentation and baking, that is consumed and taken into the body.[4]

In this chapter, I discuss nationalism and acts of reinforcing national identity, as well as the implicated phenomenon of modernization, through analysing discourse and narratives on bread. I specifically consider bread production and consumption in recent and contemporary Japan, while situating this phenomenon in historical accounts. I also examine these narratives of bread in the context of existing scholarship on the crafting of Self and Other in the construction of Japanese cuisine. Ultimately, I argue that despite tenacious associations of bread with the West in Japan, not only do standardized notions of Japanese breads exist but also networks of bakers and bread enthusiasts are gathering and holding events in public spaces to grapple towards a novel notion of bread that can reflect Japanese aesthetics and sentiment beyond these standardized forms.[5] What 'Japanese bread' may mean rests not solely with bakers but also becomes a project undertaken by farmers, millers, policy-makers, mass media personnel and the consuming public in their attendance and contribution to these festivals and seminar events. These individuals come together in seminars and events to express their stances on the creation of Japanese bread that can best reflect this notion of Self. They also engage in the mundane

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[4] On structural understandings of food absorbed into the body and the importance of its materiality, see: Douglas, *Purity and Danger*; Lévi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked*. On bread, social meaning (as well as taking into the body), see also Sack, *Whitebread Protestants*; Bobrow-Strain, *White Bread*. On fermentation, see: Paxson, *Life of Cheese*. When I discuss bread culture in this chapter, I mostly refer to leavened, wheat-based buns, loaves and slices, though I leave the parameters of what bread may mean fairly open to see how my informants discuss what they consider to be bread.

[5] Here I draw on Fajans' argument of people's manipulation of food in reinforcing changes in social life; thus food takes on a role as a transformative agent, in bestowing prestige and reinstilling notions of national identity. Fajans, 'The transformative value of food', 143–144.

acts of production and consumption of the food. I therefore address: (1) nationalism and national identity in terms of food and cuisine in Japan; (2) *Wa* (Japanese) and *yō* (Western), and *Nihon no pan* (Japanese bread), the traversing of constructed categories of Self and Other; (3) the decline of rice consumption and the ubiquity of bread in Japan today; (4) the introduction of bread into Japan, its historical trajectory and implications for modernizing projects; (5) baking networks across Japan (and Taiwan). Ultimately, I discuss the new phenomena among baking and bread networks grappling for a 'national' sentiment of Japanese bread.

## Nationalism and National Identity in Terms of Food and Cuisine in Japan

Food although seemingly benign in its mundanity has been implicated in political schemes. Food is mobilized overtly in the case of nation-building projects, but mundane acts of consumption and production in everyday life also figure in imagined notions of national identity and belonging.[6] In discussing bread and national identity, I turn to existing scholarly literature on nationalism more broadly, as well as forms of nationalism in Japan. Understandings of nationalism espoused by Ernest Gellner, Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm share the viewpoint that nationalism and nations are modern constructions, not age-old entities.

Ernest Gellner's influential work on nationalism challenged the natural necessity of nations, and instead argued that nationalism was a function of modernity, where the industrial revolution created conditions for language, communication, social mobility and goals transcending individual selves. Benedict Anderson, too, viewed nations as modern in contending that nations are 'imagined communities' of horizontal comradeship. Eric Hobsbawm also draws from Anderson and Gellner in asserting

[6] On food and politics, especially in modernization and industrialization, see: Goody, *Cooking, Cuisine and Class*; Mintz, *Sweetness and Power*.

the historical recentness of the nation, and insists that the view from below requires attention, as ordinary people also have other forms of identifications and attachments.[7]

In this vein, understandings of food are also embraced to promote this constructed nation, where the sense of timelessness of customs confers validity in reproducing this notion of nation. For example, Thomas Hylland Eriksen discusses the political use of cultural symbols, such as music, folk tales and food reified as symbols transformed into a constant, in the production of the cultural community that is the nation.[8] In one example, Eriksen raises this phenomenon in the Norwegian context: of peasant music, food, etc. used in fashioning a Norwegian national identity, but his overarching argument implies generality that can be applied to Japan's case.

The elevation of 'traditional dietary culture of the Japanese' *washoku* as an intangible cultural heritage can be analysed in this light, where food plays a political role. Eric Rath argues that *washoku*'s acceptance as intangible heritage with a definition that includes the term 'fresh ingredients' comes in the wake of the March 2011 earthquake and reflects the Japanese government's need to ensure the safety of the food. He also notes that *washoku*'s definition includes not concrete items like sushi, but more inclusive values like presentation style and attention to nature, grasping at a wider interpretation of cultural heritage.[9] Katarzyna J. Cwiertka and Barak Kushner also discuss the government's mobilization of food as a provision for the construction of modern, strong bodies fit for military engagement. In this case, discourse turned to food of the Other, the West, as exemplar for nourishing fit bodies – meat and bread being prime examples.[10]

Nationalism is not a concept employed solely by the political elites in overt forms of (re-)legitimization, but is also reproduced in the mundane, in ways often overlooked. Take for example, the sumo wrestler

[7] Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*; Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism*; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 5–7.

[8] Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 123–125.

[9] Rath, 'How Intangible?'; see also: Bestor, 'Washoku on the World Stage'.

[10] Kushner, *Slurp!*; Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, 33, 68–72.

bread statue mentioned earlier. The supporters of the Japanese baking team who are watching the sumo wrestler bread statue come into being brandish not only one large *hinomaru* flag but also small stickers of the same Japanese flag prominently on their faces while waving smaller Japanese flags in their hands. They also hold up plastic blow-up batons with 'JAPAN' written boldly on them below the image of the flag, all to cheer on the competing bakers from Japan. This brings to mind Rika Kayama's assertion of a petit nationalism (*puchi nashonarizumu*) in what she considered the nonchalant ways in which youths wave the Japanese flag during soccer games and sing the national anthem, without a deeper consciousness of history. What I take from Kayama's argument here is that the use of flags in competitive games may seem benign and yet it engages in the process of nationalism and in mass expressions of national sentiment.[11]

Michael Billig also examines overlooked forms of nationalism in coining the term banal nationalism. He brings attention to the ways in which nationalism is reproduced daily, embedded in the routines of life. To illustrate his point, he directs attention to flags: unwaved flags that in turn are 'flagging' nationhood, providing mindless reminders of one's established homeland. While discussing various instances in which flags appear noticed and unnoticed, he raises the subject of bread. He remarks on the symbolic and signalling function of the tricolour flag on bread in France, which 'signals' bread made in the authorized method of baking, *pain de tradition française.*[12]

On motifs of flags on food, Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney mentions how the lunch box *hinomaru bentō,* a bed of white rice with a red pickled plum *umeboshi* in the centre, conjures up the image of the national 'rising sun' flag in her discussion of Self and Other in analysing rice symbolism in Japan.[13] Curiously, in Yoichi City in Hokkaido Prefecture, for 130 yen, one can buy *hinomaru* bread that also evokes

[11] The *hinomaru* flag only became formally chosen as the national flag in the 1870's. Previously, groups for and against the *bakufu* used the flag. See Ohnuki-Tierney, 'The Emperor of Japan', 205.

[12] Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, 40.

[13] Ohnuki-Tierney, *Rice as Self*, 93.

the red rising sun. The circular bread is topped with freshly whipped cream as the white part and a dollop of strawberry jam as the red centre. In another instance of conjuring up the flag, Hinomaru Seipan Bakery in Hashima City, Gifu Prefecture employs the motif of the rising sun in its company name.[14] In these cases, the flag is a blatant symbol of nationalism, though often overlooked as mundane, rendered into bread form and written onto storefronts, waved vigorously in international bread competitions– routine mindless iterations of the notion of Japan.

## *Wa* and *yō*, and *nihon no pan*: The Traversing of Self and Other

Besides deployment of the flag as a means of evoking nation, several kinds of breads have been embraced as Japanese, similar to the foods and folk culture Eriksen argues become reified as symbols. Such breads elevated to the status of *nihon no pan* (Japanese breads) include (1) *kashipan* (sweet breads) such as: *anpan* (red bean bun), *meron pan* (bread with cookie-crust topping cross-hatched in melon rind pattern), *chokokorone* (chocolate cream-filled horn-shaped bread), *kurīmu pan* (cream bread); (2) savoury breads such as *karepan* (curry-filled bread) and *yakisobapan* (*soba*-noodle sandwich); and (3) *shokupan* (pillowy white bread, often sliced for sandwiches). I call these standardized forms of Japanese breads [mostly soft, with sweet crumb (bread interior)] so as to differentiate them from the new wave of breads moving beyond these established forms, their makers combining European methods and imbuing this bread making knowhow with a Japanese sensibility.

[14] Hinomaru Seipan Bakery's signature item is not a rising sun bread, but bread called *misogi pan*, in which *misogi* refers to the Shinto purification rite of washing oneself in water. In this case, the bread is actually two red bean buns skewered on a stick. The concept of the bread derives from *misogi mochi,* or rice cakes of the same name famous in that area. Like the rice cakes, the bread is also lathered with miso paste. The bread is made of domestically grown wheat from Hokkaido Prefecture, as well as rice flour.

As I mentioned, these standardized breads are often referred to in bakery publications, bread dictionaries, mass media and in conversations with bakers and consumers as *nihon no pan* (Japanese bread) as well as other words signifying a national Self. In each instance of evoking *nihon no pan* is another banal reiteration of national sentiment.[15] It is worthwhile here to discuss this designation of *nihon no pan* in the greater scheme of *washoku* (traditional dietary culture of the Japanese) and *nihon ryōri* (modern Japanese cuisine).

*Wa* (literally: harmony), as a prefix, is a discursive term signifying Japanese, a kind of notion of Self as opposed to the Other, *yō* (Western). Yet, *wa* and *yō* are far from timeless terms – although their daily reflexive usage may make them seem so. They are constructed terms, fabricated during the Meiji Period as a means of marking the Self in response to a foreign Other. They arose in the context of a greater consciousness towards national identity through food.[16]

In addition to the *wa*/*yō* binary is the term *nihon ryōri,* also referring to Japanese food. Both *wa* and *nihon ryōri* signify Japanese food; however, *nihon ryōri* is a wider term that includes imported foods adapted to Japanese palates. While bread has been most often relegated to the *yō* (Western) side of the equation, calling certain standardized breads *nihon no pan* seems to circumvent this *wa*/*yō* binary and instead align this canon of familiar bread *nihon no pan* to that of *nihon ryōri*, in a kind of categorical discursive mechanism that allows bread to be understood as Japanese.

Yet new groups of bakers, self-styled bread educators and event coordinators discuss 'Japanese-style' or 'Japanese' bread in these various terms which have different nuanced meanings that include not only *nihon* (Japan) but also *wa: wafū pan, wapan, washoku no pan, nihon rashī pan, nihon no pan*, as well as others. Some of these bread culture purveyors generously apply even the *wa* prefix to bread.

[15] Billig, *Banal Nationalism*.

[16] Rath and Assman, 'Japanese Foodways', 7; Kushner, *Slurp!,* 10–11; Ohnuki-Tierney, *Rice as Self,* 106–108; Theodore Bestor, 'Washoku on the World Stage'; also Tatsuya Mitsuda's chapter in this volume.

In her work on coffee, Helena Grinshpun remarks on bread culture in Japan: 'Bread, which today constitutes an integral part of the Japanese diet, is still associated with foreign food culture, as manifested by bakeries' foreign-sounding names, representative more of the "abstract West" than of any particular bread-related tradition.'[17] While I indeed find it to be the case that some bakeries adopt foreign names to market this vague notion of the West, there are still others in the recent phenomenon who follow closely a particular European tradition, most often French or German, while claiming a certain Japanese aesthetic to the production and taste of their breads. As I have mentioned, these new movements in bread culture involve adopting the style of European breads, while simultaneously shaping and marketing them as structurally coherent in a Japanese meal to be eaten on an everyday level.

In emphasizing the categorical rigidity of Japanese and Western foods, Merry White makes an assertion on what can be served with coffee: 'In adopting foreign foods and particularly in the malleable space of the café, coffee can go with anything, from peanuts to ice cream. What it usually cannot accompany, however, is "Japanese" food. Curry rice, having become in some ways "Japanese," seems an exception.'[18] Naomichi Ishige also argues in a similar vein with respect to this division between the Self (Japanese-style foods) and the Other (Western-style foods) regarding bread in Japan. He contends that bread cannot structurally be paired with anything else but Western-style food (in Japan), insisting that there are particular foods associated with rice and particular foods associated with bread. '[T]he menu of bread-associated dishes is a closed system, consisting entirely of Western-style foods and excluding Japanese or Chinese-style foods. This shows that bread meals have never been modified to a truly Japanese form, but have retained a strongly foreign character.'[19] He later concedes that wine is sometimes eaten with rice, and is therefore in the process of traversing categories.[20]

[17] Grinshpun, 'Deconstructing a global commodity', 360. See on coffee also Helena Grinshpun's chapter in this volume.

[18] Grinshpun, 'Deconstructing a global commodity', 359.

[19] Ishige, *The History and Culture*, 169.

[20] For wine see also the next chapter in this volume by Chuanfei Wang.

If he waited another 15 years to comment, he would have seen that bread has also been traversing boundaries and is not strictly relegated to the 'foreign side'. Similar to the curry rice described by White, these breads paired with food associated with the *wa* side of the category have become in some ways, 'Japanese'.

Thus, if we consider new phenomena in bread culture, we can see that bakers and self-styled bread event coordinators in Japan are penetrating these structural boundaries that social analysts have drafted through their analyses. In short, these bread pioneers promote bread paired with Japanese food and drink (fish paste, pickles and sake are some examples) as not only possible but also as delicious and fitting.

Drawing up what Japanese bread may mean to these bread pioneers is not limited to concrete food items and their pairings, but involves the art and process of preparing and offering food. Some informants emphasize the importance of attention and care in the process of preparation – the consideration afforded to bread making and the assembly of sandwiches as particularly 'Japanese' – while drawing parallels with the care required in making sushi and foods such as *dashimaki tamago*, a delicately rolled omelette made with *dashi* broth. These purveyors of bread and sandwiches consider this care as a crucial part of food service and hospitality in conveying Japanese sensibility.

The efforts to promote these new breads and creations are ways to develop a kind of nationally inspired or nationally representative style of bread, while simultaneously emphasizing regional and local specialties and seasonality. Not only centred on single individuals, formed networks of people across Japan gather to discuss how to innovate and create breads that reflect a Japanese sentiment and aesthetic. To give a better sense of such efforts in bread innovation and collaboration, I provide here three examples of the varied networks discussing bread in Japan. While one of the networks I mention here is listed as a non-profit organization, the other two point to their projects as central to defining their presence and aims. One non-profit organization calls itself a relay-race team, handing over the baton from wheat producers to distributors, to bakers, to consumers and to all the people and steps in between. They come together as a 'team' during certain festivals and seminars to discuss ways to advance 'Japanese bread'. Another related network of local farmers, millers and bakers promotes self-sufficiency in wheat and teaches families and individuals about bread history, culture and industry in Japan through hosting educational events. Yet another network led by a fermentation and bread specialist focuses more on the transformative aspect of bread production, especially in the fermentation stage, and categorizes bread in Japanese culinary culture among well-established fermented foods in Japanese cuisine such as soy sauce, miso and sake, while promoting these foods including bread as part of a regional revitalization. These are but a few examples and there are more – but they have all cropped up recently and are quite intertwined, as members traverse different organizational spaces. The breads that they promote are charged with notions of national identification of Self and Other, especially in combining bread with the prefix *wa* or in using terms like *nihon no* (Japanese).

## The Introduction of Bread into Japan, Its Historical Trajectory and Implications in Modernizing Projects

Wheat farmers in Japan, whom I have met through my research, constantly feel the need to remind me that wheat cultivation, coming in through China, existed in Japan for a long time historically, as wheat was and continues to be used in noodles, *manjū*[21] and wheat *dango* (dumplings), and eaten in addition to barley and other millets. Some theories state that wheat flour had been used as early as the Nara period (710–784), but declined in the Heian period (794–1185) due to a lack of grinding stones, among other reasons; moreover, records indicate that wheat cultivation gained traction in the Kamakura period (1185–1333), when farmers often grew wheat on paddy land during the dry, drained paddy season after the rice had been harvested.[22]

[21] *Manjū* is a confection with the outside made in part of flour and the inside usually filled with red bean paste.

[22] Ito, 'Japan's Use of Flour'.

While people in Japan consumed noodles and other wheat products, the history of bread is considerably more recent.[23]

Early consumption of bread involved Portuguese traders and Christian missionaries coming to Japan. Even the word for bread *pan* in Japanese has its roots in this period in the sixteenth century, as *pan* comes from the Portuguese term for bread, pão.[24] The first ship carrying Portuguese traders to Japan was a Chinese ship that was blown off-course, arriving on Tanegashima Island (Kagoshima Prefecture) in 1543. Portuguese and Spanish missionaries introduced Christianity to the country in 1549, when Jesuit Saint Francis Xavier established Japan's first mission at Kagoshima. Christian missionaries played a role in spreading bread consumption from 1549 until the early 1600s through the ritual of the Eucharist. It was also during the 1600s that biscuits were being mass-produced in Nagasaki and shipped to Luzon (the Philippines). Spanish noble Rodrigo de Vivero, interim governor of the Philippines in 1608–1609, noted that while bread was not an everyday food in Japan during that time, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the bread made in Edo was the best in the world. However, daimyo Toyotomi Hideyoshi began prohibiting Christianity and persecuting Christians in 1612, driving bread

[23] While Nagao Seiichi argues that there is increasing variety of bread in Japan, including bread that is arranged for Japanese tastes, he also warns against forgetting that bread's history in Japan is shallow and that there are many [people in Japan] who are learning from people that have been eating breads for some thousands of years. Nagao, 'Pan wa naze', 4–5. Foods like *okonomiyaki* (shredded cabbage pancakes) and *takoyaki* (balls of pan-cooked batter filled with diced octopus) are also made of wheat.

[24] Such Portuguese influence on food in Japan today persists in other Japanese words like *tempura* (battered and fried seafood and vegetables) and *kasutera* (soft cake, derived from *pão de Castela* in Portuguese). *Pan* (bread) is written in the katakana loanword alphabet. Bread is sometimes referred to as *bureddo* from the English word bread or much less frequently in writing using the Chinese-derived kanji characters 麵麭 [with a few variations of the characters, pronounced *pan* (or maybe even *menpō* using the Japanese version of the Chinese pronunciation), but on the rare occasion that it is used, the word is usually not deployed orally but written in print somewhere], as it was more widely used in the Meiji era. Prior to that, in the Azuchi-Momoyama period (1573–1600), bread was at first referred to as 波牟 (pronounced *pan*), 蒸餅 *mushi mochi*, 麦餅 *mugi mochi* and 麦団子 *mugi dango*. Kamura, *Nagasaki Chōnin shi,* 253. (Regarding etymology, some other sources contend that the word *pan* (also) derives from the French word *pain* propagated later in the Meiji period. On bread deriving from the French word *pain*, see: Munakata, *Yokohama*, 118.) On the more widely accepted notion of *pan* deriving from Portuguese *paō*, see: Shibata, *Nihon no pan*, 3.

production down. This led into a period of national isolation, *sakoku*, starting from trade restrictions from the early seventeenth century, followed by edicts issued by Tokugawa Iemitsu from 1633 to 1639, until the arrival of Commodore Perry's ships in 1853. Yet, even during the *sakoku* period, commerce continued in Nagasaki where there was limited trade and interaction with China and the Dutch – and bakers in Dejima (an artificial island used as a Dutch trading outpost) still maintained a market of selling bread to Dutch residents.[25]

In 1842, Egawa Hidetatsu Tarōzaemon, *daikan* (local intendant) of the Tokugawa *bakufu* (shogun-headed military government), who is known for constructing the reverbatory furnace for making canons, built a baking oven on his estate grounds in Nirayama City, Shizuoka. (The oven still exists to this day, roughly speaking an iron pan and wooden lid over a stone chamber for the fire.) After witnessing portable rations distributed by Western armies, Egawa decided to experiment with hardtack *kanpan*, shelf-stable, portable bread for use as field rations. His legendary innovative genius led him to bake bread from techniques he learned from a man named Sakutarō, summoned to Tokyo to help with baking. Sakutarō worked in food preparation at a Dutch estate in Nagasaki and had learned the craft of making bread. In 1953, the Japan Bread Association (*Zenkoku pan kyōkai*) designated Egawa as *panso* 'Forefather of Bread' and erected a monument in his estate to

[25] On missionaries, see: Cortazzi, 'The Foreigner in Japan', 276–278; Cooper, Michael. *They Came to Japan*, ix. On Christian persecution, see: Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, 3–4. On prohibition of Christians and effect on bread, see: Adachi, *Nihon no funshoku minzokushi*, 130. On bread culture in Nagasaki and Dejima, see: Eiichi, *Pan no Meiji hyakunenshi*, 8–9; Kamura, *Nagasaki chōnin shi*, 253. On export of biscuits and wheat from Nagasaki to Luzon (Philippines), see: Kamura, *Nagasaki chōnin shi*, 270; Sola, *Historia de un desencuentro*, 15. For a Spanish version of Rodrigo de Vivero y Aberrucia's comment on bread in Japan: 'Y aunque los japaneses no gastan pan sino como género extraordinario, no es encarecimiento decir que el que se hace en aquel pueblo es el mejor del mundo, y porque lo compran pocos, es casi de balde'. Vivero, *Relación y noticias de el reino del Japón*; others mention his quote in Japanese: Kamura, *Nagasaki chōnin shi*, 251; Ōtsuka, 'Pan to Nihonjin', 15. Accounts provided on bakery websites and articles on bread history often bring up Jesuit missionary St. Francis Xavier as an integral figure in the history of bread culture in Japan by spreading bread consumption through the practice of communion breads. They also note that the practice of baking bread remained on a small scale and was sold to foreigners in Nagasaki Prefecture after the *bakufu*'s edict banning Christianity. As for *sakoku*, scholars currently debate how secluded this period of isolation actually was.

commemorate his achievements.[26] The original furnace for baking still graces the Egawa estate, the entirety of which is designated as an Important Cultural Property.[27] While monuments and cultural heritage designations reify aspects of nationhood, modernization is at play here, coded through such temporal terms as 'ahead of one's time' or 'forward-thinking', terms tour guides and printed literature assign to Egawa. Festivals held at the estate can be read not only as a means to promote the city but also to reclaim a narrative of modernization through the introduction of bread culture, and an effort to advance this narrative across Japan through drawing students to participate in the festival's national baking competition.[28]

Commodore Perry and his United States Navy forces arrived in Japan in 1853 and forced open trade in 1854 after Japan's period of isolation. Yokohama, a port town with many foreigners, then became a site where bread baking flourished. In 1860, Utsumi Heikichi received instructions on baking from the cook of the French warship Dordogne and used Japanese wheat to bake what was described as a baked 'wheat dumpling-like' bread. He opened a bakery that sold *genkotsu pan* (fist-sized rolls).[29]

[26] Ōtsuka, 'Pan to nihonjin', 16; Minato City Library, 'Prominent People of Minato City, Tarozaemon Egawa'. See also Tatsuya Mitsuda's chapter in this volume. The curator of the Egawa collection at Nirayama unfurled the scroll-like recipe for bread (handwritten by Egawa, originally enclosed in a letter) to show me the listed ingredients. In addition to bread, the recipe also included a mention of *kasutera* (soft cake).

[27] Photos from online blogs show that some visitors have also bought a version of Egawa's hardtack bread labelled 'Bread forefather's bread' to try for themselves. The bread is marketed with the accompanying text, 'Revived from 150 years ago' as well as 'The first bread baked in Japan! It's hard! Please challenge yourself with savoring the Edo era.' Apparently, the hard bread comes with directions that recommend: 'If it's difficult to eat, immerse the bread in hot water or tea and enjoy.' Izunotabi, 'Dai rokkai panso no pan matsuri hanbaiten goannai.' I tried this hard bread at the festival in April 2016 and it was harder than I expected. When I took my first bite, I envisioned my teeth chipping off from the tenacious rigidity of the hardtack. My particular bread came with no accompanying label with directions, but I was advised by the baker to dip it in tea to soften the bread, and following her lead, eating the bread was a feat that suddenly became a lot easier to manage. In short, it absorbed the liquid like a sponge, turning soft and rather mushy, with a slight hint of flavour from the absorbed tea.

[28] On performances and rituals (including festivals and memorializing monuments) and the Important Cultural Property designation that contribute to Japanese social memory, see Hui, et al., *Perspectives on Social Memory in Japan*; Brumann and Cox, *Making Japanese Heritage*.

[29] Ikawa, *Hama kotoba*, 149. Kosuge, *Kindai nihon shokubunka nenpyō*, 4–9; Time Slip Yokohama, 'Pan no hasshōchi: Yokohama bēkarī uchiki shōten'. The baked bread was said to

In 1861, Jose Francisco from Portugal opened a bakery in the 126th section of the foreigner residential ward, while another baker George W. Goodman from America also opened up shop in the same year using imported wheat for his breads. Goodman's shop burned down that November and he reopened two years later, calling his shop: Yokohama's First European-style Bakery.[30] Another example of an early bakery is Yokohama Bakery established by British baker Robert Clarke in 1862. In 1888, Yokohama Bakery employee Uchiki Hikotaro took over the business and the website of Uchiki Pan calls Clarke the forefather of *shokupan* (popular bread loaf for slicing).[31] In 1865, Edward Kirby arrived in Yokohama and was the first person to import a bread oven to Japan to open a bakery.[32]

In 1868, Kobe's port opened to outsiders, and shortly thereafter, Osaka, Tsukiji and Niigata also opened to foreigners. Since then, Kobe's bread industry grew rapidly because of trade volumes and the demands of the foreign settlement.[33] Nearby Kyoto residents also quickly became familiar with bread, their tastes for novelty shaping the rise of bread consumption and culture in the city.[34] Hotels serving bread near ports and foreign residences from the 1860s onwards also contributed to the propagation of bread.[35]

be similar to *yudedango* (boiled dumpling) and the Time Slip Yokohama website suggests that the bakery was a *wafū panya* (Japanese-style bakery). Ikawa mentions the bakery is French style and also bread was first sold under the term *pan* coming from the French word *pain*.

[30] Kosuge, *Kindai nihon shokubunka nenpyō*, 4–9; Katō, *Yokohama, Past and Present*, 67. Time Slip Yokohama, 'Pan no hasshōchi: Yokohama bēkarī uchiki shōten'.

[31] Hōmeido Kyōkai, *Pansheru jūkentei*, 17; Katō, *Yokohama, Past and Present*, 67; Uchiki Pan, 'Pan no rekishi ni tsuite'. Clarke's widow took over the bakery after Clarke's death and after 35 years of baking, she retired in 1888, handing the shop over to Uchiki Pan Bakery, at that time called Yokohama Bekārī Uchiki Shōten.

[32] Tamura, *Forever Foreign*, 32. Kirby was a businessman and expatriate to Japan, born in England in 1846 and moved to Australia in about 1856 before moving to Shanghai and eventually arriving at Japan. According to Tamura's account, besides his aims with respect to baking bread, he was also the first person in Japan to open a small department store.

[33] Kimura, *Pan no Meiji hyakunenshi*, 109.

[34] Nihon hakugaku kurabu, *Bakushō!*.

[35] Kimura, *Pan no meiji hyakunenshi*, 123.

In 1869, Buneido Bakery was first established in what is now Shimbashi, then moved to Ginza, Tokyo and was renamed Kimuraya in 1870. In 1875, Kimuraya developed the *anpan* (bun filled with red bean). Kimuraya's *anpan* made with sake yeast dough accented with a salt-pickled cherry blossom was presented to the Meiji emperor on April 4, 1875 during a cherry blossom viewing occasion at the Mito domain villa (now Mukojima, Tokyo). Here, too, is another example of bread being raised to a national level, offered to the emperor, to be ingested by a figure who is a salient symbol, 'Manifest Deity' of Japan. This proffering is especially momentous considering Kosaku Yoshino's argument that, as a kind of primary nationalism, the Meiji elites established the tradition of the emperor as rooted in Shintoism and familialism for the construction of a constituted centre as a touchstone for national identity.[36]

As a kind of taking in of a constructed notion of the 'Other' since its inception, bread also has links to historical endeavours of modernization and conceptualizations of advancement and progress. This is especially so in modern Japan, at the end of Edo period, as in the case of Egawa's legacy and the opening of the ports; and more acutely at the start of the Meiji era (1868–1912), when the adoption of Western customs was considered a mark of progress and refinement. Katarzyna Cwiertka writes that in the making of strong bodies for war, bread was taken into consideration as a robust food needed for a stalwart-bodied army. Takagi Kanehiro, who

[36] Kimuraya sōhonten, 'Anpan no hi to wa?'; Kimura*, Pan no Meiji hyakunenshi*; Yoshino, *Consuming Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 13; Ohnuki-Tierney, 'The Emperor of Japan', 205, 208–209. In discussing how to understand the 'divinity' of the emperor, Ohnuki-Tierney argues for the transformation of how the emperor was conceived: the emperor was made especially visible during the Meiji period through paintings and later photographs as 'Manifest Deity', but even so the populace still spoke of the emperor in human ways through a fluid understanding of *kami* (Shinto divine beings, gods or spirits). In terms of foreign food consumed by the Meiji emperor, it is important to note here that during the Meiji era, imperial meals often served French food, as a way to accommodate for foreign guests not accustomed to food in Japan. For imperial menu in the Meiji era, see Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, 13–14, 18–24; also listen to Barak Kushner's frustration at the refusal of the *kunaichō* (imperial household management bureau) to provide access to menus from imperial banquets during the mid-Meiji era. He attributes their refusal to allow access to the menus to the abundance of French influence on court food: 'It's this fascinating element that even until today, the Japanese imperial household doesn't officially serve Japanese food at its functions; it serves French food.' New Books Network, podcast of Carla Nappi's interview with Kushner on his book *Slurp!*, December 20, 2012.

directed the Tokyo naval hospital, experimented with bread in 1884 as part of a move towards a more Western diet to fight the debilitating disease of beri beri (now associated with Vitamin B1 deficiency). Takagi regarded beri beri as an Asian disease that did not much afflict Western bodies, and suspected nutritional deficiencies in the navy provisions as the culprit. In his assessment, he drew comparisons between Japan and the West, and aimed to incorporate what he considered a nutritiously superior Western diet that included bread to boost the navy's might.[37]

Bread making was also implicated in other aspects of war, such as its proliferation in the Bandō prisoner-of-war camp. In 1897, Germans and Austro-Hungarians took over the harbour town of Tsingtao (Qīngdǎo) on the Shāndōng peninsula in China. In August 1914, during the Taishō era (1912–1926) and at the beginning of World War I (WWI), Japanese forces seized Tsingtao. Those Germans and Austro-Hungarians living in Tsingtao were moved and interned in the Bandō POW camp in Naruto, Tokushima Prefecture, Shikoku Island as prisoners of war. These (mainly) Germans baked bread at a bakery in what is considered a recreated German village. Photos from the time show the bakery which had a wooden signboard shaped like a pretzel and bags of flour piled on a wooden table.[38]

Also during the Taishō and early Showa eras, more and more bakeries were cropping up, as yeast varieties similar to ones used today were being used at the time. *Shinise* (long-standing shops) from the Taishō era include Tokyo stores Taishō Seipan Sho bakery (1919-) and Setapan (1923-), among many others. In Kobe, 1918 rice riots contributed to bread's popularity for breakfast. The rice riots also spurred the founding of Shikishima Baking Co. Ltd (PASCO) in 1919 in Nagoya, now a large baking manufacturer whose bread can be seen in supermarkets and convenience stores.

[37] Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, 68–72. Alexander Bay mentions that the soldiers hated the bread and many threw it overboard; but bread was commonly used in combination with barley by unit doctors as therapy for beriberi. Bay, *Beriberi in Modern Japan*, 44–45, 80. Later, other staunch assertions of nutritious bread over rice came from nutritionists in the mid-late 1950s. Professor of medicine Hayashi Takashi, in comparing Western and Japanese diets, even suggested a full bread diet and abolishing rice paddies to achieve the stronger mind that bread confers. Solt, *The Untold History of Ramen*, 78–79.

[38] 'Taishō period: Bandō prisoner-of-war camp.' Japan Photo Archive; Murphy, Mahon. 'Brücken, Beethoven und Baumkuchen', 128–130.

The Kantō Earthquake and resultant fire wiped out the majority of bakeries in the Tokyo area, many of which were speedily rebuilt thereafter. It was also after WWI in the twentieth century when American-style sweet breads, German bread ovens and industrial yeast became more widely propagated. WWII also affected bakeries: the Tokyo Air Raid devastated many bakeries such as Uchiki Pan, which had to be rebuilt. Through large-scale production and consumption, *kanpan* (hardtack) had become widely known by 1944 and was used not only in the military as a staple for several decades but was also advertised to the public using patriotic texts and imagery – overt forms of nationalism taken into soldiers' and everyday civilians' bodies alike.[39]

In terms of the wider diffusion of bread consumption in Japan, many of my informants discuss the post-war era, where changes in taste were fuelled by food aid from America during a time of food crisis in Japan. At a time when malnutrition and black markets for food were rampant, American occupation forces instituted a school lunch programme in 1947 to provide for schoolchildren's nourishment. Former supplies of the Japanese army and American donations comprised the bulk of the food.[40] From 1950, school lunches included bread such as *koppe pan* (sweet rolls) and *agepan* (fried bread), made from American surplus wheat. Powdered milk also accompanied bread. In 1976, the Japanese government pushed for greater inclusion of rice in school lunches in part to accommodate Japan's rice surplus and also as a response to the declining consumption of rice.[41] The sense of nostalgia (a mix of fondness and ruefulness) regarding these school lunches with bread can be seen in my encounters in Japan. While sitting at a small,

[39] Taishōpan, 'Irasshaimase'; Setapan, 'Setapan sutōrī'; Pasco, ('1919) nen (taishō 8 nen) – sōgyō'; Kimura, *Pan no Meiji hyakunenshi*, 550–551, 556. Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, 125. PASCO's research team also pioneered mass production of bread made in part with domestic wheat, using *yumechikara*. *Yumechikar*a is a variety of Japanese wheat (suitable for bread use) developed in Hokkaido and registered in 2008–2009, after a span of 13 years in development. Pasco, 'Yumechikara tanjō monogatari'.

[40] Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, 157–158; General Headquarters Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, *Mission and Accomplishments of the Occupation in the Public Health and Welfare Fields*, 17. The American charitable organization was Licensed Agencies for Relief in Asia (LARA), which provided 350 tons of food and clothing in their first shipment of relief goods in November 30, 1946.

[41] Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, 158. Regarding the decline of the consumption of rice, Cwiertka demonstrates that a rising standard of living was the background against which people in Japan consumed more meat, fish and fruit at the expense of rice by the 1970s.

cozy *kappō ryōriya* (a small restaurant/bar where the owner cooks and serves Japanese-style food from behind a counter), I spoke with a middle-aged couple that happened to sit down next to me at the counter. Among many topics, we also talked about bread consumption. The couple reminisced about Showa school lunches and insisted that bread at that time was made of flour of low quality coming from America as food aid and the milk that was provided with the lunch could be barely called milk but rather *dasshi funnyū* (powdered non-fat milk). This subject seemed never to fail to trigger looks of revulsion and a chorus of disgust among the couple and other customers who joined in the conversation. The couple ate this bread as children, but could not bear to drink what they considered an inferior milk-like liquid.[42]

Incidentally, during this dinner another customer came barrelling through the door (as it was raining, there was a bit of a commotion with umbrellas) to deliver homemade *shokupan* to the *kappō ryōriya* restaurant owner. This customer is a local bread purveyor: she bakes, sells and delivers bread in the neighbourhood, though she insists that she does not go as far as calling herself a baker (*panyasan)*, which may imply owning a bakery storefront. These everyday encounters illustrate the ubiquity of bread in Japan, found in supermarkets, convenience stores, bakeries and even hand-delivered by local, informal networks of bread purveyors.

## Decline of Rice Consumption and the Ubiquity of Bread in Japan Today

Questions people often ask me when I explain my research are: 'Do people in Japan eat bread? Isn't Japan a rice-eating culture?' This is not a question posed solely outside Japan; there are also people in Japan who say, sure we

[42] Cwiertka and Kushner discuss the subject of bread and milk as part of the school lunch programme and its legacies: Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, 163; Kushner, *Slurp!*, 199, 210–211. See also Japan Dairy Association (J-milk)'s website in Japanese for a timeline of the kinds of milk served as school lunch provisions in Japan. Japan Dairy Association (J-milk), 'Gakkō kyūshoku no fūkei'. According to my informants, school lunches have since been transformed and more variety is served to schoolchildren. See also Solt, *The Untold History*, 10; and Kushner, *Slurp!*, on the history of Japanese wheat and noodles.

eat bread, but our main staple is rice. However, as my informants suggest, the answer is not quite that simple. While some stress that rice is a staple food, at the same time, I have encountered others who tell me that they prefer bread over rice, and that rice eating is facing decline. Yet, others inform me that it is not so oppositional, that bread can also include rice and in fact some of the supermarket breads do. One baking instructor, who was running a baking school out of the kitchen/dining space in her home, informed me that Japan is undergoing a bread boom. According to her, about ten years ago, there were very few projects like hers, but now there are many.[43] A simple trip to the convenience or grocery store in Japan conveys the sheer demand for bread, with shelves filled with many (often small) loaves or buns. Even vending machines sell bread in clear plastic packaging at certain train stations and key locations in Japan. Bread is not only viewed in the imaginations of the public in Japan as a modern, portable food but also as an increasingly accepted everyday food item. In addressing the phenomenon of increasing bread production and consumption in the broader bread culture of Japan, in no way am I downplaying the significant and conspicuous role of rice in the cuisine and culture of Japan.[44] Yet, there is an increase in bread consumption, debatably at the expense of rice.[45]

In *Rice as Self*, Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney demonstrates the impact of rice on Japan's national imagination, achieved through the selection and canonization of the creation myth Amaterasu, Sun Goddess, and her divine fields of rice. In this case, the cuisine of the 'Self' that features rice was constructed, a myth of a static 'unchanging' form of consumption of which all Japanese people (later as members of the

[43] In discussion with the baking instructor, February 25, 2016.

[44] Ohnuki-Tierney, *Rice as Self*.

[45] One director at a government research centre indicated that there are many forms of competition, including competition between wheat and rice, but also rice and *okazu* (accompanying side dishes), where the amount of rice provided in *obentō* (lunch boxes) for sale has decreased in favour of *okazu*. Therefore, it is not as simple as to suggest that wheat and rice are the main rivals, as another coordinator of bread/wheat-related events also suggested bread and rice are not diametrically opposed. This coordinator said wheat and rice were sometimes also used in cooperation, such as bread made with rice and wheat. Discussion with director of government research centre, April 20, 2016; Discussion with bread/wheat event coordinator, February 25, 2016.

nation) partook – overlooking the substantial consumption of other grains and tubers, as well as the matter of rice's inception in Japan through continental Asia.[46] In considering religious rites, Shintoism heavily employs rice symbolism (e.g. through the use of *sake* or rice wine) and holidays such as the New Year are often accompanied by eating *mochi* (pounded rice cakes) in *ozōni* soup and placing out *kagami mochi* (mirror rice cakes) decorations.[47] Yet, journalists and bloggers express doubt over the predominance of rice over wheat in actual consumption. For example, one Slate article asks, 'How did Japan come to prefer wheat over rice?' It gives an overview of modern Japanese food history, stressing wheat coming from the US as food aid, and eventually concludes, '[t]hat's because over the last 40 years, the Japanese have increasingly favoured wheat-based foods like bread, pasta, pizza and noodles, while rice consumption has declined by more than 50%.'[48]

One graph based on statistics provided by the household economy survey of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC, *Sōmushō*) demonstrates that for households with two or more people, the amount of money spent on the consumption of rice has been veering downwards in the last decade and actually crossed that of the rising line of bread in 2010, thus eliciting remarks from media that bread consumption has surpassed rice consumption in Japan. The graph indicates that in 2010, households of more than two people were spending 28,318 yen annually on bread while rice expenditure

[46] Ohnuki-Tierney, *Rice as Self*, 83–84; Kushner, *Slurp!*, 125. Establishing this notion of 'Self' was achieved through by Tenmu emperor's orders to canonize myths, eventually selecting rice agriculture as a means of defining the Japanese 'Self' against the Tang Chinese 'Other' (even as rice was introduced to Japan through continental Asia). The imperial court's implementation of the creation myth of Amaterasu exhibits strong claims with respect to Japan's treatment of rice as a touchstone of cultural identity since the canonized myths assert: (1) the Sun goddess Amaterasu's divine rice fields yielded the first crop of rice and (2) this deity is an ancestor of the imperial family and thus, of people. See also Ohnuki-Tierney's tracing views of scholars in Japan after WWII on the subject of staple food. She demonstrates how there are generally two camps, one arguing for rice as a staple in Japan's history and the other arguing for miscellaneous grains (including wheat among others) who contend that only the elite ate rice consistently. Ohnuki-Tierney, *Rice as Self*, 30–36.

[47] Ohnuki-Tierney, *Rice as Self*; Rath, 'The Magic of Japanese Rice Cakes'.

[48] Arumugan, 'Waves of Grain'.

was below that mark at 27,428 yen. Yet, this graph is also somewhat misleading because it only accounts for rice as grain, *kome*, purchased by households and does not account for *obentō* (lunchboxes), *onigiri* (rice balls) and other prepared rice purchases. However, the fact that the graph often comes up in my interviews and fieldwork events, as well as on shows on national television, indicates that people in Japan are taking seriously these sweeping identifications of rice consumption vs. wheat consumption in notions of Self and Other. In the episode on bread in *BEGIN Japanology* aired on NHK (Japan's national broadcasting channel), the narrator also refers to this graph, insisting household bread consumption is surpassing rice consumption. At one of the bread festivals I attended focusing on teaching about wheat and bread culture, an event brochure featuring this graph was circulated. When I was later interviewing the event coordinator at a Tokyo cafe, he pulled the graph out again to illustrate his account of a general background to bread consumption in Japan in the last few years. I mentioned some problems with the graph to him. He responded by saying that although the omissions on eating out are indeed true, the graph still gives an idea of the immense changes that have been occurring. Other informants have also directed my attention to this graph, as it has been widely circulated as credible statistics published by a cabinet ministry of the national government, even though they understand the graph's limitations. The aggregate of what my informants have expressed suggests that the decreasing consumption of rice exemplifies transformations in the societal level in the imaginations of the consuming public.[49]

Concomitantly with the fading consumption of rice, producers and consumers alike in Japan also regard bread as being infused with positive associations of progress. In some instances, bread currently continues to be marked as an indicator of advancement and closeness towards the West, or at least Western forms of culinary culture, as a form of pride and as an index of this elusive notion of modernity and progress. Yet,

[49] One woman who works part time at a senior care centre (*deisābisu sentā*) told me that among certain populations, such as the elderly, rice is still favoured, though some like soft bread. Other informants indicate that the elderly are actually nostalgic for bread, having consumed it as part of school lunches in their childhood.

bakers and self-fashioned bread coordinators I have met grapple with a persistent association of bread as Western,[50] while aiming to produce a kind of bread that reflects some imagined national aesthetic and sentiment they can proudly call their own.

## Baking as Big Industry in Japan

It is worth noting that the baking business is a big industry in Japan. In 2014, Japan's Yamazaki Baking Co., Ltd ranked as the world's fifth top baking company based on international sales expressed in dollars. Yamazaki Baking Co., Ltd has stores located in Taiwan, Thailand, US, France, Malaysia and Singapore. It owns Vie de France, a giant bakery chain in Japan, which has a subsidiary in the US with five bakeries located in Maryland, Washington D.C. and California.[51]

Turning to another form of industrial bread, emergency disaster relief kits (common in households and offices because of the risk of earthquakes) often include canned bread. The Pan Akimoto Company delivered 10,000 cans of bread in their stock as relief for those affected by the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami immediately after the disaster.[52] Since the Meiji period, bakeries have flourished and bread has become popular for breakfast, lunch and on occasion for dinner as a quick and simple meal or an accompaniment to meals. The regionally specific 'morning service' (*mōningu sābisu*) at cafés in and around Nagoya City includes free toast, egg (and sometimes salad) with an order of coffee.

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[50] While many people to whom I have spoken in Japan still associate bread with the West, I should note that this association of bread and the West is tenuous: not only is it challenged by the bakers and networks promoting a kind of Japanese-style bread that I account for here, but there are also kinds of breads in Japan that have been considered more or less 'Western' than others, which I will also discuss in this chapter. Also, it is important to keep in mind that the term 'Western' also carries an array of contentious meanings and the affiliated term 'Westernization' in relation to Japanese history can refer to several related phenomena: for example, Farrer demonstrates that Western food referred mostly to American food immediately following WWII, but in the 1980s tended to signify European tastes. Farrer, 'Eating the West', 5–6.

[51] Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 'Bakery Products in Japan'; Vie de France, 'About Vie de France'.

[52] Government of Japan Public Relations Office, 'Cover Story'.

In fact, the similar 'morning set' (*mōningu setto*) which is widespread across Japan usually comes with some kind of bread (and possibly other items) for an extra few hundred yen in addition to the price of coffee.[53] All-you-can-eat-bread restaurants serving lunch and dinner allow customers to fill up on varieties of bread from rows of baskets to enjoy with their meals. Larger supermarkets come equipped with a bakery that bakes bread on site not to mention shelves full of pre-packaged bread, and department stores typically include at least one or possibly more bakeries, often located in the underground food shopping centres (*depachika*). The local supermarket in a residential area near my apartment has a sale on bread every Wednesday that they advertise on large banners and in broadcasted announcements. Convenience stores also have at least one or two shelves devoted to pre-packaged sandwiches and breads sealed in plastic. Bread also serves as buns for hamburgers and hot dogs in the rampant fast food chains of Japan. Even in the home, bread can be made easily with bread machines, like Panasonic's 'Home Bakery' (*hōmu bēkarī)*, and personal-use dough-kneading machines. One informant said that bread is convenient precisely because it is so versatile – unlike rice it can be eaten without any accompanying side dishes, but it can also be eaten with meals.[54]

Outside of consuming bread as food, people produce and consume images and ideas of bread in books and magazines, bread seminars and events, bread museums (in Hokkaido and one in the planning stages in Kobe), bread art (including bread charms, jewellery and paintings)

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[53] Interview with a manager at a large bread manufacturing company, November 18, 2015. The terms 'morning service' (*mōningu sābisu*) and 'morning set' (*mōningu setto*) are now often used interchangeably, but the previous connotes a free 'service' of bread and sides as extras with the purchase of coffee, while the latter connotes a set to be ordered. My impression is the term 'morning service' is used more widely in and around Nagoya City, but I have also seen cafes and bakeries outside of the region use the term 'morning service', in addition to 'morning set'.

[54] On changes in material inventory/equipment in the home in conveying social status as well as notions of national identity, see: Fajans, 'Challenging cooking styles', 112–113 on pressure cookers and blenders; on rice cookers, see: Nakano, *Where There Are Asians*. As conveyed by the informant, I also insist that bread in Japan can be considered a 'platform food', as Barak Kushner calls ramen; in other words, a food that can take on and be paired with many flavours and toppings, and can be adapted to local tastes. In fact, Kushner likens ramen to a sandwich in this aspect of versatility. See Poon, '"Artisanal" Ramen?'.

and even bread animation characters (especially the ones in the long-standing *Anpan man* red bean bread cartoon with its own children's museum chain in five cities: Yokohama, Sendai, Nagoya, Kobe and Fukuoka). Thus, bread as food in turn generates other areas of industry and culture, its likeness emerging as art, literature, tourism and entertainment.

Many of the interviews I have conducted and events I have attended recently have been driven by topics my informants have mentioned over and over. Based on the comments of my informants, these events and narratives focus on understanding the so-called bread boom Japan is experiencing today. The events also involve new networks formed to ascertain and probe what Japanese bread or Japanese-style bread might mean, as a means of crafting bread that represents Japan.[55]

## Baking Networks Across Japan (and Taiwan)

In my efforts to better understand baking networks striving for breads that reflect a national sensibility in Japan, I talked with Kondo, a baker, whose bread is widely received in his community in a residential area in Tokyo. He has over 20 years of experience in bread making. He runs the bakery upstairs while his wife runs the cafe in the basement. The floor space of their bakery is small – perhaps only three to four customers can fit in the bakery comfortably at any one time to order bread from the counter – yet his bakery exhibits an impressive variety of breads and pastries behind glass. Kondo and his wife visit France on a yearly basis during the summer for short-term training, and they have also visited Taiwan to teach seminars. Kondo's latest workshop in Taipei in December 2015 was on the use of Taiwanese and Japanese flour in baking bread.

Kondo elaborated on his perspective of bread history and culture in Japan: 'When I talk to foreigners, they often want to know what the roots

[55] As I mentioned, these bakers and self-styled bread educators and event coordinators discuss 'Japanese-style' or 'Japanese' bread in these various terms which have different nuanced meanings: *wafū pan, nihonrashī pan, wapan, washoku no pan, nihon no pan*, as well as others.

of Japanese bread are, but no matter what, I can only remember the bread that came after [Japan] entered the war [World War II]. After the war, after Japan lost the war, American wheat and American food culture came into Japan. In Taiwan there are also breads that are new, that didn't exist a long time ago. Now they put in all kinds of things.' He goes on to discuss new endeavours of young Japanese bakers: 'We want to make new breads coming from Japan . . . until recently in Japan people have imitated French bread, but now young people are really [using] Japanese techniques of crafting. Japanese are good at absorbing other kinds of cultures. Bringing in French culture as it is, making French bread [has been done], but from now on to have a more essential grasp of it, and make bread that matches our, national, Japanese tastes . . . everyone in [this baking network pushing for this movement, referring to a community of bakers he is in] is [doing] that.' I asked him if his bakery is also implicated in this endeavour. 'My bakery is also like that. I like France, but I'm also doing that [making bread that reflects 'our/national/Japanese tastes']. The shape is French bread, but the inside is Japanese bread. It's a bit difficult [to explain].' When I asked him to explain what he meant by that, he said, 'To put it directly, for example, *shokupan*, [which are] tastes that Japanese people like. To put it more generally, of course, using wheat harvested from Japanese land to make bread, so, in that way, the Japanese production of wheat is not the same as France's. It becomes completely Japanese bread.'[56]

From Kondo's account, we can see that there is currently a movement striving to create a kind of bread that reflects Japanese sentiment, taste and sensibility, in which he uses 'national', and 'our' (for 'our breads'), as well as 'Japanese'. In this case, in the word 'Japanese', he specifically uses the term *nihon no pan*, a term I reference earlier to signify established Japanese breads such as sweet buns and savoury breads like fried curry bread, and yet he uses this term to refer also to breads that may appear French, but to him entirely reflect a national sentiment in execution and conception: 'completely Japanese bread'. The process involves combining French or other

[56] Kondo (pseudonym), discussion, March 25, 2016.

European techniques[57] with Japanese techniques and ingredients to craft a kind of product that is uniquely and completely Japanese, as he puts it.

This phenomenon is not limited to Japan, as he also explains that experimentation in Taiwan is gaining ground as well. While Taiwanese bakers strive to produce signature breads using local products, they also draw from Japanese techniques, both for practical know-how and as a kind of branding for prestige. As David Wu puts it, 'In Taipei, however, once the bakery claims or is known to be Japanese, it commends exceptional admiration and prestige for customers.'[58]

Taiwan's placement in the top three in several World Cup Baking competitions and the proliferation of these award-winning breads (often sold out) at bakeries from which the competing bakers hail attest to the growing awareness of a 'Taiwanese' bread that reflects this sense of Self. In Taiwan as well as Japan, bakers and bread enthusiasts grapple with the notion of how to create breads that reflect a national sentiment of Self, while moving beyond standardized forms of soft, white, sweet bread.[59]

## Conclusion

I began this chapter by detailing the ways in which bakers in Japan express notions of national identity and their versions of historical narrative representative of their country to a global audience through artistic bread pieces at prestigious international baking competitions. Here I raise *sumō* bread sculptor and baker Chinen again in his response to the question why he chose *sumō* for his bread sculpture. His reply was, '*Sumō* is Japan's national sport [*kokugi*]. It is simple and since olden times, it has been loved by

[57] There are also other shops that focus on other types of European breads (and to some extent American), but the most prevalent European influence at least in the Tokyo area and perhaps in all of Japan is French, as many bread labels are written in French rendered into *katakana* (alphabet for loan words). However, there is a variety of influences, especially in metropolitan areas.

[58] Wu, 'Cultural Nostalgia', 116.

[59] On the emerging craft of making European-style bread reflecting Taiwanese identity, see: Yang, *Ōushì miànbāo zài táiwān fāzhǎn zhī chūtàn (1962–2011).*

everyone. Bread is the same: it is simple and since olden times, it has been loved by everyone. Because of these kinds of commonalities, I chose [*sumō*] to be the theme for my decorative bread piece this time.'[60] For Chinen, *sumō* is exemplary because it already serves as a symbol of the nation. He likens bread in general to *sumō* in terms of something recognizable and simple that goes back to 'olden days', brimming with nostalgia and meaning. This meaning is conferred by temporal longevity: a faraway past. By using the word everyone in 'loved by everyone' 'since olden days', he manages to draw out this parallel between *sumō* and bread without discussing bread's specific historical trajectory in Japan. (I find this quote especially telling, considering that bread was in fact not loved much in Japan in the Meiji period as hardtack for military use.)[61] In discussing ways in which bakers express these national characteristics inscribed onto the medium of bread to a general public not only in global media but also locally at stores as breads for purchase, one must first understand broader historical trajectories of food culture, as well as identity politics of Self and Other; and the dynamics of cultural exchange and mobility.

I have demonstrated how food and cuisine, which due to their symbolic charge, are convenient tools brandished for political causes. I have discussed *wa* and *yō* in Japan as constructed divisions used not only for food but also as general aesthetics to discuss Self and Other. Yet I have not addressed how encompassing or limiting this notion of Self, *wa,* actually is in terms of the way it is deployed. Japan is home to identity politics that include minorities such as Ryūkyū people, ethnic Koreans and Ainu, that unfortunately have not made their way much into my discussion here, but certainly can be addressed in the purview of bread and food culture more generally.

Many sources and informants attribute post-war relations with America as heavily shaping bread culture in Japan. They also discuss influences from Europe and the development of bread-making techniques crafted for Japanese tastes. I traced the historical context in which bread first entered

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[60] Ōe, 'Bēkarī wārudo kappu taiwan nii'.

[61] Bay writes how in 1884 when the government instituted Takagi's reforms on provisions and diet, sailors hated their new diets: Takagi noted that they often did not eat their meat and bread and even threw their bread overboard into the sea. Bay, *Beriberi in Modern Japan*, 44–45.

Japan and then became more widely diffused. I also demonstrated the striking aspects of the bread market and culture today, where networks of bakers are moving towards baking breads that reflect what they consider to be singularly distinct, representational and commendable on a global scale. In turn, consumers are taking in these breads as metaphors of the Self and tokens of national pride as they purchase and take in the breads into their bodies. Both producers and their customers in Japan consume media surrounding bread that emphasizes this nation-representing facet of bread using various terms to denote the Self – for example, referencing the concept *wa* or calling their creations *nihon no pan* (Japanese bread), while facing persisting sentiments of bread's association with Western food. In constructing this notion of Self vis-à-vis the Other, bakers weave transnational networks and pull from what they consider outside traditions to make tangible things (bread) and more abstract concepts (bread culture) they refer to as their own.

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**Annie Sheng** is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Anthropology at Cornell University and a National Science Foundation fellow. She currently conducts fieldwork research in the porous geographic spaces of East Asia, and to some extent Southeast Asia, on modern foodways and systems. Her dissertation research explores the intersection of social meaning, policy and transnational and local networks.

# Joining the Global Wine World: Japan's Winemaking Industry

Chuanfei Wang

## Introduction

Japan is not only a country of *sake* and tea but also a country of wine. This chapter traces Japan's history of wine production as a process of state-led cultural globalization. In 2013, Yamanashi Prefecture was legally designated by Japan's National Tax Agency as a wine-producing region according to Geographical Indication rules, and it was also registered as a wine-producing region by the International Organization of Vine and Wine (OIV). The recognition was significant for Yamanashi. According to the local government's official website, 'wines with the Yamanashi label meet several strict Geographical Indication requirements guaranteeing place of origin and quality. As a result, the Yamanashi wine brand will be further improved'.[1] Yamanashi is now the only officially recognized

[1] Yamanashi Kankō, 'Chiri teki hyōji Yamanashi'.

C. Wang (✉)
Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan
e-mail: chuanfei.wang@gmail.com

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wine-producing region in Japan. However, it is not the only wine-producing region in the country; now at least 36 of the country's 47 prefectures produce wine.[2]

Like Yamanashi, some of these other wine-producing regions are also actively trying to become officially recognized regional brands. Their local governments are trying to use the concept of 'valley', first used by newly established wine-producing regions in America and Australia, to brand their own winemaking regions. In 2015, the Nagano prefectural government provided a report for the development of a wine valley in the Shinshu area. It claimed clearly that Nagano would build a wine valley, which would produce 'a culture of high quality wine and aroma in a beautiful terroir' (*Utsukushii fūdo no naka de kōhinshitsu na wain to kaori takai bunka*).[3] The Shinshu wine valley project aimed to make Nagano wine a world brand. Now, like Nagano, similar wine valley projects are also being planned in Yamagata, Hokkaido and Niigata.[4] This boom of promoting winemaking culture around the country reveals that Japan is making a great effort to join the ranks of globally recognized wine-producing regions.

This raises two questions. Firstly, why is Japan trying to embrace wine production, in which it has few if any natural or cultural advantages? Secondly, who are the actors pushing to increase and promote wine production? By considering Japan's winemaking culture in a longer historical context, this chapter aims to address these questions. The current process of Japan becoming a wine-producing country cannot be fully comprehended without referring to the history of modern winemaking in Japan. Winemaking in Japan started in the early Meiji period (1868–1912) and was an arduous task, as its natural conditions were only marginally suited to wine grape growing and wine production. However, it was still promoted by the government as part of a national project of agricultural and culinary modernization. After the war, Japan's winemaking experienced a long, confusing period during which many

[2] Johnson and Robinson, *World Atlas of Wine*, 377.

[3] Nagano Prefecture, 'The Initiative of Shinshu', 3–4.

[4] Takahashi, 'Nihon wain no chiri', 8.

unique winemaking Japanese methods were used. Not until the early 2000s did Japan come to approximate winemaking practices according to international standards and begin to gain a reputation outside the country.

One of the puzzles in the story of Japan's wine industry is its relative lack of success in comparison to the beer and whisky industries that began under similar circumstances around the same time in the Meiji period. European beer and whisky were successfully localized, became hugely successful industries in Japan, then successfully globalized and have now attained a global reputation for quality.[5] In contrast, wine producers struggled to establish themselves in Japan despite the growing popularity of imported wines. The reasons for both the failures and more recent successes of Japanese wine producers go beyond the simple issues surrounding grape agriculture.

In the 1970s, new wine-producing regions, especially in the United States and Australia, initiated a new pattern of wine globalization characterized by scientific production of good quality wine for mass consumption.[6] However, the current boom in Japanese wine production is part of a more recent pattern of wine globalization employing artisanal production of specialized wines for more individualized consumption. While the emphasis is on the 'local' character of the product, the standards of taste and quality are increasingly those of the global wine world – a globalized network of producers, consumers and expert tasters. Thus, Japan's winemaking culture shows a process of culinary glocalization,[7] which is an intensified localization of global standards.

In this chapter, we will see the history of Japan's modern wine industry from the Meiji period to contemporary times. By connecting the past to the present, this chapter argues that national and regional governments have been the key actors in developing and promoting Japan's winemaking culture. However, governments are not the only important actors. As this chapter will show, Japan's wine culture is

[5] See Alexander, *Brewed in Japan*; Checkland, *Japanese Whisky*.
[6] Lukacs, *Inventing Wine*, 239–277.
[7] Robertson, 'Glocalization: Time-Space', 28.

constructed by a collaborative network of actors including governments, private companies, individual winemakers, research institutes and consumers. However, among all these actors, national and regional governments play the key role in initiating and organizing the whole project of promoting Japanese wine culture inside and outside Japan. Wine culture is used as an important local resource for regional food culture promotion to ultimately facilitate local economic and agricultural revival. The state-industry collaboration in developing Japan's winemaking culture thus represents another case of culinary politics in Japan.[8] In both the Meiji period and the present era, wine production has been a national project: first geared to modernization now to globalization.

## The Establishment of Japan's Winemaking

The Japanese islands have a long history of grape growing. However, only in the mid-nineteenth century was the idea to make it into wine explored. In 1859, when Yokohama harbour opened, Japan started international trade with foreign countries. For the first time, Japanese people outside the elite class did business with foreigners and gained a new social status as businessmen. This group had more opportunities than ordinary people to taste wine, and became the first non-aristocratic wine drinkers. Their access to wine prompted some of them to attempt industrial wine production in Japan. Although none of them could make a bottle of wine as a final product, the Yokohama businessmen were the pioneers of growing wine grapes in Japan, paving the road for later wine production.[9]

On the initiative of the Japanese government, the industrial production of wine in Japan started in the early Meiji period.[10] It was motivated by two goals. The first aim was to reduce rice consumption for other reasons

[8] See Assmann, 'Food Action Nippon'; Farrer, 'Introduction: Traveling Cuisines'.
[9] Asai, *Nihon no wain tanjō, 7–8.*
[10] Asai, 'Wain gyōkai', 523.

than food. The new government kept using the old tax system by which taxes were still received in the form of rice. Grape winemaking could help to reduce the amount (of rice) used for rice winemaking and thus help guarantee sufficient tax revenue for the government by ensuring a healthy reserve of rice especially in years of a bad harvest.[11] Another, more important goal was articulated in the new policy of industrial modernization (*shokusan kōgyō*) aiming to build a strong country. Under this policy, the Meiji government encouraged its people to learn from the West and initiated new industries that are considered to be able to strengthen the country and military in order to avoid being colonized by Western countries. While winemaking technologies and facilities were regarded as difficult to import from the West, its grape varieties could easily be imported to Japan. As such, Japan's winemaking industry started by growing Western grapes. Winemaking as a new industry was designated as part of this policy to modernize Japan's agriculture in a historical period during which a local wine market did not exist.[12]

Government-owned facilities for wine grape growing were opened in Tokyo (Uchifuji Shinjuku Shikenjō, Mita Ikushu Jō), Hokkaido (Hokkaidō Kaitaku Shikan En), Hyogo (Hashu Vineyard), Niigata and Kanagawa during the early Meiji period.[13] The first winemaking company, Great Japan Yamanashi Wine Company (Dainippon Yamanashi Budōshū Kaisha), was established in 1877 by rich local farmers in cooperation with the local government in Yamanashi, an area with a long history of indigenous grape growing in Japan. Right after its establishment, the company sent two young men to France to learn grape growing and winemaking skills.[14] In 1879, they returned to Japan and attempted to make genuine European-style wines by applying the knowledge they had learned in France at Yamanashi's wine company. It is particularly worth noting that they made wine with a local variety, the Koshu (*kōshū*) grape, which – as we will see later in this chapter – now represents the Japanese taste of wine.

[11] Asai, *Nihon no wain tanjō*, **153–154.**

[12] Asai, 'Wain gyōkai', 524.

[13] Shikatori, *Nihon wain*, 3; Asai, 'Wain gyōkai', 524.

[14] Asai, *Nihon no wain tanjō*, **87–94.**

At the time, wine made with local grapes was very rare. Grape growing facilities in other regions put great effort in growing Western wine grapes as the *shokusan kōgyō* policy aimed to replicate the Western winemaking industry in Japan. Furthermore, facilities in the regions without a history of growing local grapes had little interest in growing Japanese varieties.[15] Thus, the first genuine Japanese wine from Japanese grapes was made by this Yamanashi company, producing about 5 kl of wine made with Koshu grapes in 1879 and about 33 kl in the following year.[16] However, the company started to fall on hard times in 1884. Due to the opposition of some local government officials, financial support to the company ceased and wine production halted. Eventually in 1886, the Great Japan Yamanashi Wine Company closed, marking the failure of the first government-initiated wine-producing company. Around the same period, winemaking in other government-owned facilities also gradually stopped. Eventually, the privatization of the Hashu vineyard in 1888 marked the complete end of the first government-owned winemaking project.[17]

Privately owned wineries became major wine producers in Japan as of the 1890s. Not all of these wineries produced the same wine. There were two different types: one aimed to be close to the taste of European wines, the other one was rather sweet, and suited for popular taste. An example of the first type was the *Daikuro Budōshu* (*Daikuro* grape wine) produced by the Kaisan Grape Winemaking Company, reformed from the former Great Japan Yamanashi Wine Company. However, the Europeanized flavour was not welcomed by Japanese consumers at the time and *Daikuro Budōshu* did not sell well in the market.[18] The first wine of the second type, a sweet wine which proved to be popular, was Hachijirushi Kozan Grape Wine made by Kamiya's winery[19] in 1881. In the early years, sweet wine was made from bulk wines imported from France, Spain and Italy, and additive sweeteners. However, with the passing of the Blended Alcohol Tax Law in 1895,

[15] Asai, 'Wain gyōkai', 523.

[16] Asai, *Nihon no wain tanjō*, 100.

[17] Asai, 'Wain gyōkai', 524.

[18] Asai, *Nihon no wain tanjō*, **159.**

[19] The winery still exists today. It is called Chateau Kamiya.

restrictions were placed on wine importation.[20] In order to have sufficient base wine, some wineries such as Kamiya's commenced local wine production. Starting in 1898, Kamiya's owner spent six years building a vineyard. However, the wine made with grapes from his vineyard was not the final product, but rather the base for sweet wine. Among all the sweet wines, the most famous one in Japan was Akadama port wine, produced in 1907 by Torii Shinjiro, the founder of Suntory Beer Company. Its popularity was reflected in the fact that Japanese people referred to all the sweet wines as port wine from then on right until the 1970s. Like Kamiya, Torii also tried to acquire domestic vineyards for producing base wines to blend sweet wine. The production of wine as an ingredient for blending sweet wine transformed Japan's wine industry during this period, so that much production was not for direct consumption.[21]

In the early twentieth century, the number of wineries in Japan and its related production increased rapidly. Rich farmers and landowners as well as merchants who had gained wealth in other businesses became the major investors in wineries. In 1939, the number of wineries in Japan reached 3,694.[22] During the Second World War, wine production continued to be encouraged by the national government and largely increased. By 1940, Japan's annual grape wine production was 6,000 kl. It sprung to 32,000 kl in 1943. During this period, however, wine was not produced for drinking, but rather for providing tartaric acid, a raw material for making radiowave weapons.[23]

## A 'Unique' Japanese Winemaking from 1950s to 1990s

After the Second World War, Japan's wine was again produced for consumption. However, the wine produced in this period did not meet the international definition of wine. Since sweet wine remained popular,

[20] Asai, 'Wain gyōkai', 525.
[21] Ibid, 524.
[22] Shikatori, *Nihon wain*, 4.
[23] Asai, 'Wain gyōkai', 526.

even in the 1970s, the majority of non-sweet wines produced in Japan were still used as ingredients for blending sweet wines.[24] The red wines were made with Concord, Cambell Early, and Muscat Bailey A, and the white wines were made with Niagara, Delaware, and Koshu grapes. Unfortunately, all these grapes were not wine grapes. This was because as base ingredients for sweet wines, these red and white wines did not need to conform to strict standards of quality.[25] The use of table grapes in winemaking did not mean that Japanese people were not familiar with wine grapes. As early as the 1870s, Japanese people had known the difference between wine and table grapes. The government imported and planted a large number of European wine grape seeds. But, phylloxera (an aphid attacking vine root) destroyed almost every imported grape. After that, varieties such as Delaware and Koshu which had survived the disaster became major grapes grown in Japan. Thus, the grapes used in winemaking were table grapes (as we will see in the following, Koshu only recently came to be regarded as a wine grape).

The popularity of sweet wine started to decline in the 1960s as other types of sweet drinks such as coke, juice and milk drinks appeared in the market.[26] Moreover, in the 1970s, foreign wines, both fine and ordinary, were increasingly brought to the Japanese market by free trade so that affluent consumers became familiar with global wines. Finally in 1975, the national consumption of dry wine overtook that of sweet wine for the first time.[27] Japanese wine producers faced a crisis. Sweet wines had been the major type to be produced by Japan's winemakers since they had first appeared at the end of the nineteenth century until the 1970s. Technically, they did not qualify as genuine wine by international standards. So, the focus on making wine as a base ingredient for sweet wine prevented the progress of Japan's wine quality. However, the wines used for making sweet wine were still important in Japan's wine production and consumption history. In terms of production, they prevented

[24] Asai, 'Wain gyōkai', 524; Hozumi, 'Yamanashiken wain seisan', 555.
[25] Kawai, *Usuke bōizu*, 8.
[26] Asai, 'Wain gyōkai', 525.
[27] Ibid, 525.

the complete collapse of Japan's early wine production weakened by inexperienced grape growers and winemakers, an erratic national policy for wine production and the global epidemic of the phylloxera. As for consumption, sweet wines played an important role in helping to propagate a wine drinking culture in Japan as people regarded it as healthy.[28]

When the Japanese consumers' preferences changed from sweet to genuine European-style dry wine, most of the nation's corporate winemakers remained to produce wine in the way they had done. They used imported bulk wine and grape juice instead of grapes. There were several reasons for this. One was the insufficient grape supply. At the time, the view that Japan's soil and climate was not suitable for growing wine grapes was strongly accepted by Japanese oenologists, grape growers and winemakers.[29] Secondly, it was difficult for corporate companies to access the already limited supply of grapes. After the Second World War, besides the large producers owned by beer companies, grape growers had their own small wineries. Their products, however, were only consumed within their own community and did not reach the larger market. As the corporate companies did not plant grapes, they relied on grape growers. But, since growers also needed the grapes for their own wineries, they could not supply the larger companies sufficiently. Thus, the lack of domestically grown grapes led Japanese corporate winemakers to use a substantial amount of imported ingredients for making Japanese wine until the 1990s.[30] However, although the companies did not meet international standards, they were still concerned about the quality of their products. In the 1980s, they began importing fresh grapes and grape juice to boost quality.[31] Thirdly, the government's domestic regulation and international trade policies further prevented winemakers from meeting international quality standards. As explained above, domestic grapes were hard to attain, while simultaneously the alternative ingredients became more accessible. In 1962, due

[28] Ibid, 524.
[29] Maeshima and Higawa, 'Ni ryū kara', 15; Shikatori, *Nihon wain*, 5; Kawai, *Usuke bōizu*, 41.
[30] Maeshima and Higawa, 'Ni ryū kara', 15; Kawai, *Usuke bōizu*, 10.
[31] Asai, 'Wain yō budō no genjō to mirai', 342.

to changes in Japan's Liquor Tax Act, dried grapes and condensed grape juice could now be legally used for making wine.[32] Moreover, in 1970, free trade policy removed the restrictions on foreign wines imported to Japan. Imported bulk wines became cheaper. Many local winemakers turned to cheap imported condensed grape juice or bulk wines rather than the expensive domestically grown grapes in order to maintain their businesses. This situation accelerated in the 1980s, as the appreciation of the Yen made imported bulk wines even cheaper. As a result, winemaking with imported bulk wines cost much less as compared to using grapes grown in Japan.

In summary, since the 1950s, the method of using imported bulk wine and grape juice or domestic table grapes by the majority of producers resulted in the overall quality of Japanese table wines remaining low. Some Japanese fine wines made with wine grapes could meet international standards and received awards in international contests. However, these wines were exceptions and not representative of mass produced wines. Moreover, global wine production changed dramatically during the same period. The global wine trend was shifting from strong tannic to fruity aromatic flavours initiated by the new producers in America and Australia.[33] Japanese winemakers, however, continued to focus on producing strong tannin, as the aged wine was still highly regarded.[34] As a result, by the mid-1990s, Japanese winemakers had been aiming to make powerful instead of fruity wines.[35] All of these factors have made Japanese wine appear to be inferior in both the domestic and international wine world.

## Japan's Winemaking in the 2000s

Japan's wine production only began to achieve a better reputation when it recognized new taste trends and adopted new ideas of wine production in the 2000s. Currently, domestically made wines account

[32] Shikatori, *Nihon wain*, 5.
[33] Lukacs, *Inventing Wine*, 278–314.
[34] Nakada, 'Kōshū wain no Yōroppa senryaku', 33.
[35] Kawai, *Usuke bōizu*, 14.

for only 30 per cent of the Japanese wine market. The two types of wine producers, small wineries and corporate companies, established after the war, are still the major actors. The number of corporate producers has expanded, and like in the Meiji era, they are all owned by beer companies. In contemporary Japan, the major companies are Mercian (Kirin), Manns wine (Kikkoman), Tomino Oka (Santory) and Sapporo wine (Sapporo Beer). They produce about 80 per cent of all of the domestically made wines, mainly table wines. And like their predecessors, many companies still use imported grape juice or bulk wines. In recent years, they have started to make more of their wines with grapes from their own vineyards located in regions such as Yamanashi and Hokkaido.

Besides regular table wines, Japan's wine companies have also concentrated on producing a type of specialized wine, which is made without sulphur dioxide (an additive for preventing wine's oxidation and maintaining the flavour's stability), to conform with recently rising concern by Japanese over the relation between food and health. However, wines of this kind are now mistakenly understood as Japanese wines by most Japanese consumers. As critics have pointed out, they are only wines made in Japan but not Japanese wines at all because 'most wines without sulphur dioxide circulating in the Japanese market are partly made overseas, where condensed grape juices are heated to contain about eighty percent of sugar. Such condensed juice is four times diluted by water and added sugars, then fermented to become wines'.[36] Like most regular wines, this type of wine is not made by grapes grown in Japan either.

In recent years, the increase in wine consumption in domestic markets has prompted larger investments in winemaking by beer companies. With more investments, the number of regions producing wine is growing. Places producing wine for the first time include, for example, Tochigi, Niigata, Toyama, Akita and Miyazaki. Now, 36 of the nation's 47 prefectures are producing wine. And some of these prefectures are displacing the established wine-producing regions. For instance,

[36] Shikatori, *Nihon wain*, 8.

although Yamanashi is regarded by most Japanese as the wine kingdom, Kanagawa has emerged as Japan's largest producer since 2001. Kanagawa's new status can be largely attributed to the Fujizawa Kōjō factory, owned by Kirin Group. However, the vineyards in Kanagawa are actually not large enough to provide wine grapes for producing such amounts of wine. In fact, a large proportion of the wine produced there is still made by imported condensed grape juice or bulk wine.[37]

Other important actors are small and medium-sized private wineries. Unlike producers owned by beer companies, these wineries produce Japanese wines made with grapes in Japan. As a contemporary well-known Japanese journalist and writer Shikatori states, 'most wineries, especially in Hokkaido and Nagano built after 2000, use hundred percent Japanese grapes. Some of these wineries have their own vineyards'.[38] These wineries can be found in every winemaking prefecture in Japan. They have a different vision for winemaking than that of the corporate companies as will be seen in the example of winemaker Misawa Ayana described below. Corporate producers make wine as an industrial product, just as they do with beer. In contrast, small wineries model European makers and view wine as an agricultural product and employ the European concept of *terroir*[39] as a means of evaluating quality.[40] Therefore, they have become the major players in producing authentic Japanese wines.

## Government and Industry Collaboration: The Case of Koshu Wine

Globally, one of the keys to gaining recognition for wine regions has been the promotion of signature varietal grapes associated with regions or even nations, such as Sauvignon Blanc in New Zealand or Pinotage in

[37] Nihon Keizai Shimbun, 'Wain seisan Kanagawa'.

[38] Shikatori, *Nihon wain*, 9.

[39] The word *terroir* comes from French word *gout du terroir*. The concept of *terroir* embraces both natural and cultural aspects of a place. Thus, theoretically, a *terroir* product is assumed to reflect the nature and culture of where the product comes from.

[40] Chan, '*Terroir* and Green Tea', 226.

South Africa. In the case of Japan, this is the Koshu grape. In 2010, Koshu was officially registered on the OIV's list of wine grapes. Since then, Koshu grape made wine has become the globally known Japanese wine. The establishment of Koshu wine as national taste is a top-down collaborative project by the Japanese government and the wine industry. In this section, I will show how the status of Koshu grapes transitioned from a second to a first class grape variety, the processes through which wine producers developed different Koshu wines, and finally how the government promoted them globally.

Prior to the Meiji period, Koshu was the name of present day Yamanashi prefecture. Koshu wine might be simply thought of as the wine produced in Yamanashi.[41] In fact, today Koshu wine refers to the variety of grapes used and not the geographical location of production. Two legends exist regarding the origin of the Koshu grape in Yamanashi. One explains that a priest received the grape from Buddha and later planted it as a medicine. The other one says it was discovered by a local man. However, science has proven that the Koshu grape is a hybrid variety of *Vitis Vinifera* and an East Asian wild grape. The National Research Institute of Brewing (NRIB) together with an American research team conducted DNA testing on the Koshu grape by analysing single nucleotide polymorphism. As they demonstrated the hybrid character of the grape, it is conjectured that it came from the Caucasus via the Silk Road to Japan.[42] Although historically, the Koshu grape was commonly grown throughout Yamanashi,[43] for a long time, it was not considered Japan's signature varietal grape. In the early Meiji period, the grape began to be used for winemaking. However, throughout most of the twentieth century, it had been planted by grape growers as a table grape instead of a wine grape. As a variety of table grapes, Koshu was not popular among growers, mainly because Koshu was usually harvested later than other table grapes beginning in the end of September and through all of October. By this point other table grapes, such as Delaware, had already entered the market during the more favourable

[41] Yamamoto, *Yamanashi ken no wain*, 34.
[42] National Research Institute of Brewing, 'Kōshū budō no rūtsu'.
[43] Hozumi, 'Yamanashiken wain seisan', 555.

period of early autumn. Since these grapes sold for a higher price, growers preferred them over Koshu even though growing the latter was highly suited to the Japanese climate and soil.[44] As a result, since the 1950s, the growing of Koshu grapes had declined.

Although Koshu were grown to be table grapes, winemaking companies needed them to produce base wines to blend sweet wine. However, because growers preferred other table grapes, there was an insufficient supply of Koshu for wine production. In order to encourage grape growers to plant more Koshu, the 'Council for Stabilizing Grape Supply for Wine Making in Yamanashi Prefecture' (Yamanashi-ken genryō budō juku antei kyōgikai) was established in 1975 to protect the trading price of Koshu.[45] Since then, Koshu had been gradually recognized as a wine grape by more growers. However, when the council was dissolved in 1994, the protections dissolved and the price of Koshu grapes declined by market competition. By 2005, the output of Koshu (6,970 tons) was only half of the amount harvested in 1991 (15,700 tons).[46]

Today, wines made with Koshu grapes have different flavours. For a long time, Koshu wines were sweet tasting, which had been thought of as delicious by consumers. However, until the 1980s, the taste of dry wines made with Koshu grapes was regarded as ordinary, flat and lacking individuality.[47] The Mercian wine company played an important role in upgrading the quality of Koshu wines by conducting experiments with new technologies and openly sharing the newly discovered methods to local wineries. The Sur Lie winemaking method,[48] which is popularly used today, was first successfully applied to Koshu wine production by Mercian in 1983. Koshu wine's quality was for the first time significantly upgraded through this method. Later in 2000, Mercian started the 'Koshu wine project', aiming to fully display the Koshu grape's individuality. The company added the grape peel's aroma into white Koshu

[44] Ibid.

[45] Asai, 'Wain yō budō no genjō to mirai', 339.

[46] Maeshima and Higawa, 'Ni ryū kara', 15.

[47] Kirin Holdings, 'Daiikkai: Kōshū wain'.

[48] *Sur Lie* is a French word, meaning on the lees. Sur Lie aging is a process to extract flavours by allowing an aged wine to continue to sit on the lees.

wine, a technology invented by French oenologists. For example, Mercian produced Koshu Gris de Gris in 2002, introducing the aroma of wild rose, previously not found in Koshu wine.[49] Moreover, in 2003, Mercian attempted a new method, using only grapes from the upper part of a bunch in their early maturity when they tasted better and using the lower part in a yeast experiment. They found that the Koshu grape gave off a previously unknown aroma of fresh orange. Samples were sent to the University of Bordeaux in France for chemical analysis. It was discovered that Koshu had a grape fruit aroma, a finding which would prove significant for Japanese wine production. In September of the next year, they harvested Koshu grapes when the grapefruit aroma peaked and made Koshu Kiiroko 2004. This wine had a fresh taste and a citrus aroma marking new progress for Koshu wines.

In addition to this large winemaking company, private wineries are also playing an important role in upgrading the quality of Koshu wine. One of them is the Chuō Budōshu winery where Misawa Ayana is the chief winemaker. Her recent creation Cuvee Misawa Akeno Koshu 2013 won the gold medal in the international Decanter World Wine Awards in 2014. This was the first time that a Japanese wine won the gold medal. The 2013 vintage bottle marks a new page in Koshu wine's history because it has completely changed the flavour of wines from oxidized and off-dry to fresh, fruity and dry. This new flavour of wine comes from Misawa's persistent efforts stretching over a decade to find better ways of making good genuine Koshu wines.[50] For a long time, Koshu grapes had been regarded as 'second class'[51] as they contained a low percentage of sugar and, therefore, could only make wines with less than 10 per cent of alcohol. These wines often had a flat taste in terms of aroma, acidity and sweetness. In order to increase the alcohol percentage and improve the aroma, acidity and sweetness, most winemakers used additives when making wines with the Koshu grape. According to Misawa, this wine-making technique conceals much of the original aroma and flavour that

[49] Kirin Holdings, 'Dainikkai: Haiiro'.
[50] Misawa, 'Sai chosen', 2.
[51] Maeshima and Higawa, 'Ni ryū kara', 1.

the Koshu grapes possess. In an interview she stated: 'I want to make a Koshu wine with its own character and complex flavours without any additives'.[52] From 2005 to 2009, she studied winemaking in France and South Africa. In France, she learned that the quality of grapes is more essential than winemaking technology for producing wines. Returning to Japan, she concentrated on improving the quality of the Koshu grape. First, she increased the sugar percentage of Koshu grapes to over 20 per cent, which for a long time had been a difficult task for Japanese winemakers. Most Japanese grape growers in Japan have been using the horizontal planting method, by which, 'vines consume much more energy to breathe. Also, upper layer leaves shade the lower layer leaves, which slows down photosynthesis. As a result, grapes contain a low percentage of sugar when they are harvested'.[53] In 2005, Misawa decided to try a vertical planting method she learned in France, which eventually increased the sugar percentage. However, in the first few years of harvest, Koshu grapes grown using this method did not show promising results. In 2009, she supplemented the vertical method with the ridge system, which she learned in graduate school in South Africa. Finally, the Koshu grape harvested in 2012 contained 20 per cent sugar. And in 2013, it reached 22 per cent, which made her 2013 vintage a ground-breaking bottle, gaining the spotlight in an international contest.[54]

Koshu wine is now being promoted globally and may soon join the ranks of beer and whisky as being part of the overseas Japanese culinary boom. Since the 2000s, Japanese food has been gaining popularity outside the country.[55] Koshu wines, like the government-sponsored ideal of *washoku*, are on their way to becoming representative of Japanese taste. The emergence of Koshu in the global wine world can be partly attributed to a government-initiated alcohol export project called: 'Japan. "Kampai" to the world', part of the larger national project 'Cool Japan'. Cool Japan is a government and industry

[52] Kawauchi, 'Josei jōzōka'.

[53] Misawa, 'Sai chosen', 2.

[54] Kawauchi, 'Josei jōzōka no gunshin'.

[55] See also Farrer's contribution on Japanese cuisine in Shanghai in this volume.

collaboration initiative. A report issued by the Cool Japan Strategy Promotion Council describes the goals of the project:

> It aims to disseminate Japan's attractiveness and allure to the world and to incorporate and harness global growth for domestic economic growth. More specifically, the expectations for Cool Japan are not limited to economic expansion contributions through the communication of Cool Japan information and the expansion of goods and services overseas; a multiplier effect is expected that will increase consumption in Japan through the growth of Japan enthusiasts overseas that, when linked to Visit Japan initiatives, will lead to greater numbers of overseas visitors to Japan.[56]

Private companies in various industries are the major actors of Cool Japan, and national and local governments play supportive roles. Four areas are assigned as important projects, including design, content, cuisine and regional resource. Included under this strategy is 'Japan. "Kampai" to the world'. Kampai is managed by Japan's National Tax Agency to promote and facilitate the export of Japan-made alcohol.[57] The project aims to bring Japanese wines to international markets. Europe, regarded by the government as the home of wine culture, was the first designated market. According to European Union rules, to export Japan's wine to the European market, it is first necessary to register the grape variety name on the International List of Vine Varieties and Their Synonyms created by the OIV. Japan's National Tax Agency decided to give the Koshu grape's application priority as it is an indigenous variety. Starting in 2010, Koshu grape was included on OIV's list. (Later in 2013, Muscat Bailey A, a grape variety for making red wine in Japan, became the second registered variety.) Since then, wine started to be exported to the European market with the Koshu label on the bottles. The exporting of Koshu wine is managed by an organization called 'Koshu of Japan' (KOJ), which was established in 2009 by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), the Yamanashi prefectural government, the Koshu city government and 15 Koshu wine producers in Yamanashi.[58] KOJ

[56] Cool Japan Strategy Promotion Council, 'Cool Japan Strategy'.
[57] National Tax Agency, 'Japan. 'Kampai''.
[58] Yamanashi Prefecture, 'Kōshū wain ōshū'.

is also a government and industry collaboration with the aim of bringing Koshu wine to the world. (Koshu of Japan n.d.) It received support from other national projects with similar goals to Cool Japan such as the 'Japan Brand' project (2009–2011) and the 'Oishii, Japanese food quality' project (2012–2013).[59]

KOJ has led efforts to make Koshu meet European Union wine regulations. London was selected to be the first European market destination of Koshu wine. The city is regarded by KOJ members as ideal because it has a wine drinking culture and a competitive market with a long history. Furthermore, there are many wine critics and journalists whose evaluations are essential for the success of a wine in the world market.[60] The success of Koshu wine in the London market was anticipated to be detrimental indicative of how it would fair in other markets.[61] Realizing this, KOJ invited Master of Wine, Lynne Sherriff, as a consultant to promote Koshu wine and world-famous wine journalists such as Jancis Robinson to give a seminar on Koshu wine. It also organized several Koshu wine tasting events at Japanese cuisine restaurants and other wine seminars at the headquarters of the Wine & Spirit Education Trust in London.[62] Through KOJ's promotion in London, Koshu has gradually become known in the international wine world. It is being exported not only to European markets, but also to Australia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Bangkok and Shanghai.[63]

## Contemporary Consumer Trends, Global Networks and Research Institutes

Besides the roles government and industry have played in developing Japan's winemaking industry, we must also consider the changing trends in the domestic consumer market, the globalization of winemaking knowledge and research developments.

[59] Yamanashi Commerce and Industry Association, 'Koshu wine EU export'.
[60] J-Net21, 'Nihon wain ga sekai'.
[61] Maeshima and Higawa, 'Ni ryū kara', 15.
[62] Yamanashi Commerce and Industry Association, 'Koshu wine EU export'.
[63] J-Net21, 'Nihon wain ga sekai'.

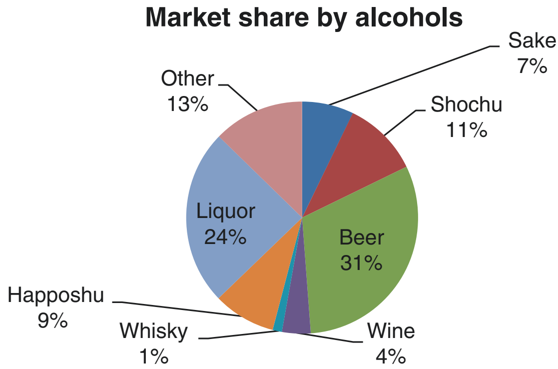


**Fig. 5** Table by author based on data from Kirin Holdings[64]

First is the increase in the number of Japan's domestic wine drinkers due to the globalization of wine consumption. Wine is now becoming one of the major alcoholic beverages consumed by Japanese people. Others include *sake, shōchū*, beer, fruit wine, whisky, brandy, liquor and *happōshu* (low-malt beer). According to the latest statistics, the consumption of grape wine enjoyed 4 per cent of the total alcohol market in 2013.[65] Although a seemingly small percentage, it is still significant considering the very diverse and competitive market (see Fig. 5).

Compared with beer's share of 31 per cent and liquor's share of 24.5 per cent in 2013, the market share of wine remained relatively small. But, from 2003 to 2013, wine consumption jumped by 140.3 per cent, the largest increase among all the genres. Moreover, wine consumption per capita per year in Japan was 3.5 bottles (750 ml per bottle) in 2013, an increase from 2.5 bottles in 2003. In contrast, the consumption of beer as well as *sake* and *shōchū* actually decreased from 2003 to 2013.[66] In particular, beer dropped 10 per cent. Furthermore, according to the result of a national survey conducted by NHK in 2007, wine was in the fifth place in a ranking of the 18 alcoholic beverages favoured by the Japanese.[67]

64 Ibid.

65 Kirin Holdings, 'Wain sankō shiryō'.

66 See also Stegewern's article in this volume.

67 NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute, *Nihonjin no suki na mono*, 31.

The changing drinking habits of Japanese consumers are an incentive for improving the overall quality of Japanese wine. Imported wines continue to dominate the market. They accounted for almost 70 per cent of consumed wines in 2013. Only about 30 per cent of wines consumed are domestically made wines (including wines made with grapes grown in Japan and wines made with imported bulk wines and condensed juice). This situation has remained more or less the same since 2000. The government and the wine industry see the expanding domestic wine market as a good opportunity for promoting domestic wine. This is part of a larger national project to encourage the consumption of Japanese food and drink products.[68]

Second are the increased connections of individual winemakers to the transnational wine world. The young generation of winemakers in private wineries has more opportunities to learn new winemaking knowledge through their global networks. In culinary globalization, individual culinary producers are always important actors.[69] The sharing of knowledge and technology through the global movement of winemakers helps improve local wine production. These young Japanese have studied in the established winemaking countries. Most of these winemakers combine 'Old World' (e.g. France, Italy, and Spain) and 'New World' (e.g. Australia and North America) methods. Some of them are 'flying winemakers', meaning they work at their own winery for one season and at overseas wineries the next. Their time spent at overseas wineries helps them upgrade the wines they make in their home countries so that they may be recognized internationally.[70]

Third is the scientific research aiming to improve the quality of grapes and wine conducted by domestic research institutions. The major institutes are The Institutes of Enology and Viticulture at Yamanashi University and the National Research Institute of Brewing (NRIB). The former is the earliest wine research institution in Japan. It was founded in

[68] Assmann, 'Food Action Nippon', 10.

[69] See, e.g., Assmann, 'Food Action Nippon'; Wank and Farrer, 'Chinese immigrants'; Farrer, 'Shanghai's Western Restaurants'; Sawaguchi, 'Japanese cooks in Italy'; Ceccarini, *Pizza and Pizza Chefs*.

[70] Kawauchi, 'Josei jōzōka no gunshin'.

1947 and was originally part of the Engineering Department of Yamanashi University. In 2000, the institute was reorganized and it has now three research laboratories focusing on microbiological, biochemical, bio-functional science and fruit genetic engineering research relating to grapes and wines, respectively. The National Research Institute of Brewing is a national organization managed by the Ministry of Finance which develops new technology for the production of every genre of alcohol. As discussed above, in 2010, it provided important scientific evidence for the successful registration of the Koshu grape as an internationally recognized wine grape by helping to prove that the grape was a hybrid variety of *Vitis vinifera* and East Asian wild grape.

## Looking Forward

Japanese wine has a long way to go to achieve the global recognition of traditional beverages such as tea and *sake* or even Japanese beer and whisky, but it can no longer be regarded as simply a failed case of culinary indigenization. Most recently, in 2015, there have been other promising developments, led by the government, for the successful globalization of Japanese wine. Firstly, new regulations were issued to improve the quality of wine including a new definition of 'Japanese wine' created by Japan's National Tax Agency. According to this definition both the wines and grapes must be produced inside the country to qualify as a Japanese wine, a stipulation required for wines to be accepted by international markets.[71] Secondly, the government also issued the Geographical Indication (GI) protection system for the agricultural, forestry and fishery industries. GI aims to address the insufficient supply of wine grapes and improve the competitiveness of Japanese wine in international trade.[72] With these initiatives and the emergence of Koshu in the international market, domestic wine may soon become another globalized product like *washoku*.

[71] Nihon Keizai Shimbun, 'Nihon wain sannen'.

[72] Takahashi, *Nōrinsuisanbutsu inshokuhin*.

## Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the development of Japan's winemaking industry by examining the various responsible actors and their motivations. I argued that the government has played the most significant role in the growth of the Japanese winemaking industry. State promotion of wine culture ultimately aims to revitalize the local agricultural economy and enhance the visibility of local food products in the international market. Additionally, wine culture as a culinary soft power[73] is also expected to help improve the national image of Japan abroad. Although *nihonshu* and *shōchū* are still considered the ideal drink to accompany Japanese foods and are indeed being promoted by the government abroad, the boom of *washoku* culture outside Japan is seen by Japanese wine promoters as a good opportunity for branding Japanese wine, especially as an alternative ideal Japanese drink to be paired with Japanese food.

Thus, the development of the Japanese winemaking industry at every stage has been linked to state-led projects. But the goals of these projects have varied from agricultural modernization in the Meiji era to the present-day objective of diversified culinary glocalization. The projects have involved a diverse set of actors promoting Japanese wine culture at home and abroad, including national and regional governments, private companies, individual winemakers, research institutes and consumers.

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[73] Farrer, 'Introduction: Traveling Cuisines', 10–12; see also Assmann's contribution in this volume.

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**Chuanfei Wang** received her Ph.D. in Global Studies from Sophia University Japan in 2017. At the momen she is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Institute of Comparative Culture at the same university. Her PhD dissertation covers wine culture in Japan, focusing on how Japanese wine producers, consumers and cultural intermediaries have incorporated Japan into the global wine world from the perspective of the sociology of culture. She is currently conducting ethnographic research on the globalization of Japanese restaurants in China, Europe, and a comparative study of wine tourism in Japan, Australia and China.

# Part 3

## Japanese Food Identities Inside-Out

# Chinese Food Threatening the Japanese Table: Changing Perceptions of Imported Chinese Food in Japan

Tine Walravens

## Introduction

'We don't use processed foods or frozen foods that are manufactured in a Chinese food company.' This is how a note on the lunch schedule in a primary school in Gamagōri City in Aichi Prefecture reassures parents of the quality of food they provide to the students (Figure 6). Spelling out clearly the non-Chinese origin of (some of) the ingredients for school lunches is not a rare occurrence in Japan, and can be seen equally often on restaurant menus, lunch boxes, or in shops (Fig. 6).

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T. Walravens (✉)
Department of Languages and Cultures, Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium
e-mail: tine.walravens@ugent.be

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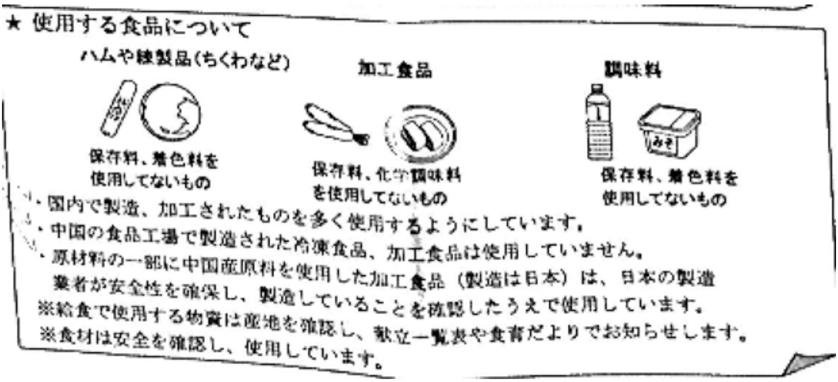


**Fig. 6** Detail of a lunch schedule at a primary school in Gamagōri City in Aichi Prefecture. The second line of the listing reads 'We don't use processed foods or frozen foods that are manufactured in a Chinese food company'. (The author wishes to thank Kyoko Ito-Morales at the Universidad de Granada for sending her a copy of this lunch schedule of her children.)

Stating that imported Chinese food has a negative image in Japan is neither new nor surprising. Japan faced a series of food-related scandals in the 2000s, ranging from excessive pesticide residues, through false labelling and fake foods, to the recycling of out-of-date ingredients. The incidents involved domestic as well as international companies, and this caused Japanese policymakers to reform the national framework ensuring food safety. Despite stricter import control mechanisms and their (statistically proven) positive effects in Japan, the negative image of imported, and particularly Chinese food products is ubiquitous. This is visible in general public opinion and in the mainstream media, with headlines that read, 'Food produced in China, deep-rooted mistrust (*nezuyoi fushin*)' (*Asahi Shimbun*, April 26, 2009), or 'China invading the Japanese table (*Nihon no shokutaku ni shintō suru Chūgoku*)' (*Shūkan Asahi*, August 3, 2007). This narrative is easily confirmed or complemented by the story found on the webpage of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW, *Kōsei Rōdōshō*) which year after year, publishes different figures but one clear message: 'China accounts for the highest number, with X cases of violations against the Food Safety Basic Law (X% of the total number of violations), ( . . . )'.[1] Opinion polls reflect the widespread acceptance of this narrative. A joint Sino-Japanese survey carried out by Gallup International and the Nihon Research Center in 2009 showed that 96% of the Japanese respondents said they were concerned about the safety of food coming from China.[2] Interestingly, in that same survey, also 79.3% of the Chinese respondents said they were wary of the safety of their domestic food. The idea that Chinese consumers do not trust their own food is compounded by talk about Chinese farmers who apparently do not eat the food they grow for commercial sale, but grow a portion of their farm products according to 'traditional methods' for family use.[3] Stories such as these evidently confirm Japanese public opinion relating to Chinese food. By contrast, Japanese domestic produce still enjoys the reputation of being safe and healthy, despite numerous incidents.

Conventional explanations of this phenomenon focus on the litany of food scandals associated with imported Chinese food, together with a near-constant wave of scandals in China itself, which have been subject to saturation media coverage in Japan since the turn of the century. However, this chapter argues that the hyperbolic public and media response is disproportionate to the food safety risks associated with the consumption of Chinese food. The chapter starts by assessing two common explanations for the widespread negative perceptions of Chinese food: (1) the development of a consumer awareness in Japan and (2) a heightening risk of consuming Chinese imported foods in the 2000s. Having established that these conventional explanations are insufficient to account for the extent of the stigmatization of Chinese food in Japan, the chapter then outlines potential alternative factors, which have also played a key role in the increasingly negative perceptions of Chinese food imports. While there has been an overall increase in the number of *reported* Chinese food scandals since the 2000s, broader

[1] The biased portrayal of these figures will be touched upon below. Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW), 'Statistics of imported foods monitoring'.

[2] Equally interesting is that 61% of the Chinese respondents mentioned their doubts about the safety of Japanese food. Nihon Research Center, Gallup International, 'Ryokō, shoku no anzensei'.

[3] Zhou and Fang, 'Multiple Rationality'.

Japanese perceptions of China, the related nature of media coverage of events in China, and the changing nature of Chinese food incidents, among others, are central factors in the development of the perception of a Chinese food threat.

## Japanese Consumer Awareness on Food Safety

The *Mainichi Shimbun* dubbed the Japanese summer of 2000 ‘the summer of eating dangerously’.[4] Food safety issues in Japan suddenly dominated the headlines, as the first domestic case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) was followed by scandals about mislabelled foodstuffs and excessive pesticide residues found on imported foods. 2000 seemed to mark the beginning of a decade of food scandals in Japan, related to both imported and domestic food products. These developments led to a belief in the media, among certain NGOs, in governmental publications and to some extent in the scholarly literature that consumer awareness of food safety in Japan had become a major issue in the 2000s.[5]

Indeed, Japan has endured its fair share of food safety incidents and scandals during this period, ranging from tainted rice to poisoned seafood, and including mislabelled food products and high pesticide residues on vegetables.[6] Although undoubtedly these more recent issues led to an increase in consumer concern over food safety, the reality is that consumer awareness of food safety had already been well established in previous decades.

Food safety concerns among Japanese consumers evolved in the 1960s and 1970s, but developed out of an earlier sensitivity about food supply.[7] One factor contributing to this attitude shift was the widely

[4] Kishi, ‘Recalling the Summer of Eating Dangerously’.

[5] Examples of this are among others: Kakuchi, ‘Scandals force Japanese to watch what they eat’; Organic Consumer’s Association, ‘Food Scandals Help Japan’s Organic Movement Grow’; Sato, ‘Cultural Politics of Food Safety’, 575; Cwiertka, ‘Culinary Culture and the Making of a National Cuisine’, 415–428; Nottage, *Product Safety*.

[6] See Kojima, 63; Jonker et al., 6–7.

[7] See also Farina in this volume.

reported spate of food poisoning cases such as the 1955 Morinaga arsenic milk contamination[8] and the Kanemi rice oil case of 1968,[9] directly affecting public perceptions of the food industry and triggering changes in the national framework ensuring food safety and sanitation.[10] There was an increase in public awareness that pollution incidents could have a direct impact on human health through their effects on food safety.[11] The Minamata poisoning affair,[12] which started off in the 1950s in Kumamoto prefecture but continued well into the 1970s, is probably the most famous of a number of pollution incidents that affected public health as locally harvested foods proved to be contaminated by industrial waste. The increasing dependence on imports further made the public realize the consequences of this dependence for food safety and food security matters.[13]

Against the background of growing citizen movements in general, these serious consumer problems resulted in the emergence of local grass-roots consumer cooperative movements, such as *Shufuren* (Japan Federation of Housewives' Associations, 1948), Japan Consumers Cooperative Union (JCCU, 1951), or *Shodanren* (Consumers Japan,

[8] In 1955 in the western areas of Japan, some 12,000 newborn babies suffered from poisoning and another 130 died after consuming milk contaminated with arsenic from the Morinaga Milk Company. This event was particularly notable for the large number of people of the same age group who fell victim to the poison. See Ui, *Industrial Pollution in Japan*.

[9] In 1968, rice oil from the Kanemi depot in Fukuoka was found to be contaminated with PCBs (Polychlorinated Biphenyl). The estimated number of victims was around 15,000 persons, but only 1,081 cases were officially recognized as poisoning. See Ui, *Industrial Pollution in Japan*.

[10] An example of this is the 1957 revision of the Food Safety Law (1947), after the Morinaga Milk incident.

[11] Jussaume et al., 'Food Safety in Modern Japan', 218.

[12] The Minamata mercury poisonings occurred in Minamata (Kyushu) as of 1956 and in Niigata (Honshu) as of 1965, where inhabitants were inflicted with mercury poisoning as nearby chemical companies dumped their industrial toxic waste directly into the local bay and water streams, affecting the local food supply. Many of the more than 2,000 recognized victims brought their case to court and in the 2000s the Minamata company, Chisso Corporation was forced to pay compensation and clean up its contamination.

[13] It is important to distinguish between food safety (*shokuhin no anzen*) and food security (*shokuryō anzen hoshō*). In the Japanese context, the first refers to whether or not food is safe to eat, the second is a reference to food supply and availability. A third term often used is self-sufficiency (*shokuryō jikyūritsu*), which refers to the ratio of domestically consumed food that is supplied by domestic production.

1956). In 1969, Takeuchi Naokazu founded the Consumers Union of Japan (CUJ) or *Nihon Shōhisha Renmei* (or *Nishōren*), one of the country's most prominent consumer organizations, which promotes domestic produce and culinary traditions.[14] Initiated to protest against the food industry and governmental institutions and their policies, these consumer movements later organized themselves in order to create alternative systems of food supply.[15] MacLachlan shows that the consumer cooperatives, which had developed out of the immediate post-war period food safety concerns, flourished in the 1980s and were firmly established by the 1990s.[16] Realizing the deleterious effects of Japan's post-war boom on the food supply, the main motivation of households in joining these co-ops was to gain access to safe and high-quality food. In the aftermath of many food-related incidents, food safety thus gained increasing importance in the discourse of social movements and civil society in Japan.[17]

In fact, the very notion of 'food safety' (*shokuhin anzensei*) is not that new at all in Japanese discourse. It emerged in the Japanese media as early as 1885, linking cholera with the consumption of fish products (*Yomiuri Shimbun,* December 9, 1885). A century later, another article in the *Yomiuri Shimbun* in 1974 stated that 93.3% of the respondents in a questionnaire said they paid attention to chemical additives when buying groceries (*Yomiuri Shimbun,* December 28, 1974).[18] Indeed, as early as 1992, Jussaume and Judson compared consumer concerns over food safety in the USA and Japan, and concluded that food safety concerns proved to be significantly higher in the latter.[19] Moreover, they showed that at this apparently 'early' stage, Japanese respondents already questioned the competence of governments, businesses, and farmers to ensure a safe food supply.

[14] Maclachlan, 'Global Trends vs. Local Traditions', 250–251. Nihon Shōhisha Renmei.

[15] Jussaume et al., 'Food Safety in Modern Japan', 218–219.

[16] Maclachlan, *Consumer Politics in Postwar Japan,* 175–200.

[17] Jussaume and Judson, 'Public Perception', 237; MacLachlan, *Consumer Politics in Postwar Japan*, 175–200; Nihon Shōhisha Renmei, interview with author, December 9, 2015, Tokyo, Japan.

[18] Of that percentage, more than 70% of the women did not know why certain additives were added. *Yomiuri Shimbun*, December 28, 1974.

[19] Jussaume and Judson, 'Public Perception', 246.

Rather than being an issue of the 2000s, food safety as a concern thus appeared in Japanese discourse much earlier. Due to the eruption of local consumer problems as mentioned above, this awareness was primarily focused on the domestic situation. However, because of the agricultural trade situation, the main import partner, which at that time was not yet China but America, also became the target of attention and a source of concern. The US demand for the liberalization of food additives that were previously banned was seen by the CUJ as a threat to Japanese consumer health and it feared that if not stopped, the Americans might come to 'occupy the stomachs of the Japanese'.[20]

Under increasing pressure, Japan had opened its market to the USA in the 1960s and ever since, bilateral relations had been plagued by a widening trade imbalance, unfair dumping practices, and forced regulatory changes. As a result, consumers developed an awareness of the relationship between food safety and trade issues. This rising trade friction between the USA and Japan beginning in the early 1960s, demonstrates that *if* nascent consumer awareness was directed against an importing country, that country was the USA rather than China.

Newspaper articles at the end of the 1960s mention in their titles phrases such as 'Commotion concerning harmful American foods' (*Yomiuri Shimbun,* October 28, 1969) or 'Dismissed Food and Drug Administration Officer inept in task of protecting food safety' (*Yomiuri Shimbun,* December 11, 1969),[21] giving proof of the distrust or anxiety concerning American foods and additives at the time. Also a qualitative questionnaire on local food safety perception, which I conducted in Japan in 2013, showed that the older respondents tended to mention the USA when talking about food safety, as opposed to the younger generation of participants. When specifically asked about Chinese products, one older respondent stated, 'Products imported from the US are similarly dangerous.'

[20] Takeuchi, *Nihon no shōhisha,* 104. Interestingly, Takeuchi Naokazu, the founder of the JCU, at the time does not speak yet of *shoku no anzen* (food safety), but rather of *shokuhin no osen* (food pollution), linking the problems to boom-era Japan and its industrial pollution of agricultural land and fisheries.

[21] The Food and Drug Administratin (FDA) is an American agency in charge of public health, through the monitoring of e.g. food safety, drugs and pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and medical devices.

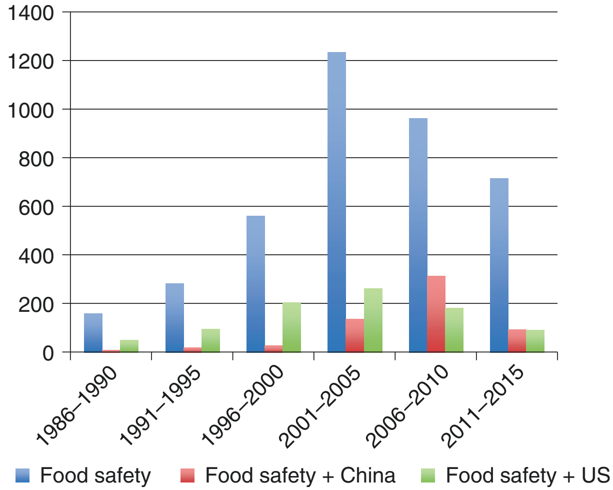


**Fig. 7** *Yomiuri Shimbun* article count, based on search input *shokuhin, anzensei, Chūgoku, Amerika/Beikoku* (food products, safety, China, the USA)

The increased media coverage of food safety issues in the 2000s does not necessarily correspond to an increase in the actual cases of food contamination (see below); it should rather be seen as a long-standing consumer concern, which was finally picked up by the media. The increased coverage can be partly attributed to the 1994 Product Liability Law (*Seizōbutsu Sekininhō*), the eventual implementation of which led to widely publicized legal cases of food contamination. Over the course of a few years, the government was forced to further reform its food safety policy framework, initiating the Food Safety Basic Law (*Shokuhin Anzen Kihonhō*) and establishing the Food Safety Commission (*Shokuhin Anzen Iinkai*) in 2003. The timing of this again contributed to the (mistaken) perception that food safety consciousness in Japan did not develop until the 2000s.

A swift media analysis corroborates this trend, as well as the role of China and the USA as the Other in the discourse in Japan (see Fig. 7).[22]

[22] During the media analysis, I encountered some difficulties concerning the Japanese translation of 'food safety'. The earliest accounts of food safety incidents reported, often used for example *shoku no osen*, tightly linked to Japan's industrial pollution and those related food problems.

Although hardly a precise measure, a significant increase around the 2000s in articles dealing with China and food safety is visible. The articles dealing with food safety relating to the USA also rise over time, but this tendency seems to have started in the earlier days, due to the debate about chemical additives mentioned above, and a fear of genetically modified organisms coming from America since the 1990s.

Thus, although there is a perception that increased food safety awareness in the 2000s can at least partially explain the heightened risk perception of imported Chinese food products, this section has shown that in fact food safety awareness was already well developed and consolidated prior to this change in attitude towards Chinese food.

## The Actual Risk of Consuming Chinese Food Products in Japan

Having recognized that consumer awareness relating to food safety was well established as early as the 1980s and 1990s, this first conventional explanation is proven to be problematic in clarifying the rise in Japanese negativity towards Chinese food in the 2000s. This chapter will now turn its attention to the second commonly accepted factor: a heightened risk of consuming Chinese foods.

Despite all the media and public attention, and indeed 'demonization' of Chinese food imports, according to the statistics of the Japanese Department of Food Safety (*Iyaku Shokuhinkyoku Shokuhin Anzenbu*) the number of Chinese violations against the Japanese food safety regulations remained constant throughout the 2000s and has in fact decreased since 2006 (see Fig. 8)[23]. Moreover, this decrease in violations has taken place as the gross volume as well as the overall proportion of Chinese imports has steadily increased, and while inspection levels are

Despite different terminology over time, leading to different figures, the tendencies remain the same: increase in China-related articles between 2000 and 2010.

[23] Data retrieved from Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW). Imported Foods Inspection Services Home Page. *Statistics of Imported Foods Monitoring*.

| Year | Number of violations | Import volume (by declarations) | Violations/import (‰) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2000 | 477 | N.N. | N.N. |
| 2001 | 330 | N.N. | N.N. |
| 2002 | 537 | N.N. | N.N. |
| 2003 | 490 | N.N. | N.N. |
| 2004 | 501 | 4,87,776 | 0.1 |
| 2005 | 441 | 5,41,537 | 0.08 |
| 2006 | 530 | 5,78,524 | 0.09 |
| 2007 | 387 | 5,63,847 | 0.07 |
| 2008 | 250 | 4,73,343 | 0.05 |
| 2009 | 387 | 5,39,069 | 0.07 |
| 2010 | 322 | 6,07,994 | 0.05 |
| 2011 | 278 | 6,33,733 | 0.04 |
| 2012 | 221 | 6,50,431 | 0.03 |
| 2013 | 244 | 6,76,475 | 0.04 |
| 2014 | 202 | 7,03,053 | 0.03 |

**Fig. 8** Chinese Violations against Japanese food safety regulations (Food Sanitation Law, JAS Law, Food Safety Basic Law), 2000–2014

comparatively high.[24] Simply put, despite the growing volume of Chinese produce imported to Japan, the proportion of those imports that is found to have violated the food safety law is in fact decreasing.

[24] Reading from the statistics, the number of inspections during a certain year is linked to the number of violations in the years beforehand. 'Trouble countries' such as Ecuador or Vietnam receive a great number of examinations as a reaction to numerous violations in the past years. (Interestingly, this does not seem to apply to the USA, which, despite one of the highest percentages of violations/import, barely exceed the level of 10% of import examinations.) Also 15–20% of the Chinese food imports are checked, which is a high portion, especially when compared to other countries such as South-Korea, the USA, or Thailand. However, a manifestation of the improving food safety records of China can be detected in the declining amount of examinations on Chinese imports in recent years. Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW). Imported Foods Inspection Services Home Page. *Statistics of Imported Foods Monitoring*.

Although this is clearly an imperfect measure, it seriously calls into question the standard narrative of the increased risk of consuming Chinese food imports.

Moreover, this is a different picture from the narrative we read in the above mentioned annually published summary (as opposed to the 'raw' statistics) by the MHLW, in which it is always clearly stated that 'China accounts for the highest [amount of violations against the Food Safety Basic Law]', mentioning an absolute number of cases. What is lacking in this portrayal by the ministry is a calculation of the number of violations, relative to the actual amount of imports; which in the case of China is ever increasing (see Table 2). When confronting Yamashita Kazuhito, an expert on Japanese agricultural policy, with this odd way of reporting, he replied, 'It is not the case, that what the ministries tell in their reports, are not facts. They report the facts, but from their own perspective. What bothers me is the way they present the facts, and what their intention behind this presentation is'.[25] The fact that for 10 years now, the ministry has been sticking to this method of portrayal does raise doubts about its intentions and implies that food has become one arena in which conflicts of globalization and its impacts are settled. Also conversely, this kind of ranking in food politics suggests that food itself contributes to national claims of qualitative differentiation and identity politics.

So far, this chapter has evaluated two potential explanations for the negative perceptions of imported Chinese food products in Japan. The first, the perceived increase in food safety risk mentioned above, is shown to be problematic as a closer look at the Japanese government's own statistics suggests that food safety violations by Chinese food imports have remained relatively constant since 2000, and even decreased despite increasing import volumes and temporarily increasing controls. A second explanation, that Japanese food safety awareness developed contemporaneously with the increase in media coverage on China-related food incidents, is also found to be problematic due to the existence of an already well-established consumer awareness of food

[25] Yamashita Kazuhito, interview with author, December 10, 2015, Tokyo, Japan.

safety in the late 1980s and 1990s. This chapter argues that the link between rising food safety awareness and Chinese imports has been fostered by other key factors. However, before addressing these, attention will briefly be turned towards the particular role China plays within the formation of Japanese national as well as culinary identity.

## Protecting Japan's Culinary Tradition

For Japan, China has always been a very significant Other in the process of identity formation.[26] The first nascent Japanese cultural and national consciousness in the eighteenth century emphasized precisely 'that which made the Japanese irreducibly Japanese, meaning the same, and thereby different from the [Chinese] Other'.[27] In this discourse of Self and Other, food is a very powerful tool for articulating identity and identification. As a commodity carrying many symbols of the nation, it communicates a sense of belonging to the Self, by differentiating oneself from the Other.

Other chapters in this volume have explored how, not unlike other culinary traditions, Japanese food and foodways were cultivated and became part of national identity in the context of what Ferguson (2010) calls culinary nationalism.[28] The Japanese national cuisine is glorified as pure, healthy, and unique; characteristics attributed to its growing process on Japanese soil.[29] However, these characteristics of purity and safety are easily politicized against an external Other, which is then defined as 'impure' and 'unsafe'. The public negativity towards China within the context of (real or imagined) food-related issues is readily applied to invoke a revived sense of national identity expressed through the 'food' framework. A report from the World Bank in 2004

[26] Duara, 'Historical Narratives and Trans-nationalism in East Asia', 105.
[27] Harootunian, *Things Seen and Unseen*, 409.
[28] Ferguson, 'Culinary Nationalism'.
[29] Ohnuki-Tierney, *Rice as Self*, 131.

stated that 'most Japanese believe that domestic food is safer than imported food, [ . . . ] and Chinese products are believed to be least safe'.[30]

National cuisine as such becomes a cultural and material resource, which shapes as well as responds to a political agenda. State-initiated protective policies and promotion programmes aim at protecting these national claims of qualitative difference by re-emphasizing the boundaries between national and foreign foods.[31] These institutionalized ways of protecting and promoting domestic produce are manifestations of what DeSoucey termed gastronationalism; the use of food in order to 'create and sustain the emotive power of national attachment' in the context of growing globalization.[32]

It was claimed for a long time by Japanese regulators – and believed by customers alike – that the Japanese framework ensuring food safety provided the public with 'the safest food in the world'.[33] The nationalist ranking thus goes beyond the culinary tradition: also the gastronational strategies and policies that protect Japanese cuisine are highly valued. In 2007, Kakita Tatsuya, a much-published expert on food safety in Japan, stated, 'Japan is five years ahead of the rest of the world in dealing with quality problems from China. The world can learn from Japan.'[34] What stands between the safe and pure Japanese cuisine and the dangerous and impure Chinese imports is thus a policy of institutionalized culinary nationalism, protecting the national claims of qualitative difference.

Sustained by a national emotive attachment to a socially constructed culinary tradition, and legitimized by a perceived threat from the Other, this idealization of Japanese food and culinary nationalism can result in symbolic boundary politics. Food, as a marker of identification towards

[30] This report was compiled in 2004, after incidents of excessive pesticide residues on vegetables imported from China, but before major media scares such as the poisoned dumpling scandal (January 2008) or the 'cardboard bun hoax' (July 2007). Jonker et al., 'Food Safety and Quality Standards in Japan', 30.

[31] See Assmann's contribution in this volume.

[32] DeSoucey, 'Gastronationalism'.

[33] Jonker et al., 'Food Safety', 1. Also see the contributions by Reiher, Kimura and Takeda in this volume.

[34] Fackler, 'Safe Food for Japan'. Kakita, *Anata mo tabeteru Chūgokusan.*

and differentiation from the Other, thus becomes an important element in the consumers' political lives on the one hand, while it contributes to domestic and global identity politics on the other hand. The potential factors affecting the perception of Chinese foods in Japan, which the chapter will now explore, should be seen within this conceptual framework of culinary nationalism resulting in conscious policies of gastronationalism.

## Potential Alternative Factors for the Stigmatization of Chinese Food in Japan

### From Food Poisoning to Poisoned Foods in China

China, like Japan, has been plagued by food contamination scandals of all kinds, including inadvertent and deliberate poisoning, local as well as national. Just as several of the most serious cases in Japan date back to and indeed were partly a product of the post-war economic boom, also some of the food scandals in China have direct parallels with bubble-era Japan, specifically those resulting from the industrial pollution of agricultural land or fisheries. Others, such as the infamous tainted milk powder scandal in 2008,[35] are the product of deliberate decisions to adulterate or to otherwise knowingly sell tainted food products. It is precisely this 'deliberate' aspect that characterizes the Chinese food incidents since the late 1990s.

Until then, Chinese food safety issues were caused mainly by a lack of modern scientific knowledge and hygiene regulations. Many large-scale food poisonings occurred in public canteens due to poor sanitary conditions, the absence of rules regarding hygiene, or the use of spoiled or unsafely stored foods. Food problems arising in home kitchens were largely due to similar sanitation problems. Moreover, under the planned

[35] The 2008 melamine scandal was a food safety incident in China, when milk and infant formula were found to be adulterated with melamine. Official reports state an estimated 300,000 victims of melamine-related illnesses and six children died. Tracy, 'The mutability of melamine', 4.

economy in China, workers in canteens just performed their task without having corporate interests in mind.[36]

At the end of the century however, there was a qualitative change in the nature of Chinese food incidents: from 'food poisoning' caused by 'backwardness' and lack of regulation, towards deliberate contamination or adulteration scandals, with clear profit-making in mind. The emergence of a new term in Chinese language around 2000, *youdu shipin,* or poisonous food (as opposed to the previously used term food poisoning) represents this shift in focus from food hygiene to food safety matters.[37] Scandals involving food adulteration by using cheaper, inferior, or even toxic substances, fake food, excessive use of additives and pesticides hit the headlines worldwide. Probably the best-known and most widely publicized example is the aforementioned 2008 milk scandal, in which infant formula was knowingly adulterated with melamine, resulting in over 300,000 victims including six lethal cases.

As deliberate contamination has a greater impact on consumers than inadvertent contamination,[38] the changed nature of Chinese food incidents can thus be interpreted as one of the reasons why China's food safety record became an issue in the 2000s. The sensational coverage in the domestic and international media on the Chinese incidents, and the public focus on the 'intentional' aspect of the scandals confirms this point.

The intentional nature of the Chinese food incidents is conceptualized to the extreme as 'food terrorism' or *shokuhin tero* in Japan, as the quote below, from the right-nationalist magazine Sapio, exemplifies, 'Shrimps, chicken, tea . . . It's not only vegetables. Dangerous Chinese foods are terrorism to the health of the Japanese people [*nihonjin no kenkō e no tero*]' (*Sapio,* August 15, 2002).

Political analyst Satō Yumi discusses the discourse of the Chinese food threat for Japan, comparing and confronting China's 'deplorable' food

[36] Interestingly, as of the 1970s, incidents involving pesticides are found in the records. However, the occurrence of these poisonings were proven to result from unawareness or mistakes. Yan, 'Food Safety', 709.

[37] Ibid., 'Food Safety', 709–710.

[38] Just et al., 'Biosecurity', 108; as mentioned in O'Shea, 'Dodgy Dumplings', 5.

safety situation with the highly esteemed Japanese framework ensuring food safety, addressing not only institutions and regulations but also personal characteristics: 'China is absolutely *ill-equipped with social manners and morals*; also concerning the labelling of commodities, they are lacking strict institutionalized criteria and checking institutions such as the Fair Trade Commission in Japan' (*Shukan Asahi,* August 3, 2007).[39]

Therefore, the Chinese food threat not only represents impure and unsafe food, it also carries moral implications, against which Japanese culinary tradition should be protected. The term 'food terrorism' further ideologizes mere concerns over the health-related properties and the safety of foods by linking these with more power-laden and politicized bilateral relations and even identity politics.

## The China Threat Thesis and Bilateral Relations

As Northeast Asia changes, China's rise and seemingly assertive pursuit of regional interests unsettle the neighbouring states, not least Japan. Growing unease at the implications is reflected in the current discourse, which is often characterized by sinophobia, the 'China Threat' thesis (*Chūgoku kyōi)* and by the perceived image of an increasingly aggressive China.[40] There is thus a clear correlation between a progressively negative image of China and the increased risk perception relating to the consumption of Chinese food imports.

In Japan, sentiment towards China has hardened since the late 1990s due primarily to a range of historical and security issues. Since the mid-2000s, the idea that China represents a serious threat to Japan, economically and militarily, has gained currency to the extent that it now seems

[39] 'Abunai shokutaku dai, 4-dan: konmei no "Chūgoku media, bakuro gassen"' [The dangerous dinner table: part 4. Chaotic 'Chinese media, exposure battle'.] *Shukan Asahi*, August 3, 2007. The Fair Trade Commission (*Kōsei Torihiki Iinkai*) is a Japanese government commission, regulating economic competition.

[40] Hook, et al., *Regional Risk*, 19–24.

conventional wisdom – this has had major implications for bilateral relations and mutual public opinion and understanding.[41]

An article in AERA in September 2007 (even before the notorious *gyōza* incident had taken place) entitled 'The origin of our China-hate. It all started with poisoned foods!'[42] clearly demonstrates the easy link between food safety issues and China's domestic political situation or bilateral relations. As mentioned above, the deliberate aspect of many of the food incidents highlights both moral and ethical characteristics of the Other, which render the fear even more palpable to the public. As my informants stated, 'The anti-Japaneseness [of the Chinese] and [their] morals are low, so I can't trust them' (Female, 20–30 years old), or 'Talking about China; there are food problems even up till now, there are structural cover-ups by the government, . . . You cannot trust them at all' (Male, plus 60 years).

The China Threat thus fits within broader negative perceptions of China as a country with bad hygienic standards, heavily polluted cities, a corrupt government, and poor working conditions.[43] A 2011 Japan-China Joint Opinion Poll by the Non-Profit Organization (NPO) Genron revealed that for those respondents who stated that they felt 'no affinity to China', the second reason (61.8%) for this is the doubts they have towards the Chinese government's dealings with food safety issues.[44] In the latest version of the poll in 2014, the second reason was the fact that 'China's actions to secure resource, energy and food look selfish' (52.8%). The first reason given for the lack of affinity towards China is, unsurprisingly and throughout the years, the territorial and historical disputes between both countries. Along those same lines, the acceptance of the China Threat narrative among the Japanese people can also be seen in the

[41] Cabinet Office, 'Gaikō ni kansuru seronchōsa'. The poll, which conducts a similar survey but reflecting both the Chinese and the Japanese side, published its results for 2015 at the time of writing. These figures show a slight improvement in affinity on both sides. http://www.genron-npo.net/en/pp/archives/5217.html.

[42] Ōnami and Kawano. 'Chūgoku kirai no honshin.'

[43] Iwabuchi, 'China, Japan's Chimera', 152–153.

[44] Genron NPO, 'Dai nanakai Nicchū kyōdō yoron chōsa'.

annual increase in the number of respondents mentioning 'China's military buildup and non-transparency' as a matter of concern.[45]

As early as 1992, the link between a China threat and food matters was made in the *Mainichi Shimbun*. However, at that time it concerned Chinese agricultural exports to Korea, and no food safety concerns were mentioned; it was rather presented as an economic threat to a neighbouring country that should be closely watched (*Mainichi Shimbun,* September 29, 1992).[46] The first link with Japan appeared in 2002, when excessive pesticide residues were found on vegetables imported from China. However, it was not until 2007 that the expressions *shoku no Chūgoku kyōi-ron* or *Chūgoku shokuhin no kyōi-ron* (the Chinese food threat thesis) became more commonly used in the media, often linked with the upcoming Olympic Games in Beijing (*Mainichi Shimbun*, August 20, 2007).[47]

## Japan's Food Security Crisis and its Dependence on China

The Chinese threat is thus not limited to merely traditional security issues. China also figures recurrently in the discourse on the two food crises Japan is currently facing: food security and food safety, both of which are inherently linked. The threat China poses is twofold: the risk associated with the consumption of Chinese foods, and the risk related to Japan's import dependency on China.

Japan's food self-sufficiency ratio (calorie based) has been steadily decreasing since the 1960s: the country went from a ratio of 79% (1960) to 39% in 2014.[48] Since the end of the 1990s, imports of

[45] For the year 2014, this was 39.2%, as compared to the 31.2% of 2013. Genron NPO, '11th Japan-China Joint Opinion Poll Analysis Report'.

[46] 'Kankoku ni Chūgoku kyōi ron, nōsanbutsu no yunyū, kyūgekini zōka' [China threat to South Korea as imports of agricultural products rapidly increase], *Mainichi Shimbun*, September 29, 1992.

[47] 'Sekai wa dō miru: Chūgoku seihin no anzensei mondai' [How does the world look at it: safety problems with Chinese goods], *Mainichi Shimbun*, August 20, 2007.

[48] See Farina in this volume. Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), 'Monthly Statistics'.

agricultural products such as leek or shiitake mushrooms, had started to rise rapidly, causing a demonstrative fall in farmers' incomes, and even leading to provisional safeguarding measures and emergency import restrictions by the Japanese authorities.[49] As the proportion of cultivated agricultural land continues to drop, and the farming population progressively ages, Japan is not likely to be self-sufficient in the foreseeable future.[50] Despite the reported scandals and negative image, the import value of agricultural produce coming from China rises every year. Chinese imports constitute the main share of the Japanese consumer's vegetable consumption: figures for 2010 show that almost half of the frozen vegetables (40%), more than half of the fresh vegetables (57%), and 80% of the dried vegetables consumed in Japan are of Chinese origin.[51] The figures released by the Ministry for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF, *Nōrinsuisanshō*) for *matsutake* mushrooms, one of the favourite autumn vegetables among the Japanese, are indicative: Chinese imports account for 97% of Japan's *matsutake* consumption.[52] Another striking example is leeks, 99% of which are sourced from China.

This dependency on China (and its highly mediatized food incidents – see below) stands in sharp contrast with Japan's aforementioned culinary nationalism, which celebrates the purity, the healthy character, and the safety of Japanese food.[53] Government programmes such as *shokuiku* (food education) or *chisan chishō* (local production, local consumption) at first sight seem to promote healthy and safe dietary patterns while supporting and reviving the local economy, yet on closer inspection the campaigns are very political and nationalistic in nature.[54] By promoting

[49] George Mulgan, *Japan's Agricultural Policy Regime*, 152. Also see same volume for a more detailed account of the initial Japanese debate on how to deal with rising Chinese imports, and trying to satisfy worried farmers as well as demanding industry.

[50] See O'Shea's contribution in this volume.

[51] Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), 'Guidebook for Export to Japan (Food Articles) 2011'.

[52] 'Matsutake kokusan shikō' [Domestic Orientation for *matsutake* Mushrooms], *Asahi Shimbun*, October 9, 2008.

[53] Cwiertka, 'Culinary Culture and the Making of a National Cuisine', 415.

[54] See also Assmann's article in this volume.

a ‘traditional’ Japanese diet, policymakers aim at reducing Japan’s import dependency and basically at protecting domestic agriculture.[55] The Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) guidebook for exports of food and agricultural products leaves little doubt about the link: ‘In reaction to food poisoning incidents caused by processed foods imported from China, there is a recent trend to promote domestic products as high value-added products.’[56]

## Sensationalist Media Coverage

We have seen that concurrently with the changing nature of the Chinese food incidents, the overall image of China in Japan also began to change at the turn of the century. The combination of these two factors is further reflected in a quantitative and qualitative change in Japanese media coverage of food-related scandals in and from China around the 2000s. This section will trace back the changes in media coverage on food safety matters related to China as a factor contributing to the negative perception of Chinese foods in Japan.

In the 1980s and 1990s, there was very little media coverage of Chinese food contamination incidents, whether they reached Japan or not. For example, in 1988 the consumption of contaminated clams led to a massive outbreak of hepatitis A in Shanghai, affecting almost 300,000 people – quite possibly the largest foodborne disease incident in history.[57] Although picked up by the *Asahi Shimbun* and the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, the coverage was limited to one very brief article per newspaper (*Asahi Shimbun*, March 22, 1988; *Yomiuri Shimbun*, March 3, 1988). This is probably also related to the fact that the link between the consumed clams and hepatitis A was not immediately clear. However, today, without any doubt, such a food contamination event, even if affecting only China, would not only enjoy saturation media coverage

[55] Jentzsch and Walravens, ‘Consuming the Nation’.
[56] JETRO, ‘Guidebook for Export to Japan (Food Articles) (2011)’, 35.
[57] Halliday et al., ‘An Epidemic of Hepatitis A’, 852.

but would also likely trigger a debate on policy changes regarding the safety of food imports.

The first mention of China in relation to matters of food safety in AERA, the weekly magazine published by *Asahi Shimbun,* is in 1989; when a nail was found in *matsutake* mushrooms. The Chinese origin of the troubled mushroom is mentioned, but not in a negative or problematic way. Chinese imports are mentioned in the context of the rapid increase of Japanese import volumes, alongside North- and South-Korean, Canadian, Moroccan, Mexican, and American foodstuffs.[58] It could thus be argued that in the absence of a widely held negative image of China in the 1990s, China-related food safety incidents were not only reported upon less quantitatively but also the qualitative nature of coverage was far less sensationalist than in the 2000s.

As the China threat theory began to take hold, the portrayal of China-related food incidents in the media and the narrative framework in which they developed changed. The particular framing of incidents is key as it influences agenda setting in the media as well as society, and actors that have the power or necessary relations, can do so to a specific end. The way a problem is defined, answers questions as to how the problem should be resolved, the means that should be chosen, and the ends that should be achieved. Hence, it is obvious that controlling the media's definition of the problem and the solution which the definition implies, is one tactic that turns the mass media into a potential playground for those actors that have specific economic, moral, political, or scientific stakes in gives issues. The media thus plays a pivotal role in setting goals, assigning responsibility, and assessing the efforts of governments in the case of a crisis.[59]

Consumers build their perception of food safety problems through media rather than direct personal experiences or government communication.[60] The rise of social media in recent years has led to an

[58] 'Kimi wa matsutake wo mō tabeta ka' [Have you already eaten *matsutake* mushrooms?], *AERA*, October 17, 1989, 62.

[59] Majone, *Evidence, Argument, and Persuasion in the Policy Process.*

[60] Wang et al., 'The Transformation of Trust', 19.

'explosion of information', which has definitely contributed to the development of this public perception, but also the more 'traditional' media play a vital role in framing these incidents. Media coverage has the power to activate a certain narrative framework by triggering pre-existing feelings or experiences among the public. According to the confirmation bias in information processing, people tend to select information that confirms their opinion or beliefs, fitting their existing prejudices, while they dismiss, ignore, or doubt information contrary to their original views.[61] When the audience complements information lacking in the story with their pre-existing feelings, knowledge, experience, or opinions, a fertile ground is created for rumours and myths.

O'Shea (2015) has already compared two strikingly similar food incidents, proving the quantitative difference in media coverage of a domestic scandal versus a China-related one. The abovementioned 2008 Chinese *gyōza* poisoning and the 2014 Japanese Aqli foods poisoning were both deliberate contaminations by disgruntled employees injecting poison into processed foods: The first, a Chinese company exporting to Japan, the second a Japanese company selling in Japan. Both companies were forced to recall their products in Japan, and twice police investigations brought the intentional motives of the poisonings to light. The variables for both cases match, only the source of the scandals being different. The Chinese case resulted in 10 Japanese consumers falling severely ill; while the Aqli case had a much wider scale of direct victims: some 2,800 Japanese reportedly suffered sickness.[62] However, the difference in media coverage with the 2008 *gyōza* case is striking: one month after the news broke, 'only' 438 articles covered the Japanese Aqli case in *Asahi* and *Yomiuri Shimbun*,[63] as compared to the 1,541 articles on the Chinese *gyōza* contamination. With his comparison, O'Shea showed that intentionality alone cannot explain the exacerbated

[61] Slovic, 'Perception of Risk', 280–285; Gardner, *Risk: The Science and Politics of Fear*.

[62] Interestingly, many of these 'reported' victims seemed to be phantom cases and a lot of the media coverage was dedicated to reporting on the negative result of medical checks on customers with supposed symptoms.

[63] Search using the *CrossAsia* database, using '*Akuri fūzu*' [Aqli Foods], December 30, 2013–January 31, 2014.

reaction to the 2008 *gyōza* incident, and he argued that both incidents developed in a different narrative framework.[64]

A content analysis of the media coverage of both cases further brought to light that the Chinese dumpling incident was portrayed as a case of terror, coming from China, a country devoid of food safety problems. Japan was designated as the victim, while the risk was generalized to all of China instead of one company. The solution presented to the Japanese consumer was to stick to Japanese domestic foods, as a guarantee for food safety. In contrast, the domestic Aqli case was treated as a 'mere' criminal act, implying that by capturing the villain, the problem was solved for the Japanese consumer. By dismissing the allegation of food terrorism in the Aqli case and other domestic precedents, the media coverage further implied that food terror as such was applicable only to threats coming from abroad. Most importantly maybe, is that after the dumpling incident, media coverage advocated stricter import measures on food coming from China. The domestic incident, by way of its portrayal, led neither to any debate on regulatory change nor to a critical appraisal of Japan's structural agricultural crisis.[65]

Incidents involving Chinese food products have received disproportionate media coverage and have become an issue of major concern to Japanese consumers. The Japanese media narrative, and indeed the conventional public wisdom, was – or largely is – that the consumption of Chinese food became an objectively higher risk in the 2000s than previously. As already mentioned, changes in the Japanese framework ensuring food safety, such as the revised Food Safety Basic Law, or the establishment of a Food Safety Commission, both in 2003, were a reaction to food scandals, but at the same time seemingly confirmed this widespread idea. As an opinion poll in 2003 showed, Japanese people turn towards newspapers as the most trustworthy source of information in the case of a food emergency. Given the fact that information provided by the government agencies and ministries was only the third choice, after television and radio news, this adds to the

[64] O'Shea, 'Dodgy Dumplings', 9–11, 14–15.

[65] Walravens, 'Appetite for the Domestic', unpublished manuscript.

power and impact of the newspapers as agenda-setters as well as investigative watchdogs.[66] In 2007, headlines were dominated by a story involving fake steamed buns (*nikuman*) sold by vendors in Beijing. According to the story, the buns were made of cardboard and pork flavouring. Although a domestic issue in China with no possible consequences for the Japanese consumer, the story was front-page news in Japan. A survey in the aftermath of the incident found 39% of the respondents stating that they would no longer buy Chinese food at all, and another 35% would refrain from buying certain Chinese foods.[67] Even after it transpired that the story was a hoax, this revelation was largely ignored in the newspapers, as it played into the developing Chinese food/bad – Japanese food/good dichotomy.[68]

The story is of course not as clear-cut as this, and a counter-tendency in the media, which gives a more nuanced view, can be observed as well around the 2010s. General criticism towards Chinese imports diminished, partly due to rising domestic prices.[69] Attention is being paid to the fact that many food incidents, such as products imported from China being labelled and sold as Japanese, partly carry Japanese responsibility.

> If the Japanese side is involved in the violation by a local subsidiary, we should not only blame the Chinese side. Of many of those Chinese food problems, which receive a lot of commotion recently, the Japanese side carries responsibility as well. (AERA, July 30, 2007)[70]

Another example in this context is the episode 'Can we trust them, Chinese foods?' (*Shinrai dekiru ka? Chūgoku shokuhin?*) on the NHK

[66] Food Safety Commission, 'Food Safety Monitor Survey'.

[67] Ōnami and Kawano, 'Chūgoku kirai no honshin'.

[68] Walravens, 'Japan Facing a Rising China', 133.

[69] Furthermore, it seems that also the series of domestic scandals and deliberate mislabelling are finally gaining ground within the Japanese public as well.

[70] Fujiu and Kimura, 'Chūgoku tondemo shokuhin'. In a follow-up article a month later, Japanese traders, beekeepers, and eel-importers testify on Japanese responsibility, driven mainly by the continuous demand for cheaper foods by Japanese customers, concerning the problems relating to Chinese foods. 'Chūgoku no "doku" wa nihonhatsu', *Aera*, August 6, 2007, 29.

blog *Kurashi * kaisetsu* (Life * explained) in 2014, in which the China expert Katō Harunobu puts the most recent food incident with Chinese chicken nuggets into perspective, stating among others also the statistically proven improvement in food safety records in order to debunk the perceived Chinese food threat.[71]

## China as the Scapegoat

In 2009, Nikkei BP, one of the major business publishers in Tokyo, dedicated a series of columns to *Fuanteina jidai ni ikinokori* or 'Surviving in an age of uncertainty'.[72] Since the late 1990s, the Japanese popular mindset seemed to have gradually become one of anxiety and worry. Social structural changes and events such as the Hanshin Earthquake (1995)[73] or the Sarin gas attack in the Tokyo Subway (1995)[74] shook the commonly accepted idea of Japan as a safe country. The food crisis could just be another threat, one of the many, which the Japanese public was facing and the government was not ready or able to deal with.[75] The abovementioned crises left the Japanese public with a sense of permanent potential danger, invisible threats that could just befall anyone. This is one of the defining characteristics of the hazards in Ulrich Beck's 'Risk Society', a society categorized by insecurities and risks that were 'induced and introduced by modernity itself'.[76]

As these risks are invisible, they only exist as 'knowledge' until they manifest themselves in actual harm. As shown above, this knowledge can thus be manipulated and influenced, which makes the constructed

[71] Kato, 'Shinrai dekiru ka?'.

[72] 'Fuanteina jidai ni ikinokori'.

[73] The Great Hanshin earthquake was a 6.9 magnitude earthquake which occurred on January 17, 1995 near Kobe, killing approximately 6,500 people.

[74] The Tokyo subway Sarin gas attack was an act of domestic terrorism in March 1995, when deadly sarin gas was released in five Tokyo subway stations in the government district. The Japanese cult movement Aum Shinrikyō was found guilty of the crime.

[75] Leheny, *Think Global, Fear Local,* 144. Suzuki and Ito, 'Acceptance of Beck's Theory in Japan', 119–121.

[76] Beck, *Risk Society,* 21.

concept of risk a fertile ground for 'social scapegoating'. Beck argued that modern 'risk society' has the tendency to become a 'scapegoat society', implying that it is not the hazards anymore, but 'those who point them out that provoke the general uneasiness'[77]. Rather than focusing on the inability or inaction of the authorities to deal with the crises, the focus is shifted towards the Other who arguably brought these threats upon the Self. As an example for this, I refer back to the poisoned dumpling incident in 2008. The Chinese employee who poisoned the *gyōza* did not know they were meant for export to Japan, nor did he have any anti-Japanese aim in mind with his deeds.[78] Nevertheless, from the beginning, anti-Japaneseness was seen as a potential motive in Japanese public opinion, and the public discourse turned towards China as the culprit. Furthermore, the failing Japanese food safety system – how could these poisoned foods have passed the rigid net of Japanese food safety regulations? – is not questioned. The socially constructed 'risky' Chinese foods, and China in general, in fact become a displaced fear (resulting in displaced action and perception) and at the same time function as a convenient 'lightning rod'[79] for the actual food crises Japan is facing and for the Japanese government's inaction to tackle them. It is precisely within this narrative framework that the development of the 'Chinese food threat' should be understood. The reputational damage of Chinese foods is a long-lasting secondary effect of a series of food-related incidents in Japan, triggered and reinforced by the dynamics of a scapegoat society.

Denoting supposedly erroneous stories affecting the sales figures of certain products or brands, the term *fuhyō higai* (harmful rumours) became widely dispersed in the aftermath of the Triple Disaster.[80] It is

[77] Ibid., 75.

[78] He wanted to draw the attention of the company's management to the poor working conditions in the factory, and in doing so he also affected Chinese customers. This part of the story, however, is largely ignored in the reporting in the Japanese mainstream media, leading to a lack of understanding about the Chinese side of the story.

[79] Beck, *Risk Society,* 75.

[80] See also Kimura in this volume. *Fuhyō higai* (harmful rumours) is a term that gained increasing resonance and acceptance in the aftermath of the Triple Disaster in 2011, when food products from the northeastern region of Japan were stigmatized for fear of radioactive contamination.

interesting to see however that it had already been used before in the context of Chinese foods. The victims of the harmful rumours were in this case Japanese importers, manufacturers, and restaurant-owners with Chinese business links.[81]

In response, industry started taking countermeasures, while acknowledging improved conditions on the Chinese side. As a report by the World Bank in 2004 shows, China enjoyed high esteem from Japanese importers for its efforts to tackle the problem of pesticide residues.[82] Importers and business alike appreciate the dedication on the Chinese side to improve the quality of (at least) their exported products,[83] and violation statistics show the effects of this determination (see above). Moreover, despite the fear of *fūhyō higai* and avoidance behaviour through public opinion, the ever increasing volumes of Chinese agri-food imports, the majority of which are used in processed foods and restaurants, do not reflect this damage.

## Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to challenge the conventional wisdom that the negative image of imported Chinese food in Japan is a result of the high objective risks associated with its consumption. The chapter showed that the number of Chinese food safety violations has not increased in the 2000s. In fact, they have decreased in proportion to their overall volume. A second explanation, that the negative image of Chinese food imports coincides with the development of consumer awareness in Japan, was also found to be problematic due to the fact that food safety awareness was shown to have been well established as early as the late 1980s and 1990s.

[81] 'Chūgoku-sei shokuhin, tsuzuku keikai shōhisha, kibishī me' [Chinese-made foods, vigilance continues. Consumers with a strict eye], *Asahi Shimbun*, March 27, 2010. 'Chūgoku-sei shokuhin, tabeta futari ga ken ni sōdan sūpā nado 81 shisetsu ni kaishū shōhin' [Two people who consumed Chinese foods consult the prefecture. 81 establishments like supermarkets recall products], *Yomiuri Shimbun*, February 1st, 2008.

[82] Jonker et al., 'Fod Safety', 4.

[83] UNIPAC (Trading house), Interview with author, December 4, 2015, Tokyo, Japan. Saito Satoshi, Food Watch Japan (Food business analyst, journalist), Interview with author, February 16, 2016, Tokyo, Japan.

While not entirely discounting these two explanations, the chapter presented an alternative account of the development of the negative image of Chinese food imports. A first and very important factor is the changing nature of Chinese food safety problems from food poisonings to poisoned foods. Whereas originally, food safety incidents in China were due to a lack of scientific knowledge and hygiene standards, more recent scandals are largely the result of negligence or deliberate adulteration in order to increase profits. This intentional aspect combined with Japanese culinary nationalism found its way into Japanese public opinion, adding moral dimensions to the Chinese food threat. Within the context of the ongoing deterioration of bilateral relations and the increasingly negative view of China in Japan, this factor is compounded by the diffusion of the 'China Threat' theory. Regarding food safety issues, this development is further considered in the context of the subsequent factor, Japan's increasing dependence on China as a source of food supply. A golden thread throughout these additional factors is the dichotomy of Japan versus the Other, mainly manifested in an emotional attachment to domestic food products and food culture, and directed against the threatening Other. The social construct of 'dangerous' food coming from 'risky' China further proves to be particularly well-suited to diverting attention away from Japan's domestic structural deficiencies in food safety and agricultural policy.

Despite the statistics showing the results of an effective Chinese determination to polish up their country brand, there thus seem to be other political and societal interests at stake that – consciously or not – counteract the improvement of the Chinese (food) reputation, while protecting domestic cases. Nevertheless, despite its bad reputation, ever-increasing import statistics show how the economic principle seems to prevail and Chinese foods still find their way onto the Japanese table.

Now that the negotiations for the Trans-Pacific Partnership have been concluded, the food safety discourse has gradually shifted towards 'threatening and dangerous' American foods.[84] The regional free trade agreement, which would open up the Japanese market to (mainly American) imports, might revive Takeuchi Naokazu's fear from the

[84] See also the articles by Reiher and O'Shea in this volume.

1970s, that 'the Americans' might come to 'occupy the stomachs of the Japanese'.[85] The USA seems to have partially taken over the role of China in the food safety discourse, although I argue that both Others are discussed on different levels. US goods are feared, as housewives and the public in general assume that the standards in the USA are lower than the Japanese ones.[86] Chinese goods, as demonstrated, are rather feared because of the potentially corruptive intentions of the producers. The future proves to be interesting, in terms of seeing how the USA and Japan, two countries with very different approaches to food safety policy, will find each other and how public perceptions (and hence, consumer trust) will weigh in the debate.

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[85] Takeuchi, *Nihon no shōhisha*, 104.

[86] Yamashita Kazuhito, interview with author, December 10, 2015, Tokyo, Japan.

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**Tine Walravens** has been a MEXT scholarship guest researcher at Keio University and is currently a Ph.D. candidate and research assistant at the Institute of Japanese Studies at Ghent University. Her doctoral research is on the politics of food and food safety in East Asia, in particular Japanese consumer trust and food risk. She has published on a variety of topics including food scandals and agri-food trade in Sino-Japanese relations, Japanese national identity and culinary nationalism, and the Japanese diaspora. Her most recent publication is a research article on the Japanese regulatory framework for food safety since the BSE scandal in Contemporary Japan, while she is working on a number of topics including alternative agri-food movements, bioterrorism and genetically modified foods.

# Domesticating the Japanese Culinary Field in Shanghai

James Farrer

## Culinary Politics and the Japanese Culinary Field in Shanghai

Three days after the March 11, 2011 earthquake triggered a nuclear meltdown in Fukushima, I flew to Shanghai with my family, partly for fieldwork and partly to escape the nuclear anxiety pervading Tokyo. The welcome in Shanghai was not altogether open-armed. Some Chinese acquaintances expressed concern about the radiation we might carry on our bodies and clothing. Worrying about nuclear fallout from Japan, others avoided letting their children play in the open air. Iodized salt sold out all over the city, as residents sought protection from radiation presumed to be drifting over the East China Sea.[1]

[1] The salt was supposed to provide iodine to protect from cesium poisoning, a spurious idea from a scientific perspective. Guardian, 'Chinese Panic-Buy Salt'.

J. Farrer (✉)
Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan
e-mail: j-farrer@sophia.ac.jp

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**Table 1** Number of Japanese restaurants in major cities according to popular food pages (March 2017)

| Resource | City | Total | Japanese | Italian | French | Chinese |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dianping | Shanghai | 163,348 | 3,182 | 417 | 127 | – |
| Yelp | New York | 48,631 | 1,609 | 3,435 | 428 | 4,455 |
| Yelp | London | 27,850 | 700 | 2,255 | 502 | 1,469 |
| Hungrygowhere | Singapore | 22,523 | 1,686 | 849 | 368 | 8,330 |

Instead of escaping nuclear anxiety in Tokyo, we found a nuclear panic in Shanghai, albeit a short lived one.

At the time I foresaw a mortal blow to Japanese culinary culture in Shanghai, and for a while it seemed so. Chinese consumers began avoiding Japanese food products, and the PRC banned all agricultural imports from 10 prefectures near the disaster area (in comparison, Taiwan and Hong Kong banned foods from only five prefectures). The PRC further required radiation-level certification from products from 37 prefectures, many more than other countries.[2] Japanese restaurants in Shanghai – the subject of this chapter – also suffered, some losing customers for months. But within half a year, the impact was negligible.[3] Instead, between 2010 and 2017 the number of Japanese eateries in Shanghai, as listed on the most popular food website, shot up from 1,434 to 3,182.[4] This total is considerably more than those found on the most popular restaurant review websites in New York, London, or Singapore (see Table 1). The focus of this chapter is on this culinary boom rather than the politics of the nuclear issue per se, but the story of the burgeoning Japanese culinary field must also include a consideration of how food safety – along with culinary politics and questions of culinary authenticity – has been framed by domestic narratives and narrators within China.[5]

Using the same international website, tripadvisor, as a basis for comparison, Shanghai had more entries for Japanese cuisine than

[2] Legco, ‘Food Control Measures’.

[3] Iwama, ‘Shanghai no nihonshoku bunka’, 11.

[4] JETRO, ‘Gaishoku sangyō no dōkō’, and dianping.com.

[5] Yan, ‘Food Safety and Social Risk’. See my discussion in the conclusion of this chapter.

**Table 2** Number of Japanese restaurants in major cities according to tripadvisor

| Resource | City | Total | Japanese | Italian | French | Chinese |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| tripadvisor | Shanghai | 15,944 | 1,359 | 411 | 174 | – |
| tripadvisor | New York | 9,064 | 505 | 1,439 | 266 | 399 |
| tripadvisor | London | 17,909 | 585 | 1,859 | 502 | 539 |
| tripadvisor | Singapore | 8,952 | 613 | 352 | 152 | 1,005 |

these cities in March 2017 (see Table 2). The extraordinary popularity of Japanese food in Shanghai requires some explanation.

The politics of food safety is one puzzle requiring explanation in this ongoing boom. Another is the relation of culinary politics to geopolitics. Sino-Japanese relations have been in a state of high tension since at least 2005, when Prime Minister Koizumi Junichirō's visit to the Yasukuni Shrine, right-wing revisions of history textbooks, and Japan's push to join the UN Security Council, prompted mass demonstrations all over China, including riots in Shanghai. Japanese restaurants became targets of rock-throwing mobs, and several were severely damaged by intruders.[6] Further demonstrations occurred in 2012. Following both of these large-scale demonstrations, business at Japanese restaurants fell, but recovered even more quickly than after the nuclear accident.[7] As will be discussed below, one key to understanding this recovery may be the changing domestic context, including the Chinese understandings of food risks, but also growing Chinese dominance of the Japanese culinary field.

A culinary field comprises a social field of tasters, things tasted, producers of tastes, and other actors with a stake in determining these tastes.[8] While a Japanese culinary field has indeed developed in China, it is one now dominated by Chinese actors, who increasingly determine the direction of its development. In other words, the argument here will focus on the indigenization of this culinary field, which partly insulates it from geopolitical frictions, serving to

[6] Farrer, 'Multiple Contexts of Protest'.

[7] Iwama, 'Shanghai no nihonshoku bunka', 11.

[8] Ibid., 4–7.

frame issues such as food safety within Chinese narratives. These narratives will be discussed more generally in the concluding discussion. The main body of this chapter traces the development of this transnational Japanese culinary field. It is based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Shanghai over the past five years, part of a larger project on international cuisine in that city.[9] I have interviewed 15 chefs or owners of Japanese restaurants, conducting in-depth interviews in either Japanese or Chinese. Further data include publications by other researchers, online reviews (in Chinese), and interviews of food critics, bloggers, ordinary consumers, and other culinary professionals. I use this data – though limited in many respects – to trace out the development of a Japanese culinary field in Shanghai.

## A Short History of Japanese Cuisine in Shanghai

A version of a Japanese culinary field appeared in Shanghai in the pre-war era, but its development followed a very different path than the current one. The 1880s ushered in a fashion for Japanese culture among urban Chinese, including patronizing Japanese teahouses and geishas in Shanghai. The former sold Western and Chinese dishes, but also some Japanese stacks.[10] This Japanese nightlife boom in Shanghai fell victim to the Sino-Japanese War of 1895, during which most of Shanghai's Japanese community returned to Japan.

After the war, Japanese restaurants reappeared, but they appealed largely to the growing Japanese population of the city rather than to local Chinese.[11] One of the earliest and most famous was Rokusantei, a large full-service restaurant opened in 1900 by Nagasaki native Shiraishi Rokusaburō on Tanggu Road near the site that would soon be occupied by the prestigious Japanese Club in the heart of Hongkou District. The restaurant boasted dozens of geisha from Nagasaki, and a large second-

[9] See Farrer, 'Shanghai's Western Restaurants'.

[10] Iwama, 'Shanghai no nihonshoku bunka', 1.

[11] Ibid., 2.

floor *tatami*-covered room with *tokonoma* (alcoves) featuring Japanese flower arrangements. The building still stands, though it is now used for public housing.[12] In 1912, Shiraishi opened a Japanese teahouse further out in Hongkou on Xijiangwan Road. This too became a landmark until it burned down in the Sino-Japanese war in 1937. It featured a lawn and garden known for its seasonal blossoms and was used by Japanese sports and garden club meetings. At least some Chinese also held banquets there.[13]

By the 1910s there were 50–60 Japanese restaurants in Shanghai. Twenty-four of them served alcohol and offered the companionship of geisha along with Japanese food.[14] Most of these restaurants were located in the Hongkou District with the largest concentration on a busy stretch of Zhapu Road directly north of the Suzhou River, the heart of Shanghai's unofficial 'Japantown.'[15] By the late 1930s Shanghai was home to over 25,000 Japanese, the largest population of foreign residents in the city, growing to 100,000 in the war years.[16]

Aside from politics, the greatest culinary obstacle to Chinese acquiring an interest in Japanese food in early twentieth century China, as in the USA, may have been the reluctance to eat raw foods.[17] Therefore, one of the most common Japanese dishes offered in Shanghai as in Hong Kong was *sukiyaki*, a cooked beef dish. This dish even made it onto the menus of some of the preeminent Western restaurants in Shanghai, including the German Restaurant Deda, which had *sukiyaki* on the menu in the 1930s. During wartime, even the famed Cathay Hotel offered *sukiyaki*, written in Japanese *katakana* on the otherwise English and French menu. For example, the menu from May 12, 1943

[12] Interior and exterior photos of the contemporary building can be found on the April 4, 2014 entry of the blog Mikyō: Shanghai jōhō http://d.hatena.ne.jp/ekobiiki888.

[13] Iwama, 'Shanghai no nihonshoku bunka', 2. Photo of the Chinese banqueters is at http://f.hatena.ne.jp/ekobiiki888/20160507005357. The location can be seen on 'Shanghai Historical Map:' http://historicalmap2010shanghai.com/%E5%85%AD%E4%B8%89%E4%BA%AD.

[14] Iwama, 'Shanghai no nihonshoku bunka', 2.

[15] Miyake, *Shanghai inshōki*. Zhapu Road would become one of the first restaurants streets to thrive in Shanghai in the 1980s, this time dominated by privately run Chinese restaurants.

[16] Fogel, 'Shanghai-Japan'.

[17] Nakano, 'Eating One's Way', 112.

offered *sukiyaki* alongside 'Veal Chop Vichy,' likely a nod to the collaborationist French regime situated in Vichy, France.[18]

Japanese foodways undoubtedly influenced China in more subtle ways than restaurant cuisine, including the advent of the flavouring monosodium glutamate (MSG) by the Ajinomoto Company and its rapid spread as *weijing* throughout China[19] and the wide popularity of the electric rice cooker introduced from Japan.[20] But there is little evidence for a broad popularity of Japanese cuisine in Mainland China before the 1990s.

Even in Hong Kong, where the first Japanese restaurant opened in a Japanese hotel in 1892, a popular interest in Japanese cuisine did not emerge until relatively recently.[21] As late as the 1960s, Hong Kong people would complain, 'There is nothing to eat in Japan'.[22] Starting in the 1960s Japanese department stores offered imported Japanese food products, but these were priced beyond the reach of most Chinese. The boom in Japanese restaurant cuisine in Hong Kong began when a Hong Kong middle class emerged in the 1980s, a decade in which Japanese pop culture influences were at a height in East Asia. Japanese supermarket chains introduced new food items, and restaurateurs began marketing cuisine such as *teppanyaki* tailored to the tastes of Chinese Hong Kongers.[23] Because of this head start in the 1980s, Hong Kongers were important customers in the first Japanese restaurants that opened in Shanghai in the following decade.

In Shanghai, as in other cities in Mainland China, Japanese food had disappeared from restaurant menus in the 1950s and 1960s, as foreign cuisines were condemned as bourgeois cultural affectations. And as China 'opened up' to foreign cultural influences again in the 1980s, most Chinese were too poor to indulge in restaurant foods except for formal occasions, usually reserved for traditional Chinese banquets. It was only

[18] Menus are in Tina Kanagaratham's private collection.
[19] Sand, 'A short history of MSG'.
[20] Nakano, 'Eating One's Way', 114.
[21] Iwama, 'Shanghai no nihonshoku bunka', 3.
[22] Nakano, 'Eating One's Way', 112.
[23] Ibid., 114–118.

in the 1990s that foreign-themed restaurants, including Japanese restaurants, began reappearing in significant numbers in the city.[24]

Unlike pre-1949 Western culinary culture in Shanghai, Japanese restaurant culture in pre-war and wartime Shanghai seems to have left little impression on the public urban consciousness. Most older Shanghainese would know the names of several of the famed Western restaurants of the 1930s and 1940s, the French Red House, the German Deda, or the Armenian bakery Laodachang, all of which continue on as state-owned 'famous brands' to this day.[25] In contrast, no one except historians and nearby residents likely remember the name of Shanghai's once famed Rokusantei. The reputation of Japanese food in Shanghai thus could be – or had to be – completely reinvented in the 1990s.

## The Creation of a Japanese Culinary Field in Contemporary Shanghai

Japanese cuisine restaurants returned to Shanghai and other cities first in the form of hotel restaurants.[26] In Shanghai, by far the most famous were the two restaurants at the Okura Garden Hotel that opened in 1990 on the premises of the former French Club of Shanghai, fronted by the club's elegant gardens. The Garden Hotel was the most elegant in Shanghai in the 1990s, and the associations of Japanese food with excellence and luxury were enhanced by its reappearance in Shanghai in such illustrious surroundings. The two Japanese restaurants at the Garden Hotel pioneered the import of the vast array of Japanese food products necessary for making high-quality Japanese cuisine, many of which were (no longer) known in Shanghai. The head chefs from Japan trained the first generations of Chinese chefs making Japanese food, and these went on to staff the Japanese restaurants that would appear later in

[24] The exception would be a few 'Western cuisine' restaurants? that reopened in the 1970s and 1980s as state-owned enterprises. See Farrer, 'Imported Culinary Heritage', 'Shanghai's Western Restaurants'.

[25] See Farrer, 'Imported Culinary Heritage'.

[26] Iwama, 'Shanghai no nihonshoku bunka', 3.

the decade. This was a pattern also noted in the Western hotels that opened around the same time, whose kitchens also became culinary training grounds.[27] The customers at Japanese restaurants in the 1990s were mostly business travellers from Japan and their Chinese business clients.[28]

Japanese expatriates were significant stakeholders in the early development of this culinary field, as investors, operators, and customers, as Shanghai became again the centre of Japanese business on the Mainland. In addition to the area around the Okura Garden Hotel, a larger Japanese restaurant scene developed in the Hongqiao area, the centre of Japanese business activity in Shanghai. These included many small venues that featured *nijikai* (afterparty) drinking sessions with Chinese hostesses, perhaps not so different from the geisha services decades earlier.

By the end of the 1990s, experienced restaurateurs recognized that the international restaurant market in Shanghai was ready to break out of the confines of the hotel restaurant scene. The first fine dining French restaurant, 'M on the Bund', appeared on the Bund riverfront in 1999.[29] One of the first fine dining Japanese restaurants to be opened outside a hotel was Shintori, founded by a Taiwanese entrepreneur surnamed Kuo at a location on Wulumuqi Road near Jianguo Road in 1997.[30] According to Shintori's manager Germaine Zhou, a Shanghai native who has worked at the restaurant since it opened, it was the wrong business model at the time. Chinese were not ready for such high-end dining, and the Japanese business market was never large enough to sustain more than a handful of such eateries. Moreover, the cuisine at Shintori was traditional *kaiseki* cuisine, whose elaborate and dainty presentation did not appeal to a wide range of patrons.

While Shintori struggled, Kuo achieved great success with a chic ultra-modern Chinese restaurant called 'People,' requiring a 'secret' code for

[27] Farrer, 'Shanghai's Western Restaurants', 117–118.

[28] Iwama, 'Shanghai no nihonshoku bunka', 7.

[29] Farrer, 'Shanghai's Western Restaurants', 118.

[30] Interview and fieldnotes April 6, 2016.

entrance. This restaurant showed that modern design, even gimmicks, would be key to success in the high end of Shanghai dining. The team decided to move the Japanese restaurant to a similarly modern venue on central Julu Road. A Japanese architect redesigned the new premises, originally a small theatre, as a radically open space, with a kitchen entirely open to view in the area that would have been the stage in the theatre. According to Zhou, this was the first truly 'transparent' restaurant kitchen in China. The narrow entrance off busy Julu Road is through a grove of bamboo that conveys a Zen-like austerity. When you reach the restaurant the massive doors open automatically and you are astonished to emerge into a cavernous industrial concrete and mirrored space. Mirrors give a quality of indeterminate dimensions that is more like a nightclub than a restaurant. The menu was also redesigned to feature larger portions and a fusion appeal, including salads. A *sushi* bar seats close to 20 people. Chinese regulars sit there, receiving recommendations from the chefs about the best items available that day. The non-Chinese regulars, mostly Europeans and American expatriates, usually sit at tables. Along the dining balcony overlooking the kitchen there are tables for two, usually couples on a date. In the back there are three separate spaces partly concealed by bamboo blinds behind which noisy groups of business associates eat.

According to Zhou, the majority of the customers in the boom years of the 2000s were Western expatriates, particularly Americans. This surprised even the management, who were aiming to attract young Shanghainese. However, in the years after China joined the World Trade Organization in 2001, it experienced a boom in foreign direct investment and an explosion in the expatriate population that did not taper off until after the financial crisis of 2008. The 2000s also coincided with a global boom in Japanese cuisine, meaning that expatriates were eager to explore a fashionable Japanese eatery such as Shintori. The cost of the average dinner according to Dianping.com is 475 yuan (approx. $72 USD) per person.

One of the reasons for the popularity of Japanese cuisine in Shanghai, as globally, is presentation, including the elaborate and particular use of small plates. When Shintori opened, the management found that buying pottery in Japan was too expensive, but when they visited the famed pottery making centre of Jingdezhen in China they found only traditional Chinese motifs, and nothing suitable for modern fine dining. So Kuo decided to start his own pottery kiln on the outskirts of Shanghai with a potter from the USA. Kuo thus pioneered a practice of making and designing tableware that the other restaurants now also employ. This importing of Japanese and international artistic sensibilities, along with the employment of Chinese chefs, Chinese management and the focus on expatriates from around the world, indicates both the simultaneous indigenization and transnationalization of the Japanese culinary field in Shanghai in the 2000s.

## The Diversification of the Japanese Culinary Field

The decade from 2005 to 2015 witnessed a proliferation of Japanese restaurants throughout the city. In May 2016, the webpage Dianping listed 3,464 Japanese restaurants in Shanghai. About 1,702 were listed as serving fine cuisine, including *kaiseki*, regional *nabe* (stew), Japanese beef, crab, *fugu* (blowfish), sashimi, tempura (fine style); 689 were serving instant Japanese mainstream food, including ramen, revolving sushi, tempura (fast-food style); and 321 served grilled Japanese food, including *teppanyaki* (food prepared on a hot steel plate) and *okonomiyaki* (savoury pancake).

This growth must be attributed to supply-side as well as demand-side factors. On the supply side, a JETRO report states that the boom was driven by three types of actors: individual Japanese entrepreneurs, Japanese companies, and individual Chinese entrepreneurs.[31] Since 2010, we can add Chinese restaurant companies; now the most dynamic actors.

Individual Japanese entrepreneurs were some of the earlier entrants into the market. A survey of 30 Japanese restaurants conducted in 2005 found that 13 had Japanese owners and 17 had Chinese owners. Half of the restaurants still served a clientele that was more than 50 per cent Japanese, whereas 9 of the 30 had a customer base of less than 30 per cent Japanese.[32]

[31] JETRO, 'Gaishoku sangyō no dōkō'.
[32] Asahi Research Center, 'Shanghai ryōriten chōsa hōkoku'.

Secondly, Japanese chains in the 2000s hastened the popularization and domestication of Japanese tastes in China,[33] introducing Japanese foodways to a far larger market segment than the small privately owned restaurants in the 1990s. Japanese chains active in Shanghai include Watami, Gatten Sushi, Ajisen Ramen, Genroku Sushi, Matsuko Japanese Restaurant, Saizeriya, Yoshinoya, Sukiya, and Matsuya.[34]

Thirdly, individual Chinese entrepreneurs have been instrumental in the spread of Japanese cuisine around the world,[35] so it should not be surprising that Chinese entrepreneurs have participated in the spread of Japanese cuisine within China. According to my interviewees, there are two broad pathways by which Chinese enter the Japanese restaurant business. One is by working in one of the restaurants managed by the Japanese in Shanghai. The other is by working in Japan. The latter pathway is particularly significant. Among the hundreds of thousands of Chinese who studied in Japan in the 1980s and 1990s the most popular type of part-time work was in the food and beverage sector.[36] This experience provided the know-how for returnees to open Japanese restaurants in China, even specializing in cuisines that would be rare outside Japan, from eel restaurants to horse-*sushi*.

Kamon, a popular *izakaya* (tavern)-style restaurant on Dagu Road, is an example of a small owner-operated restaurant.[37] The manager and part-owner surnamed Cai is a migrant from Zhejiang Province, whose job in a Japanese-owned restaurant in Shanghai was her first exposure to the cuisine. It also enabled her to establish a trusting relationship with her Japanese business partner, a co-owner of the restaurant. Kamon attracts Japanese customers from the nearby offices of NHK as well as families from the nearby luxury apartment complex. It is one of hundreds of *izakaya* in Shanghai, a genre that in China is treated more as a Japanese restaurant serving a variety of foods rather than

[33] Iwama, 'Shanghai no nihonshoku bunka', 5.
[34] JETRO, 'Gaishoku sangyō no dōkō'.
[35] Wank and Farrer, 'Chinese Immigrants and Japanese Cuisine'.
[36] Liu-Farrer, *Labor Migration from China*, 67.
[37] Interview and field notes, March 28, 2016.

being primarily a drinking place. According to Dianping the average expense per person at Kamon is 107 yuan (approx. $15 USD).

Most recently, Chinese chains have become the newest and now dominant force in this market. Most of them offer a one-price all-you-can-eat menu, ranging from 180 yuan (approx. $27 USD) to 380 yuan (approx. $58 USD) per person. One of the most successful is the high-end Wandao, with four branches in the city. The Wandao branch on Wulumuqi Road is an open two-floor space with a *sushi* bar that can seat 40 or 50 and table seating for 200. The 380 yuan per person price includes drinks and food. The day we visited Wandao, there were dozens of staff at work, and service was quick and very efficient. A very enthusiastic young waitress from a village in remote Yunnan Province served us. She returned frequently to our table, encouraging us to order more food, puzzled about how little we consumed compared to the typical customer.[38]

The seafood arrives in giant bowls of ice, including large raw shrimp and sea urchin, tuna, snapper, red conch, and scallops. A lobster shell with a tail portion filled with translucent white flesh comes embedded in the serving bowl whether you ask for it or not. Some of the items seemed partly frozen, but overall the quality was good. There were also hot dishes including stir-fried cow tongue and *sushi* topped with Chinese *foie gras*. The promise of unlimited quantities of luxurious ingredients at reasonable prices has made these chains hard to beat.

Beyond the competition from chains such as Wandao, two factors are challenging all restaurant owners in Shanghai: rising rents and rising wages. Zhou at Shintori pointed out that when the 10-year lease on their building on Julu Road was renewed in 2011 it was 4.5 times higher than the rent 10 years before. In the mid-2000s, the investors could make a 50 per cent return on their investment in the company, she said. In the next few years after the US financial crash it dropped to 10 or 20 per cent. In 2015, there was nearly no profit.

Wages have risen even faster, she said. Fifteen years ago you paid 400 yuan a month for a waitress, now it is 4,000 yuan. It has become difficult

[38] Field notes from April 4, 2016.

to find good staff. Fifteen years ago, it was easy to recruit Shanghainese staff from local tourism polytechnics. However, as Shanghai families become wealthier, they want their children to go to college, and the city has closed down most of the tourism polytechnics that trained food and beverage staff. Now restaurants such as Wandao recruit their staff from the far corners of China, even distant Yunnan, not only saving money, but insuring a labour supply.

The demand side is equally important in explaining the changing nature of the Japanese culinary field. First of all, Japanese expatriates were a mainstay of expansion through the early 2000s. According to the Japanese consulate there were 48,255 Japanese in Shanghai in 2010.[39] By the mid-2000s a second key customer base was the large number of non-Japanese expatriates residing in the city, numbering over 120,000 by 2010.[40] Finally, in the 2010s, the dominant market became the well-travelled and highly educated young Chinese urbanites, many of whom visited Japan on short shopping trips and vacations. As in Hong Kong a decade earlier, Japanese food has now become a form of urban fashion closely paired with tourism.[41]

With growing competition, restaurant owners are developing new markets for Japanese cuisine through novel restaurant concepts. One trendsetter is a small two-floor ramen shop on Shaanxi Road called 'The Ramen Shop', owned by a trio of Shanghai natives.[42] Ramen was popularized as a Japanese product in China by Japanese chains, despite having its ultimate origins in China.[43] The owners of 'The Ramen Shop' aimed to create a 'Shanghai-style' ramen shop that would distinguish itself from the corporate chains, but not be regarded as a Chinese noodle shop. Interestingly, the localization strategy they pursued was to create a more international style of interior with an English name and menu boards in English. The motif appeals to Western expatriates, but also fits

[39] JETRO, 'Gaishoku sangyō no dōkō'. In 2010, Beijing at the time had only 10,416 Japanese residents. Beijing had 819 Japanese restaurants compared to 1,434 in Shanghai.

[40] Farrer, 'Shanghai's Western Restaurants', 119.

[41] Nakano, 'Eating One's Way'.

[42] Interview and field notes April 7, 2016.

[43] Aoki, 'Domestication of Chinese Foodways'.

with the Western-oriented cosmopolitan identity of the owners from Shanghai. They also hired a Japanese cook named Yuki, who had been working in an *izakaya* in Hongqiao. He is a professional guitarist. Making *ramen* behind the glass-enclosed counter, he looks the part of a bohemian Tokyoite with long grey hair and a signature Tyrolean hat. According to Yuki, the style of *ramen* is still Japanese, but there are some personal touches including a generous mound of vegetable toppings. An average bill is 73 yuan (approx. $11 USD) according to Dianping, quite pricey for noodles in Shanghai.

Other eateries have created a niche at the lower end of the market. For example, Haru Sushi is a small hole-in-the wall take-out eatery located on the first floor of a residential block on Kongjiang Road in Yangpu District, outside the fashionable city centre.[44] The owner is a 20-something chain-smoking nightclub aficionado with long bleached hair who sees *sushi* as a way to earn a living in the competitive city. The tiny shop, with one table for eating in, sells *sushi* rolls to the neighbourhood's youths and families. Other mainstays are young nurses who take a box of *sushi* home after work, or order in to the hospital. His father delivers.

The young owner learned *sushi*-making by working a few days in a Japanese restaurant. 'Sushi is easy', he said. 'But to do business in Shanghai you need a trick, something different.' His trick is the sauces, he said. For the rolls, he uses copious mayonnaise, ketchup, and thousand-island dressing. 'People in Shanghai like sweet flavours', he pointed out. Many of the fillings are cooked (e.g. fried shrimp), but there is also raw salmon, the most popular fish in inexpensive Shanghai *sushi* shops. One-third of the customers are pupils from the nearby middle school, so he also sells French fries and fried shrimp to children. The average bill is 37 yuan (approx. $5.6 USD) according to Dianping, but an afternoon snack would be less than 10 yuan (approx. $1.5 USD).

This discussion shows that the culinary field in Shanghai is increasingly diverse and stratified. We can see a simultaneous indigenization and transnationalization of the Japanese culinary field. There are more local Chinese actors, including owners, chefs, and consumers, and at the

[44] Interview and field notes August 22, 2014.

same time more influences drawing not only upon Japanese inspirations but culinary design concepts from the USA and Europe. To conclude the ethnographic discussion, I will end with a longer description of one of these newest entrants to the culinary field, and use this example to talk about the importance of diners as not only consumers but active gatekeepers within the culinary field.

## Culinary Theatre for the WeChat Generation

Opening in February 2016, the restaurant Anthologia is a window onto developments in the Japanese culinary field in Shanghai.[45] This high-end eatery – whose Chinese name better translates as Global Gourmet Theatre (*Diqiu meishi juchang*) – is quite literally a culinary theatre, in which Japanese food culture is staged by a mixed Sino-Japanese staff for a largely Chinese audience. A set menu is priced at 1,080 yuan per person (approx. $166 USD). Though far beyond the means of the average urban worker, I use this example not to show a typical Japanese dining experience but as an ethnographic study of the changing practices of conspicuous consumption in urban dining, and the new online trendsetters who now shape the culinary field.

Since Anthologia only opened in February 2016, it is too early to know if it will be a success or failure. It is located in a new culinary themed shopping street called Happiness Lane between Xingfu Road and Fahuazheng Road in the western section of the Former French Concession, a district of low-rise heritage architecture that now (as it did a century ago) houses some of Shanghai's richest and most powerful residents.

Patrons enter the plain windowless façade through *noren*-curtains into a traditional Japanese entrance. Backed by a gorgeous Japanese flower arrangement, two Chinese hostesses in bright floral kimonos greet us at the door. There is a place in the foyer for removing footwear. Immediately we know we are in a Japanese space. Indeed, Shanghai's

[45] Interview and field notes April 2 and 3, 2016.

citizen food reviewers on Dianping frequently mention the requirement to remove shoes as a sign of culinary authenticity in Japanese restaurants. These busy online reviewers are now the new collective culinary gatekeepers in Shanghai. Not everyone posts reviews on Dianping, but nearly all diners share photos and comments with their circle of friends through the medium of WeChat, a dominant social media platform, used by 93 per cent of all cell phone users in urban China.[46] A few customers may be influential food writers, with thousands of followers on the blogging platform Weibo.

From the foyer, we then enter the main restaurant space, which can seat roughly 40 guests. Seats arranged in rows face inward towards a sunken stage surrounded by a five-metre wide bank of video screens that effectively fill the diners' field of vision. Customers start arriving at 18:30 and are seated as they would be in a theatre, each facing his or her own private table. Other than myself, all the customers are male-female couples, who look to be in their twenties or thirties. There is one group of two couples who arrived together, but the space does not function for group dining, because there are no private rooms, or even tables around which a group could converse. You can only hear the person beside you, but diners can still be constantly in communication with their friends outside the restaurant through WeChat.

An artfully folded paper menu on the table describes the eight-course *omakase* set-menu dinner that will follow.[47] Except for the drinks, there is no need to order. The menu is entirely in English and Chinese. Surprisingly, there is no Japanese, though most of the Chinese staff speaks Japanese, some well enough to fluently explain the elaborate dishes. All of the patrons this night, however, are Chinese, which is typical in the restaurant.

The projections on the screen have already begun, black and white scenes from a sake brewery in Japan accompanied by music. Sake and whiskey bottles are placed in the sunken stage in front of the screen, and

[46] BI Intelligence, 'WeChat Breaks 700 Million'.

[47] 'Omakase' means 'leave it up to the chef,' and such set-menus are now regarded by Shanghai diners as a sign of high quality dining.

people are ordering drinks, mostly sake (for sake and Japanese national identity see also Stegewerns' article in this volume). I order a Kirin dark beer, waiting for my host, the Shanghai-based restaurateur Hirano, a native of Tokyo, to arrive. This slideshow is subdued in comparison to what will come, but all the customers have begun taking out their phones and texting the exotic images to their chat group friends.

My Kirin arrives. Then Hirano arrives from a meeting. We then order sake, which is delivered in colourful irregular sake pitchers specially made for the restaurant at a suburban Shanghai kiln. The head chef emerges onstage in a kimono, with his face shockingly painted like a kabuki actor. He introduces himself as Bulizo, a stage name meaning roughly 'Master Yellowtail'. Bulizo makes a dramatic speech in Japanese about seasonal ingredients. Because it is spring, the theme of the meal is spring. The Chinese sous-chef, also in kimono, gives a dramatically rendered translation. As Bulizo speaks, the huge screens behind him bloom brightly with a kaleidoscope of flowers. The kimono-clad waitresses deliver a salad of raw red cockles flavoured with a hint of miso. We are then handed a mysterious paper package to shake and dump into our salad. It contains coloured lightly sweetened popcorn and flowers that beautifully match the images of flowers on the screen. Everyone immediately photographs the flowery popcorn and cockle salad, the face-painted kabuki chef, and the kaleidoscopic floral screen. It is a spectacular show of culinary Japonaiserie, a visual collage of stereotypical images and real culinary skill intended to shock, please, and entice, not only the diners, but their friends on WeChat.

Like many other visitors I am reminded of a famed French restaurant in Shanghai called Ultraviolet, which at 3,000–8,000 yuan per diner, makes Anthologia seem cheap. Ultraviolet, which is run by Shanghai expatriate chef Paul Pairet, often tops the rankings for all restaurants in Shanghai; it pioneered the idea of set-menu dining at nosebleed prices. The chief innovation of Ultraviolet is the projection of images on all four walls and even on the table, making dining a multisensory and multimedia event.[48] It has set a model for ambitious chefs in Shanghai,

[48] Farrer, 'Shanghai's Western Restaurants', 119.

and Anthologia is one of its several imitators. The images make for good photography. This is conspicuous consumption for the WeChat generation, for whom posting the meal is as important as eating it.

Hirano is not too pleased with the cockles, complaining they do not have enough miso flavour. I find them tender, fresh, and tasty. Like most of the seafood, they have been purchased from Nagasaki by a Sino-Japanese joint venture that flies in high-end seafood three times a week. Bulizo makes a pass by the tables. Bulizo only speaks in Japanese, but his stage sidekick, the Chinese sous-chef who has worked with Hirano for five years, translates the speech into Chinese. One of the waitresses also has nearly perfect Japanese, having lived in Japan for 13 years, returning to China after a divorce. The core staff members have been working with the owner Hirano at his three other restaurants in Shanghai.

Everyone is looking at the screens on their phones as they send out their photos on social media. The man closest to us, however, is trying to cuddle with his date while she texts, putting his arm around her waist and touching her in as many places as the situation would allow, reaching over to kiss her, when she lets him. This is meant as a dating place, Hirano said, a place designed to appeal to women, since they are the ones who decide where to eat. 'The idea is that this should be a place you go before having sex', he quipped. 'You watch this show, you eat some light and fresh food, you feel excited and happy, you pay a lot, and then you go back and have sex'. Not all couples are on a first date. Towards the end of the dinner another couple, we found out, was celebrating their wedding anniversary, and they were congratulated by the chef.

There are eight courses, each with its own performance and video presentation. The most memorable video presentation was a scene shot by Hirano himself of the restaurant staff out fishing off the coast of Nagasaki. We receive a piece of extremely tender and sweet *hiramasa* (goldstriped amberjack) as we observe the sous-chef fishing a similar fish out of the bay. The silvery fish writhes hugely on the screen. One is convinced that one is eating a genuine product, and the diners are collectively urged by the sous chef to travel to Nagasaki where the fish is caught. As we eat, Hirano reveals to me that he hopes to open a boutique hotel near this fishing area in Japan. The ideal is to appeal to the global boom in gastrotourism, and especially to the interests in travelling to Japan among well-off Shanghai urbanites like his customers. The collective longing to travel to exotic places and to experience fresh natural tastes is merged in the restaurant. We are next given a deep-fried beef *katsu* in a broth with an eggy foam dip. This is Australian *wagyu*, a common substitute in China, which bans Japanese beef imports, since the discovery of BSE ('mad cow disease') in Japan in the early 2000s. The accompanying video is more abstract and consists of steers engaged in combat in a bullfight in Japan. Except for Bulizo's explanations, most of the performance is in Chinese. An English speaker would be lost. A Japanese person would be bewildered by the cultural mishmash from bullfights to Buddha images. Hirano was not concerned.

The restaurant was not aimed at Japanese he said. 'There are no rich Japanese in Shanghai anymore, just young expatriates with their families,' Hirano said, a view echoed by other restaurateurs who pointed out that corporate budgets had been cut, with dinner expenses limited to 400 yuan (approx. USD $61) per person, now a mid-level restaurant budget in Shanghai. The effects of the change in the market are not limited to this restaurant. Hirano has been running a traditional *sushi* restaurant for seven years. When it opened, 70 per cent of the customers were Japanese, 25 per cent Europeans, and maybe 5 per cent Chinese. Now 80 per cent are Chinese, 10 per cent European, and 10 per cent Japanese.

At the same time, Hirano pointed out, there were no private rooms in this restaurant either. Private rooms were essential for the Chinese banquets often involving businessmen entertaining government officials, a type of 'face' giving banqueting, or *yingchou*. This type of 'face consumption' has been the focus of much writing on post-socialist Chinese entertainment culture.[49] Now, this market also may be in retreat. 'I don't want businessmen,' Hirano said. 'They smash their cigarettes into the floors and are demanding and rude to the staff.' With the anti-corruption drive in full force these days and economic growth rates falling, corporate and government banqueting is falling out of favour, at least publicly. The goal for restaurateurs such as Hirano is to attract rich second-generation young people spending private income and advertising the restaurant for free on social media.

[49] Yang, *Gifts, Favors, and Banquets*.

Hirano stays in the background and lets Bulizo be the public face of the restaurant. The idea of a star chef is relatively new in China, where chefs are generally treated as anonymous workers in the kitchen. But the globalization of the fine dining scene in Shanghai, pioneered by Michelin-starred chefs like Ultraviolet's Paul Pairet, has changed gastronomic culture. Anthologia takes the chef as performer to a new level, with Bulizo's painted face and bombastic tenor working as a simulacrum of Japanese *bushidō* culture. At one point in the show, he slices *sushi* for the audience using a monstrous knife Hirano specially purchased in Japan. He even produces a flower arrangement during one of the courses. Bulizo however told me that he is proud of his role as a performer in the culinary theatre. 'The first time the patrons gave a standing ovation, I nearly broke out in tears,' he said.

Bulizo, whose real surname is Terada, worked at several famous restaurants in Tokyo, including the Tokyo branch of the globally famous fusion restaurant Nobu, which has influenced the style of dishes he serves in Shanghai. His career goal had been to work in Nobu outside Japan, but the opportunity did not emerge. So he began applying online for jobs internationally, and he was thrilled when offered the opportunity to be the head chef at Hirano's third restaurant Kappo Yu, located in central Shanghai. He came to Shanghai with his wife, who was a pastry chef at Nobu.

Although Bulizo is the star, the concept for the restaurant is Hirano's. Only 40 years old, he is a graduate of Musashino Art University, where he studied design. Side-stepping into the food and beverage industry, he was sent to China to manage the restaurant investment of a large Japanese company. When the parent company failed during the 2008 financial crisis, he acquired the Shanghai business for himself. This was not a smooth transition. The first concept was a high-end Japanese family style restaurant in a historic villa on Donghu Road. 'It completely failed. This was a bad time for me. My business failed, and my wife left me.' He saved the business by converting the location into trendy Spanish tapas bistro managed by a charismatic Barcelona native, who goes by the name of 'Willy.'[50] The experience taught him about the type of innovative,

[50] The two are still partners in the Mediterranean restaurant called Elefante. See Farrer, 'Shanghai's Western Restaurants'.

design-focused, bold style of marketing necessary to succeed in Shanghai. 'You have to be willing to do something outrageous to succeed in China,' Hirano said. 'This is what the Chinese expect. It has to be an interesting experience. The food must be good, but it doesn't need to be spectacular.' The concept of a theatre-style restaurant does not require a large staff. There is only one sitting, and all the dishes are served at the same time. A small kitchen can manage the production. Hirano has made his career in Shanghai with four restaurants, and he is now married to a Shanghai native with whom he has three daughters. But he wants to move away. The air is bad, he complains, and he's been there long enough. He is devoting himself to the boutique hotel project. The focus would be on gastrotourism and ecotourism. So he would open up a place in Nagasaki and people would have a chance to fish and also eat the fish. Even in his 'leaving Shanghai plan', he is counting upon the power of the increasingly globalized Chinese consumer.

The story of Hirano and Anthologia illustrates the increase in Chinese urban spending power and the dominance of well-off young Chinese as a consumer group. With the rise of an affluent middle and upper class, we see great changes in the dominant style of consumption, from *yingchou*-style business consumption focused on building connections, to personal consumption among the young and wealthy. Both are forms of conspicuous consumption, but with different 'audiences' and purposes. For the latter, the purpose is to show off a glamorous lifestyle to friends on social media. It is thus essential to create a restaurant that is visually as well as gastronomically exciting. This also means that the chief arbiters of taste and authenticity in the Japanese culinary field are now Chinese consumers on social media.

## A Domesticated Japanese Culinary Field and Domestic Culinary Politics

Amazingly for myself, who first lived in Shanghai 25 years ago, the city has now emerged as a centre of fine Japanese cuisine. Equally amazingly, the dynamic agents pushing this change are no longer Japanese corporations and expatriates but Chinese companies and consumers with a deep, and seemingly abiding interest, in Japanese cuisine. The boom in Chinese tourism to Japan bolsters the trend as luxury tourists collect 'Michelin Stars' at famous Tokyo and Kyoto restaurants and bring these expectations back to Shanghai. Because wealthy Shanghainese favour Japan as a tourist destination, they seem more willing to overlook political tensions when choosing to eat Japanese cuisine. After the 2012 national demonstrations, the return to normality was quicker in Shanghai than other Chinese cities, with business reviving within three months or even a few days.[51]

The expansion of this indigenized and transnational culinary field is remarkable given the setbacks of two large anti-Japanese demonstrations in Shanghai – in 2005 and 2012 – and the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster, which made Chinese customers nervous about Japanese food products. The development of a domestic Japanese culinary field of owner and suppliers partly explains how these crises were weathered. Local Chinese restaurateurs are able to strategically dissociate themselves from Japan when crises occur, even posting signs that claim Chinese ownership.

In the politics of food safety, domestic narratives of food-based dangers also undoubtedly shape the framing of the radiation issue. Chinese have profound anxieties about food safety, but these anxieties have centred less on the dangers of modern technology (nuclear power, GMO products, etc.), than on unscrupulous small-scale food producers. Whereas many in the West see faceless corporations as the chief culprits, in Shanghai the villains in food safety scandals are more often seen as inland producers and migrant vendors selling adulterated or even poisonous food in the city. This would include the infamous 'gutter oil' recycled from food waste and used to cook dishes, and often associated with foods produced by rural-to-urban migrants.[52] Imported products, including Japanese products, have been considered more reliable. Because nuclear disaster did not conform to these elitist urban narratives of food contamination from rural and migrant sources, it may have been

[51] Iwama, 'Shanghai no nihonshoku bunka', 11.

[52] Yan, 'Food Safety and Social Risk'. I have reported on these narratives in the 'Chinese Culinary Dreams' Workshop on Happiness in China, Georgetown University, Washington DC, October 10–12, 2014.

more easily forgotten than in contexts like Europe, where food fears are often expressed in narratives of technology run amok.

Indigenization of the culinary field also complicates the politics of culinary authenticity. The localization of Japanese food at the lower end of the market in Shanghai has some Japanese observers worried. In 2015, the Japanese internet food portal Gurunabi established a 'Japanese Cuisine Working Group' in Shanghai. This committee aims to set standards for Japanese restaurants in China and provide educational and cultural support for spreading authentic Japanese food and food culture in China and deepening communication on food between Japan and China.[53] This is an extension of the state-centred culinary politics discussed by Stephanie Assmann in her contribution to this volume.

Based on my observations, such efforts miss the point that Chinese consumers are already rigorously enforcing standards of culinary authenticity through their online commentaries. The biggest influence may be the collective activities of ordinary diners commenting through mainstream food websites, especially Dianping. Dianping has created a list of the 150 best Japanese restaurants according to taste, environment and service. This list is often updated according to the recently received scores. Reading through the comments, it seems young Chinese are the major participants. In the comments, taste is valued most highly by customers. Environment and service are also valued, especially for high-end venues.[54]

In evaluating Japanese cuisine on Dianping, the freshness of seafood is the most prized feature in the comments, with freshly caught seafood valued most highly. Defrosted seafood (though actually quite common) is regarded as inauthentic Japanese food. The arrangement of food on the plate is also important, with the balance of colours mattering. The thickness of the cut (*atsugiri*) is a frequently mentioned and positively evaluated word borrowed from Japanese. Salmon is the fish that most frequently receives comments. It seems that for Shanghai diners, salmon is the familiar measuring stick of the quality of seafood in the restaurant.

[53] Gurunabi, 'Nihon no inshokuten'.

[54] The analysis is based on a reading of the comments on this list of restaurants. http://www.dianping.com/shoplist/search/1_10_113_. JETRO mentions Dianping as the market maker in China (JETRO, Gaishoku sangyō no dōkō).

In terms of service, the timing of changing used plates for clean ones and delivery of dishes to the table is closely evaluated. All of these top-ranking restaurants are seen to offer Japanese-standard service. Waitresses are expected to serve dishes with the right timing and in the right order. The ability to solve problems or answer questions during meals is also highly valued in these Dianping comments. Since Japanese seafood varieties are not well known by Chinese customers, consumers expect an explanation of each item by waiters or chefs. Consumers note attention to detail such as refilling water and providing clean towels. In terms of environment, wooden interior decoration, independent rooms, and tatami rooms for which shoes must be removed are seen as symbolic of an authentic Japanese restaurant. Cheaper and less carefully prepared food products are also sold in Japanese eateries in Shanghai, but the sophisticated reviewers are aware of the difference. Users on Dianping roundly criticize the offerings at places like Haru Sushi, though the middle school regulars there probably do not care.

In short, the new gatekeepers of Japanese culinary authenticity in Shanghai are now Chinese consumers. Rather than Chinese consumers pushing Japanese restaurant culture towards a hybridized mish-mash of confused and lower standards, the web portals have become a place where consumers police culinary boundaries, and act as more effective agents of culinary authentification than would be possible by Japanese government and corporate groups alone. The common anthropological story of culinary glocalization may have to be revised to account for the ways in which information and also culinary authority are now dispersed in such glocalized culinary fields. Shanghai is now itself one of the major centres of Japanese culinary culture in Asia, and Chinese producers, and consumer/reviewers are now agents in a transnational and localized Japanese culinary field.

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**James Farrer** is a professor of Sociology and Director of the Graduate Program in Global Studies at Sophia University. His research focuses on urban sociology, including studies of foodways, sexuality and expatriate communities.

# Ḥalāl Foods Discourse and Constructing Muslim Identities in Japan

Junichi Ono

## Introduction

'What should you do according to Islam, if you come across an alien?'[1] Nakata Kō (1960–), a noted and controversial scholar of Islamic law,[2] answered: 'You should judge whether it is edible or inedible.'[3] Nakata's way of thinking is clearly based on Islamic law, as the usage of word

[1] Tanaka, 'Kaisetsu', 223.

[2] Nakata Kō grew up and was educated as a non-Muslim Japanese. While studying Islamic studies, he converted to Islam. In his Ph.D. thesis he focused on Islamic theology (kalām) and law (sharīʿa). He received licences of Qurʾān interpretation (tafsīr) and the Ḥanafī school (Sunnī Islamic school of jurisprudence). Thus, he is one of the ʿulamāʾ, specialists in Islamic jurisprudence. He published the first Japanese comprehensive study on the Ḥanbalī school of jurisprudence and the latest Japanese translation of the Qurʾān. At the moment, he is the most influential, representative, but also controversial figure among native Japanese Muslims, attracting significant attention from the general public and media. Nakata is the only intellectual in Japan discussing the ḥalāl food topic from the perspective of a Japanese Muslim trained in Islamic law.

[3] Tanaka, 'Kaisetsu', 223.

J. Ono (✉)
Tōyō University, Tokyo, Japan
e-mail: onoju@mac.com

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'judge' already suggests, and this view reflects the Islamic perception of the world. Moreover, it can be assumed that for Nakata 'being Islamic' is founded in law, referring to the recognition of the world or the relation between Self and Other in the world. Lately, the word 'ḥalāl', which means 'legally allowed' (Qurʾān 5:3;90, 16:114),[4] seems to be omnipresent in the national and international public discourse as the ample media coverage on this topic shows.[5] The matter of ḥalāl food is without doubt connected to the issue of modernity and globalization: food products were traditionally produced and sold inside the Muslim community or world (al-umma al-islāmīya; dār al-islām), and accordingly, there was no necessity to ask whether food was ḥalāl or not. Muslims could buy ḥalāl foods in Jewish or Christian shops. However, Muslim minorities living in countries where ḥalāl food is not part of tradition and where shop owners would neither know or even consider offering and clearly label ḥalāl food, as in Japan, have to judge themselves whether or not food is ḥalāl.

It is only in the past decade that the ḥalāl market in Japan has evolved to target Muslim travellers, Muslim business people, workers, and students coming to Japan for short stays,[6] as well as Muslims living in Japan (whether native Japanese or not).[7] Although already in the 1980s the number of foreign Muslim workers steadily increased in Japan, the ḥalāl matter never came up among non-Muslim Japanese. Certainly, one reason

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[4] I use the following text from the Qurʾān and translations: *The Koran Interpreted*, translated by Arberry (1955); *The Qur'an: English Translation and Parallel Arabic Text,* translated by Abdel Haleem (2004). *The Qur'an: Interpreted in Japanese,* translated by Nakata and et al. (2011).

[5] Cf. http://www.japantimes.co.jp/tag/halal-food/.

[6] According to the statistic of the Immigration Bureau, temporary visitors from Malaysia were less than 80,000 in 1985, with over 40,000 from Indonesia, and over 20,000 from Iran. In 2012, almost 120,000 temporary visitors came from Malaysia, and over 100,000 from Indonesia. Cf. Komura, *Nihon to isurāmu*, 71.

[7] In the first half of the 1980s there were 5,000–6,000 foreign Muslim residents in Japan (0.004% of the total population), rising to 100,000 foreign Muslim residents since the 1990s. In addition, there are around 10,000 Japanese Muslims (Japanese born, and converted to Islam including spouses of foreign Muslims). According to the latest population statistics, there were ca. 110,000 Muslims in Japan (0.08% of the total population) in 2014. Cf. Tanada, *Nihon no mosuku*, 1–3. According to the statistics for 2012 from the Immigration Bureau, ca. 33,000 foreign residents came from Indonesia, ca. 12,000 from Malaysia, over 10,000 from Pakistan, and ca. 8,000 from Bangladesh. Cf. Komura, *Nihon to isurāmu*, 72.

for the lack of attention is the small number of ethnic Japanese Muslims at that time,[8] but the main reason can be found in the commercialization of ḥalāl food within the context of a neoliberal global economy.

Regarding ḥalāl foods, two dimensions are deeply connected, namely the civilization-discourse (framework of Islamic law) and individual daily life; Muslim identity is constructed within this frame. In Japan, ethnic Japanese Muslims not only eat 'traditional Arabian foods',[9] but rather consume 'Japanese foods', while being conscious of ḥalāl. In this chapter, I will discuss how Japanese Muslims consciously create their Muslim identity, and how they define their Muslim-ness in regard to food.

In general, one would not expect to encounter extraterrestrial aliens, but encountering terrestrial Others is – in our globalized world – a daily occurrence. One could argue that life itself revolves around constantly encountering and experiencing someone or something Other and different and it is this very experience that makes us aware of the 'Self'. The experience of the Other(s) consciously or unconsciously conceptually forms the 'self-foundation' and the conceptualization of the 'Self'. The above-mentioned quote by the Japanese Muslim thinker Nakata suggests that the problem of food is closely related to self-identification in the sense of 'knowledge or understanding of the world', or to the primordial level of the articulation of human experience in which Self and Other appear.

I will examine Nakata's view as a case in point for the Muslim interpretation of food in Japan, as he represents the Muslim Japanese or Islamic Japanese intellectuals. Moreover, I will look at the issue of Muslim identity in Japan while referring to Nakata's concept of 'embodiment (of ideals)' (*shintaika*) as the core of identity.

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[8] At the end of the 1960s there were ca. 3,500 Muslims in Japan: ca. 1,500 of them were foreign Muslim residents, ca. 2,000 Japanese converted to Islam and ca. 100 of these converted Muslims were spouses of the aforementioned foreign Muslim residents. Between the 1980s and 2010, it is estimated that there were ca. 2,000 Japanese Muslims who had converted to Islam not because of marriage but belief. Cf. Tanada, *Nihon no mosuku*, 11–16.

[9] As we see in the statistics mentioned in the above footnotes, the majority of the current foreign Muslim residents in Japan come from Southeast Asia and South Asia. Since the publication of Edward Said's Orientalism (especially in postcolonial studies), the typical confusion between Muslims and Arabs, or the stereotypical image of Muslims as Arab has been addressed. Recently, the French philosopher E. Balibar described the Muslim stereotype as Arab as a new anti-Semitism based on Said. Cf. Balibar, 'Un nouvel antisémitisme?', 89–96.

## Islam in Japan

In 1872, Fukuchi Gen'ichirō (1841–1906),[10] who was staying in Paris as a member of the Iwakura Mission (1871–1873), was sent to Istanbul in order to make an inspection of the judicial systems in the Ottoman Empire and Egypt.[11] In 1890, the first cultural envoy of the Ottoman Empire came to Yokohama with a letter from the Ottoman Emperor. On this occasion, Noda Shōtarō (1868–1904) was sent as the first Japanese journalist to Istanbul.[12] In June 1891, he converted to Islam and (arguably) became the first Japanese Muslim.[13] During the Russian Revolution in 1917, hundreds of Tatars or Turkic people from Central Asia, especially areas around Lake Baikal escaped to Japan.[14] Japanese Islam has thus always had, from the very beginning, a close connection with Turkic Islam, rather than Arab Islam. One reason for the orientation towards the Asian Continent is that Japanese imperialism was aiming at expanding its sphere of influence and power to the Asian Continent, while Muslims were cooperating with Japan in order to counter Russian expansion.[15] Due to the number of Muslim refugees it was only a question of time until the first mosque in Japan was built; generally, mosques not only serve as a religious space, but also as a meeting and an educational space for a given

[10] Cf. Iokibe, 'Fukuchi Gen'ichirō kenkyū josetsu', 43–88.

[11] Miura, 'Isurāmu tono deai', 7. The mission was named after its chief envoy, Iwakura Tomomi (1825–1883) and consisted of over 100 people including male and female students and high-ranking government officials in order to correct unfair treaties and investigate modernization in the countries with which Japan had made unfair treaties before the Meiji Restoration.

[12] Cf. Misawa, 'The first Japanese who resided in the Ottoman', 51–69. Misawa and Akçadağ, 'The first Japanese', 85–109.

[13] Misawa, '1890–1993nen ni okeru "*Jijishinpō*"', 129.

[14] Tanada, *Nihon no mosuku*, 8–10.

[15] Japan focused on Turkic Tatar Muslims in Central Asia (mainly in Russia but partly in China) to counter Russia's southward expansion at that time (as for the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, 1902). Turks in Russia such as Volga Tatars, Bashkirs and others sought increased autonomy. From the 1930s onwards, organizations related to the Japanese Government propagated information about Islam in order to justify Japan's expansion and raise funds for it. Cf. Komura, *Nihon to isurāmu*, 46–50. Additionally, Japan needed to cooperate with the Uyghurs in China and the Hui people in order to expand into China. Cf. Komatsu *Iburahimu*, 71. See also Esenbel et al. (eds.). *The Rising Sun*, 2003; Esenbel, 'Japan's global claim to Asia and the World of Islam', 1140–1170; Kobayashi, 'Isurāmu seisaku to senryōchi shihai', 63–94; Kurasawa, 'Daitōa sensō ki', 233–285.

community. It is said that the first mosque in Japan was built by Tatars in Nagoya in 1931,[16] although this is contested by a document named *The Nagoya Muslim Mosque* stating that the Nagoya Muslim Mosque was built in 1936.[17] In 1935, Turkic, Tatar, and Indian Muslims living in Kobe built the Kobe Muslim Mosque, which must therefore be the first and one that exists to the present day.[18] However, Muslim intellectuals had already visited Japan earlier: Abdürreşid İbrahim (1857–1944), a Tartar intellectual, started his 'round-the-world travel' in September 1908 and arrived in Wakasa, Japan, in February 1909.[19] He already departed from Japan in June 1909, but was invited back in 1933, becoming in his old age the first Imam in Japan, in the Tokyo Camii (Tōkyō Jāmī; Tokyo Mosque), which was built in 1938 by Russian exile Tatars.[20] The former organization of this mosque goes back to the Tokyo Muslim Association (Tōkyō Kaikyōto Dan), which was founded by the Bashkir intellectual, Muhammed-Gabdulkhay Kurbangaliev (1889–1972) in 1924.[21] Today, this mosque belongs to the Embassy of the Republic of Turkey in Japan. According to a census from 2014, there are currently ca. 80 mosques in Japan.[22] By 2014, there were around 100,000 Muslims living in Japan, with only 10% native Japanese Muslims who were born in Japan as Japanese. Today, very few Japanese are born Muslim.[23]

[16] Komura, *Nihon isurāmu shi*, 299.

[17] On the foundations of the first Nagoya mosque, see *The Nagoya Muslim Mosque*, 12. The first Nagoya mosque was destroyed during the American air raids in 1945 and never reconstructed. Since 1998, there has been a second Nagoya mosque built by *Nagoya Isuramu Kyōkai*, which is a different organization than the Tatars, who had built the former one. Cf. Tanada, *Nihon no mosuku*, 24.

[18] Cf. Tanada, *Nihon no mosuku*, 24.

[19] He visited places all over Japan and met important politicians such as Ōkuma Shigenobu (1838–1922) and Itō Hirobumi (1841–1909) in his summerhouse shortly before his assassination in Harbin. Cf. Komatsu, *Iburahimu*, 50–54. İbrahim published his travel report: İbrahim, *Âlem-i İslâm*, 1328 [i.e. 1911]; Ibid., *Un Tatar au Japon*, 2004. On Abdürreşid İbrahim, see also Komatsu, 'Muslim intellectuals', 273–288; Sakamoto, 'Abudyurureshito Iburahimu', 1–81; Ibid., 'Yamaoka Mitsutarō', 157–217.

[20] Sakamoto, 'Tōkyō mosuku enkakushi', 121–128.

[21] Cf. Matsunaga, Akira. 'Tōkyō Kaikyō Dan', 179–232.

[22] Tanada, *Nihon no mosuku*, 36–37.

[23] Ibid., 11–16.

## Ḥalāl/Ḥarām: The Fundamental Distinctive Features

According to Nakata, the Muslim way of thinking is jurisprudential in essence.[24] As mentioned earlier, he expressed the most jurisprudentially ideal and most Muslim-like pattern of thinking and action as follows: if an alien appears, one should judge, whether it is edible or inedible.[25] If it (or she or he) is not edible but is surely a living being given the capacity for autonomous thinking, one should introduce it (or her or him) to the Qurʾān to teach, as the Qurʾān will not have been revealed to it (or her or him), because it is revealed only on earth.[26]

Nakata's view demonstrates the basis for judgement, classification, distinction, or cognition during the first moments of an encounter with the Other. The discrimination between 'edible or inedible' basically stems from the question of whether it is legally permitted to eat or not eat something. Tanaka Machi (1960–) labels such an attitude as 'looking at things through the Islamic framework' (*isurāmteki na wakugumi de mono wo miru*) and introduces the following episode: a Muslim father shows his son an illustrated encyclopaedia of animals and explains which animal is 'ḥalāl' (legally allowed to eat) and which is 'ḥarām' (legally not allowed to eat).[27] The distinction between 'ḥalāl' and 'ḥarām' is thus fundamental to the articulation of experienced surroundings, worlds, and objects or to the arrangement and organizing system and method.

Needless to say, food and drink are central to survival. This means the perspective or articulation of food is one of the most important factors for human life. From a Muslim perspective, the judgement of 'edible/inedible' is the fundamental distinctive criterion for recognizing the world. It lies at the basis of the relationship between the Self and the world and, above all, is legally defined within Islam. In other words, the most

[24] Nakata, *Isurām*, 32–67; idem, *Isurāmu hō*, 2015.

[25] Tanaka, 'Kaisetsu', 223.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid., 224. These Arabic terms 'ḥalāl' (permissible) and 'ḥarām' (impermissible) are not only used in relation to food, but also to all things, events and actions of daily life.

essential aspect for sustaining human life is incorporated within the ideal of consuming those specified animals which are accepted by law or which may be slaughtered while usually quoting Qurʾānic expressions, in order to sanctify these animals.[28] In this process of judging food, a culinary ideal is realized, based on the perception of the sacredness of food, which creates a Muslim identity.

When buying (ḥalāl) foods in a (ḥalāl) shop in Muslim areas, a Muslim does not have to consider whether or not it is ḥalāl. In these places, Muslims do not need to be conscious of ḥalāl-ness. In non-Muslim areas, however, Muslims should be aware of the ḥalāl-ness of their acts and the products they indulge in. Nakata discusses this matter as follows: on each occasion, one should determine what is ḥalāl at one's own risk and on one's own account.[29] If one does not make an independent decision, one gives away the chance to connect with God. Following ḥalāl certification, authorized by a state or a particular organization, is equal to shifting one's responsibility for being a Muslim and living according to Islamic law to someone else, as one unconsciously accepts the jurisprudential theological authority of such an organization.[30]

> Muslim jurists can express their own opinions, but these are nothing but suggestions for reference, which have no compelling force. Muslims [individually] read the Qurʾān and the Ḥadīth, for they should finally decide and take the responsibility for their decision.[31]

The 'Ḥadīth' mentioned in this quote literally translates as 'report' or 'narrative', and is the collection of what the Prophet Muḥammad said as well as the reports of his actions. Besides the Qurʾān, the Ḥadīth is without

[28] I wish to express my thanks to Dr. Nurullah Sat (Ankara University) for his suggestions.

[29] The relation to ḥalāl/ḥarām in Muslim self-awareness is a matter of eschatology. In the context of ḥalāl foods it is the fear of God. That is the core of Muslim identity, as will be discussed below. Cf. Nakata, *Isurām*, 48.

[30] See Nakata, *Watashi wa naze*, 62–66; idem. *Isurām*, 63–64.

[31] Idem, *Watashi wa naze*, 64.

question the second most important source of all judicial judgements for Muslims.[32] Nakata concisely explains the following fact: the interpretation of the Qurʾān and the Ḥadīth as undertaken by each Muslim is the only criterion for himself or his actions and the interpretation or opinions published by jurists have no essential authority in this case (Muslims can refer to them, but not necessarily). This is why each Muslim has to read the Qurʾān and the Ḥadīth individually so as to take action. Nakata claims that judicial judgements are no more than reference information that aids thought and independent decision-making:

> There is perhaps an image that Islam is bound to rules. However, that is not correct. Primarily, it is Islamic to make a decision based on one's own judgement on the authority of the Qurʾān without resort to any other authority. Therefore, even if you eat pork, you are not accountable, if you have no idea that you have been eating pork.[33]

In Nakata's opinion, when one cannot avoid ḥarām foods, because one was not informed, one cannot be held accountable for one's own actions.[34] One has to think jurisprudentially (i.e. in the legally founded systematic way) and by oneself. It seems that Nakata's judicial position is typical for the Ḥanafīya, which attaches much importance to 'individual reasoning' (Arabic: ra'y) and explains why Nakata calls Islam 'jurisprudential thinking'.[35] He is, of course, aware that the concept of law and jurisprudence mentioned differs from modern law.[36] However, as non-Muslim scholars also claim, the articulation of ḥalāl/ḥarām is not fixed, but depends on the situation. For example, mainly based on Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī (1926–), Yagi Kumiko (1958–) argues as follows: if one has not eaten nor drunk anything for days on end, one fears for one's life, and if there is only pork or beer, one has no choice other than to accept pork or beer, then it could be allowed (of course, this decision depends

[32] Idem, *Isurām*, 42–45.
[33] Idem, *Watashi wa naze*, 65.
[34] Idem, *Isurām*, 34–36.
[35] Idem, *Isurām*, 32–34.
[36] Idem, *Isurām*, 34–36.

on the person facing such a situation).[37] This means that the act of eating pork is consistently forbidden, only under circumstances in which a person has alternatives.[38] Surely, this is an extreme and unrealistic example. But the point she wants to make is that the articulation of ḥalāl/ḥarām depends on the person and the situation and it cannot be decided nor standardized uniformly and universally, since Islamic law only provides the fundamental context-sensitive principles as Muslim codes of behaviour, but is in nature not a legal positivism.[39]

The thoughts by Yagi and Nakata can be summarized as follows. The nature of legal positivism, which focuses on the individual as an object and provides legal standards, has an affinity with globalizing logic and neoliberalism. One can say, neoliberalism is standardization oriented, while classical liberalism defends diversity, which establishes individuality as the principle of contra-universalism. As natural law, Islamic law functions as a universal norm, provides the foundation for self-determination, and promotes the diversity of opinion.[40] In this sense, Yagi and Nakata's understanding of the ḥalāl ideal within Islam has more affinity with classical liberalism. Two points, however, contradict each other, which Yagi and Nakata pointed out as problems of ḥalāl. On the one

[37] Yagi is a non-Muslim Japanese scholar and specialist in religious and Islamic studies. Her recent publication is the most comprehensive research on ḥalāl in Japanese, which deals with the actual globalizing Japanese situation and Muslims in Japan. Cf. Yagi, *Jihibukaki kami*, 2015; Yagi's argument is based on the following text: al-Qaraḍāwī, *Min hady al-islām*, 2003. al-Qaraḍāwī is one of the most influential jurists and thinkers in the Muslim world.

[38] Concerning identity, Yagi advocates habituation in the sense of rendering unconscious the consciousness of ḥalāl. Muslim self-awareness stems from such a consciousness of what one should choose in a given situation. Cf. Yagi, *Jihibukaki kami*, 116. In this point, Yagi and Nakata share a common logic. However, the embodiment, which Nakata emphasizes, has more function than habituation in the sense of rendering unconscious. Nakata does not unfold his idea but I think it is indispensable to discuss its background and range, in order to understand Muslim identity.

[39] I summarize Yagi's discussion as follows. The law can be separated into two orientations, facts and norms. The former does not deal with behaviour, but individual objects (things like pork or alcohol), while Islamic law deals with legal and moral norms of Muslim behaviour regarding how one should act in a certain situation. Yagi, *Jihibukaki kami*, 73–75. Nakata argues in the same manner. Cf. Nakata, *Watashi wa naze*, 54–77.

[40] The principle of classical liberalism is regarded as 'the absolute and essential importance of human development in its richest diversity' (Wilhelm von Humboldt) as John Stuart Mill emphasizes in the famous epigraph of *On Liberty*. See also, Wallerstein. 'Islam, the West, and the World'.

hand, Muslims should be clearly cognizant of their situation and act accordingly. That means, Muslims should think about, and decide on ḥalāl for themselves on a case-by-case basis, and should be aware of their jurisprudential origins of Muslim-ness in every particular situation. On the other hand, in accordance with standardized ḥalāl products, Muslims do not have to think each time of their jurisprudential origins, but with an easy mind can generally consume standardized ḥalāl products.

## Ḥalāl Standardization and Actual Situation in Japan

Identities are not simply given. One chooses and constructs one's own identity. The global situation is continually changing and accordingly so is the constitution of identities. According to Yagi, today, Muslim identity is critically confronted with mass-produced goods, because self-aware Muslims should make choices very carefully.[41] On the one hand, she indicates a kind of apparent 'necessity' for standardization or the 'positive side' of the homogeneous systematization of the ḥalāl issue. The universal, standardized guidelines such as the single authority regarding ḥalāl, facilitate life, because one does not need any due care or effort when purchasing or consuming. In the standardization of ḥalāl products, she accepts such a facile solution, which renders uniform the ḥalāl consciousness of consumers. Consumers need to only follow the ḥalāl mark of the producers' judgement.

This is not the primary Muslim way, but today in the global context, the ḥalāl mark has become the target of global business. Nakata goes further and his representation of anti-neoliberalism forms the establishment of Muslim identity, which should be actualized as the self-decision of ḥalāl consciousness in today's globalized situation. He denounced the production of the ḥalāl mark as 'idolatry', since producers and consumers forget ḥalāl-ness and pursue the ḥalāl mark.[42] His view not only incorporates theological jurisprudential factors, but also a kind of criticism of neoliberalism, which offers

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[41] Yagi, *Jihibukaki kami*, 89–96.

[42] Nakata, *Isurāmu no ronri*, 140–145.

standardized production and robs people of the chance to think about ḥalālness. The multiplicity of opinion and interpretation is, in Nakata's Islam, closely connected to consumers' ḥalāl consciousness. Before we review his identity construction as ḥalāl consciousness, we need to have a look at the ḥalāl standardization in Japan.

At the 1964 Summer Olympics in Tokyo, food and other products were confirmed as ḥalāl by the fifth Imām, leader of the Tokyo Mosque, Ainan Muhammad Safa (1898–1984).[43] Abd al-Raḥīm Gawāhī (1944–), the first Iranian ambassador to Japan after the Iranian Revolution in 1979, told me that in the 1980s Muslims bought ḥalāl meat in the Indian Embassy in Japan.[44] Today, there is a well-known 'legal opinion' (fatwā) that Muslims can take ḥalāl products made in Christian countries or made by monotheists.[45] So, Muslims in Japan consider foodstuffs imported from such countries as ḥalāl. Historically, there has not been an institution for ḥalāl (food) on a local or global level, and even today systems such as ḥalāl certification are not well known among the Muslims in Egypt. Yagi reports that Egyptian Muslims do not check the ḥalāl mark on imported foods.[46]

The standardization of ḥalāl began with the first institutionalization in Malaysia in 1994. Malaysia and Indonesia both have one single official organization for ḥalāl food standards, but Japan, the USA, and European countries each have several organizations. While these organizations are specialized in authorizing ḥalāl products, the institutions in Egypt and other Arabic countries also have other tasks.

The majority of Muslims in the world live in Southeast Asia, but they live next to non-Muslim groups such as Hindus and non-Muslim Chinese. Along with economic development, many Muslims, who previously lived in the countryside, have moved to urban centres in Southeast Asia, requiring authorized ḥalāl products. In this process, they developed a form of

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[43] Tanada, *Nihon no mosuku*, 98–99.

[44] I am extremely thankful to Dr. Gawāhī for his indications. My thanks also go to Dr. Bahman Zakipūr (Komazawa University).

[45] Yagi, *Jihibukaki kami*, 80. It is quite possible that the 'legal opinion' is ignored, because it is just an opinion or advice expressed by some learned person, and it is up to the person concerned which opinion he follows.

[46] Ibid, 102.

ḥalāl standardization which has spread worldwide. Today, there are many organizations in Japan such as the NPO (NonProfit Organization) Japan Halal Association.[47] The first Muslim association in Japan, the Japan Muslim Association, established in 1968, authorizes products as ḥalāl on the request of Japanese enterprises, wanting to export their products to Muslim countries. The members of the committee are Muslim specialists who studied Islamic studies and law (sharīʿa) in Muslim countries, and who are able to judge and certify ḥalāl-ness.[48]

Many debaters and intellectuals recognize the merits of standardization, although they appreciate that economic logic requires it and that it is the result of globalization. Japan's ḥalāl food industry is considered to have great potential for worldwide business opportunities.[49] As a service to Muslim overseas students, ḥalāl lunch boxes served in Japanese university canteens are an example of such new developments.[50] The Japanese government further announces campaigns to attract Muslim tourists from Southeast Asia, creating high expectations for restaurants and the food industry.[51] Many Japanese cities such as Tokyo,[52] Kobe,[53] and Okinawa,[54] provide handbooks and guidelines on ḥalāl when non-Muslim Japanese receive Muslim visitors. All ḥalāl-ness is standardized in these cases. And once ḥalāl codes are standardized and abstracted from concrete situations and contexts, the principle of situational and personal judgement of ḥalāl is beyond the range of consideration.

[47] http://www.jhalal.com.

[48] http://jmaweb.net/free/halal.

[49] http://www.suikei.co.jp/gyoshoku/%E3%80%8C%E3%83%8F%E3%83%A9%E3%83%AB%E8%AA%8D%E8%A8%BC%E3%80%8D%E5%8F%96%E5%BE%97%E3%81%A7%E3%80%81%E3%82%A4%E3%82%B9%E3%83%A9%E3%83%A0%E5%9C%8F%E3%81%AB%E6%97%A5%E6%9C%AC%E3%81%AE%E9%AD%9A%E9%A3%9F/; http://mainichi.jp/articles/20160215/k00/00e/040/079000c.

[50] http://withnews.jp/article/f0150427002qq000000000000000G0010801qq000011929A.

[51] http://diamond.jp/articles/-/59569.

[52] http://www.sangyo-rodo.metro.tokyo.jp/tourism/kakusyu/handbook/.

[53] http://www.feel-kobe.jp/_en/muslim/omotenashi/about.html.

[54] https://www.visitokinawa.jp/oin/manual/552.

Yagi evaluates ḥalāl standardization which secures the Muslim identity and way of life.[55] However, she is clearly aware that Islamic law affords only codes of conduct and the judgement of the same act is changeable depending on the person and situation. Standardization of ḥalāl-ness changes this principle and the main character of Islamic law. In the same context, Nakata, who belongs to ʻulamā',[56] regards the standardization of ḥalāl as a 'clearly anti-Islamic act' (akirakani han-isurāmuteki na kōi)[57] and he argues as follows: '[I]n Islam nothing is acknowledged as authority except God. Only God may judge what food is ḥalāl.'[58] Therefore, when an organization passes judgement on what is considered the right food, this organization takes the authority and right of judgement away from God. Believers are able to stand in the presence of God only by their own decision and by taking responsibility for it. Holding themselves responsible for their decision proves their belief in God.[59] In this eschatological view of the world, God judges whether the believers' acts are permissible, and they have to leave the judgement to God. In the context of this aspect of Muslim belief which is actualized as ḥalāl consciousness, the intake of food functions as the corporeal interpretation or embodiment of sacredness.

## Corporeal Hermeneutics of Sacredness and Constructing Identity by Ḥalāl Consciousness

Muslims actualize and embody their interpretation of the Holy Scripture in a verbal and non-verbal way.[60] Male circumcision in

[55] Yagi, *Jihibukaki kami*, 101–102.

[56] Scholars, specialists, or intellectuals are called in Arabic ʻulamā' (sg. ʻālim), who are trained in traditional Islamic sciences and are regarded to be able to offer professional legal advice. Today, this term is also known as ulama in English.

[57] Nakata, *Watashi wa naze*, 64.

[58] Ibid.

[59] See footnote 21.

[60] On Muslim culture as interpretation, Izutsu, *Isurāmu bunka*, 26. See also, Said, 'Orientalism reconsidered', 93. On sacredness in Islam, see Chodkiewicz, 'La sainteté', 13–32; Idem, *Le Sceau des saints*, 1986.

the Jewish-Muslim tradition, for example, is the act of carving or inscribing religious significance, in order to embody sacredness.[61] In the same sense, the act of eating foods that are recognized as ḥalāl can be called the embodiment (*shintaika*) of the religious meaning.[62] It is not simply so that the act gives the 'meal' a ceremonious purpose, but rather that the act of eating ḥalāl food or consuming animals slaughtered while reciting the sacred words is a very corporeal interpretation.[63] This embodiment can also be called realization or actualization, but because I think Nakata and Legendre's viewpoint regarding the corporeality of interpretation is appropriate, clarifying personal individual consciousness and action, I would like to use the word embodiment. In this way, I think it is possible to develop a new dimension of Izutsu and Said's idea of Islamic culture as 'communities of interpretation'. Fundamentally, everyone lives in 'communities of interpretation' and everyone always interprets his Self and Other(s) in an individual manner, which is in danger of being closed down in the context of ḥalāl standardization.

While circumcision is the act of inscribing sacredness from the outside onto the outside, the act of eating ḥalāl food is the act of inscribing sacredness from the inside into the inside, so that the sacredness is integrated within the human body. Circumcision, as well as the taboo on pork, existed as a custom before the Qurʾānic revelation. However, since then, the significance of those same actions has changed into the embodiment (personal or individual actualization) of the Qurʾānic ideals such as the sacred law, words, and will of God, making these ideals part of the believers' Self, and understanding the ideals as the elements of the believers' own

[61] Legendre takes the Jewish custom of circumcision into consideration for exemplifying the corporeal inscription of sacredness. Cf. Legendre, *De la Société comme Texte*, 73–74. I include the Muslim custom of circumcision in the same process.

[62] Nakata, *Watashi wa naze*, 23–25. Nakata speaks of the embodiment of the ideals. In his view, the embodiment is a sort of naturalization or rendering unconscious in the way of thinking and behaviour. When eating, which is the most ordinary and familiar event or act, Muslims cannot help practicing the hermeneutic culture of Islam. Therefore, this matter is a highly interesting and suggestive example for the embodiment of the ideals in general.

[63] Bourdieu, *Méditations pascaliennes*, 187; Legendre, *De la Société comme Texte*, 73–74.

identity. The embodiment of the Qurʾānic ideals is a practice of sacredness as the embodiment (inscribing) of the distinguished nature. The embodying practice functions as the precondition for the decision as to what believers should do or the criterion for believers' actions. In this way, it works as the articulation of the world or nature, and that provides the understanding of the world or nature. In ḥalāl consciousness, it has the same effect. The articulation of and decision regarding ḥalāl are the result of an understanding of the world or nature, in other words, the realization of the embodiment of the Qurʾānic ideals. In ḥalāl consciousness, it is articulated and decided which part is appropriate to sacredness.

This cultural religious act indicates the hermeneutic feature of Islam and determines the worldview as well as the self-defining understanding of 'Self', 'Other(s)', and the 'world'. In the self-defining spot, the world or nature is interpreted according to the ḥalāl principle. There, another horizon is opened along with embodiment, in which mind and body are reintegrated. Nakata's idea of embodiment demonstrates this fact. In my understanding, the peculiarity of his interpretation lies in regarding the definitive feature of food culture in Islam as the one-to-one relationship between God and man.

This attitude seems to be against the stereotypical Japanese view on nature. In general, one thinks that the Japanese attitude to nature implies a kind of unification between nature and man. In the same stereotypical manner, the Islamic attitude is represented as sacred, religious, or supernatural (contra-natural). In my opinion, the generally observed attitude of people in Japan indicates that they unconsciously and essentially separate nature and man. On the contrary, Muslims are highly conscious about being unified with ḥalāl objects. The one-to-one relationship between God and man in Islam does not mean that Muslims separate the transcendent from the rest. In the Muslim consciousness, all phenomena, events, and acts are the sacred manifestation of transcendency. In this sense, all human experience (physical or mental) is the body-mind interaction of sacredness. Nakata explains the meaning of body-mind interaction of sacredness in this context through his interpretation of 'The Night Journey' (Qurʾān 17:44). According to Nakata, this passage shows that the basic Islamic worldview is animism. It appears to the Muslim body-mind unit (the individual which embodies the Qurʾānic ideals) that sacredness appears in the immaculateness of all phenomena. Nakata calls this appearance animism.[64]

By demonstrating the Muslim concept of immaculateness, it can be argued that there is a direct relationship between food, transcendency, sacredness, and animism. In the following quote, Nakata explains his concept of animism and at the same time the relationship of transcendency (separation or purification in his understanding) to all beings (their existence is glorification) in the universe:

> It is totally irrelevant to Islam to think that only the human being as rational being is special. All things and events in the universe are spiritual beings, which praise God in their words. In Islam the human beings are distinguished only through the presence of an intention to choose to obey or disobey the orders of God. All things and events in the universe except the human beings praise God inevitably and necessarily, while the human beings are able to run counter to God's orders. The human essence consists in the ethical being which is able to commit a sin.[65]

[64] In order to examine his way of constructing his identity, I quote Nakata's Japanese translation of verse 44 below, and translate his choice of the words and expressions into English literally (Nakata, *Isurāmu*, 71): 'The seven heavens and the earth, and beings in them offer up the glorification to Him (God). Indeed, no matter what it is, there is nothing, which does not praise His transcendency (chōetsu) in admiration for Him. However, you all do not understand their glorification' (17:44). Nakata stresses in his Japanese translation the aspect of immaculate transcendency. Cf. al-Maḥallī, *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*, 256. By emphasizing transcendency, which is implied contextually, Nakata demonstrates that transcendency does not prevent the interaction of nature and man, but it provides for animism, as discussed below. Suyūṭī's (1445–1505) work is regarded as one of the most standard classical interpretations under Sunni as well as Shiite Muslims. It is well known that al-Suyūṭī spoke in defence of Ibn ʿArabī (1165–1240), one of the most prominent thinkers in Islam, whose interpretation will be discussed in relation to Nakata's idea of animism below. By emphasizing transcendency, which is implied contextually, Nakata demonstrates that transcendency does not prevent the interaction of nature and man, but it provides for animism, as discussed below.

[65] Nakata, *Isurāmu*, 71. Here he seems to refer to the thoughts of Ibn al-ʿArabī and his Ottoman follower al-Nābulusī (1641–1731). Cf. Tanaka, 'Kaisetsu', 259. Nakata published with his wife a theological introductory book on Islam which is based on the thoughts of al-Nābulusī (Nakata, Kō and Kaori, *Yasashii kami*, 2008). In regard to his interpretation of the divine manifestation, Ibn al-ʿArabī is often claimed to be animist in the sense of polytheist. However, Nakata apparently authenticates Ibn al-ʿArabī's interpretation on grounds of the idea of transcendency, that all beings, that appear animisthically, are exclusively the manifestation of divine activity. On transcendency in Ibn al-ʿArabī, see his major work *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, especially, the third chapter

The sentence 'All things and events in the universe are spiritual beings, which praise God in their words' corresponds to the Muslim version of animism. The part of 'All things and events in the universe except the human beings praise God inevitably and necessarily' coincides with a Muslim version of Heraclitean world-view that all things are in flux.[66] In Nakata's mind, I think, the image 'everything glorifies' and the vision 'everything flows' expresses the activity and movement of the world, as perceived by humans. According to Nakata, each decision towards events and things should thus be understood as a corporeal interpretation of the sacredness in Islam. Therefore, in each act and on all levels, man establishes his relationship with sacredness. Nakata uses the word 'intention' to denominate this relationship, which in religious terms is expressed as 'glorification'. In this sense, the act of eating food is no exception. In his understanding, every physical and psychic act (intention) of Muslims, including the act of eating, is a 'glorification' of God. I argue that Nakata as such introduces his understanding of animism, claiming that Muslims construct their own identity in their encounter with phenomena or objects, which are in an animistic state of constant perpetual flux.

In the 'traditional aesthetics' of Japan, the changing nature, which is regarded as living, vivid, and endlessly full of nuance, is immediately conceptualized at the moment of every individual experience. This understanding of the world experience is quite often represented as a Japanese Buddhist view of 'everything flows'.[67] In classical Japanese *waka* poetry, poets intentionally turned the streaming vision of nature into the semantic 'multi-stratification' of *waka*-poetic concepts.[68] Therefore, the instantaneous

'Wisdom of Transcendency (ḥikma subbūḥīya)'; Izutsu, *Sufism and Taoism*, 65, Note 2 (originally in English).

[66] Heraclitus of Ephesus is a pre-Socratic Greek philosopher who described the world in the famous short phrase 'everything flows (panta rhei)'. This expresses that the world is always changing. Such a worldview is observable in Buddhist thoughts (cf. Izutsu, Poetry, 534–535) as well as in Islamic ones (cf. Izutsu, *Sufism and Taoism*, 232).

[67] Cf. Izutsu, 'Poetry', 534–535.

[68] Ibid., 532–533.

conceptualization, which is poetically verbalized in *Kokinshū*,[69] *Shinkokinshū*,[70] or *Saijiki*,[71] is easily confused with the direct cognitive experience of nature or of the surroundings. At least, if one does not understand the poetic-creative consciousness, one solely reads stereotyped expressions and associations.[72] Furthermore, when these concepts, which were formed in cultural history and which represent experienced realities, are used, one unconsciously or uncritically speaks of stereotyped aesthetic ideas or classified senses of season, instead of describing, explaining or interpreting one's own experience.

> In *waka* in the classical periods, such natural things as moon (autumn), snow (winter), cherry-blossoms (spring), cuckoo (summer) appear constantly, showing that they are already poetic stereotypes. The fact that one gets the impression that these natural objects have lost their original concreteness and vitality, and have turned into insubstantial entities is due to a fundamental shift of emphasis that occurred [ . . . ] from the dimension of description to that of evocation. As a result, Nature is made to function primarily as a power evocative of semantic fields. The moon, for instance, immediately evokes autumn, and through the latter, the whole extent of a semantic field including Nature and human affairs in so far as the latter are related to autumn.[73]

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[69] The *Kokinwakashū* (Collection of Old and New Japanese poems) is the first official Imperial anthology of waka poetry, compiled in ca. 905–912. This contains poems that are not included in the oldest anthology of Japanese poems, *Manyōshū* (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves), completed after 759. The ideals and concepts represented in the *Kokinshū* became the canon of aesthetics, poetry, literature, theatre, and other traditional arts.

[70] The *Shinkokinwakashū* (New Collection of Old and New Japanese poems) is the eighth Imperial anthology of waka poetry, compiled in ca. 1201–1210. Besides the *Kokinshū*, this is one of the most influential classics and it is said that the symbolism and techniques in literature are most refined and sophisticated.

[71] In the Nara period (710–794), the Chinese *saijiki* (Year Time Chronicle) came to Japan. The Japanese original version was made by Kaibara Ekiken (1630–1714) in 1688. However, under the influence of Japanese poetry, the Japanese type of *saijiki* became a collection of the key terms of seasonal ideals, things and events used in the *renga* and *haiku* poetry. This type was compiled for the first time as early as 1647 by Kitamura Kigin (1625–1705) under the title *Yama no I* (Well of Mountain).

[72] Cf. Izutsu, 'Poetry', 532–533.

[73] Ibid., 533–534.

If 'these natural objects have lost their original concreteness and vitality, and have turned into insubstantial entities', it means that nature is experienced in a non-animist way. However, if Nakata's opinion about the distinction of sacredness is fundamentally based on an animist view of the world, I claim that his opinion has the potential to develop a non-stereotypical sensory perception, because his corporeal interpretation negates standardization in the sense of stereotypical conceptualization and represents critical consciousness and understanding of contextual individuality. In Nakata's type of worldview, the contra-stereotyping tendency must be stronger, and thus more conscious in the daily lives of the Muslim Japanese, when they follow one of their 'ulama' Nakata. Given the ḥalāl consciousness of animist sacredness qua immaculateness as an indispensable and essential condition for experiencing nature and human affairs, Muslim Japanese are always vividly confronted by the surrounding majority's categorizations, which make them conscious of their Muslim identity, as Nakata demonstrates. Usually, it is supposed that Muslims negate the animist perception, because Islam is a monotheistic religion. However, while explaining Muslim identity, Nakata demonstrates that a real animism is expressed in Islam. The important thing, however, is that this position is taken only by the minority, making precisely this minority forcibly aware of their non-stereotypical conceptualization and understanding of the world experience.

## Conclusion

From the above discussion, it is possible to conclude that the relationship of the Self towards the world, which human beings objectify and consume, is transferred by Muslims to their understanding of the world. In Muslim world understanding, things are manifestations of the primordial (apparently one calls this the 'Other', 'absolute', 'transcendent', 'sacredness', 'God', and so on), and foods are manifestations turning towards the primordial (in the above-mentioned religious expression 'glorifying God'), too. Deciding what to consume (in the eschatological sense) is the Muslim individual's responsibility.

Nakata criticizes the de-personified understanding of primordial reality.[74] Nevertheless, I would argue that together with a personal decision or self-awareness of being Muslim, simultaneously a contra-stereotyping event happens during each individual experience. That is to say, the primordial precondition which can diverge towards personification or de-personification. Personifying or de-personifying, the decision regarding the spot of experiential precondition, makes the minority aware of the Self as an anti-stereotype. As such, the dimension of constructing this self-awareness is also recognized.

Why should Muslims be conscious of sacredness in daily life? In Islam, there is no dualism of monk and layman, or of the sacred and the profane. Instead, in the Muslim world understanding all existing things are intending (glorifying) God, as we saw in Nakata's animism discourse in the last quotation. The path of existence is glorification, and hence the world should be full of the sacred. Muslims must thus interpret God's words on a daily basis, in order to recognize themselves as Muslims. The act of eating is an identification with things glorifying God. This act makes Muslims aware of the separation between the transcendency and the physical embodiment of sacred manifestations. This double internal realization of the concept of transcendency or sacredness via thinking and eating is a hermeneutic corporealization, and a compliance with God's law. The self-identification of Muslim-ness functions in compliance with the law, which is again a glorification of God. Nakata's idea that the embodiment of ḥalāl recognition realizes Muslim-ness, precisely contains this significance. Following Nakata's idea, I thus argue that this identity construction manifests itself through the individual act of eating ḥalāl foods.

Surely, identities have different dimensions, being political, religious, aesthetic, ethical, but precisely the minority dimension makes all the hermeneutical acts highly conscious and obligatory. Within the Muslim community or world, where Muslims are the majority, the awareness and conscious conception of ḥalāl are not actualized. Muslim Japanese,

[74] Nakata, *Watashi wa naze*, 174.

however, as an extreme minority, encounter the ḥalāl issue on a daily basis, and are made conscious of their self-identification as Muslims. Their circumstances make them conscious of their position and Muslimness. Religious patterns seem to function as a framework or paradigm which determines the life of Muslims uniformly. In reality, Qurʾānic hermeneutics functions as cultural practices that determine what to do in everyday individual experiences. On the one hand, this corporeal hermeneutics has a universal dimension, while on the other hand, it demonstrates a rich diversity among minorities as shown through the ḥalāl interpretation of Japanese food.

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**Junichi Ono** studied Islamic Studies at the University of Tokyo and is teaching Philosophy and Islamic Thoughts (mysticism, philosophy, intellectual history) at university level. He is an editorial board and founding member of the European Journal of Japanese Philosophy (EJJP). His recent publications include "The Non-conceptual Cognition and Fragrance of Being in Ibn ʿArabī" in Senshū Jinbūn Ronshu, No. 100 (2017): 249–272

# Eating Japanese – Being Japanese: Ethnic Food in Hawai'i

Jutta Teuwsen

## Introduction

In this chapter, I will analyse the meaning of Japanese food in the context of constructing national identity among Japanese migrants and their descendants in Hawai'i, based on participant observation within groups of elderly first- (*Issei*), second- (*Nisei*), and third-generation (*Sansei*) Japanese people.[1] I will first describe Shirokiya as an anthropological place and approach the phenomenon of 'Shirokiya' from a sociological

[1] This research is based on a three-month-research project that I conducted on a Japanese department store named Shirokiya in Honolulu in 2011. During that time the elderly Issei, Nisei and Sansei included me in their social networks and were glad to tell their stories about what it means to be Japanese (American) in Hawai'i. I participated in their everyday breakfasts, in their Qi Guong sessions on Saturday mornings and was even invited to their homes for their Halloween parties and birthday celebrations. I therefore did participant observation and conducted several interviews.

J. Teuwsen (✉)
Heinrich-Heine University Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf, Germany
e-mail: Jutta.Teuwsen@uni-duesseldorf.de

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perspective. I will subsequently establish the framework for my analysis and explain why examining Japanese people living outside Japan is useful to researching the connection between Japanese food and processes of constructing national identity. In the fourth part, I give a short overview of the history of Japanese immigration to Hawai'i. The following sections focus on the relevance of Japanese food in dealing with homesickness and explain the relevance of food prices in this process. In part seven, I will illustrate how particularly Japanese-American fusion food serves to construct ethnic identity and describe how Japanese locals not only maintain but even try to develop a certain Japanese national identity by eating Japanese food.

## Shirokiya: A Place of History, Relations, and Identity

When I first walked into Shirokiya, I felt as though I had just passed a hidden borderline between here and there – between Hawai'i and Japan. Right at the entrance I passed a tiny, somewhat separate bakery, offering *melonpan* and thick-sliced white bread, as is popular in Japan. It smelled deliciously sweet, like freshly baked *anpan*. Accompanied by fine Koto music (string instrument), I approached the centre of the first level, where a small selection of kimonos, fine handkerchiefs, and other Japanese goods caught my attention. Behind the desks, women were speaking Japanese, bowing slightly from time to time. I followed the narrow walk heading towards what looked like a Hello-Kitty-and-other-cute-little-things-base, spotting the huge placards hanging from the ceiling, reading about a 'Kyushu-fair' and a ramen festival. Surprised by a mechanical sound, I looked to my left and saw a small showroom with eight quite expensive massage chairs – ready to be tested by the customers. Soon I entered a small separate room, loaded with Japanese books, movies, and other media, hardly hearing anyone speaking English, but only Japanese. Back in the main showroom, I made out a row of heavy, yet filigree glass-topped tables such as I have never seen outside Japan before. They presented finely arranged, astonishingly realistic imitations of *wagashi* (Japanese confectionary) and fine cakes. Summer-season sweets, for example, with strawberries, were offered and embellished with pretty floral decorations.

Judging by the aroma of soy sauce, I expected to find more upstairs, so I took the escalator to the second floor. Before seeing anything, I could already hear the bustle of a food court such as I had experienced in Osaka. Upstairs, beneath some short shelves filled with Japanese pickles, noodles, and other groceries, I saw the full width of this food court. With the exception of the atmospheric seating area called Yataimura Beer Garden right in the centre and some more rather modest tables at the sides, the whole level was crammed with booths offering freshly made food like ramen, sushi, tempura as well as bento boxes. Passing the oden-stand, a Japanese woman rushed around, saying 'Irasshaimase!' and placed a fresh stack of onigiri on the tables in front of me. One obento looked more delicious than the other. The cooking demonstrations, accompanied by some explanations in Japanese, invited the customers to approach the tiny booths and to take away some of the items on display or to order freshly made ramen or takoyaki. This finally convinced me to enjoy my first obento at Shirokiya.

Sitting in the Yataimura Beer Garden, finishing my delicious obento, I reflected on what I had just experienced. Still, I could hardly believe it. Never before, neither in Dusseldorf, with the third largest Japanese community in Europe, nor elsewhere in the world outside Japan, had I experienced something that reminded me so deeply of Japan. And finally, I had found it here in the centre of a huge shopping mall in Hawai'i – little Japan. Those feelings I had when visiting Shirokiya for the first time may seem irrelevant to my study. And yet, I insist on including them because they give rise to some broader questions: If this place reminded me of Japan and from that day onwards encouraged me to return on a regular basis, how would it impact on the Japanese population living here? Would this place not be of utmost importance to them, given that it ultimately connected them with their homeland or that of their ancestors? It appeared to me that this place was much more than just an analogue cultural container, as the simplest explication of space in intercultural contexts. This place did not seem to be just a conglomeration of various Japanese goods and elements to which no one could ever forge a connection. It rather seemed to be relational in that it left room for social processes of perceiving, using, and adopting it for individual and group identity activities and considerations.[2] If this were true, then it seemed appropriate to consider this location as an anthropological place. That is, when space[3] is concretely and symbolically constructed, serving to create identity, it becomes a place.[4] It appears that Shirokiya allows local groups and individuals to deal with all the identity relations that Augé describes. Firstly, shared identity: this symbolizes those components a whole group has in common. Secondly, particular identity: this is how groups and individuals understand their identity in relation to each other. Finally, singular identity: this gives information about the differences between groups and/or individuals.[5] While Augé does not use the term 'national identity', it is evident that the three identity relations described are strongly entangled with the formation of a Japanese national identity. His differentiation also shows that the Japanese national identity displayed at Shirokiya is not constructed just as a single homogeneous complex. It rather takes place on various concurrent and more or less entangled levels within the Japanese groups of Hawai'i. As a place, Shirokiya, thus, already incorporates the three basic characteristics that Augé assigns to all anthropological places: identity, relations, and history.[6]

## Analysing Japanese National Identity Abroad: Diaspora, Identity, and Food

It has already become clear that food is one of the central aspects for analysing the meaning of Shirokiya for Hawai'i's Japanese groups. It is striking that for most of them Japanese food plays an important role in their lives. Yet, the reasons for attaching relevance to Japanese food in everyday life vary significantly.

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[2] See Bachmann-Medick, *Cultural Turns*, 292.

[3] While Augé rather refers to open public space, for me applying the notion to buildings and institutions likewise seems to be appropriate. See Augé, *Non-places*, 42ff.

[4] See ibid., 51.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid., 52.

The connection between food and ethnic, national as well as cultural identity has already been addressed in several academic works. In his enlightening essay on symbolic ethnicity, Herbert Gans points out that consumer goods in general, and food in particular, are an essential source of ethnic symbols and, therefore, constitute a strong base for ethnic identity construction.[7] While he stresses symbolic ethnicity, it is well acknowledged that food plays a crucial role in constructing and maintaining ethnic identity. In 'Food, Self and Identity', Claude Fischler underscores this significance by stating, 'Food is central to our sense of identity'.[8] He further argues that culinary practices help to give the eaters a place in the world and, upon that, a meaning.[9] Food habits of certain ethnic groups still remain intact when other indications of identity, such as language, have already become obsolete.[10]

That *washoku*, traditional Japanese food, is heavily involved in the construction of Japanese identity and a sense of belonging has scarcely been questioned over the decades and centuries. However, this relationship was officially recognized when *washoku* became part of the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list in 2013. Several recent publications have dealt with practices of Japanese national identity formation on the basis of one particular food product. In 'Making Tea, Making Japan: Cultural Nationalism in Practice' (2013), Kristin Surak analyses the meaning of the tea ceremony for Japan's 'nation-work'.[11] In this, she shows how the making and practising of the tea ceremony are involved in the processes of constructing Japanese national identity. In 'Slurp! A Social and Culinary History of RAMEN – Japan's Favorite Noodle Soup' (2012), Barak Kushner explains the meaning of this popular dish in Japan in the light of the Sino-Japanese relationship. Already in 1993, Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney wrote in 'Rice as Self – Japanese Identities Through Time' about the significance of this staple

[7] See Gans, 'Symbolic Ethnicity', 10.

[8] Fischler, 'Food, Self and Identity', 275.

[9] See ibid., 288.

[10] See Scholliers, 'Meals', 8.

[11] Surak, *Making Tea*, 3.

food in the formation of Japanese national identity both in the past and up to the present day. She argues that, in contrast to the West, rice in Japan is much more than a staple food: 'As a metaphor for the self of the Japanese, rice is necessarily involved when the Japanese situate themselves in their interaction with the rest of the world.'[12] Rice serves as symbol of wealth, power relationships, and, beyond that, a good life in Japan.[13] Interestingly, Shirokiya's senior vice president Eddie Wakida stresses that especially the rice has to be imported from Japan and that rice from other countries should never be used. Therefore, even today the symbolism of rice, deeply enrooted in Japanese history, can still be helpful in gaining a proper understanding of the construction of national identity. Though of little nutritional value, the perceived high value of white Japanese rice is still embedded in the heads of many Japanese people. Rice is seen as a key ingredient that is even planted by the emperor within the Imperial Palace – not because he grows all the grain he needs. Indeed, by publicly planting as a ritual, the aim was to strengthen the idea that rice is valuable for the Japanese nation. In 'Cuisine and Identity in Contemporary Japan' (2011), Theodore C. Bestor describes cuisine as 'a product of cultural imagination [ . . . ][which] is thought to include the range of practices and preferences that are shared broadly across the members of a society as they prepare and partake of the food'.[14] He continues that the basis for such imagination must be an agreement, which can be (more or less) defined and (more or less) distinguished from the other. He points out that for Japan this basic element is fresh ingredients.[15] One further aspect of freshness is a certain seasonality for food in Japan. Culinary calendars are especially important for festivities.[16] This seasonality is also highly visible at Shirokiya where, depending on the festivities and seasons, the appropriate kind of *washoku* is presented, promoted, and offered throughout the year. This means that Shirokiya preserves the key aspect, commonly

[12] Ohnuki-Tierney, *Rice as Self*, 8. For rice in Japan see also articles by Paul O'Shea and Hanno Jentzsch in this volume.

[13] See Ohnuki-Tierney, *Rice as Self*, 63ff.

[14] Bestor, 'Cuisine and Identity', 13.

[15] See ibid., 13.

[16] See ibid., 14.

rated as typical for good Japanese food by the Japanese themselves: freshness. Given that food is the key element of Shirokiya's product spectrum, being highly visible all over the store and marketed perfectly, this store offers a treasure trove of telling results about the connection between Japanese national identity and food.

But why is it necessary to take a look at Japanese people living outside Japan when considering the construction of Japanese national identity by means of food? Diasporas, or nationals from a certain country living abroad, have long since been subject to various kinds of investigations. Literature examining the connection between food, migration, and identity has, however, been scarce. At a workshop on food and migration in London, staged in 2009, British researchers criticized that 'the complex, and multidimensional relationship between food and migration remains both under researched and under theorized'.[17] However, many persisting questions regarding identity and food can be answered by analysing the food habits of nationals of a certain country living abroad. Investigating these practices abroad offers the opportunity to isolate factors such as the importance of ancestry and family, the will to uphold traditions by means of food or tendencies towards nationalism in a rather separated setting. From the behaviour of migrants, and ancestors of migrants abroad, it is much easier to deconstruct the value and meaning of their original ethnic food. After all, they have to go to considerable lengths to obtain this food, while at home everyone just eats it without further ado, making it harder to explore the reasons and consequences of this everyday practice. Finally, since food in Japan is of obvious significance in constructing ethnic and national identity, it is useful to take a look at the eating habits of Japanese people living abroad.

In this sense, it is not surprising that Shirokiya and its Japanese food are essentially involved in helping the Japanese maintain and construct their national identity in Hawai'i. While Japanese food has always been one of the core products at Shirokiya, it has become highly visible as the heart of the store since the latter's recent refurbishment.

[17] Quoted after Flitsch, 'Hesitant Hands', 975.

## The History of Japanese Immigration to Hawai'i

For a comprehensive understanding of the Japanese groups under study, it is essential to be aware of their immigration background. In 1868, the first 148 Japanese men came to work on Hawai'i's sugar plantations. After their contract ended most of the Japanese returned to Japan. Due to poor working conditions, some workers went home even before their three-year contracts had expired and only 90 individuals settled down in Hawai'i.[18] This number is still quite high given that all migrant workers had originally intended to return home after earning sufficient money.[19] However, after the contracts had been improved, Japanese immigration increased and more and more migrant workers stayed in Hawai'i for good: by 1898, more than 16,000 Japanese had settled.[20] When Hawai'i became a territory of the USA in the same year, immigration processes became much less complicated. Over the following 10 years 68,000 more Japanese migrants came to Hawai'i, many of whom left for the West coast of the USA where they expected to earn higher wages. As one consequence of this increase in immigration, the Gentlemen's Agreement was signed in 1908: passports were issued only to close kin and 'picture brides'[21] of those Japanese nationals already living in the USA. In 1924, when 125,368 Japanese nationals were living in Hawai'i, Japanese immigration was completely prohibited.[22] Up to today, the Japanese-American population remains one of the largest ethnic groups in Hawai'i. One-fourth of the entire population is of Japanese origin.[23]

18 See Kimura, *Issei*, 3.

19 See Befu, 'Japanese Transnational Migration', 34.

20 See Kimura, *Issei*, 13.

21 Picture brides were Japanese women sent from Japan to Hawai'i in order to enter into an arranged marriage. The practice started when the immigrants realized that they could not accumulate enough money through their work to go back to Japan any time soon. (See Kimura, *Issei*, 143) The future husbands had nothing but a picture, waiting for the brides to arrive at the harbour.

22 See ibid., 13–15.

23 See U.S. Census Bureau (2010).

While the notion of a 'Japanese Diaspora' can be found in literature, especially in the case of Hawai'i, this term is not appropriate. From a very broad perspective, the various Japanese groups of Hawai'i could be summed up under that term, but in fact many of them do not have much in common, except for being defined as an homogenous diaspora of people outside this so-called diaspora. Brubaker, who criticizes the inflationary use of the term 'diaspora' for any migrants, has identified three criteria to identify a '"diaspora" diaspora': dispersion, homeland orientation, and boundary-maintenance.[24] Most of these criteria do not apply to the (local) Japanese people of Hawai'i. Analysing the food habits of the Japanese groups of Hawai'i will underline this evaluation. Indeed, the different Japanese and local Japanese groups use Japanese foods in diverse ways to construct various Japanese national identities, which in some cases even contradict each other.

## Eating Up Homesickness

During my research, I experienced that Shirokiya's food sections are especially important to Japanese-born and recent immigrants, who still prefer to eat Japanese food. Moreover, they tend to prefer Japanese food at Shirokiya over other local alternatives. One of my respondents is Haruto, whom I met every Saturday during the Qi Guong sessions in the park by the sea and afterwards in Makai Market, close to Shirokiya, where one was allowed to bring one's own food. He arrived in Hawai'i several years ago and yet he still prefers the Japanese food over local cuisine. And he likes it best at Shirokiya. He goes to Shirokiya several times a week to buy a bento box. He explains his choice:

> Ethnic food can only be really good and you know, real, when cook a person from that ethnicity. Only German cook can cook real German food, right? And only Japanese cook can cook real Japanese food. And Shirokiya, I taste it is Japanese cook. When I go eat Japanese here, I want Japanese, not some food just look Japanese!

[24] See Brubaker, 'The "Diaspora" Diaspora', 5–6.

Haruto is better integrated into the local community than most of the other Hawai'i Senior Life Enrichment Association (HSLEA) group members and speaks some English.[25] Some of those who more recently came to Hawai'i seem to be dissatisfied with their new environment – especially regarding the food. Takeshi is one such person, too. At the age of 40, he is one of the youngest members of the group and just came from Tokyo some months ago. Talking about food, I asked him if he had already been to Shirokiya. He responded in English: 'Yes, I go there every day! I am fed of Hawai'i food. Can you eat the junk food? I hate the junk food!'[26]

It appears that the Japanese tend to stick to or prefer to eat Japanese food at Shirokiya, the less integrated they are in the Hawai'ian community and the more recently they have come to Hawai'i. Haruto's, but especially Takeshi's reactions to what they perceive as 'not-real' Japanese and local food are highly emotional. The importance of ethnic food for foreign nationals, who still have strong bonds with their homeland has likewise been stressed by Vallianatos and Raine in their work on Arabic and South Asian immigrant women in Edmonton:

> Food also connects across time and place, and for many migrants, food is an essential component of maintaining connections to home. How and what kinds of food are consumed recall families and friends left behind, and by continuing to consume both everyday and celebratory foods migrants preserve these transnational relationships and enact their companionship with those back home.[27]

As the interview with Takeshi has shown, it seems that Shirokiya to some extent serves to maintain their psychological well-being. The fact that his English and that of many other Japanese nationals is still poor and they spend most of their time solely with other Japanese

[25] With most other members of HSLEA I spoke only Japanese, while I switched between English and Japanese with Haruto.

[26] He said this in English. As for talking about everyday life, he had the vocabulary and tried to speak in simple sentences.

[27] Raine and Vallianatos, 'Consuming Food', 356.

nationals indicates that they are not entirely comfortable in their new environment. But eating Japanese food helps them to overcome these feelings of homesickness. Feelings of home and belonging are not only present in the human mind as abstract thoughts. They are also highly charged with sensual memories that go back as far as childhood, and even before language acquisition. Accordingly, the imagined home not only consists of visual pictures, but is even more so a construct of all the other senses, including taste.[28] As a result, food choices reflect eating habits that have developed in early childhood as part of a socialization process. Therefore, childhood eating habits are quite stable and generally remain so.[29] Upholding and indulging in Japanese national identity serves as a safe haven within an unfamiliar environment. Thus, eating Japanese food at Shirokiya helps Japanese nationals uphold their Japanese national identity, which they are not willing to lose, living in Hawai'i. Food at Shirokiya can indeed be referred to as 'entangled objects'[30]:

> Its nuances of class, ethnicity, gender and sensory embodiment produce a memorable moment for identity, of 'floating' and dreaming, of entanglement and constraint – a moment shaped by specific convergences of power in time and place.

By means of certain foods, it is possible to recall family and friends who have been left behind and to foster transnational relationships.[31] In doing so, the Japanese uphold their Japanese national identity. One example of how Shirokiya serves to revive memories of home for first-generation immigrants is Hideko. Now living on the Big Island of Hawai'i, she came from Sapporo 58 years ago. It has been a long time since she last saw Japan, so her memories of Japan are much more the memories of her childhood and youth: knowing that she was from

[28] See Morse, 'Home', 63.
[29] See Raine and Vallianatos, 'Consuming Food', 357.
[30] Crang 1996, quoted after Duruz, 'Floating Food: Eating "Asia" in Kitchens of the Diaspora', 47.
[31] See Raine and Vallianatos, 'Consuming Food', 356.

Sapporo and seeing her eat the Sapporo-ramen from the current 'ramen festival', I asked Hideko what kind of ramen she was eating:

> Actually, these are Sapporo-ramen! Now it's Sapporo festival and today they serve Sapporo-ramen! Unbelievable, I can eat the food of my hometown here! After all these years I still love Japanese food, but this is so special today!

Still today, eating the Sapporo-ramen reminds her of her childhood in Japan and serves as a bridge, and an opportunity to travel there again – albeit only in her mind. Belasco describes this simple logic of food advertisement, in which only short phrases or even words are enough to transport the customer back home.[32] In this case, just the word 'Sapporo' conjures up childhood associations and then, smelling the food, seeing and tasting it brings back all the memories she did not even know she still had. In her dissertation on Hawai'ian ethnogastronomy, Kirkendall sums up this phenomenon illustrated by Hideko perfectly: '[ . . . ] we seem to retain precise, eidetic memory of tastes and smells through which we can revive experiences of childhood through the flavour of something long ago tasted [ . . . ].'[33] Given its Chinese origin, ramen is not added to *washoku*, but still belongs to *nihon ryōri*, therefore 'Japanese food'. Kushner explains how ramen pushes the borderlines of Japanese national cuisine in this way.[34] Ramen plays a strong role in Japanese food tourism in several respects: first, local regions try to retain their uniqueness through certain local foods. Often, this is achieved through ramen.[35] Beyond that, ramen is an essential element of Japanese food tourism. It is exported to the USA and all over the world, and is also circulated by means of popular culture products such as manga and anime.[36] Finally, ramen is even influential in increasing Japan's soft power, as it attracts national and international attention to Japan and its regions simply through one dish.

32 See Belasco, *Food*, 31.

33 Kirkendall, *Hawaiian Ethnogastronomy*, 9.

34 See Kushner, *Slurp!*, 11.

35 See ibid., 220.

36 See ibid., 235.

Interestingly, although ramen does not belong to *washoku*, it is highly visible all over Shirokiya. Generally, various ramen-dishes are offered every day and beyond that, ramen-festivals take place regularly. While the store offers *washoku* in their traditional representations, the amount of ramen offered is surprisingly high. This can be led back to the fact that the ramen and the ramen-festivals are highly attractive for consumers, as ramen, more than other *nihon ryōri*, significantly plays with the construction of local Japanese identities, particularly appealing to consumers with roots in certain geographical areas. Beyond that, local customers who like to indulge in prevalent Japanese food tourism can do so just by going to the department store. Of the many foods offered at Shirokiya, ramen is especially involved in constructing Japanese national identity, where local identities play a major role.

## Talking About Prices

Japanese pensioners who have not been in Hawai'i for very long generally receive a high pension and therefore do not have to be as concerned about their money as the local Japanese with their local pensions. This means that the comparatively high prices of the food products at Shirokiya constitute a serious issue. I first encountered this, meeting an elderly Japanese couple in Makai Market close to Shirokiya who had come to Hawai'i more than 50 years ago. After talking extensively about food, they mentioned their frustration at the food at Shirokiya being so expensive. They would go there every day, they said, if only they could afford to. This was only the beginning of a whole series of complaints regarding the prices at Shirokiya. I also spoke about the prices with Sakura, who came from Japan in 1963. She still did not speak English properly and therefore only communicated in very short sentences, or rather fragments of sentences and words. When I asked her if she sometimes goes to Shirokiya, she just responded: 'Yeah. But too expensive! But every Wednesday!' When I asked her why she went on Wednesdays she answered: 'Seniors' day!' That Shirokiya offers a seniors' discount on Wednesdays is well known among the elderly Japanese. Since they only offer 10% off, I presume that most customers who shop there every Wednesday, like Sakura, would still go there even if they did not receive that special discount. The discount does not greatly affect the high prices. The reason for going there on Wednesdays may be that seniors feel acknowledged through this special day and therefore participate. Conversely, this means that someone who avoids Shirokiya because of the high prices will probably not be convinced by the small discount. This is illustrated by an excerpt from my conversation with Satsuki and Takeo, an elderly second-generation Japanese couple I interviewed several times: talking about Shirokiya, Satsuki said they loved Japanese food, but that 'in fact, we haven't been at Shirokiya for some years. For us local people it's much too expensive. Really good – but that doesn't change that we just cannot afford it.' Satsuki and Takeo display a reaction towards Shirokiya that reveals which role especially Japanese food at Shirokiya can play for those people of Hawai'i with a direct connection to Japan. In fact, Satsuki and Takeo love Japanese food and they like it best at Shirokiya. If it were cheaper, they would prefer it to other Japanese alternatives. Moreover, it is not as though they do not go there to eat what they like most – they do not go there at all. It seems that the frustration of looking at the desirable foods at Shirokiya is greater than the pleasure one could derive from strolling through and looking at the offers, without buying anything. The couple passes Shirokiya almost every day when heading towards Makai Market. They seem to have resigned themselves to Shirokiya being out of their reach and prefer not to have it in their lives than feel excluded from something valuable as a result of extortionate prices.

In her enlightening essay 'Hesitant Hands on Changing Tables: Negotiating Dining Patterns in Diaspora Food Culture Transfer' (2011), Flitsch explains how the culinary patterns of migrants are changed when living abroad and how the old and new dining patterns, coming together in everyday life, alter how they deal with their national identity. One of her central aspects is autonomy over food, which means that the desired food can be accessed more or less easily. Seen in the context of Shirokiya, host communities or host institutions can challenge individual autonomy over food.[37] While most local Japanese people are not poor per definition, their pensions are still particularly

[37] See Flitsch, 'Hesitant Hands on Changing Tables', 978.

low so that they cannot afford the food at Shirokiya. Flitsch explains the consequences of the lack of autonomy over food choices: 'A particular form of crisis is destitution, not to mention falling into destitution, under diaspora conditions. This is a critical issue in the topic of the transfer of food culture.'[38] And she continues: 'In destitution and lack of food autonomy, orders are disrupted, identity is disturbed, and feelings of insecurity and disorientation may easily develop into serious illness and dislocation.'[39] The local Japanese who cannot afford the food at Shirokiya are particularly disturbed in dealing with their Japanese national identity. While the food they desire is so close at hand, they still cannot afford it and are excluded from connecting with their Japanese heritage.

## Japanese-American Food

Toru does not have to count his pennies when deciding whether to choose Shirokiya or cheaper alternatives. When asked whether he liked to go to Shirokiya when he arrived in Hawai'i 15 years ago, he answered:

> Oh, yes! Because Shirokiya is very special in selling good Japanese quality stuff, products. Regarding fresh food products. Yeah. Shirokiya, the price is a little bit higher than other Japanese stores, like [the store] Don Quijote. And ah, there is another big Japanese store, called Marukai. And Shirokiya's price is a little higher, but the quality of the products is better. Particularly the people from Japan, they prefer to buy food at Shirokiya. Because the quality is much better at the Shirokiya.

Toru's explanation indicates an inconsistency between the Japanese food at Shirokiya and what many local Japanese think that Japanese food is. Especially those who are familiar with Japanese food from Japan prefer Shirokiya. However, the situation is different for other groups who have not been to Japan or who do not yearn for food that is closest to that in

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[38] See ibid., 979.
[39] Ibid., 980.

Japan. These groups do not particularly care about the batter of the tempura, whether it is thick or not. Nor do they care about where the rice and azuki beans come from and whether they are all the same size, and the *dorayaki* (red bean pancake) is therefore equally soft in every bite.

Unfamiliar with original Japanese food, they prefer local Japanese food, opting for reasonable prices rather than buying more Japan-like quality for higher prices. This inconsistency was reflected in my interview with Eddie Wakida, senior vice-president of Shirokiya:

> You know, what we try to keep is maintaining our quality and to give the local people something very similar to Japan taste. So on certain part we really cannot compromise. For instance, some of the basic ingredients are very essential, so we have to bring them from Japan. Then it comes a little bit expensive, but for the quality of it, we really believe that the quality is very good. It is kind of hard but we are trying to keep the best price as we can. So, about if they feel that the price is very high, we hope the customers understand that we try to bring the quality standard.

Here, Wakida is in line with the Japanese agrarian ideology that Japanese rice is better than Chinese rice or any other rice in the world.[40] He imports rice only from Japan, although it is particularly expensive, especially due to the long distance to Hawai'i. As explained above, if 'the customers' are local Japanese people, like Nisei and Sansei, they disappoint Eddie Wakida's hope, because they literally do not understand. They do not support Shirokiya in striving to match the quality offered in Japan. They simply do not appreciate it. It should be stressed, however, that this does not mean they do not care about Japanese food. In fact, there is a difference between their definition of Japanese food and what is offered at Shirokiya under the same label. Their Japanese food is Japanese-American food. It is the food that is common in local restaurants and that they have been eating at home with their families, cooked by their parents and grandparents. It would be naïve to expect

[40] See Ohnuki-Tierney, *Rice as Self: Japanese Identities through Time*, 102.

that the Issei would maintain their traditional Japanese diet on the plantations under the given conditions and that their children and grandchildren would preserve this heritage. It would be equally naïve to assume that the eating habits of around 1900 were still the same today in Japan.[41] Of course, the immigrants adjusted to the new conditions and their children, growing up in an American environment, internalized the habit of eating American food.[42] While for the Issei, eating Japanese food still had traditional status value, the Nisei interpreted eating American food as an improvement in status.[43] Therefore, what has evolved into the food eaten by Japanese American families today is not Japanese food as it is consumed in Japan, nor is it local food without Japanese influence. In the majority of cases, it is something inbetween, united under the term 'Japanese-American food'.

The role of Japanese American food in everyday life is best illustrated by my dinner with the Tanaka family. I was glad that Charlie and Nora, both Sansei, invited me to dinner with Charlie's parents Hannah and James. She cooked and served dinner in their living room. The dinner was described as 'Japanese', but when Hannah placed it on the table she explained:

> Well, this is a kind of fusion food, you know. Since we are living in Hawai'i, we eat a lot of local things as well; I do not cook Japanese like you probably know it from Japan. But we still say it's Japanese food. There are Japanese elements and also local elements . . . and I don't know what other elements. [Laughing] But this is the way we usually eat.

And finally, she presented a truly Japanese-American dinner: on the one hand, we had *chirashi* sushi (slices of fish on a bowl of rice) with local vegetables and oden, on the other, there were hot chicken wings with soy sauce and tiny burger patties, finally *mochi* (rice cake) ice cream for dessert. The dinner encapsulated Japanese-American culture in

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[41] In this context, it appears as though I was assigning these naive ideas to Eddie Wakida, but this is not the case. It rather reflects the impression one might have about issues of Japanese food in Hawai'i, without knowing much about the background.

[42] See Masuoka, 'Changing Food Habits', 763.

[43] See Wenkam, 'A Half Century', 30.

Hawai'i and illustrated that it should not be confused with Japanese culture. Obviously, Hannah and James do not insist on cultivating a Japanese national identity that is as original as possible, but they do maintain a Japanese-American culture and lifestyle. At the same time, they are not particularly interested in any of the Japanese products offered at Shirokiya. It follows that the majority of local Japanese people, who have no bonds to present-day Japan, do not strive for original Japanese quality and are not prepared to pay the high prices at Shirokiya. As for their Japanese-American cuisine, local products are deemed to be either as good, or even better than the more expensive products at Shirokiya.

Indeed, the two Nisei, Hannah and James, have truly different opinions from the Sansei Charlie and Nora when it comes to Japanese food, resulting from different aspirations towards Japanese food. Hannah and James do not care where they buy their Japanese food and ingredients because they are not striving for 'authentic'[44] Japanese cuisine. The crucial point is that they do not wish for Japanese food, but for Japanese-American food. They have travelled to Japan only once, together with Charlie and Nora to visit their grandson. This was quite a while ago and they can hardly remember anything about their journey. Ultimately, Hannah and James do not associate cooking and eating Japanese-American food with the country of Japan. Conversely, they cultivate eating habits that relate to Japanese-American culture and to their family life both past and present, maintaining their Japanese-American identity.

In contrast to Charlie's parents, Charlie and Nora insist that Shirokiya is the best option for Japanese food. This is due to the fact that they are not striving for Japanese American food, but Japanese food as it is in Japan. When asked about the quality of Shirokiya's food products, Nora answered:

> They're very good! I think their rice is still different quality of rice, so if you eat a plate lunch at a local drive-in or Marukai versus eating rice at

[44] For the discussion of this difficult notion, see Assmann in this volume, Cameron, 'UNESCO and Cultural Heritage', 323–336 and DeSoucey, 'Gastronationalism', 432–455.

> Shirokiya, it's a different quality. So, at Shirokiya the quality is really good. Yeah, it's the closest thing to Japan you can get in Hawai'i.

It becomes visible, that especially second- and third-generation Japanese people are caught between two stools. On the one hand, they like original Japanese food and *washoku*, as it is also presented at Shirokiya. On the other, they preserve the food habits of their parents in their new home, which is Hawai'i. Flitsch accordingly concludes:

> The second diaspora generation often stands between enculturation and integration of their parents' generation. They are faced with the consequences of a dual socialization. Often enough, this is configurated on tastes and the food culture of both – host and parents' home cultures – and their particular skill is the ability to stand in between, both to master and to challenge tastes and dining patterns on both sides.[45]

Those who do have vivid bonds with Japan – be it because it is their place of birth and childhood or because of their travels – appreciate the difference in quality, that Shirokiya offers. In this way, Nisei and Sansei use the food at Shirokiya to maintain a specific Japanese national identity, referring to the country of Japan today in order to create feelings of belonging.

## Eating Japanese, Being Japanese

Up to this point, I have described the extent to which Japanese food contributes to the various ways in which the different Japanese groups in Hawai'i deal with Japanese national identity. While for one group it serves as remembrance to the homeland, for others food becomes a way of maintaining their ancestors' heritage. Finally, some perceive the country of Japan and the memories they associate with it as a central part of their lives and on that basis, they celebrate Japanese

[45] Flitsch, 'Hesitant Hands', 980.

food. It appears that eating Japanese food can even serve to convince oneself that one is Japanese, although this often appeared to be rather an empty expression. I had this impression, meeting a Nisei and her daughter at the Yataimura Beer Garden at Shirokiya, whose statements about being Japanese (as opposed to Japanese-American or American) only referred to their ancestry. I became curious about these two when I perceived how embarrassed they were to admit that I knew more about Shirokiya than they did. Initially, I was confused when they introduced themselves to me as Japanese. In the past, I have rarely heard Nisei or Sansei say this as they would not usually comment on their nationality and if they did, they would rather speak about their Japanese family or tell me that their parents or grandparents were Japanese (in that they had immigrated from Japan). Most common was a comment such as 'I am Sansei'.

Never having seen *oden* (different ingredients stewed in soy-flavoured fish stock), they curiously asked me what I was eating. When the mother guessed that the white chunks were probably tofu, I told her it was fishcake. She reacted surprised and said that she had never eaten it. So I explained to her the concept of preparing *oden*. This encounter is quite telling: while some people come to Shirokiya to learn about the country of their ancestors, others dwell there, seemingly trying to become Japanese by incorporating Japanese food into their diets. In front of me, two women tried to uphold the illusion of Japanese national identity just by eating Japanese food. They were not even interested in what they were eating, it just had to be labelled Japanese, and in so doing recreate a Japanese identity. In this sense, Brillant-Savarin's famous quote, 'Tell me what you eat and I will tell you what you are'[46] is turned around: if you do not want to be what you are, eat to become what you want to be.

However, even where the motives vary significantly among the (local) Japanese customers, who visit Shirokiya regularly, they all have one central aspect in common: at Shirokiya, it is Japanese food that serves best to fulfil their hopes, wishes and aspirations. It helps them deal with homesickness and to indulge in memories of Japan. It is the only place in

[46] Belasco, *Food*, 1.

Hawai'i where Japanese and Japanese-American food is separated and where a seemingly 'authentic Japanese environment' is created. In Honolulu, Shirokiya plays a key role in constructing Japanese national identity by means of Japanese food. Even so, the ways in which the different groups construct, deal with, and maintain this Japanese national identity in Hawai'i differ greatly.

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**Jutta Teuwsen** is a Ph.D. candidate at the Institute for Modern Japanese Studies at Düsseldorf University in Germany. She recieved a master's degrees in Philosophy and Arts and another master's degree in Contemporary East Asian Studies. Her research interests are the Japanese diaspora and contemporary Japanese arts.

# Part 4

## Agricultural Politics of Self-Sufficiency and Dependency

# Japan in the International Food Regimes: Understanding Japanese Food Self-Sufficiency Decline

Felice Farina

## Introduction

Japan's food self-sufficiency rate was 73% in 1960, but it fell rapidly and reached 39% in 2011; the lowest among major industrialized countries.[1] The food self-sufficiency rate, which is based on calorific intake, refers to the ratio of calorie supply from domestically produced food to the total calorie consumed by each person on a daily basis. In other words, this means that of the 2,415 kcal that each Japanese person consumes every day, only 947 kcal come from food produced within the borders of the country.[2] This drastic decline has been attributed to both a weakening of

[1] MAFF, 'Shokuryō jikyūritsu to wa'.

[2] There are several methods to calculate the food self-sufficiency rate (e.g. in terms of monetary or production value), however the method based on calories is, with minor adjustments, the most widely used in academic papers and policy discussions.

F. Farina (✉)
Kyoto University, Kyoto, Japan
e-mail: felice.farina@outlook.it

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domestic production, as well as to a radical change in dietary habits in post-war years. On the one hand, the small farm sizes, the aging farming population, the decline of farming income, and a fall in cultivable land have reduced Japan's capability to produce enough food to meet the needs of its population. On the other hand, the lifestyle of Japanese consumers changed from a traditional diet to a westernized one, with an increase in the consumption of meat, wheat, oils, dairy products, and a decrease in the consumption of 'traditional' food, such as rice, that has led to a major consumption of imported food.[3] Some scholars have focused on the political causes behind the decline in Japan's food self-sufficiency.[4] They assert that post-war agricultural protectionism, in particular the prolonged protection of the rice sector above other goods, has been a hindrance to Japan's agricultural productivity growth. According to these authors, this protectionist policy has arisen as a result of the Liberal Democratic Party's strategy to strengthen its electoral support among the rural population. Others have tried to analyse the international causes that affected the increase in Japan's food dependency, highlighting the influence of the USA and international organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) in opening Japan's agricultural market and, thus, in letting the food self-sufficiency rate decline.[5]

Japan's high dependence on food imports raises concerns to the government, and in particular to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (*Nōrinsuisanshō,* MAFF), about Japan's capacity to ensure stable and secure food supplies in the mid to long term. According to the MAFF, a low food self-sufficiency rate is a risk factor for Japan's national food security because it makes Japan more exposed to the fluctuations of the international food market, resulting from, for example, food crises due to bad harvests, structural changes in world food markets, or political turmoil altering international trade. Therefore, in recent years the government and the MAFF have put in place a range of measures,

[3] Ministry of Agriculture, Forestries and Fishery. 'Shokuseikatsu to shokuryō jikyūritsu no kankei'.

[4] See George Mulgan, 'Electoral Determinants', 875–899 and *Japan's Interventionist State* (2005); Yamashita, 'Tokei no hari'.

[5] See: Suzuki, *Shokuryō no sensō*.

such as Food Action Nippon or the Law on Food Education, analysed in detail by Assmann and Reiher in their contributions to this volume, in order to increase the food self-sufficiency rate to 45% by 2025.[6] It is important to note that in Japan there is a strong academic debate between the scholars who support MAFF policy and claim that Japan should increase its self-sufficiency in order to improve food security,[7] and those who assert that food security and food self-sufficiency are not necessarily related (an example often cited is North Korea, which has a food self-sufficiency rate of almost 100% but is not food secure) and that food security can be achieved through friendly international relations with exporting countries, thus securing a food supply system.[8]

The present chapter draws upon a food regime approach and explores the interaction between international food trade dynamics and Japanese policymaking in a long-term perspective in order to explain how Japan became so heavily dependent on imported food. As such, it shows how the food regime perspective, which scholars have barely applied to the Japanese case, is indeed particularly useful in analysing Japan's dependence on food imports.

The aim of this work is twofold. Empirically, it aims to put the analysis of Japanese food dependence into the historical framework of food regime theory, understanding how Japan reacted to the structuring of the global food system and how it contributed to it. Theoretically, it attempts to relativize the western-centrism of the food-regime theory. Some authors criticize the fact that food regime theorists have concentrated on too few countries for a complete reading of global food development. They claim that those theorists fail to accommodate the differentiated experiences of nation states and underplay national variations, relying heavily on explaining international regulation in terms of

[6] The target has been reviewed several times, due to the difficulties in achieving it. In 2000, the government announced the Basic Plan for Agriculture and Rural Areas (*Shokuryō nōgyō nōson kihon keikan*), where it decided to raise the food self-sufficiency rate from 40% to 45% by 2010. In 2010, a new plan provided for an increase in the rate to 50% by 2020. The last plan of 2015 provides, as we have seen, a target of 45% by 2024.

[7] See: Shimazaki, *Shokuryō jikyūritsu*; Suematsu, *Shokuryō jikyūritsu no naze?*.

[8] See: Asakawa, *Nihon wa sekai*; Hayami, *Nōgyō keizairon*, and 'Food Security: Fallacy or Reality?'; Honma, 'Sekai no shokuryō', 1–30, and *Gendai Nihon no nōgyō*; Tashiro, *Shokuryō jikyūritsu*.

US hegemony.[9] Other scholars have tried to investigate the relation between the dynamics of international food regimes and Japan's food situation, but they tend to focus on one particular food regime[10] or on a single bilateral relation.[11] Here, I assume that an overall and long-term analysis of Japan's international food trade is essential to understanding the causes of Japan's low level of food self-sufficiency.

This study attempts to fill this gap in the literature. I will not only apply the food regime theory to Japanese experience, but will also try to show how Japan played a crucial role in the formation of the rules that underpinned the three historical food regimes identified by Friedmann and McMichael, which will be analysed in detail in the following paragraphs.

## Theoretical Framework

Food regime analysis was first introduced by agrarian sociologist Harriet Friedmann in 1987, but it is an article Friedmann wrote with Philip McMichael in 1989, which appeared for the first time in *Sociologia Ruralis* in 1989, titled 'Agriculture and the State System: The Rise and Decline of National Agricultures, 1870 to the Present', which can be considered the seminal work of food regime theory. Since its first formulation, food regime analysis has been applied to innumerable global phenomena related to food, and it has proven to be 'one of the most durable perspectives in agrarian studies'.[12]

A simple definition of 'food regime' is given by Friedmann, who describes the concept as a 'rule-governed structure of production and consumption of food on a world scale'.[13] According to Friedmann, the

[9] Goodman and Watts, 'Reconfiguring the Rural', 1–49.
[10] Okada, 'The Role of Japan'.
[11] Araki, 'Fūdo rejīmu ron', 31–49 and ibid. 'Senzeki chōsen', 15–29.
[12] Buttel, 'Some Reflections', 23.
[13] Friedmann, 'The Political Economy of Food', 30–31.

food regime is 'partly about international relations of food, and partly about the world food economy'.[14]

Food regime analysis draws heavily on political science and sociological literature. First of all, the Friedmann-McMichael food regime theory owes much to the international relations concept of an 'international regime' that, in the words of Stephen Krasner, is a set of explicit or implicit 'principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actor expectations converge in a given issue area'.[15] The first to talk about 'food regime' were the two international regime theorists Donald J. Puchala and Raymond F. Hopkins.[16] They write that the post-war food regime was the result of the creation of international food organizations (e.g. the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [FAO]), the growth of the USA as a supplier of grain to the world market, and the diffusion of new farming practices.[17]

In her first article on food regimes of 1982 (here she uses the expression 'international food order'), Friedmann asserts that the Hopkins and Puchala study is ambiguous about the relation between international power and international economy and that it overemphasizes production and distribution.[18] Thus, in her later works, she draws insights from Aglietta's French Regulation Theory and Wallerstein's World Systems perspective in order to formulate her original concept of food regimes. The regulationists see the history of capitalism as a succession of phases, each distinguished by certain historically developed, socio-institutionally defined structural forms that give rise, so long as they are maintained, to distinctive economic trends and patterns.[19] At the basis of the World Systems perspective, is the idea that the organization of geographic spaces is the result of a long historical process, and the unit of analysis is not the single state but the 'world system', that is a historical, social system of interdependent parts that form a bound structure and operate according to

[14] Ibid., 31.
[15] Krasner, 'Structural Causes', 185–205.
[16] Hopkins and Puchala, 'International Regimes', 61–93.
[17] Ibid., 76.
[18] Friedmann, 'The Political Economy of Food', 254.
[19] Aglietta, *Régulation et crises du capitalisme*.

distinctive rules.[20] By combining these two theories, the food regime approach has tried to develop a world-historical perspective of the transformation of international relations of food and has conceptualized the logic of world systems 'as being as much or more political-epochal rather than mainly economic-cyclical'.[21] It can therefore be argued that the key innovation of this theory has been the capability to situate the dynamics of the agri-food sector in a world-historical perspective.

Friedmann and McMichael identified three global food regimes in history.[22] The first food regime covers the period between 1870 and 1930,[23] when, within a general rhetoric of free trade and the system of the gold standard, European countries imported cheap tropical products such as sugar, coffee, tea, and tropical oils, from their colonies and from settler states like the USA, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, in exchange for capital and manufactured goods.[24] The second food regime started in the 1950s and lasted until the 1973 food crisis. This regime saw the emergence of the USA as the new world *agricultural* power, thanks to the results of agricultural policy implemented after the economic depression in the 1930s that increased American production, thus generating food surpluses. In order to dispose of agricultural surpluses, 'food aid' was created as a policy instrument. Foreign economic aid was based on the role of the dollar under the Bretton Woods monetary system. Within this system, the USA started to distribute food surpluses to countries or regions that were facing food shortages, such as Europe with the Marshall Plan or Japan, as we will see in detail in the following paragraphs. Food aid was not only a solution to the domestic agricultural

[20] Wallerstein, *The Modern World System*.

[21] Buttel, 'Some Reflections', 24.

[22] In their first article (1989), Friedmann and McMichael talked about only two historical food regimes, the pre-war and the post-war food regimes. Philip McMichael supposed the emergence of a third food regime in (1992), and its main characteristics have been analysed in later studies. See: Friedmann, 'From Colonialism to Green Capitalism', 227–264; McMichael, 'Global Development', 265–299; Pechlaner and Otero. 'The Neoliberal Food Regime', 179–208.

[23] In this chapter, I make use of McMichael's periodization. Friedmann (2005) prefers to date the first food regime between 1870 and 1914, others between 1860 and 1914. See: Winders, 'The Vanishing Free Market', 315–344.

[24] Friedmann, 'From Colonialism', 242.

situation; it also served as a foreign policy tool. Particularly in the context of Cold War rivalry with the USSR, it was used as an instrument of containment, by strengthening ties with recipient countries.[25] The second food regime entered into crisis in 1973, when the world faced the biggest food crisis since 1945. In 1972, in the climate of *détente*, the USA and the USSR made a deal over the sale of wheat and other grain commodities. This deal created an unexpected shortage of grain on the international market, noticeably pushing food prices up.[26] As such, the main feature of the second food regime – food surpluses – disappeared. There is some debate in the literature about the contours of the third food regime.[27] However, a number of main features have been identified: (1) an increased global trading of food; (2) the development of new biotechnology; (3) consumers' fragmentation and dietary change; (4) deregulation of the farm sector, promoted by international organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and WTO.[28] However, two characteristics deeply distinguish this regime from the previous one: (1) the emergence of new centres of food production in developing countries (mostly in Latin America and Asia), the so-called new agricultural countries (NACs); and (2) the creation of new commercial relations led by transnational agribusiness corporations that have undercut the ability of single states to regulate their domestic agriculture and trade.[29]

This historical framework offered by food regime theory provides a notable theoretical advantage, which is to focus on the *historicity* of political and economic factors that characterize a particular food regime. The theory is thus particularly useful for examining the origin of Japanese food dependence from an international and long-term perspective, and for understanding the structure of the international food system and the ways in which Japan is linked to it.

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[25] Friedmann, 'The Political Economy of Food', 39–42.

[26] Luttrell, *The Russian Wheat Deal.*

[27] See: Friedmann, 'From Colonialism'; McMichael, 'A Food Regime Genealogy', 139–169; Pechlaner and Otero, 'The Neoliberal Food Regime'; Pritchard, 'The Long Hangover', 297–307.

[28] Le Heron, *Globalized Agriculture,* 144.

[29] McMichael, 'Tensions', 343–365

## Japan During the First Food Regime (1918–1945)

In the East Asian context, the first food regime can be applied to the period of Japanese colonization of East Asia (1895–1945). After the victory against China during the first Sino-Japanese war (1894–1895), Japan obtained control of the island of Formosa (now Taiwan), which became its first colony. The victory against Russia in the Russo-Japanese war (1904–1905) gave Japan control of Korea, which was annexed in 1910, and southern Manchuria, where Japan established a puppet regime, called 'Manchukuo', in the 1930s. Like the European colonial powers, Japan likewise exploited its colonies to procure goods and raw materials that were scarce at home. As Japan developed as an industrial and urbanized country, the colonies were exploited particularly for their agricultural products.

But it was only in 1918, the year of the Rice Riots (*Kome Sōdō*), that the Japanese government applied the mechanisms of the first food regime to its colonies. In fact, before the 1920s, Japan used to import food from Thailand, French Indochina, China, and also from the USA.[30]

The restructuring of the empire was intensified when the British and French colonial authorities imposed export restrictions on Southeast Asian rice, after the outbreak of World War I. Thanks to new developments in the agricultural sector in the Meiji period, Japan had been able to transfer labour from agriculture to industry without reducing agricultural output. However, agricultural production had also slowed down since the 1910s, causing a sharp increase in food prices. This led to many protests all over the country against the increase in rice prices, the above-mentioned Rice Riots, in 1918.[31] These protests served as a direct stimulus for the Japanese government to find new sources of cheap food

[30] Ōmameuda, Minoru, *Kindai Nihon,* 89.

[31] Ho, 'Colonialism and Development', 349.

supply in the colonies and to make the empire self-sufficient in food.[32] At the same time, Japanese authorities considered the German defeat in 1918 to be the result of Germany's high dependency on outside resources required for the war.[33] For this reason, it was clear to them that Japan needed to build an empire that was self-sufficient in raw materials, including food. Thus, in 1918, Japan implemented the 'Plan for the increase of rice production' (*Sanmai zōshoku keikaku*). According to this plan, Japanese authorities would pursue the promotion of rice production through agricultural research and extension systems, as well as irrigation and drainage infrastructure in the colonies. Domestically, the country would protect the internal market from rice imports from the rest of the world.[34] The Japanese strategy significantly altered the agricultural sector of these territories, shifting them towards export-oriented food production. Consequently, in the period between 1918 and 1932, rice imports from Korea and Taiwan rose from 38.8% to 63.2% and from 15.4% to 25.0%, respectively, whereas imports from other areas decreased from 45.8% to 11.8%.[35] As such, Korea and Taiwan were transformed into Japan's 'agricultural appendages'.[36]

Unlike Korea and Taiwan, Japanese interests in Manchuria were related more to its commercial and strategic importance. However, *Mantetsu* (South Manchuria Railway Company), the Japanese railway company that controlled the Southern Manchuria railway zone, promoted agricultural development by expanding soybean production in the region. Soybean production and trade became so important for the Manchurian economy that it was termed *daizu keizai, or* 'soybean economy'.[37] The intention of exploiting Manchuria as a land to produce agricultural products for export to Japan was confirmed in the 'Quinquennial Plan for Industrial Development in Manchuria' (1937),

[32] Honma and Hayami, 'Distortions', 3.
[33] Collingham, *The Taste of War,* 6.
[34] Honma and Hayami, 'Distortions', 4.
[35] Francks, *Rural Economic Development*, 170.
[36] Ho, 'Colonialism and Development', 350.
[37] Fumio, *Kindai Nihon*, 45.

which established some agricultural production targets, such as soybeans, corn, and millet.[38]

The increased export of rice and other primary commodities meant that Japan's colonies depended on agriculture economically. On the other hand, this system helped Japan to specialize in labour-intensive manufacturing based on farm-supplied materials such as silk reeling, tea processing, and cotton weaving.[39] In the Japanese case, this system came to an end at the conclusion of the war, when the country's defeat abruptly stopped access to these resources.

## Japan During the Second Food Regime (1947–1973)

The loss of its colonies meant for Japan also the loss of its principal sources of food. During the first two years of occupation (1945–1952), this meant that Japan was not able to provide its population with the adequate quantity of food needed. General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Allied Powers Commander (SCAP), who led the Allied occupation of Japan, arrived in Tokyo on August 30, 1945, and found himself in charge of a country that was dying of starvation. At the time, it was common to use the expression *takenoko no seikatsu* (literally 'bamboo-shoot existence') to describe the situation of deprivation the Japanese people were experiencing. As the edible bamboo shoot can be peeled off in layers, so too were the city people obliged to deprive themselves of clothes and other possessions in order to buy food.[40] One of the first measures taken by MacArthur was to prohibit Allied personnel from eating scarce Japanese food, but mass starvation was not considered a priority problem by the US government.[41]

[38] Johnston, *Japan Food Management,* 60.

[39] Honma and Hayami, 'Distortions', 4.

[40] Dower, *Embracing Defeat,* 93.

[41] For a detailed analysis of SCAP's food measures, see: Fuchs, 'Feeding the Japanese', 26–47.

According to Washington, the first aim of the occupation policy was to *destroy* all vestiges of Japan's military, economic, and political structure. As the Basic Directive for Post-Surrender Military Government in Japan Proper (JCS 1380/15) stated, 'You [SCAP] will not assume any responsibility for the economic rehabilitation of Japan or the strengthening of the Japanese economy', and the Japanese alone were made responsible for avoiding 'acute economic distress'.[42] However, the Japanese people were to rely on black markets to survive and the shortage of food sparked demonstrations throughout 1946 for the free delivery of rice and other food.[43] On May 19 of that year, over 250,000 demonstrators gathered in front of the Imperial Palace in Tokyo to demand food. The protest became known as Food May Day (*shokuryō mēdē*). The SCAP was alarmed by the protest but it was fully aware of the gravity of the situation and desperately lobbied Washington for further assistance.[44] Former American President Herbert Hoover, who led the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency (UNRRA) Mission that arrived in Japan in early May 1946, also attested to the precarious situation of Japan's food supply and declared that without food imports, Japan would fall to a level comparable to the 'Buchenwald and Belsen concentration camps'.[45] As a result of the UNRRA report and the SCAP fears, Washington agreed to dispatch several ships of rice and wheat to Japan.

However, it was only in 1947 that the American approach changed and the mechanisms of the second food regime were implemented in Japan. It was the emergence of the Cold War, around 1947, which led to a significant change in the international arena, and also influenced the American occupation strategy in the archipelago. The USA sought to bring Japan into the anti-Soviet line of defence in Asia and gradually

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[42] *Basic Initial Post-Surrender Directive to Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers for the Occupation and Control of Japan* (JCS11380/14), Part II, A. Economic. http://www.ndl.go.jp/constitution/e/shiryo/01/036/036tx.html.

[43] See: Cwiertka, 'Beyond Black Market', 89–107.

[44] Takemae, *The Allied Occupation of Japan*, 409.

[45] 'Feed Japan or Face Disorder: Hoover Warns'. *Chicago Tribune,* May 7, 1946. http://archives.chicagotribune.com/1946/05/07/page/1/article/feed-japan-or-face-disorder-hoover-war.

abandoned the policy of constraining the Japanese economy. At the start of the US fiscal year (July 1946–June 1947), the USA established the Government and Relief in Occupied Areas (GARIOA) programme, in order to provide food aid to Japan and Germany. A little later, at the beginning of the 1949 US fiscal year (July 1948–June 1949), the USA also established the Economic Rehabilitation in Occupied Areas (EROA) programme to provide food, raw materials, and machinery. The provision of official US aid to Japan continued until the end of June 1951.[46] Once the occupation ended, the USA was worried about the possibility of an eventual decrease in Japan's imports of agricultural products. Thus, US trade representatives insisted that Japan liberalize its agricultural market. In Japan as well, business organizations, led by *Keidanren* (the Japan Federation of Employers' Associations), were applying pressure on the government to liberalize agriculture imports in order to expand their export market for manufactured goods and gain access to cheap raw materials (including foodstuffs).[47] The Japanese government decided to agree to the US proposals and on March 8, 1954 signed the *USA-Japan Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement,* under Section 550 of the *Mutual Security Act* of 1951.[48] This agreement provided for the sale of American surplus wheat, valued at $50 million. But there was another aspect that encouraged Japan to accept the treaty, which was the possibility to pay for the food provisions in yen rather than in dollars. This helped Japan to use its stocks of foreign currency (mainly dollars) for the supply of other raw materials it needed.[49] Besides, this sum was not paid directly to the US Treasury but was used to finance American forces stationed in Japan.[50]

It should be noted that after 1945 Japan's government placed priority on increasing agricultural production in order to produce enough food to nourish a starving population, and the share of the national budget for

[46] Takagi, 'From Recipient to Donor.' *International Finance* 196 (1995): 6.
[47] Bernier, 'The Japanese Peasantry', 85.
[48] Full text available at: http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/treaty/pdfs/A-S38(3)-252.pdf.
[49] Kishi, *Shoku to nō no sengoshi*, 90.
[50] Ohno, 'Japanese Agriculture Today'.

agriculture grew constantly. However, beginning in 1954, when the wheat agreement was signed, the portion of the national budget allotted to agriculture began to decrease, despite the fact that national food production was still insufficient to meet domestic demand.[51] This explains the Japanese government's choice to abandon its policy of encouraging national food production and to promote food importations.

On July 7, 1954, the USA promulgated the *Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act,* also known as Public Law 480 or PL480. As for the MSA wheat agreement with Japan, PL480 allowed the recipient countries of American food aid to pay for agricultural products in local currency, giving them the opportunity to preserve their reserves of dollars. On the other hand, the USA would have used the currency received for economic or military investments in that country.

Japan signed two agreements with the USA under the PL480. The first was signed on May 31, 1955, and provided for sales of wheat and barley, as well as tobacco and cotton, valued at $85 million. The second was signed on February 10, 1956, and provided agricultural commodities worth $65.8 million.[52] The aim of these agreements was twofold: on the one hand, it enabled the USA to dispose of its agricultural surpluses and Japan to buy the food needed at a convenient price; on the other hand, the agreements strengthened the military alliance between the two countries, allowing the USA to build up military infrastructure at the US bases in Japan and allowing Japan to rebuild its arms industry. This was possible because, as we have seen, these agreements were signed under the condition of Section 550 of MSA and PL480, giving Japan the opportunity to pay for food imports in yen, thereby retaining its foreign exchange reserves for financing its industries. On the other hand, the USA used the yen payments to acquire assets in Japan and invest in its military industry. In particular, the agreements of 1955 and 1956 established that the USA would have used 20% and 49% of the yen received, respectively, 'to procure military

[51] Ibid.

[52] Full texts available at: http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/treaty/pdfs/A-S38(3)-260.pdf; and http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/treaty/pdfs/A-S38(3)-261_1.pdf.

equipment, material, facilities and services for the common defense'. Many Japanese firms benefitted from these investments: Komatsu used the funds for the production of bulldozers; Mitsubishi and Kawasaki produced under license the F-86 and the T-33, Japan's first post-war military aircraft.[53]

A portion of the yen funds was spent on promoting the sale of US agricultural products. An example of these are the School Lunch Act (*Gakkō kyūshoku hō*), which provided Japanese children with bread, milk, and meat, and the 'kitchen cars' programme, which showed Japanese housewives how to use these products with new recipes.[54] Between 1954 and 1964, Japan received $445 million in PL480 food aid and imported $10.8 billion of food from conventional trading channels.[55] As such, Japan became the number one importer of US food and its food self-sufficiency rate started to decline steadily.

## Japan During the Third Food Regime (Since 1973)

As already shown, the second food regime entered into crisis in the early 1970s, when the US *détente* with the Soviet Union in 1972–1973 cleared surplus grain stocks for the first time in the post-war period. This situation pushed the USA to impose an embargo on different agricultural products. It was the 1973 embargo on soybean exports which affected Japan significantly, as over 90% of the imported soy came from the USA, while Japan accounted for over 20% of American soybean exports.[56] The embargo lasted only a few days – from June 27 to July 2 – and it was soon replaced by a system of export control until October of the same year. From a mere agricultural and economic point of view, the embargo did neither change Japanese food imports nor did

[53] Samuels, *Rich Nation Strong Army,* 150.

[54] Kishi. *Shoku to nō no sengoshi*, 27.

[55] Moen, 'The Postwar Japanese Agricultural Debacle', 35.

[56] United States International Trade Commission. *U.S. Embargoes on Agricultural Exports,* 5.

it provoke an increase in food prices, but the psychological effects were notable. For the first time in the post-war period, Japan understood the fragility of its food supply system and the risks linked to heavy dependence on a single supplier. The Japanese government thus decided to launch a food diversification strategy, encouraging joint public-private ventures to consolidate alternative food sources. During the 1970s and the 1980s, Japan applied the principle of *kaihatsu-yunyū* (literally 'development and imports') for Official Development Assistance (ODA) projects. Japanese authorities used ODA funds to promote agricultural development in developing countries: soybeans in Brazil, corn in Thailand and Indonesia, coarse grain in South Africa, China, Argentina, and Australia.[57] Moreover, through tax incentives, the government tried to help Japanese agribusiness corporations to invest in these countries in order to produce food for import to Japan.[58] The most famous of these projects is probably the PRODECER, a 22-year programme started in 1979 for the development of soybean production in Cerrado, a vast area in central Brazil. The Japanese government provided 28 billion yen of ODA for the transformation of over 334,000 hectares of Cerrado into soybean farmland.[59]

In this way, Japan changed its strategy of food supply and diversified its supply sources. Japan's transnational corporations became the new protagonists of this change and the examples of investments in the agricultural sectors all over the world are innumerable. A non-exhaustive list of the most important investments abroad includes: Mitsui Corporations, one of the largest Japanese corporations, purchases grain at ports in producer countries for import to Japan and controls over 120,000 hectares of farmland in Brazil for the production of soybeans; Nissin Food Products, a major Japanese instant noodle producer, invested in China in the acquisition of 16 factories, 120 sales offices, and 14,000 workers for the production of instant noodles for export to Japan; Itochu Corporation formed a joint venture in China to grow

[57] Hillman and Rothenberg. *Agricultural Trade,* 46–47.
[58] Hongo and Hosono, *Burajiru no fumō,* 3.
[59] See: http://www.maff.go.jp/j/kokusai/kokkyo/toushi/pdf/1304mgj4.pdf.

cucumbers for pickles and Chinese cabbage and formed a joint venture with Brazilian corporations for the development of soybean production in Mozambique; Sojitz invested in Ukraine in the production of non-GMO soybeans; since 1964, Yakult Honsha has expanded its production in Taiwan, the USA, Brazil, Korea, Australia; other food processing companies, especially of rice products such as rice crackers, have invested in Australia to access cheaper supplies of this grain; Japanese firms also invested in Australian beef production, in order to ensure product quality and safety standards and to create a more secure supply chain.[60]

From a food regime perspective, these data show how Japan is playing a primary role in the creation of a new global system of food trade and how it is trying to preserve its own food security by means of a strategy based on the diversification of food supplies and investment in new food production in every corner of the globe, posing a major challenge to US supremacy in food exports.

## Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted how the food regime approach represents an original tool for interpreting the decline in Japan's food self-sufficiency, especially at a time when the debate on Japan's participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the food-security risks related to this involvement is flaring up, both at political and academic levels.

Japan's food dependency has generally been understood as a consequence of industrialization, economic growth, and changing dietary habits, while, in fact, it was shaped by a combination of multiple factors. The food regime approach has allowed us to put the decline in food self-sufficiency in a historical perspective, in order to show how food dependence has been strongly influenced by the international structure of the food trade and by internal and external determinants of Japan's foreign policy. As has been stressed in this work, Japan's food dependence on imported goods dates back to World War II when Japan relied on food supplies from its colonies.

[60] Farrell, *Japanese Investment,* 105–126.

During the colonial period, Japanese authorities decided to concentrate national resources on the development of the military and defence sectors. In this way, Japanese colonies served as 'agricultural appendages' that supplied cheap food to Japan's urban population. After the country's defeat, Japan's imperial system collapsed, and the Allied Forces occupied the country. During that time, Japan imported a notable amount of agricultural products from the USA under the food aid programme, and even once it had regained independence, the country continued to be a major market for the USA However, even though Japan became the main importer of American agricultural products, the choice to import more foodstuffs from the USA concealed a hidden agenda to protect and develop Japan's interests in industrial and military sectors. After the world food crisis in 1973, Japan promoted the expansion of its agribusiness corporations in 'new agricultural countries', in order to diversify the sources of its food supplies and create a secure network of food imports.

In light of the findings of the study at hand, it is possible to claim that Japan's food security and food self-sufficiency cannot be fully evaluated without reference to the international context and Japan's broader economic security interests.

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**Felice Farina** obtained his Ph.D. at the University of Naples 'L'Orientale', Department of Asian Studies, under Prof. Noemi Lanna. He is currently a researcher student at Kyoto University, with a Japanese Government (Monbukagakusho) scholarship. His current research activity focuses on the relation between Japan's international relations and Japan's food security.

# The Trans-Pacific Partnership, Import Dependency, and the Future of Food Security in Japan

Paul O'Shea

Japanese agriculture is in a bad way. Massive government subsidies and high import tariffs have failed to stem the inexorable tide of declining productivity, increasing import dependence, and falling area of land under cultivation. Against this backdrop those calling for the liberalization of the agricultural sector have gained ground in recent years. Yet agricultural policy, be it in Japan or elsewhere, is determined by much more than efficiency and comparative advantage. Indeed, the patterns of production, distribution, and consumption of food in Japan are subject to a variety of factors, including identity politics, perceptions of food risks, and rural policy.[1] The main factor in post-war Japanese agricultural politics was the

[1] For identity politics see also Farina in this volume, perceptions of food risks are also discussed by Reiher, Takeda and Walravens, and rural policy is the topic of Jentzsch's contribution in this volume.

P. O'Shea (✉)
Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark

Lund University, Lund, Sweden
e-mail: paul.m.oshea@gmail.com

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cultivation of rural support by the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), aided by the disparity in weight of rural versus urban votes.[2] The result was a system where the LDP ensured high prices for farmers by effectively limiting foreign competition, and in return enjoyed the support of rural Japan. This chapter argues that today, regional geopolitics is supplanting rural votes as the key factor in Japan's agricultural policy.

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is a trade agreement between states on both sides of the Pacific, representing approximately 40% of the world's gross domestic product (GDP). Yet the TPP is not primarily about trade: it is a product of the US response to China's rise, and as such is a key plank in Washington's 'Asia pivot' (rebalance).[3] The agreement was inked in autumn 2015 and if implemented will have a major impact on food-related issues ranging from Japanese farmers' livelihoods to the ability of the state to ensure food security and food safety. Indeed, the consequences of the TPP for Japanese agriculture will be more dramatic than anything seen since the US occupation era land reforms. The first half of this chapter traces the background and development of the TPP in the context of regional geopolitics. It begins with a brief account of previous attempts at agricultural reform and domestic politics behind the eventual participation in the TPP. This is followed by a sketch of the emergence of the TPP itself in terms of the emerging US-China rivalry, emphasizing the role of the TPP in US regional security policy. Indeed, US Secretary of Defence Ash Carter told an audience on the topic of the Asia pivot, 'passing TPP is as important to me as another aircraft carrier'.[4] Japan's entry into the TPP is shown to be less about free trade and liberalization and more about the desire to cement relations with the USA and shore-up the alliance. The second half of the chapter assesses the implications of the TPP for agriculture,

[2] Malapportionment – despite the large-scale post-war migration from rural constituencies to urban ones, these constituencies were left as they were. The result: votes of rural dwellers came to be worth as much as four or five times as much as those of their urban counterparts.

[3] The 'pivot' was renamed 'rebalance' due to the fear that a 'pivot' would imply the USA was winding down its activities and presence in the Middle East.

[4] Carter, 'Remarks on the Next Phase of the U.S. Rebalance to the Asia-Pacific', (lecture, McCain Institute, Arizona State University, April 6, 2015).

rural regions, and food security in Japan. It examines the current precarious state of Japanese agriculture and outlines the arguments in favour of liberalization. The chapter then turns to the potential negative consequences of the TPP, considering Japan's declining rural regions and food security. The chapter concludes that in many ways, the domestic debate regarding liberalization, culinary nationalism, and food security has been trumped by geopolitical considerations and the political elite's desire to contain China and strengthen the Japan-US alliance. Simply put, the desire to eat Japanese may not be as strong as the desire to hedge against China.

## Japan and the TPP

Given the grave state of Japanese agriculture, it is perhaps unsurprising that a scholarly consensus is developing around the idea of massive structural reform. For many reform-minded scholars, analysts, and politicians, the TPP represents the most promising catalyst for reform.[5] The TPP is a regional free trade agreement (FTA) in the Asia-Pacific which has its origins in the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement (TPSEP) concluded between Singapore, Chile, Brunei, and New Zealand. In 2008, the USA opened negotiations, quickly followed by Australia, Vietnam, and Peru, with Malaysia joining in 2010 and Canada and Mexico in 2012. The agreement's stated aim is to reduce barriers to trade among member states by completely eliminating protectionist measures such as tariffs and subsidies and harmonizing regulations across the member states.[6]

Prime Minister Koizumi (2000–2006), a neoliberal reformer, was the first Japanese prime minister to seriously push agricultural reform as part of his attempts to restructure Japan's economy. Agricultural reform was one prong in his attempt to gain access to foreign markets through

[5] Naoi and Urata, 'Free Trade Agreements', 326–349; Solís and Katada, 'Unlikely Pivotal States'; Harada, 'Japan's Agriculture and the TPP'.

[6] For an outline of the implications of the TPP for Japan, see Cooper and Manyin, 'Japan Joins the Trans-Pacific Partnership'.

signing FTAs.[7] However, his main battle was the privatization of Japan Post, and although he publicly stated his desire to implement 'drastic reform', the eventual reforms were modest.[8] From 2009, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), a more urban-focused party, took power. Prime Minister Kan Naoto was the first Japanese prime minister to publicly announce interest in joining the TPP negotiations in 2010, going as far as to call the TPP the 'third opening of Japan', after the Black Ships of 1853 and the defeat in 1945.[9] Prime Minister Noda Yoshihiko went one step further in 2011 when he announced that Japan would begin pre-negotiations with a view to full participation.[10] However, neither administration was strong enough to sideline the anti-TPP voices within the party, who cited not only damage to agriculture but also food safety and the healthcare system, among others.[11]

Meanwhile, the LDP seemed to oppose the DPJ's moves to join the agreement, at least until Abe Shinzō took over leadership in the September 2012. Even then, the election manifesto was ambiguous, stating only that any agreement to participate would be based on the party's own evaluation criteria and would not involve 'throw-away compromises'.[12] This apparent resistance was unsurprising given the party's long-standing links with the countryside. However, shortly after assuming office, the new Abe administration announced that Japan would formally join the TPP negotiations. Although this was seen as a major U-turn, and Abe had previously come out against the agreement, shortly before the election he had in fact floated the idea of joining.[13] During his previous stint as prime minister, Abe had shown little interest in economic reform, rolling back some of Koizumi's policies and focusing instead on his own political agenda of patriotic education and constitutional revision. His tenure was unpopular and

[7] George Mulgan, *Japan's Agricultural Policy Regime.*
[8] Ibid, 276.
[9] Kan, 'A Message from the Prime Minister'.
[10] Solis and Katada, 'Unlikely Pivotal States'.
[11] Solis, 'Japan's Big Bet'.
[12] Liberal Democratic Party of Japan, *Election Manifesto*, (2012).
[13] 'Noda to tell Obama Japan Positive about TPP'.

short-lived. Interestingly agriculture, in the form of scandals involving two consecutive agriculture ministers, was part of his downfall first time around. In his second iteration as prime minister, Abe has initially held back on his nationalist agenda, emphasizing the economy with a tripartite set of policies also known as Abenomics. Abenomics demonstrates a pragmatism absent from the first term, but also generates political capital that can be used to advance the less popular, nationalist agenda.[14] Thus, as outlined in the next section, it is likely that Abe's change of heart had less to do with a burning desire to reform the agricultural sector and more to do with his security policy, China, and the Japan-US alliance.

The final agreement announced in October 2015, if implemented, will see the wholesale elimination of tariffs over a wide range of goods, and eventually remove almost all tariffs on all agricultural products. The 'sacred five', dairy products, pork and beef, rice, wheat, and sugar, which have historically enjoyed high levels of protection, were not exempted, but Japanese negotiators did win concessions: the effects on beef vary from product to product, but overall there will be a major reduction in tariffs, with some, such as those on offal and processed beef products, being eliminated.[15] On the other hand, these reductions will take up to 16 years, and even after this a 9% tariff will remain on fresh, chilled, and frozen beef. The story is similar for pork, which has been the subject of exemptions in previous FTAs: tariffs on many pork products will be completely eliminated, while others will see significant reductions, again over 16 years. Dairy, which has seen shortages due to the massive decline in domestic production, will see increased tariff rate quotas (TRQs, import quotas with lower tariffs) and reduced overall tariffs, with the elimination of some tariffs (e.g. cheese) entirely. This will take place over 21 years. All poultry tariffs will be eliminated over the next 13 years. As for sugar and wheat, the final two sacred products, some tariffs will be eliminated, but many will remain, albeit some in a reduced form. However, in both cases Japan will create expanded TRQs of 95,000 tonnes and 150,000 tonnes, respectively. Beyond tariffs, the agreement covers a wide area of issues

[14] Pekkanen and Pekkanen, 'All about Abe'; Hobson, 'The Tragedy of Shinzo Abe'.

[15] United States Department of Agriculture, 'Fact Sheet'.

including the protection of intellectual property rights, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, access for foreign investment, and opening state procurement, much of which is controversial among consumer groups, NGOs, and unions; however, these controversies are beyond the scope of this chapter. Overall, the tariff reductions *are* dramatic and will fundamentally alter the landscape of Japanese agriculture. They will be phased in slowly, however, and the Japanese government is already working on countermeasures in order to lessen the blow. How effective these measures will be, remains to be seen – previous subsidies following the Uruguay round of the General Agreement on Trade Tariffs in 1990 cost the Japanese state 600 million yen, without being tied to any increase in competitiveness for Japanese agriculture.[16] I will return to the implications of these tariff reductions later in the chapter: first, I turn to the development of the TPP as a US-led enterprise, a key plank in the containment of China and the 'Asia pivot'.

## The TPP and the 'Asia Pivot'

US entry into the TPP negotiations in 2008 fundamentally changed the nature and purpose of the agreement. The original TPSEP was an agreement between four small, open, trading states. After the election of Barack Obama, the USA sought to reinsert itself into the Asia-Pacific region, and thus the new aim for the TPP was to broaden it across the region. The move was part of an attempt to rebuff Asian talk of US 'decline' following almost a decade mired in seemingly unwinnable conflicts in the Middle East and South Asia. By 2011, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton had announced that the USA was pivoting to Asia as part of 'America's Pacific Century'.[17] The unstated target of this pivot was China, whose increasing economic and military power was causing – and continues to cause – alarm in Washington. The 'Asia pivot' is fundamentally about reasserting US hegemony in the Asia-Pacific

[16] 'TPP gōi ikinai no hanei to antei no ishizue ni'.
[17] Clinton, 'America's Pacific Century.

region and contains many planks, from maintaining freedom of navigation to the creation of new alliances and the deepening of old ones. But given China's phenomenal economic growth and increasing economic power, containing China militarily is only one aspect of the pivot: maintaining the US-led neoliberal trade order is where the TPP comes in. Key US policymakers have made this very clear. As mentioned earlier, Ashton Carter stated that 'passing TPP is as important to me as another aircraft carrier', while Ely Ratner, a former China-hand at the State department, and Kurt Campbell, former Secretary of State for East Asia and influential Japan-hand, called it a 'cardinal priority' in terms of the pivot.[18] Senator Mitch McConnell, the Republican Senate Leader, stated that enabling the TPP would send America's allies the message that 'we understand they [the allies] are somewhat wary about Chinese commercial and potentially military domination.'[19]

The TPP will define future trade rules in the region according to the preferences of the most influential states in the negotiation: which primarily means the USA. It will (re)integrate the USA into the Asia-Pacific region and, since China is not included, it will be marginalized. Estimates of the costs of the TPP to China vary widely, from 47 billion dollars annually up to as much as 100 billion.[20] Michael Auslin, US analyst and TPP supporter, put it in very simple terms: 'tilt the outcomes of Asian regionalism towards US interests . . . [and] the prevention of a trade order that is dominated by China'.[21] Indeed, the political nature of the TPP seems obvious, but is frequently over-looked by both scholars and the media alike. Time and again scholars and journalists uncritically reproduce statements along the lines of 'China needs to reform in order to meet the "high standards" of the TPP in areas such as state procurement and intellectual property rights'.[22]

[18] Campbell and Ratner, 'Far Eastern Promises'.

[19] Kobayashi, 'TPP's Fate Rests with Japan, US'.

[20] The 47 billion claim comes from the Petersen Institute, as cited in Vanderklippe, 'TPP Deal a Way for US to Reassert Primacy over China'; the 100 billion comes from Davis, 'US Blocks China Efforts to Promote Asia Trade Pact'.

[21] Auslin. 'Getting It Right'.

[22] For example, Itakura and Lee, 'The Implications of the Trans-Pacific Partnership for Japan'.

Moreover, the Vietnamese economy is considered ready for the partnership, but the Chinese economy is not – neither is the much more advanced Taiwanese, as the USA wants to contain China, but not overly aggravate it! Conversely, much is made by pro-TPP scholars and commentators of the environmental and labour protection measures in the agreement, without interrogating how states like Vietnam, Brunei, and perhaps soon Indonesia, will enforce them. For example, Vietnam outlaws independent labour unions, while corruption and incompetence in Indonesia contribute to the annual air pollution haze, a lethal and widespread annual phenomenon which plagues the region.

Japan's accession to the TPP comes at a crucial moment for the Japan-US alliance and Japan's security policy in East Asia. From 2009 to 2010, the new Democratic Party of Japan government attempted its own 'Asia Pivot', seeking to strengthen relations with China and South Korea while making the Japan-US relationship more 'equal'.[23] A pledge to remove a major US base from the southern prefecture of Okinawa became a key issue in Japan-US relations, to the extent that there was talk of a major 'crisis'. Although the policies themselves had the support of the majority of the Japanese people, their poor execution, together with the USA and domestic bureaucratic resistance led to their failure.[24] The new administration was toppled after less than a year. Meanwhile, relations with China plunged to a nadir in the aftermath of flare-ups in 2010 and 2012 in the fractious East China Sea territorial and maritime dispute.

While the new DPJ leaders in Tokyo worried about alliance drift and even abandonment by the USA, the Abe administration saw this as an opportunity to push its own security reforms, which could be framed as a necessary result of *beiatsu* or US pressure. Demonstrating Japan's commitment to the alliance would reassure both Washington and the Japanese people. At the same time, Washington saw Japan's inclusion in the TPP as crucial and stepped

[23] O'Shea, 'Overestimating the "Power Shift"'.

[24] Ibid. See also Hughes, 'The Democratic Party'.

up the pressure on Japan to join. A typical statement of the US perspective: 'Tokyo's successful participation in the TPP is, rightfully or wrongly, a test of how much Japan will remain at the centre of US Asia policy in the coming decades'.[25] The same author wrote that 'if Japan's government is not willing to make commitments to strengthening the liberal, democratic order in Asia, then the United States will be forced to become closer to nations that have no such hesitation'.[26] This is a familiar form of US rhetoric: appealing to the 'liberal, democratic order in Asia' via participation in an agreement that includes an absolutist monarchy and Islamic Sultanate (Brunei) as well as an authoritarian one-party communist state (Vietnam), while not including the only actual liberal democracies in the region apart from Japan: South Korea and Taiwan.

The pressure to join the TPP was part of a broader push to lock Japan into the US side of the growing gulf between China and the US, as Washington sought increased Japanese military spending and reduced institutional restrictions on military deployment – which happens to correlate with Abe's own security policy.[27] In the words of one alliance manager, spending increases 'send a very important signal to Washington that Japan is serious about meeting its own defence responsibility under the security alliance with the United States'.[28] Abe's signing up to the TPP can be seen as part of a broader geopolitical shift which includes the notion of 'proactive pacifism' and the reinterpretation of the constitution to enable collective self-defence.[29] Abe even used Washington's own language on the day he announced Japan's participation in the agreement: 'Japan must remain at the centre of the Asian-Pacific century [ . . . ]. This is our last chance [ . . . ]. If we don't seize it, Japan will be left out.'[30]

[25] Auslin, 'Getting it Right', 29.
[26] Ibid, 29.
[27] O'Shea, 'The East China Sea Maritime and Territorial Dispute'.
[28] Quoted in Mie, Ayako, 'Stop Foot-Dragging on China's Threat: Maher'.
[29] Maslow, 'A Blueprint for a Strong Japan'.
[30] Quoted in Hiroko Tabuchi, 'Japan Moves to Enter Talks on Pacific Trade'.

## The Decline of Japanese Agriculture

The decline of Japanese agriculture has been well-documented (see Jentzsch in this volume). Estimates of the costs of sustaining Japanese agriculture vary: one economist calculates that it costs 4.2 trillion yen while creating only 5.3 trillion yen in added value, thus contributing only approximately 1 trillion yen, less than half of 1% of GDP.[31] Other calculations are even lower, with one suggesting that, costing almost 5 trillion yen but contributing 4.7 trillion, net Japanese agricultural GDP may actually be less than zero.[32] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) figures indicate that as much as half of Japanese farm receipts come in the form of state support, compared with an OECD average of roughly 10%.[33] This massive state support comes despite the tiny contribution agriculture makes to the Japanese economy – essentially the vast sums of money invested can be seen as a kind of 66% consumption tax which results in Japanese consumers paying among the highest food prices in the world in order to sustain Japanese agriculture.[34] Although Japan's average tariff rate is not unusually high, those levied on the 'sacred five' can be as much as 700%.

Despite these huge subsidies and high tariffs, the area of land under cultivation has dropped by almost a third since 1960 and the majority of Japanese farmers are now over 65.[35] Furthermore, only a fraction of Japan's 2.5 million farmer households operate on a full-time basis, with the rest using agriculture to supplement pensions or other jobs.[36] Also, even as the area of land under cultivation drops, state policies, specifically the *gentan* policy of paying farmers to reduce rice cultivation, have resulted in large quantities of farmland being left uncultivated – although in 2013 the Abe administration announced plans to phase

[31] Harada, 'Japan's Agriculture and the TPP'.
[32] Yamashita, 'Ensuring Japan's Food Security'.
[33] OECD, *Producer and Consumer Support Estimates Database*.
[34] Naoi and Urata, 'Free Trade Agreements and Domestic Politics'.
[35] Yamashita, 'The Perilous Decline of Japanese Agriculture'.
[36] Harada, 'Japan's Agriculture and the TPP'.

out the policy by 2018.[37] Meanwhile, the food self-sufficiency rate has fallen from 79% in 1960 to approximately 40% today, with the important exception of rice in which Japan is self-sufficient.[38] This import dependency traditionally involved large-scale food imports from the USA, but today a number of other Asia-Pacific states are occupying an increasing proportion of food imports. China has become a major source of food imports, especially fresh and frozen vegetables and processed food – as outlined later, this increasing dependence on Chinese imports has become a source of controversy in Japan. With the increasing average age of Japanese farmers, the fiscal pressure on state coffers in the face of the 'super-aging society' and the 2011 Triple Disaster, neither the state's agricultural policy nor Japanese agriculture itself appear sustainable in its current form.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) has long defended the protection of Japanese agriculture due to the 'positive externalities' it produces, such as the protection of the natural environment and rural scenery, culture, rural communities, and national food security.[39] This 'multifunctionality' of agriculture was so enthusiastically taken-up by the MAFF that one scholar described it as becoming the 'Ministry of Agriculture, Food Production, Farm Incomes, Agricultural and Rural Public Works, Rural Affairs, Industry and Environment, and Consumers, Food Supply and Food Safety'.[40] Multifunctionality is obviously not a neutral concept, and can be adopted for the defence of protectionist policies and used by ministries to extend their area of regulatory control.[41] As we saw, the so-called 1955 system – in which the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) governed continuously from 1955 to 1993 – relied in large part on electoral support from Japan's rural constituencies. These constituencies were over-represented in the diet:

[37] As demand for rice has decreased consistently since the early 1960s, the government's *gentan* programme keeps prices high by reducing supply through payments to farmers to leave their rice paddies fallow.

[38] Yamashita, 'Ensuring Japan's Food Security'.

[39] Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, 'What Is Multifunctionality of Agriculture?'.

[40] George Mulgan, *Japan's Agricultural Policy Regime*, 167.

[41] Ibid, 29.

the large-scale movement of people from rural to urban areas was not matched by constituency adjustments, meaning that rural votes were (and in many cases still are) literally worth more than urban votes. Also, the former electoral system, using proportional representation, allowed the election of representatives with only a small fraction of the constituency vote (between 15% and 25%), enabling special interests to mobilize and back their own candidates without having to appeal to the broader population. All this led to a powerful farm lobby fronted by Japan Agriculture (JA, aka *Zenchū*), an umbrella co-operative group. This lobby effectively opposed the liberalization of Japanese agriculture throughout the boom years in Japan, but its influence has waned over the past two decades due to electoral reform, the sharp decline in the number of farmers, and Japan's ongoing economic difficulties, and most recently by reforms under the Abe administration.

## The Implications of the TPP for Japan

Perhaps unsurprisingly then, a scholarly consensus is developing around the need for the restructuring of Japanese agriculture, ideally through liberalization, with the TPP seen by some as a potential saviour. This burgeoning literature concentrates on the benefits to agricultural efficiency and the economy more broadly, but pays less attention to the potential negative consequences of liberalization. FTAs such as the TPP always produce winners and losers. Even the pro-TPP *Nikkei* newspaper acknowledged that Japanese agriculture 'is largely acknowledged as a major loser of the deal'.[42]

Economists broadly agree that agricultural subsidies distort markets, put exporters from developing countries at a disadvantage, and cost taxpayers in developed rich countries huge amounts of money.[43] As we have seen, Japan does indeed spend almost as much on subsidizing

[42] Yoshida, 'Japan Farmers'.

[43] Brooks and Cahill, 'Why Agricultural Trade Liberalisation Matters'; Tokarick, 'Dispelling Some Misconceptions'.

agriculture as agriculture itself contributes to the economy, and these policies have so far failed to prevent the continuing decline of the agricultural sector. Japan's accession to the TPP received strong support from politicians in both the LDP and DPJ, the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI), big business federations such as *Keidanren*, all arguing that the benefits of the TPP far outweigh the costs. Assuming ratification, the primary economic beneficiaries will be large manufacturing industries through easier access to foreign markets.[44] Indeed, a METI study stated that staying outside the TPP would cost Japan approximately 10.5 trillion yen and almost 1 million jobs.[45] The final deal does remove tariffs on almost all Japanese industrial exports, although the 2.5% US duty on auto imports will be phased out over 25 years, and Japanese carmakers have already shifted much production abroad in order to avoid tariffs, making use of the North American Free Trade Agreement. Consumers would gain through reductions in prices, especially food prices, as well as access to a wider range of good and services.

The scholarly economic arguments for joining the TPP from an agricultural perspective focus on the inefficiency of the current system and the possibilities for consolidation of farms as small farmers go out of business due to increased competition. The basic argument is that high tariffs together with high subsidies, combined with land-use legislation, has produced an agricultural sector dominated by small farmers (many of whom are part time), in which innovation and efficiency are discouraged. This, in turn, results in high food prices and the ongoing decline in actual agricultural output. Aurelia George Mulgan has published prolifically on Japanese agriculture and is highly critical of both JA and MAFF for their protection of inefficient small farmers. She advocates not only for entry into the TPP but also for increases in land taxes to force out small farmers and encourage farm consolidation and corporate farming (i.e. farms run by corporations rather than households).[46]

[44] Naoi and Urata, 'Free Trade Agreements and Domestic Politics'.

[45] Ibid.

[46] George Mulgan, 'Abe's "Growth" Strategy'.

Similar arguments are made by Harada Yutaka and Michael Auslin, who also advocate trade liberalization through the TPP as well as increased land tax and farm consolidation.[47] Others, such as Godo Yoshihisa, call for the fundamental overhaul of land-use regulations to prevent land hoarding.[48] Almost all emphasize the trade barrier issue. For example, Tanaka Tetsuji and Hosoe Nobuhiro argue that MAFF's protectionist policies to preserve self-sufficiency are 'nonsensical' as they prevent major trade gains in other areas when, according to their simulations, even the abolition of all tariff and non-tariff barriers to rice imports would not significantly affect Japan's food security.[49] Thus, they suggest full liberalization accompanied by some side-payments to compensate farmers. Even those who do not specifically critique the protection of small farmers advocate agricultural liberalization through the TPP.[50]

Beyond the numbers, Japan has lagged behind regional states such as China and South Korea in signing FTAs with other Asia-Pacific states, and opting out of the TPP could have left it even further behind. Also, since the TPP is not merely about reducing trade barriers but the harmonization of social, political, and economic regulations, being the second largest economy in the negotiations enables Japan to shape the future of Asia-Pacific economic activity. Indeed, the sheer size of the TPP zone means that its regulations will have global effects. This is the other side of Prime Minister Abe's previously quoted statement on Japan's participation: 'Japan must remain at the centre of the Asian-Pacific century [ . . . ] This is our last chance [ . . . ] If we don't seize it, Japan will be left out.'[51]

Undoubtedly the arguments in favour of liberalization through the TPP – which at this point in time is by far the most likely catalyst – are strong. Under MAFF's policies, food self-sufficiency has declined dramatically; production is declining, leading even to shortages in key areas

[47] Harada, 'Japan's Agriculture and the TPP'; Auslin, 'Getting it Right'.

[48] Godo, 'The Puzzle of Small Farming in Japan'. Godo and Takahashi, 'Evaluation of Japanese Agricultural Policy'.

[49] Tanaka and Hosoe, 'Does Agricultural Trade Liberalization Increase Risks'.

[50] Solis and Katada, 'Unlikely Pivotal States'; Naoi and Urata, 'Free Trade Agreements and Domestic Politics'.

[51] Tabuchi, 'Japan Moves to Enter Talks'.

such as dairy. However, the situation is far from being as clear-cut as some scholars and politicians suggest. It is certainly true that farming has remained small scale, but as we will see in the next section, this is not necessarily as negative as it is made out to be. Furthermore, the TPP is both broad and deep, trade being only one facet. As Abe's remarks above highlight, the TPP is about far more than agriculture, automobiles, or intellectual property. It is about the future of US leadership in the Asia-Pacific region, and is a fundamental pillar of the US 'Asia Pivot' and the containment of China.[52] Rural Japan may yet be transformed thanks to the developing rivalry between two great external powers.

The chapter turns now to the negative potential implications of liberalization: the agriculture-dependent regions, which are currently protected by the government, such as Tohoku and Kyushu, are already in near-terminal demographic decline. In terms of securing food imports, highly import-dependent states such as Japan find themselves in a potentially precarious position: spikes in grain prices in 2008 and 2009 led to key Asian grain exporters implementing export restrictions[53]; increasing quantities of grain are being diverted for biofuel production[54]; and climate change threatens to further increase the unpredictability of harvests. Conversely, as outlined below, those in favour of the TPP argue that its implementation will help strengthen Japan's relations with the USA and friendly Asia-Pacific states, thus opening up new sources of food imports, thereby simultaneously double-hedging against both geopolitical and food security risks.

## The TPP and Rural Japan

Japan's agricultural trade protectionism doubles as a regional economic policy, since it protects regional economies, especially Hokkaido, Kyushu, and Tohoku. These regions already lag far behind urban

[52] Asia pivot renamed rebalance, see endnote 2.
[53] Headey, 'Rethinking the Global Food Crisis'.
[54] Koizumi, 'Biofuel and Food Security'.

Japan in terms of per capita GDP. This income divide is matched by an ever-widening demographic divide: Japan's rural periphery faces something resembling demographic oblivion in the not too distant future. The National Institute of Population and Social Security Research (IPSS), a Japanese state research body, describes the country as facing a future 'super-aged society … the first experience in human history'.[55] By far the most dramatic effects of this are to be seen in rural prefectures. In a few years, two out of every five Japanese people will be over the current retirement age, and one-fifth of the population will be over 75: the current life expectancy being 83.[56] In rural prefectures such as Akita, projections suggest that as many as 43.9% of inhabitants will be over 65 by 2040. As we have already seen, Japanese farmers are aging, and a large proportion of those part-time farmers supplement their pensions or other income with farming. These are precisely the type of farms that will be affected by agricultural reform and liberalization, whether it be through increased land taxes aimed specifically at removing them from the agricultural landscape, or through competition from overseas through the TPP.

Although many studies focus on the need for agricultural reform, they often pay less attention to the negative impact that the reforms could have on these regions and their elderly inhabitants. Harada posits food processing in rural regions as a solution.[57] He argues that 'the development of the food processing industry would create job opportunities for former farmers' and that 'even if import ingredients are used, the industry can provide jobs and income to sustain the local economy'.[58] Furthermore, he states that the TPP would create other job opportunities for these out-of-work farmers. However, the main beneficiaries of the TPP are likely to be large manufacturing exporters. These companies are not generally located in or indeed anywhere near rural towns and villages, and it is difficult to see significant numbers of elderly former

[55] Morita, 'Introduction'.

[56] Hook, Mason, and O'Shea, *Regional Risk*.

[57] Harada, 'Japan's Agriculture and the TPP'.

[58] Ibid.

farmers in peripheral prefectures abandoning their hometowns and moving to major urban centres to work for their last years. It is possible that younger people in these regions will leave, however. While perhaps a boon to the Japanese economy, this will only further exacerbate the demographic crisis in rural areas.

The other argument put forward is, as mentioned previously, that either young farmers or corporations would use the opportunity to consolidate farms, thus benefitting agriculture in the regions.[59] Encouraging the younger, motivated, and innovative farmers would undoubtedly be positive for Japanese agriculture and the peripheral regions. Encouraging corporate farming would have more mixed results. Small-scale farmers would be forced out of their farms by either land tax increases or international market forces, and their land would then be bought out by large companies. It is highly unlikely that these former small holders would return to their or their neighbours' former land as farm workers. Small-scale rural farming is not singularly an economic activity producing profit. It is also about, among other things, tradition, the consumption of one's own produce, exchange with neighbours and family, and sending food to family in urban areas. It maintains social life in small communities. This cannot be easily rendered into a simple labour-wage exchange. Moreover, it is highly unlikely that corporate farming would seek to hire pensioners to work the company fields. In fact, according to an article by the financial news company Bloomberg, since the Abe administration enacted laws easing the entry of companies into corporate farming, 'Seven and I Holdings Co. and Lawson Inc. have already started buying farmland and training workers to replace Japan's current agricultural landowners'.[60] What is not mentioned in the article (Bloomberg generally publishes pro-liberalization and TPP work) is the fact, as with rural industry, that the workers undergoing training are likely to be immigrant labour (mostly Chinese) on temporary visas with a maximum validity of 3 years. Simply put, farmers are being replaced by a temporary immigrant agricultural workforce. Therefore,

[59] George Mulgan, 'Abe's "Growth" Strategy; Yamashita, 'Ensuring Japan's Food Security'.
[60] Takada, 'Lobby Turf as Abe Reforms Farming'.

while agricultural reforms might well increase productivity due to corporate farming, and might even tempt young farmers to expand, unless part of a broader policy of rural promotion, they could also lead to the death of the small farm, the widening of the rural–urban wealth gap, higher levels of poverty among elderly rural dwellers, and the exacerbation of the hollowing out of Japan's regions.

## Food Security

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization states that 'food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life'.[61] Food security is generally a concept used with reference to the developing, rather than the developed world. However, with increased trade in agricultural goods, cross-border food safety scandals, and price volatility resulting from increasing energy prices, biofuels, and climate change, ensuring food security is also a vital issue to developed states, especially ones as dependent on imports as Japan. In terms of the developing world, agricultural liberalization is often framed as a moral imperative; not only due to economic efficiencies but also due to the negative impact protectionism has on less developed countries. However, the reality of agricultural trade liberalization economics is rather more complicated. The elimination of all agricultural trade barriers could result in increased global food prices. Tariffs keep demand down, thus reducing prices. Subsidies increase supply, thus reducing prices. Simply put, agricultural liberalization could benefit net-export developed states more than less developed states. Thus, although the situation varies from country to country, it has been argued that liberalization would actually hurt many less developed states.[62] Looking specifically at Japan, the situation is complicated. On the one hand, the reduction in protection would free

[61] Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, 'Trade Reforms', 29.
[62] Tokarick, 'Dispelling Some Misconceptions'.

up resources for other uses and prices of some products – those with high tariff barriers such as the sacred five – would decrease, in the long-run food prices more generally could actually increase because of the conditions outlined above.

We have seen that Japan's agricultural policies have left the country highly dependent on food imports both in terms of variety of produce and overall calorie intake, with one major exception: rice. Opinions vary on the impact of the TPP on Japan's rice production. George Mulganargues that liberalization would result in the structural adjustment of the farm sector, resulting in a 'more internationally competitive, innovative and efficient agricultural industry'.[63] Rather than devastating the farm sector, she argues that farmers would adapt to change by 'catering to niche agricultural markets, producing value-added products, and expanding farm exports'.[64] This may well be true, and even if it is, it does not address the issue of what liberalization would do to the quantity of domestic production – though it should be noted again that under current policies a large quantity of domestic production is set aside as feed and *gentan* leads to fallow paddies in order to maintain high prices.

Some pro-liberalization studies do address this issue. For example, Tanaka and Hosoe discount the effects on domestic production.[65] Through various simulations based on the abolishment of protectionist measures combined with productivity shocks at home and abroad, they come to the conclusion that although liberalization would increase exposure to international price volatility, this would not cause any major shocks to domestic prices in Japan. These positive simulations are predicated on the projected future export states, the USA, Thailand, and Australia (all part of the TPP), not implementing export restrictions on rice in times of shortages and increased prices (when they do, the simulations produce a far more negative outcome). They do acknowledge, however, that imported rice would come to occupy a large proportion of Japanese consumption and that domestic production would

[63] George Mulgan, 'Japanese Agricultural Reform'.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Tanaka and Hosoe, 'Does Agricultural Trade Liberalization Increase Risks'.

inevitably decline. However, given that most of their simulations do not foresee major vulnerability to price shocks, and that three of the four key sources of imports (Thailand, the USA, and Australia, but not China) are unlikely to restrict exports, they conclude that Japan's national food security would be better served by imports than by domestic production.

On the one hand, this acknowledges the inevitable decline of rural rice-producing regions in the event of liberalization, with all the negative social impacts outlined above. Indeed, a recent study specifically on the impact of the TPP on Japanese rice production found that within 5 years annual rice imports from the USA and Vietnam would constitute 3 million and 1 million tonnes, respectively, half Japan's annual consumption. According to the study, small and medium farmers would be dramatically affected. On the other hand, the argument that Australia, the USA, and Thailand would not implement rice export restrictions holds water. As they point out, Thailand has promised never to restrict rice exports. Such promises ought to be taken with a grain of salt (or rice), but in Thailand's case it is a matter of self-interest: Thailand is the world's largest rice exporter and their commitment is important for their credibility as a trading partner. Still, it is worth noting at this point that Thailand and China are developing closer ties while Thailand-US relations are drifting. Joining the TPP will bring the US-Japan relationship, already the world's oldest military alliance, ever closer, and thus the US commitment to selling rice to Japan is credible. Meanwhile, Japan and Australia are developing closer diplomatic and military ties, and similarly it would be in Australia's interest to maintain this relationship also through trade credibility.

From all this, rice import dependency for Japan seems a safe bet. However, from 2006 to 2008 international rice prices tripled as part of soaring global grain prices. This led to key Asian grain exporters implementing export restrictions.[66] A large number of factors have been cited as causing this spike, including increasing oil prices, crop diversion to biofuels, droughts, and export restrictions. Export restrictions were more a product than a cause of the crisis, but nevertheless it is the case that

[66] Headey, 'Rethinking the Global Food Crisis'.

Vietnam, the world's second largest exporter, banned rice exports during the crisis, as did India and a number of much smaller exporters.[67] Domestic rice prices in Japan were not significantly affected due to the fact that Japan was already self-sufficient in rice production, domestic prices were already high, and retailers absorbed the costs of the increase rather than risk driving away customers.[68] Nevertheless, the fact remains that, despite Tanaka and Hoseo's optimistic analysis, ending Japan's rice self-sufficiency would expose Japanese consumers to future price fluctuations. The international market in rice is the smallest of the major grains, as most production is consumed domestically.

Significantly, rice is also the most protected major grain in the world: states such as Japan and South Korea have historically been very careful to maintain domestic production and avoid reliance on imports. Given increasing global energy demands, climate change, and geopolitical volatility, increasing dependence on grain imports – and specifically on a crucial crop such as rice – would be a 'brave' decision, particularly given both its deep symbolic status in Japan and its daily importance as the primary source of calories. Indeed, it is perhaps no surprise that South Korea, which protects domestic rice production and has achieved rice self-sufficiency, removed rice from the negotiating table in its FTA with the USA and is not signing up (yet at least) to the TPP. Beyond rice, as was mentioned earlier, China has come to occupy an increasingly large share of the market, especially in fresh and frozen vegetables and processed food. This state of affairs has become increasingly controversial as Sino-Japanese relations have frozen and as mutual antipathy has increased at both a citizen and elite level. China has used informal export embargoes as a diplomatic weapon against Japan in the recent past, and with the future of bilateral relations looking bleak, informal food export restrictions are hardly inconceivable. Moreover, a spate of domestic scandals in China has led to highly negative perceptions of Chinese food safety. This is despite the very different Chinese production systems for domestic and export-to-Japan foodstuffs, as well as the fact that,

[67] Ito, 'Japan's Rice Policy'.
[68] Ibid.

according to Japanese Customs data, other states, notably the USA, actually have equally high rates of health and safety violations as China (see also Walravens in this volume). China's absence from the TPP means that the USA is likely to become, or perhaps regain, its position as Japan's number one source of food imports.

## Conclusion

There is one caveat in the aforementioned discussion: despite masterminding the agreement, the USA may not actually ratify it. Of the remaining US presidential candidates at the time of writing, none of them openly support the TPP, and the two likely contenders, Donald Trump and Hilary Clinton, have come out against it. Clinton's opposition is opportunistic, and reflects a realization that in the current political climate, FTAs are electoral dynamite. Realistically, if Clinton wins she will attempt to push through the TPP, and although she faces Republican opposition in both Houses, the Republican Party tends to be more favourable to free trade. If Trump wins, all bets are off, not only on the TPP, but across a wide range of issues in the Japan-US relationship, from trade to military bases. Regardless of domestic US politics, the TPP or something resembling it is likely to go ahead in the Asia-Pacific region, with or without US participation. The agreement will pass smoothly through the other member states, including Japan. Some form of regional trading bloc comprised of the regional states wary of China, with some level of US participation, remains the most likely outcome. It may not feature the depth and breadth of the TPP, but one thing is clear from the negotiations of the last years: agricultural policy is now a pawn in regional geopolitics.

This has massive implications for Japanese agriculture and food security, as great as the aforementioned post-war land reforms implemented by the US occupation. Those reforms forced the absentee landlords to sell their land to the government, who then sold it to the tenant farmers, ending the old system of centralized ownership and landless labour and creating the contemporary system of small, family-run farms. There is no shortage of irony in the fact that the agricultural system produced by those reforms is set to be reformed, once again under US auspices, to create a system based once again on a centralized ownership and farm-labourer model. MAFF, whose policies have aimed at preserving the old system, has failed to prevent the decline of production, the decline of rural regions, and the decline of self-sufficiency. However, liberalization, whether through the TPP or some other means, is not a panacea, rather, it may serve to further exacerbate some of these trends and speed up the hollowing out of rural Japan.

So far, the TPP has been agreed but not yet ratified by all participants, which gives the Abe and subsequent administrations time to develop and implement amelioration policies to prevent the damage to Japan's peripheral regions and perhaps even utilize the TPP as a catalyst to not only reform agriculture but breathe new life into the countryside. Yet as critics note, this will require a far more long-term and thoughtful strategy than *gentan* or other payment policies that have been implemented thus far.[69] One clear impact of the TPP is that it will increase Japan's already high food import dependency and replace a large proportion of domestic rice consumption with imports. Specifically, it is likely that Japanese consumption of US rice, beef, pork, and dairy products will soar.[70] There is nothing inherently 'wrong' with a policy of food import dependency, indeed some states – such as Singapore – manage such policies in a way that leads to high quality, low price food for their citizens. However, such countries usually do not have substantial rural populations dependent upon a rural economy based on agriculture. Yet, Japan's decision to join the TPP was not due to a desire to liberalize agriculture or revitalize the countryside, rather it was in large part a function of the Japan-US alliance and regional geopolitics. Thus, in order to tighten the alliance and to balance against the rise of China, Japan has chosen to increase not only its security dependence, but also potentially its food security dependence on the USA. Japan's post-Cold War strategy offset various

[69] 'TPP Gōi Ikinai no Hanei to Antei no Ishizue ni', Asahi Shimbun; Yoshida. 'Japan Farmers'; Yamashita, 'Ensuring Japan's Food Security', Yamashita, 'Japan's Perilous Decline'.

[70] United States Department of Agriculture, 'Fact Sheet'.

risks by hedging: developing close economic relations with China while maintaining the Japan-US security alliance. Such hedging strategies enable states to keep their options open across a wide range of policy areas. However, the advent of the Abe administration has seen a shift towards a more one-sided, US-centric strategy. This has significant consequences for Japanese farmers, food security, and the future of the Asia-Pacific region.

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**Paul O'Shea** is senior associate lecturer at the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies at Lund University in Sweden. His research interests include the international relations of East Asia and Japan's foreign policy, as well as the impact of international relations on Japanese society.

# Subsidized Tradition, Networks, and Power: Hamlet Farming in Japan's Changing Agricultural Support and Protection Regime

Hanno Jentzsch

## Introduction

Eating rice is the essence of 'consuming the nation'[1] in Japan. Yet, rice production is in an ever-deepening state of crisis. In the economically dwindling Japanese agricultural sector, rice is cultivated particularly inefficiently by small, fragmented, and rapidly aging part-time farms. This defective production structure was brought about and then maintained by an agricultural support and protection regime, in the context of which rice has been overproduced at high political and economic costs, and despite Japan's outstanding dependency on imports of virtually every other food. This structure has not only catered to the interests of producers themselves; it has also paved the rise of their main interest group – the organization of agricultural

[1] Jentzsch and Walravens, 'Consuming the Nation'.

H. Jentzsch (✉)
Japanese Studies, German Institute, Tokyo, Japan
e-mail: jentzsch@dijtokyo.org

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cooperatives (Nōkyō or JA, Japan Agriculture) – into an economic and political giant; and mobilized rural support for the post-war dominance of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). Over the past 20 years, however, gradual changes in the agricultural support and protection regime have stripped small rice farms of unconditional support and undermined Nōkyō's power position – albeit without solving the structural crisis of farming. As of 2013, more than 60% of the workforce is above 65 years old. Successors for their tiny, scattered plots are hard to find, so that more and more land is falling idle.[2]

Amidst this crisis, collective cultivation in so-called hamlet-based collective farms (*shūraku einō*, hamlet farms)[3] (re)gained relevance for farm households across Japan, with a particular boom after a subsidy reform in 2007. Hamlets – in official parlance referred to as 'agricultural communities' (*nōgyō shūraku*) – are 'natural settlements' of typically several dozen households, which for many centuries have been the core social unit in rural Japan.[4] Based on interviews and participatory observation in several agricultural communities, this chapter analyses hamlet-based collective farming as an interface between agricultural politics and norms and practices from a seemingly distant agrarian past. In the contested debate over the future path of Japanese agriculture, the comeback of the hamlet as an 'agricultural production unit'[5] in the 2000s reflects a political defence strategy that aims to legitimize ongoing agricultural support for rice farmers by tapping into notions of national identity and rural nostalgia. In a sense, this strategy mirrors the ongoing efforts to establish the social practice of 'eating Japanese' as a core element of Japan's national identity: without Japanese ingredients, *washoku* (Japanese cuisine) is a hollow concept. From this perspective, constructing a

[2] MAFF, 'FY (2013) Annual Report on Food, Agriculture, and Rural Areas in Japan'.

[3] The English term 'community-based farm co-operatives' is sometimes used for the same phenomenon, see for example, Kimura and Martini, 'Evaluation of Agricultural Policy Reform in Japan', 62.

[4] E.g. Fukutake, *Rural Society in Japan.*

[5] Fukutake, *Rural Society in Japan.*

link between *washoku* and national identity also means that the objective to support the crisis-ridden agricultural sector becomes a matter of saving Japan. This symbolic inflation is by no means coincidental. For the incumbent defenders of agricultural support and protection, the promotion of 'eating Japanese' is a way to shield the support for 'producing Japanese' from public criticism and political pressure. Yet, there is more to hamlet farming than the political exploitation of rural nostalgia. A look at the local level reveals that 'traditional' agrarian norms and practices are best understood as adaptive resources in an increasingly hostile political and socio-economic environment. The ability to adapt hamlet norms and practices to a changing political context shapes small farmers' continued access to state support. Furthermore, for local governments and the local branches of Nōkyō, (re)enforcing the hamlet as an agricultural production unit is also a matter of exercising and conserving power over the local agricultural sector.

## Hamlet Farming in the Context of Changing Agricultural Politics

A hamlet-based collective farm is the result of several or all farming members of a hamlet pooling land, machinery, and labour. They can also include more than one hamlet. Hamlet farms differ in terms of their legal status and – closely related – the extent to which cultivation and management are unified. For example, hamlet farms can be 'voluntary associations' (*nin'i soshiki)* in which the members – farm households – keep the land use rights; or incorporated legal entities (*hōjin*) which can take on land use rights. While hamlet-based collective farming is not an entirely new phenomenon, it has significantly gained momentum in recent years. Since 2000, the number of hamlet-based collective farms has increased by more than 50%. As of 2013, more than 11% of the arable land in Japan – or roughly 500,000 ha– was cultivated by more than 14,000 hamlet-based farms. The share of collective farming appears even stronger when broken down regionally. Hamlet farming is mainly a paddy-field-related phenomenon. Yamanashi Prefecture, where horticulture is dominant, has only very few hamlet farms, while regions with a high share of small rice producers display a strong presence of collective farming. In Saga Prefecture, for example, almost 45% of all farmland is cultivated collectively.[6] There are also significant sub-regional variations. In Hikawa Town in Shimane Prefecture,[7] 40% of the arable land is farmed collectively, which by far exceeds the prefectural average of 15%.[8] The reasons for the strength of collective farming in Hikawa will be addressed in more detail below. First, however, I will put the overall increase in collective farming in the context of growing pressure on the post-war agricultural support and protection regime.

## State Support for Rice Farmers – From 'Sacred Ground' to a Contested Sphere

Japan's notorious agricultural support and protection regime has long rendered part-time rice farming a lucrative household strategy. Since the early 1960s, the LDP came to employ state control over the rice price as a political instrument for redistributing the benefits of economic growth to every corner of the country. Closely related, generous investments in the peripheral infrastructure and the mechanization of farming reduced the labour input for wet-paddy cultivation and created direct and indirect opportunities for off-farm employment, for example, in the mushrooming construction sector. Consequently, many farm households switched to part-time rice farming, which hampered the development of large-scale industrial farming. As a coupling link between the LDP and rural voters, Nōkyō – the main executive agent behind the state procurement system – used its ubiquitous membership base to become an effective vote-gathering machine for campaigning (LDP) politicians. Deeply

[6] Hashizume, 'Shūraku einō hatten'.

[7] Since a merger in (2011), Hikawa Town is a part of Izumo City.

[8] For the prefectural data, see Hashizume, 'Shūraku einō hatten', 124. For the data on Hikawa, see Hikawa Town Agriculture and Forestry Office, *Heisei 24 nendo einō zadankai shiryō.*

entrenched in the post-war political economy, this regime proved enormously solid, despite the tremendous fiscal, political, and economic costs of inefficient, excess rice production.[9]

By the mid-1990s, however, reforms had become virtually inevitable. The international pressure to reduce border protection and trade-distorting state support became manifest when Japan joined the WTO in 1994.[10] Domestically, agriculture lost its post-war nimbus of being a 'sacred ground',[11] as the public became increasingly critical of excess state support, and the 1994 electoral reform at least gradually reduced the pressure on politicians to cater to the army of subsidy-dependent small rice farmers. Japan embarked upon an ongoing agricultural reform process, which has been shaped by intense contestation between incumbent profiteers of the old regime – Nōkyō, LDP 'farm politicians', and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF) – and market-liberal reformists from business and politics, resulting in an inconsistent and at times contradictory path.[12] The boom of hamlet-based farming in the 2000s represents a focal point of this political contestation over the pace and the direction of institutional change in the agricultural support and protection regime.

## Increasing Pressure on Small Rice Farms and Hamlet Farms as 'Ninaite'

From 1995 onwards, the post-war system of direct state control over rice collection and marketing was dismantled. Subsidization for rice and the major diversion crops grown on paddy fields shifted from uniform price support towards a mix of price stabilization measures and direct income support. Marketing rice has been mostly liberalized,

[9] For detailed accounts on the post-war agricultural support and protection regime, see for example, Bullock, 'Nokyo'; George Mulgan, *The Politics of Agriculture in Japan;* Sheingate, *The Rise of the Agricultural Welfare State.*

[10] George Mulgan, *Japan's Agricultural Policy Regime;* Davis and Oh, 'Repeal of the Rice Laws in Japan'.

[11] Robert Bullock, 'Redefining the Conservative Coalition', 194.

[12] George Mulgan, *Japan's Agricultural Policy Regime;* Gōdo, *Sayonara Nippon nōgyō.*

which also means that producers are free to sell their crops through bypassing the cooperative organization. However, the state has not given up rice price control entirely, employing instead high prohibitive tariffs on rice imports and a system to curtail domestic production. In the context of the rice production control programme, the diversion of paddy fields to other crops, like wheat, soy, or rice for animal feed is heavily subsidized. The responsibilities to execute the rice production control programme – that is, to keep the rice price artificially high – lies with local governments and local cooperatives.[13] Although Nōkyō, which still has a high stake in the rice market, is eager to make its members follow the rice production quotas comprehensively, the rice price could not be prevented from a steady decline since the end of direct state control, with a particularly sharp drop since 2014.[14] Small, aging part-time rice farm households typically lack the machinery, the labour force, or the skills to grow anything but rice – they are thus neither able to fully exploit the support connected to rice production control, nor to switch to more lucrative crops altogether.[15] Compared to the heyday of rice price support, access of small rice farms to state support has thus become more difficult, while they are even further away from producing competitively.[16]

Changing subsidization methods went hand in hand with 'structural reform', that is, a series of policies to promote more efficient and business-oriented farms, euphemistically referred to as 'bearers', or *ninaite* in Japanese. Formally, 'certified *ninaite* farms' qualify for a variety of benefits, including for example cheap loans or better access to infrastructural support. Hamlet-based collective farms were included in the *ninaite* support schemes from the onset. Over the course of the 1990s, *ninaite*

[13] For details on the policy process, see George Mulgan, *Japan's Agricultural Policy Regime*; Honma, *Gendai Nihon nōgyō no seisaku katei;* Kimura and Jones, *Reforming Agriculture;* Gōdo and Takahashi, 'Evaluation of the Japanese Agricultural Policy Reforms'.

[14] Interview with officials in Hikawa Town, March 2016.

[15] Only less than half of the paddy field land in Japan is subject to the paddy-field diversion programme, see Honma, 'The TPP and Agricultural Reform in Japan', 104. The Abe administration has announced the end of rice production control for 2017. This will be counterbalanced by further expansion of support for rice for conversion crops.

[16] Aritsubo, 'Give Up Growing Rice, and Do-What?'.

policies mostly constituted an additional form of support.[17] In the 2000s, however, this changed with a series of policy initiatives aimed at *exclusive* subsidization for certified *ninaite*. In 2007, the government restricted a new support scheme for paddy-field crops on certified *ninaite* farms, originally even setting an acreage threshold of 4 ha as the minimum farm size to be eligible. For the first time, this reform was to exclude the large majority of rice farms in Japan from support payments for rice and the major diversion crops.[18] In this situation, founding a hamlet-based cooperative farm emerged as a lucrative loophole for small rice farms. Hamlet farms could access the new payment scheme if they assumed the legal form of a 'special agricultural group' (*tokutei nōgyō dantai*). This requires members to pool at least two-thirds of the hamlet land for collective cultivation permanently, to unify accounting, and to present a plan for incorporating the farm within 5 years.[19] Between 2006 and 2009 alone, the number of hamlet farms rose sharply from about 10,500 to almost 13,500.[20] Meanwhile, the exclusive approach to paddy field subsidies was heavily criticized by agricultural interest groups such as Nōkyō, as well as by LDP politicians with rural constituencies. Already after the LDP lost the Upper House election in 2007, the strict limitations for the subsidy scheme were watered down again and eventually taken back by the DPJ administration after 2009.[21] However, positive incentives for hamlet-based collective farming have been maintained, resulting in a further, but more moderate increase.[22] As of today, hamlet farms are firmly included in the politically sponsored target group of *ninaite* farms.

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[17] George Mulgan, *Japan's Agricultural Policy Regime*, 75–81.

[18] For details on this policy called the Cross-Commodity Management Stabilization Countermeasure (*hinmoku ōdanteki keiei antei taisaku*), see Honma, *Gendai Nihon nōgyō no seisaku katei;* Gōdo and Takahashi, 'Evaluation of the Japanese agricultural policy reforms'.

[19] Honma, *Gendai Nihon nōgyō no seisaku katei;* Toyama, 'Shūraku einō'.

[20] Hashizume, 'Shūraku einō hatten', 117.

[21] Gōdo, *Sayonara Nippon nōgyō*, 132–136

[22] MAFF, 'Shūraku einō jittai chōsa (2014)'. As of 2013, a hamlet of 30 households each cultivating 0.3 ha rice could 'reap' an extra inflow of 435,000 Yen/year in subsidies if it decided to engage in collective cultivation. See Hikawa Town Agriculture and Forestry Office, *Heisei 24 nendo einō zadankai shiryō*, 16. The current Abe administration heavily subsidizes the incorporation of hamlet-based farms, see Andō, 'Nōchi chūkan kanri kikō'.

Under this umbrella, farm households can access cheap loans and invest in heavier machinery, which enables them to engage in the cultivation of land- and subsidy-intensive crops apart from rice. Thus, in an increasingly hostile political and socio-economic environment, collective cultivation at the hamlet level is a means to exploit resources and subsidies that have become inaccessible for small household farms alone.

## Hamlet Farming as a Defensive Political Instrument

The inclusion of hamlet farming into *ninaite* policies reflects the defensive interest of the incumbent profiteers from the old agricultural support and protection regime. The notion that changes in the subsidization system and a rationalization of the small-scale production structure of rice farming in particular are unavoidable has become consensual in Japan. Yet, LDP farm politicians, Nōkyō, and the MAFF have also been eager to formulate the concrete trajectory of these changes in a defensive way. Promoting hamlet-based farming has been an ideal tool for this objective. Collective farming leads to fewer, but larger entities, which in fact can have significant benefits in terms of efficient land use and exploiting economies of scale. On the other hand, hamlet farms also keep a large number of small rice farms under the umbrella of state support. Further, the inclusion of hamlet farming into the *ninaite* concept has enhanced the prospects of these policies to bring about presentable results of 'structural reform' without principally challenging the farm household as the mainstay of Japanese farming. As of 2014, almost 50% of the total arable land is in the hands of *ninaite* farms.[23] A significant share of this structural change is related to the increase in hamlet-based farming.[24] Nōkyō is particularly eager to promote collective cultivation. As I will point out in more detail below, hamlet farms tend to remain closely tied to the cooperative organization personally,

[23] Kobari, 'Nōchi chūkan kanri kikō shonendo ni okeru nōchi shūseki no dōkō'.

[24] Primaff, *Shūraku einō hatten shita no nōgyō kōzō – (2010) sensasu bunseki.*

economically, and organizationally, whereas individual entrepreneurial farmers tend to pursue their own ways of cultivation and marketing outside the tight cooperative corset.[25]

Importantly, the hamlet is by no coincidence the social unit upon which the political defence strategies of the incumbent profiteers from the 'old' agricultural support and protection regime are built. Hamlet-based farming resonates strongly with the institutional history of rural Japan. Farmers and policymakers alike perceive the hamlet as the 'natural unit' for agriculture-related cooperation. Far beyond agricultural production matters, the hamlet itself is symbolically charged as an idealized rural home place (*furusato*). The traditional rural settlement tends to be imagined as a holdout of 'authentic' Japanese culture,[26] pressured by modernization – indeed westernization – and thus in dire need of 'revitalization'.[27] Both by Japanese and Western scholars, the hamlet has often been presented as the nucleus of Japanese culture and society as a whole – central, for example, to the notion of the 'Japanese' way of consensual, unanimous decision-making, or the notion of valuing solidarity over individualism.[28] Such accounts have been frequently criticized as the raw material for cultural nationalism, if not chauvinism.[29] Yet, as Japanese farming is under pressure to be deregulated and rationalized, conservative defendants of the 'old' agricultural support and protection regime have still been able to tap into the symbolic value of the hamlet in their own political interest, eventually creating a legitimate channel of continuing state support for small-scale, part-time rice farming households. The 'Japanese' way of consolidating farmland, in this sense, is shaped by its rural traditions, which stands in contrast to market-based capitalist expansion. The promotion of 'producing Japanese' is closely linked to the promotion of 'eating Japanese'. In both cases, cultural-nationalistic sentiments and

[25] Maclachlan and Shimizu, 'Local Innovation and Interest Representation'.

[26] See, e.g., Ivy, *Discourses of the Vanishing.*

[27] Knight, 'Rural Revitalization in Japan'.

[28] This argument has been most prominently made by Nakane, *Kinship and Economic Organization in Rural Japan;* Nakane, *Japanese Society.*

[29] Yoshino, *Cultural Nationalism in Contemporary Japan.* The emphasis on 'harmony' and 'unanimity' in analysing hamlet-level decision-making is criticized in detail by Marshall, *Collective Decision Making in Rural Japan.*

rural nostalgia are employed to defend agricultural support and protection against the forces of 'liberalization' – albeit on slightly different levels. The promotion of 'eating Japanese' has been identified as a means to justify support and protection for domestic producers in general.[30] The inclusion of hamlet farming in national *ninaite* policies represents a second line of defence, that is, the protection of the 'traditional' household-based production structure against other forms of agricultural production. At first glance, this recursion to rural traditions seems anachronistic. The Japanese countryside has actually long lost its agrarian character, and in the course of the post-war shift from 'rural Japan' to 'regional Japan', hamlets themselves have diverted from the idealized cooperative agricultural communities of the past.[31] Nevertheless, the hamlet farming boom reaches beyond the 'defensive' exploitation of rural nostalgia by policymakers. The next section thus takes a closer (i.e. local) look at the role of hamlets and 'traditional' agricultural norms and practices.

## Hamlet Farming and Adaptive Norms and Practices

Picturing hamlet-based farms as an expression of 'traditional' rural social organization certainly misses the far-reaching socio-economic and political changes that have shaped rural Japan's institutional landscape since the post-war years. At the same time, contemporary hamlet farming can hardly be discussed outside the context of the hamlets' institutional history. I argue that the key to understand the recent boom of hamlet farming is to regard both hamlets themselves and 'traditional' agricultural norms and practices as adaptive resources in the contested sphere of changing agricultural politics. This requires a brief discussion of the hamlet as a longstanding, but by no means static institution.

[30] On raising the food self-sufficiency ratio as a way to justify further producer support, see George Mulgan, *Japan's Agricultural Policy Regime*, 118. Similarly, the Japanese 'local production, local consumption' movement was 'hijacked' by the MAFF and Nōkyō, also using nationalist symbolism, see Jentzsch and Walravens, 'Consuming the Nation'.

[31] Kelly, 'Regional Japan'; Fukutake, *Rural Society in Japan.*

## The Hamlet in the Course of Time

The institutional history of hamlets is complex and changeful. What a hamlet was, what it is today, and how it relates to other forms of rural settlements and/or (historical) administrative units is a frequent source of misunderstandings, which is especially true when the term hamlet is used in relation to the term 'village' (*mura*). When I talk about contemporary hamlets, I refer to the Japanese term *nōgyō shūraku*, which the Ministry of Agriculture defines as follows:

> A rural society based on agriculture, located within the area of the municipality. Hamlets [agricultural communities] are rural societies that once evolved naturally. With households tied together by territorial bonds and kinship, they form basic entities of social life that have been taking different forms of group and social relations.[32]

This definition stresses the character of hamlets as 'natural settlements'. Until the end of World War II, however, hamlets also served as formal administrative units. The Occupation Regime took this status away. Still, hamlets display a striking degree of continuity. Of the roughly 143,000 *nōgyō shūraku* that the MAFF counted in 1970, more than 95% existed before 1880, and most of them were much older.[33] Most farmers I interviewed in Hikawa Town in (2013) can trace back their family history in their own hamlet over 10 generations and more.

Historically, hamlets are most comprehensively characterized as 'agricultural production units', engaging in the necessarily cooperative cultivation of wet-paddy rice.[34] As such, hamlets have created and enforced rules concerning irrigation and land use over centuries. Within clearly demarcated boundaries, hamlet land has been treated as a collective resource exclusively to be used for the benefit of those living in the hamlet.[35] Based on agricultural cooperation, hamlets developed a dense

[32] MAFF, '(2010) nen sekai nōringyō sensasu kekka no gaiyō', 157, trans. by author.
[33] Fukutake, *Rural Society in Japan*, 77; Jussaume, *Japanese Part-Time Farming*, 50.
[34] Fukutake, *Rural Society in Japan.*
[35] Iwamoto, 'Local Conceptions of Land and Land Use', 222.

web of rules and practices covering virtually every aspect of everyday life.[36] For centuries, hamlets remained relatively self-contained social units. However, rapid urbanization, agricultural rationalization, and socio-economic differentiation in the post-war era rendered hamlet members less dependent on each other, and less dependent on agriculture for their livelihood.[37] This profoundly affected 'traditional' hamlet-level cooperation. An interviewee remembers hamlet life in her childhood:

> We took turns in the hamlet. Well, not me, but my mother. I heard stories about how the fastest people or the most skilled ones got together. The tea break was held on the paddy field, everybody came together for the break.[38]

According to her and other respondents in different parts of Japan, such 'traditional' hamlet-based agricultural cooperation disappeared around the 1970s. As modern pipeline irrigation became more common, even wet-paddy farming has at least technically become an independent household activity. Yet, although hamlet functions and hamlet life have been changing significantly, hamlets have by no means disappeared as 'viable social units' in the post-war era.[39]

This role was reinforced strongly by their (continued) integration in local administrative structures. Post-war municipalities kept relying on hamlets informally as the most convenient 'channel of administrative communication', an 'inexpensive tool for the collection of taxes', and the 'instrument for many other administrative activities'.[40] Further, some of the 'traditional' norms and rules once created and enforced on the hamlet level became integrated in the emerging regulatory framework of post-war Japanese agriculture. For example, the post-war legislation on land improvement has been reinforcing the role of hamlets as the 'basic unit

[36] Fukutake, *Rural Society in Japan;* Iwamoto, 'Local Conceptions of Land and Land Use'; Haley, 'Rivers and Rice'.

[37] Fukutake, *Rural Society in Japan.*

[38] Interview with retired cooperative care worker in Hikawa. Unless otherwise indicated, interview material was sourced between March and December (2013).

[39] Jussaume, *Japanese Part-Time Farming*, 51.

[40] Fukutake, *Rural Society in Japan*, 168.

responsible for control and allocation of water'.[41] Hamlets were also integrated in the agricultural cooperative organization. Founded in 1947, Nōkyō's local cooperatives incorporated the agricultural divisions (*jikkō kumiai*) that every hamlet already maintained. Hamlet-level institutions thus came to form the bottom level of the cooperative organization, which in the following decades absorbed many of the collaborative tasks that once were governed by hamlets alone.[42] Its embedding in the rural social structure facilitated Nōkyō's role as an executive agent for implementing state policies, and in general has been a major source of the organization's political and economic power (Fig. 9).[43]

The constituencies of local co-ops and villages and towns have often overlapped, leading to a twofold integration o hamlets and not least hamlet norms within local administrative structures. More

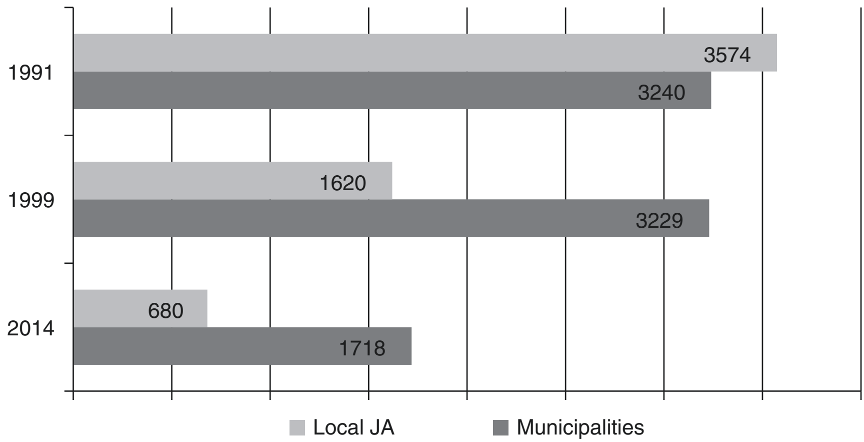


**Fig. 9** Changes in the numbers of local Japan Agriculture (JA, Nōkyō) and municipalities in Japan, 1991–2014[44]

[41] Fukutake, *Rural Society in Japan*, 81; Sarker and Itō, 'Design principles in long-enduring institutions of Japanese irrigation common-pool resources'.

[42] Fukutake, *Rural Society in Japan.*

[43] George Mulgan, *The Politics of Agriculture in Japan.*

[44] George Mulgan, *The Politics of Agriculture in Japan*, 286; MIC, 'Shichōsonkazu no hensen'. For the number of local JA in 2014 see JA Zenchū, 'JA kazu no suii'.

recently, however, ongoing cooperative mergers and a wave of municipal mergers between 2002 and 2006 have diluted the once comprehensive integration of hamlets within co-ops and municipalities. As municipalities have grown larger and more differentiated, the number of autonomous, mostly rural towns and villages with longstanding, narrowly confined social and spatial boundaries has decreased, arguably pushing rural and remote hamlets further to the periphery of broader constituencies.[45] The social and spatial proximity between hamlets and local governments as well as local cooperatives has thus declined. Further, hamlets have continued to grow less and less 'agricultural' over the course of the 2000s. While this does not render hamlets obsolete as an institution, it weakens the links between local co-ops and hamlets, which have already been found to be less stable than in the post-war decades. By 2010, around 73% of all farm hamlets still maintained a *jikkō kumiai*,[46] although some of them also act independently from Nōkyō.[47]

## 'Adaptive Traditions' as the Informal Foundation of Hamlet-Based Farming

Viewed in the context of the developments outlined above, the rise of hamlet-based farming in the 2000s illustrates the adaptability of hamlets and 'traditional' agricultural norms and practices; and the interest of Nōkyō in (re)enforcing hamlets as agricultural production units. 'Traditional' norms and practices serve as the foundation for contemporary hamlet farms. The most commonly reported motive for creating hamlet-based farm cooperatives is the notion of protecting farmland as a collective resource (i.e. prevent it from falling idle or being rented out or sold to 'outsiders'), which clearly resonates with the institutional history

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[45] For this argument, see, e.g., Koike, 'Local Government Amalgamation in Japan'; Reiher, *Lokale Identität und Ländliche Revitalisierung*; Rausch, 'The Heisei Dai Gappei'. For the effects of cooperative mergers, see, e.g., George Mulgan, *The Politics of Agriculture in Japan*, 288.

[46] MAFF, '(2010) nen sekai nōringyō sensasu kekka no gaiyō', 17.

[47] Interview Professor Gōdo Yoshihisa, March 2014.

of farmland being subject to (informal) hamlet control.[48] As the agricultural workforce is rapidly aging, collective farming can be a means of conserving farmland (cutting grass and irrigation issues, *kusakari, sui kanri*). In contrast, renting land to 'outsiders' is perceived as bearing the risk of leading to 'disorder'.[49] Moreover, hamlet-based farms incorporate long-established practices of decision-making and selecting leaders from the hamlet – for example, creating 'study groups' (*kenkyūkai*) to prepare difficult decisions and a 'screening board' (*senkōiin*) to select leaders.[50]

Interestingly, evidence from Hikawa suggests that hamlet farms are not only built upon certain agricultural norms and practices, but also contribute to their revival under new terms of trade. In Hikawa – like in other localities throughout Japan – 'traditional' forms of hamlet-based mutual support had become rare with the onset of highly subsidized part-time farming. But while 'traditional' cooperation patterns might have been muted for decades, they have still remained in the 'tool kit' of hamlet life, and have been reinstalled in a different context as the normative and organizational foundations of hamlet-based collective farms. As positive models for behaviour that hamlet members can resort to, they support agricultural cooperation when national policies set incentives to do so. Contemporary hamlet-based farms in Hikawa have reintroduced 'traditional' practices like female work groups, joint lunches on the fields, and skill-based labour division among hamlet members to everyday hamlet life. Kinship, neighbourhood, as well as 'modern' non-agricultural social ties (sports teams, festivals, travel groups) are the 'seeds' for reviving the norms and practices of agricultural cooperation.[51] Many hamlet farms that were formalized in the 2000s could also build on older (sub-hamlet-level) cooperation patterns, even though such patterns may have been neglected for some time.

[48] Fieldwork; evidence from other scholars supports this argument, see, e.g., Kitagawa et al., *Nōgyō, mura, kurashi no saisei.*

[49] Interview with hamlet farm leader in Hikawa.

[50] This was reported by several hamlet farm leaders, as well as members of the agricultural administration in Hikawa. On the (historical) internal structure of hamlets see, e.g., Marshall, *Collective Decision Making in Rural Japan*; Fukutake, *Rural Society in Japan*; Shōji, *Nihon no sonraku to shutai keisei.*

[51] Participatory observation in several hamlet farms in Hikawa.

Some observers have criticized the increase in hamlet farms in the mid-2000s as ‘policy-reactive’ (*seisaku taiōteki*), which is described to be essentially different from (and inferior to) ‘natural hamlet farming’ (*honrai shūraku einō*).[52] In contrast, I argue that the observation that hamlets adjust the extent and the scope of their cooperation patterns to changes in the political incentive structure speaks for the vitality rather than the decline of ‘traditional’ norms and practices. Founding a hamlet-based collective farm is a form of productive exchange, that is, ‘the exchange process through which two or more parties organize and combine their resources to produce some good or service not (as cheaply) available to any separately’.[53] Arguably, engaging in a wide variety of ‘productive exchanges’ has characterized Japanese hamlets throughout their history.[54] As recent agricultural policies have become more exclusive, state support has indeed turned into a resource ‘not as cheaply available to any separately’. Importantly, the ability to adapt hamlet norms and practices to new forms of agricultural cooperation is not only observable as a reaction to the 2007 subsidy reform. Older hamlet farms have also been ‘policy-reactive’. For example, the oldest hamlet-based farms in Hikawa were founded over two decades ago in the early 1990s. One of them is widely recognized as one of the earliest ‘model cases’ for hamlet-based collective farming in Japan. The farm was founded on the basis of public funding for a large-scale land improvement project in the context of early *ninaite* policies.[55] Following the same logic, even older patterns like joint machinery investments and ‘block rotation’ under the rice acreage reduction programme were ‘policy-reactive’ as well. The ability to adapt to changing formal rules is thus a longstanding quality of hamlets.

This said, forming a hamlet farm is still not an option equally available to all hamlets. Taking advantage of state support as a collective requires the activation of informal hamlet resources that not every

[52] Toyama, ‘Shūraku einō’.

[53] Marshall, *Collective Decision Making in Rural Japan*, 17.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Jindai, ‘Shimane-ken’.

hamlet is able – or willing to – bring about. 'Traditional' hamlet norms are *contested* – they have been coexisting and often clashing with the principle of individual property throughout the post-war period.[56] As landowners pass away, move away, give up farming for health reasons, and sell or rent out their land, (re)enforcing agricultural cooperation patterns has only become more difficult. This development proceeds unequally across and even within regions. As a result, two neighbouring hamlets may even differ in terms of their attitudes towards farmland and agricultural cultivation, which affects how and by whom the land within the hamlet's boundaries is used.[57] The varying normative configuration of hamlets thus ultimately shapes how state support is distributed across the countryside. The internal configuration of hamlets, however, is not the only factor for this distribution. As the next section will show, if and to what extent hamlets (re)invent themselves as agricultural production units is also shaped by their embedding in the local administrative and cooperative structures.

## Adaptive Hamlet Norms in the Context of Local Social Networks and Power: The Case of Hikawa Town

In general, the proliferation of hamlet farming reflects the interests of local JA and local governments. Yet, there are vast differences across localities regarding the extent to which collective cultivation takes hold. As mentioned above, Hikawa Town in Shimane Prefecture displays a particularly strong role of hamlet-based farming. I argue that this is more than the cumulative result of separate hamlet activities. Instead, it reflects a local strategy aimed at exercising and consolidating power

[56] See, e.g., Noriaki Iwamoto, 'Local conceptions of land and land use and the reform of Japanese agriculture'. The process of collusion between landowners and politicians gaining the upper hand over 'traditional' hamlet norms has been connected to farmland loss and the structural problems of farming in Japan in general, see, for example, Gōdo, 'The puzzle of small farming in Japan'; Gōdo, *Sayonara Nippon nōgyō*.

[57] Interview hamlet farm leader in Hikawa.

over the local farm sector as a whole, based on the ability of the local co-op and administration to shape the adaptation and the (re)negotiation of hamlet norms and practices in their interests. Following Knight and Ensminger, the ability to create and change social norms depends on the actor's 'superior bargaining power', derived from access to (state) resources, but also from a dominant position within local social networks.[58] Before I take up this aspect in more detail, let me briefly introduce the strategic benefits of promoting collective farming for the local co-op and administration.

## Collective Farming in Hikawa as a Local Administrative Strategy

Hikawa has gained a national reputation as a role model for consolidating farmland in the hands of *ninaite* farms. Yet, the lion's share of Hikawa's impressive *ninaite* rate is made up of collective farming, signalling a local interpretation of *ninaite* policies under which both the inflow of state support to the locality and the number of clients depending on the distribution of this support remains high. As of late 2013, more than 1,000 of the 1,602 farm households in Hikawa were organized in hamlet-based farm cooperatives. Had their farmland instead been concentrated in fewer, but larger individual farms, this would have reduced the number of active farm households more drastically. Instead, the high share of land under collective cultivation effectively blocks the further expansion of large individual farms, let alone the entry of 'externals' into the local farm sector. Collective cultivation also facilitates agricultural governance. For instance, hamlet farms in Hikawa – highly dependent on paddy field diversion subsidies – faithfully follow the paddy field diversion plans from the local administration and JA Hikawa *en bloc*, thus contributing to an extraordinarily well-organized local system of organizing rice production control. For the local cooperative in particular, hamlet farming is an

[58] Jack Knight and Jean Ensminger, 'Conflict Over Changing Social Norms'.

'anchor' in the local farm sector. Hamlet farms in Hikawa have never stopped selling rice and diversion crops exclusively via their local cooperative, and they also remain closely attached to the co-op in other ways. This includes forms of direct influence (e.g. JA Hikawa acting as a shareholder), loans made via the cooperative bank, but also informal ways of 'administrative guidance', for example, help with accounting, or applying for subsidies, and information in general. The role of the local cooperative as a gatekeeper for state support is thus reinforced.[59]

Importantly, the strategy of promoting collective cultivation already emerged in the early 1990s. At that time, exclusive subsidization for *ninaite* was not yet on the political agenda; but preferential access to state funding – that is, infrastructural projects – was. On the basis of massive land improvement projects, a first wave of hamlet farms was already founded from 1991 onwards, following the model of the pioneer hamlet farm mentioned above.[60] In 2004, Hikawa already had 28 hamlet-based farms, more than half of which engaged in collective cultivation. None of the farms met the formal requirements to receive the exclusive subsidies introduced in 2007. Yet, they served as the basis for a quick and comprehensive local reaction to the policy change. Already in 2006, the agricultural administration began promoting the formalization of pre-existing hamlet-based farms. On top of that, several new hamlet-based farms were founded. By December 2008, more than 30 hamlet-based collective farms met the formal requirements for the 2007 subsidy scheme – the inflow of national subsidies to the town remained steady despite a more exclusive subsidization.

## Norms, Networks, and Power

Often led by (retired) cooperative staff and municipal officials, hamlet-based farms in Hikawa 'act in accordance with the views of Nōkyō and the municipal administration'.[61] Beyond the functional aspects of local

[59] Farmers in Hikawa would often comment on the close relationship between their farm and JA Hikawa with a shrug: 'We only know how to grow rice, but JA has the expertise in everything else.'

[60] Interview with a member of the agricultural administration in Hikawa.

[61] Tashiro, 'Izumo chiiki', 180.

governance, the promotion of the concept of hamlet-based collective cultivation is thus closely interlinked with enforcing a certain interpretation of the national agricultural policy process as a whole, that is, one that reinforces instead of undermines the control of the administration and the co-op over the local agricultural sector. The normative foundation for this interpretation – the notion of farmland as a collective resource – has been disseminated along local social network ties, and eventually shifted from the hamlet level to the level of the whole town. Personal ties between members of the administration, the local co-op, and hamlets are an important factor for the proliferation of hamlet farming. An influential farmer and former JA official in Hikawa explains:

> In every hamlet in Hikawa in which a farm cooperative is formed, there is a cooperative official or a member of the administration already living in the hamlet. In Hikawa, the presence of such leaders is important for the founding of hamlet-based farms. [ . . . ] What it needs in the beginning is somebody who is employed in the cooperative farm management department, someone who lives from farming, then the organization-building is quicker.

As indicated in the latter part of the quote, similar network ties play a role for promoting hamlet farming in other parts of Japan as well.[62] However, the integration of hamlets is particularly strong in Hikawa. As a specific feature of governance in Hikawa, groups of two to four hamlets form so-called Promotion Districts (*shinkōku*). Other than hamlets themselves, these districts are stipulated by municipal law. *Shinkōku* form a coupling link between hamlets and administration, used mostly to execute agriculture-related directives smoothly. This system guarantees an institutionalized exchange of information between hamlets, the administration, and the local co-op JA Hikawa. It is a formal expression of the high degree of social integration in Hikawa in general. The boundaries of the town and the co-op have been congruent throughout the whole post-war period, and both have been built upon older administrative and cooperative structures in the same territory.[63]

[62] This finding is backed indirectly e.g. by Shōji, 'Kyōtō-fu'; Kobayashi, 'Seido henkaku'.
[63] JA Hikawa, *Hikawa-chō*.

The local agricultural regime in Hikawa thus displays a stable overlap of social, territorial, and political boundaries,[64] which has facilitated the spread of the concept of collective cultivation in Hikawa.[65]

This has normative implications beyond the hamlet level. In Hikawa, the notion of treating farmland as a collective resource was effectively adapted and shifted from the hamlet-level to the level of the local agricultural regime as a whole by deeply socially embedded 'carriers'. Today, a prominent feature of local governance in Hikawa is comprehensive public control over farmland. Since 2004, the town has a system of publicly redistributing farmland usage rights from retiring farmers to expanding *ninaite* farms. The normative foundation for this system is expressed in the motto 'one town, one field' (*itchō, ichi nōjō*)[66] – which indicates that all arable farming in Hikawa is a collective resource, controlled not (or at least not exclusively) by the households owning the land, but by the local authorities.[67] This motto not only resonates with 'traditional' hamlet functions. In fact, it is an adaptation from the early days of hamlet-based farming in Hikawa: the pioneer hamlet-based collective farm in Hikawa was founded under the very similar slogan 'one district, one farm' (*ichi chiku, ichi nōjō*).[68] Among the local officials involved in the project was an influential local leader then employed at JA Hikawa. Even earlier, the same official had established a less formal system of collective cultivation in his own hamlet/*shinkōku*, where his family has been residing for 10 generations and more. Under the influence of himself and other local figures of

[64] Formally, these boundaries have come under attack in 2011, when the town was absorbed by neighbouring Izumo City. Moreover, by 2015 the local co-op had also been merged into the prefectural co-op JA Shimane. Yet, by late (2013), Hikawa still displayed a clearly delineated local agricultural regime.

[65] Writing on Chinese villages, Tsai argues accordingly that an 'overlap between social and political boundaries' positively influences the relationship between local authorities and their jurisdictions, because it can bring about 'informal institutions of accountability', see Tsai, *Accountability Without Democracy.*

[66] Izumo City, *Nōchi shūseki de tegakeru nōgyō shinkōsaku.*

[67] Jentzsch, 'Village Institutions'.

[68] Jindai, 'Shimane-ken', 92.

'respect and creditability',[69] the concept of collective cultivation subsequently spread alongside the other features of local farmland governance that have come to set Hikawa apart from most other localities in terms of control over farmland and farmers.[70]

Operating upon such a stable normative basis, the local agricultural administration – represented by the local agency that manages farmland matters in town, the so-called Nōgyō Kōsha – can now enforce the further proliferation of collective cultivation even against considerable resistance. Via the strong notion that land is a collective resource, the interests of farm(er)s are subjected to the agenda and the power of the agricultural administration, which prefers a further proliferation of collective cultivation over individual entrepreneurialism. In this context, it is important to note that Hikawa is an extreme case in terms of how comprehensive the normative 'raw material' on the hamlet level has been built into a defensive local agricultural regime. As mentioned above, municipal and cooperative mergers and ongoing de-agriculturalization have diffused the relation between hamlets and local authorities/cooperatives throughout Japan. While such changes might not affect the abilities of particular hamlets to exploit state support collectively, they are likely to reduce the power of local co-ops and/or administrations in other localities to enforce similarly successful defence strategies.

## Changing Hamlet Norms and Practices

Finally, another aspect of the normative foundations for hamlet farming should not go unmentioned. While founding these operations requires (re)activating 'traditional' hamlet norms and practices, hamlet farming also affects the very normative context in which it is located, in particular

[69] Referred to as '*rippa na hito*' and '*sonkei no hito*' by this particular member of the local administration.

[70] Apart from public farmland redistribution, these features also include a comprehensive system of organizing rice production control at the level of the local agricultural regime and the activities of a local company called 'Green Support', which inter alia acts as a last resort to prevent farmland from falling idle.

when hamlet farms become corporate entities. While hamlet-based farming is a means to share the burden for aging farm households, in the long run all hamlet-based farms I have interviewed face severe labour shortages. Incorporating the hamlet farm is often raised as a potential solution to this problem, as it enables farms to offer regular employment to meet their demand for additional labour, hired if necessary from the 'outside'. Heavily promoted by agricultural policymakers, corporatization affects the normative foundations of a growing number of hamlet farms. For example, incorporation typically entails that cultivation and land maintenance have to be covered by regular (and thus costly) labour. This means turning a social obligation into a paid service, thus potentially undermining the norm of protecting farmland as a collective good that underpins the hamlet-based farm – especially if the service is taken over by 'external' labour. In contrast, less formal entities can profit from their embedding in the hamlet as a social unit, thus 'socializing' time-consuming tasks like cutting grass and cleaning drainage channels.[71] Facing the risk that creating a more stable business environment can also turn into a burden to the functionality of hamlet-based farms, some hamlet leaders in Hikawa are eager to shape the process of incorporation with careful regard to the relation between farm and hamlet, integrating the institutional features of the latter into the set-up of the former.[72]

## Conclusion

This chapter has argued that Japanese hamlets and hamlet-based agrarian norms and practices are more than inane reminiscences of a distant past, but adaptive resources in the increasingly contested field of agricultural politics. This finding has theoretical implications beyond the case: the role of norms, practices, and beliefs – let alone their 'traditional' forms – remains understudied especially when it comes to politics and processes of institutional change in advanced

[71] For a similar finding, see Shōji, 'Kyōtō-fu'.

[72] Interview with hamlet farm leader/cooperative official in Hikawa.

industrial nations.[73] The development into modern political economies is typically associated with a process of formalization,[74] in the course of which 'traditional' (e.g. agrarian) norms and practices are gradually 'crowded out' or become obsolete. Informal institutions are typically assumed to be 'slow-moving',[75] that is, norms and practices change not 'by decision', but by 'cultural evolution'.[76] This chapter, however, has shown that even in highly advanced political economies like Japan, this process is neither an automatism nor irreversible, but affected by agency on multiple levels. On the macro level, this entails the creation of policies that resonate with – and in the case of hamlet farming 'reactivate' – certain normative settings. And on the micro level, groups of actors strive for the interpretation and adaptation of 'traditional' norms and practices, thus taking an active part in shaping their pathway. The latter aspect in particular deserves more attention when studying policy processes and institutional change in general in advanced political economies.[77]

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[73] E.g. Azari and Smith, 'Unwritten Rules'.

[74] See, e.g., Streeck and Thelen, 'Introduction'.

[75] Roland, 'Understanding Institutional Change'.

[76] Streeck and Thelen, 'Introduction', 10.

[77] A number of authors have proposed an understanding of gradual institutional change as endogenously shaped by actors responding to, and eventually reinterpreting institutions; Thelen, *How Institutions Evolve;* Streeck and Thelen, *Beyond Continuity;* Mahoney and Thelen, *Explaining Institutional Change;* Mahoney and Thelen, *Explaining Institutional Change;* Deeg and Jackson, 'The state of the art'. Yet, the norms, practices, and social networks that inform actor's behaviour 'on the ground', let alone the way in which local actors themselves shape their normative surroundings, have not been in the focus of these authors.

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**Hanno Jentzsch** is a Senior Research Fellow at the German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ) since October 2016. He received his PhD from the University of Duisburg-Essen (March 2016). In his dissertation, he analyzed the role of informal "village institutions" in Japan's changing agricultural support and protection regime. Under the DIJ research project "The Future of Local Communities in Japan", he explores the political economy of "rural revitalization", focusing on the interaction between local institution-building and the changing regulatory framework governing center-local relations.

# Part 5

## Post-Fukushima Food Education and Food Safety

# Eating School Lunches Together After the Fukushima Accident

Aya H Kimura

After the Fukushima nuclear accident took place in March 2011, confusion ensued as to the health and environmental impacts of radiation exposure. Radiation science is riddled with uncertainty but one aspect that scientists agree upon is that children are generally more vulnerable to radiation contamination than adults with the increased probability of leukaemia, and thyroid, skin, breast, and brain cancers.[1] One might imagine that when parents of school-age children voiced their apprehension about possible contamination of school lunches, their concern would be considered legitimate and swift action would ensue. However, the post-Fukushima accident saw a different dynamic. The authorities seemed rather unwilling to recognize the possibility of contamination, even after the discoveries of contaminated vegetables. The government maintained that, to quote the words of the Minister of Education, Nakagawa Masaharu, 'There is no

[1] UNSCEAR, *Sources, Effects, and Risks of Ionizing Radiation*.

A. H. Kimura (✉)
University of Hawai`i at Manoa, Honolulu, HI, USA
e-mail: aya.hirata.kimura@gmail.com

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impact from the accident on school lunches for now.'[2] School administrators were also far from responsive to the groups of parents raising concerns. The worried parents were rather seen as overreacting, or worse, fanning baseless fears of radiation when Japan was facing one of its greatest national crises.

This chapter explores the contexts that triggered such harsh criticism of school lunch movements emerging after the Fukushima accident by situating school lunch at the intersection of gastronationalism, disaster, and gender politics in contemporary Japan. Gastronationalism refers to the practice of nation-making that takes food as a symbol of national belonging and pride.[3] Food-nation linkage is not a recent phenomenon and in fact, food has been a key component in cultural projects associated with nation-building. The concept of gastronationalism particularly focuses on how the link between nation and food is played out in the context of globalization and expanding international trade with food. With the acceleration of economic globalization, increasing volumes of food are traded across national borders. Nevertheless, the market is institutionalized in such a way that it privileges claims of national and cultural distinctions. The concept of gastronationalism then captures the complex dynamics between global marketplace, nation-building, and foodways in the contemporary era.

Existing studies on gastronationalism[4] have not explicitly dealt with its gender implications. Whereas this chapter's immediate focus is on the post-Fukushima school lunch programmes, it also explores how gender ideologies intersect with gastronationalism.

## Safe School-Lunch Movements

Many Japanese children eat school lunches. 98% of public elementary schools and 78% of public middle schools provide school lunches – more than 30,000 schools in all.[5] Particularly at the elementary and

[2] Nihon Keizai Shimbun, 'Nōsakubutsu shukka teishi'.

[3] DeSoucey, 'Gastronationalism'.

[4] Ibid.; Mincyte, 'Unusual Ingredients'.

[5] Cabinet Office, *Shokuiku hakusho*, 2013. These statistics are for schools that provide what is called 'complete school lunches,' a meal consisting of rice or bread, main dish(es), and milk. There are other schools that provide supplementary foods or milk only.

middle school levels, the majority of children go to public schools and only a small percentage of schools are private, accounting for 1% of elementary and 7% of middle schools in 2011.[6]

When the nuclear accident struck, the national government did not take much action in regard to the safety of school lunches. The earliest action by the Ministry of Education (*Monbukagakushō*) regarding school lunches was on April 5, but it was more concerned about the hygiene of school kitchens that had been used for evacuation after the earthquake and tsunami. Surprisingly, no mention of radiation contamination was made in the statement.[7]

Yet, with the discovery of highly contaminated beef – which came to be dubbed 'caesium beef incident' – the government could no longer ignore the issue. The 'caesium beef' was discovered in the summer of 2011 as contaminated above the government standards (than 500 Bq/kg). The subsequent investigation revealed that close to three thousand cattle had already been slaughtered and sold on the market, many of them at major supermarket chains (Japan Business Press 2011). Furthermore, it became clear that part of it had already been used in school lunches in some cities.[8]

The authorities tried to play down the seriousness of the contamination. For instance, in Yokohama city where it was confirmed that 'caesium beef' was used in the school lunch programme, the government issued a special newsletter on radiation contamination, which cited an expert saying that 'beef contaminated with radioactive caesium over the standard stirred a controversy. However, the standard is not a clear boundary between danger and safety, so you don't have to worry about health impacts even when eating contaminated beef temporarily'.[9] The city's Education Council similarly downplayed the risk of radiation in food, saying that 'even eating (caesium beef) one hundred times

[6] Japan Private Schools Education Institute, 'Gakkosū no suii'.

[7] Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 'Shinendo kara no gakkō kyūshoku no jisshi'.

[8] Makishita, *Hōshanō osen to gakkō kyūshoku*; Save the Children, 'Osen gyūniku'.

[9] Karaki, 'Kiseichi wa anzen'.

would equate to the same exposure as a single x-ray and there would be no impact on health'.[10]

Despite these assurances, many parents became highly concerned about the possibility of contaminated school lunches. Beef did not seem to be the only food that was contaminated by the radioactive materials. Various foods including vegetables, milk, and processed foods like formula milk were found to be contaminated and to exceed government standards. The government test results showed 2% of tested rice, 3% of vegetables, 20% of mushrooms and mountain herbs, and 20% of seafood were contaminated above the government standards.[11] By January 2012, 89,786 samples had been tested by prefectural governments, giving rise to the detection of 1,048 cases of contamination.[12] In more than 80 cases, the government ordered a stop to the shipment of food based on the Special Measures on Nuclear Disaster Act.[13]

There were also concerns as to whether the government standards were strict enough. The nuclear accident prompted the government to use what it called the 'Provisional Regulatory Values' (PRVs) as the radiation standards for foods; PRVs for caesium were 200 Bq/kg for drinking water, milk, and dairy products and 500 Bq/kg for vegetables, grain, meat, egg, fish, and others. While the PRVs became the critical tool for differentiating 'contaminated food' from 'safe food,' their legitimacy was tenuous from the beginning.[14] PRVs were taken from the Indices Relating to Limits on Food and Drink Ingestion by the Nuclear Safety Commission, which was seen as part of the so-called nuclear village (*genshiryoku mura*), the powerful alliances of utility industries and other private sectors, politicians, as well as technocrats and scientific experts that had promoted nuclear power as a safe and economic energy

[10] Association to Protect Children from Radiation in Yokohama, 'Kōhō Yokohama hōshasen'.

[11] Data is available from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries at www.maff.go.jp/j/kanbo/joho/saigai/s_chosa/H25gaiyo.html. The seafood data is calculated based on a report by the Ministry http://www.jfa.maff.go.jp/j/housyanou/pdf/1410_kousin.pdf.

[12] Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare, 'Shokuhinchū no hōsha seibusshitsu no kensa ni tsuite'.

[13] Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare, 'Sanko shiryō (attachment)'.

[14] Kimura, 'Standards as Hybrid Forum'.

source for Japan.[15] Many citizens felt that the PRVs were too lax. Non-profit organizations such as Foodwatch Japan reported that some countries affected by Chernobyl had adopted stricter standards, for example, the Ukraine whose caesium 137 standard for drinking water is 2 Bq/l. Belarus' caesium 137 standard is also much lower, at 10 Bq/l for drinking water and 100 Bq/l for dairy.[16] Some experts also called for stricter values; for instance, professor Nagayama Junya at Kyushu University proposed caesium standards of 20 Bq/kg for dairy and milk and 50 Bq/kg for vegetables.[17] That some foodstuffs consumed in large quantities by the Japanese – fish and rice, for instance – did not have lower PRVs was also critiqued. Similar criticisms continued even after the new standards that were stricter than the original PRVs came into effect in 2012.

It is in this context that what I call the safe school-lunch movement emerged. By safe school-lunch movement, I mean the movement initiated by citizens trying to push the government to implement rigorous safety measures and schools to respond to potential radiation contamination in school lunches. After the accident, the safe school-lunch movement was neither unified nor centralized, and I use the term to refer to the many localized groups that addressed potential radiation contamination of school lunches. Before the accident, there had been a movement to improve the quality of school lunches, but in this context, I am referring solely to the groups emerging after the accident and dealing specifically with radioactive materials. These are parents – mostly mothers, but also some fathers – that started to raise concerns over the need to ensure the safety of school lunches.

The safe school-lunch movement's main focus was to advocate the institutionalized measurement of food contamination levels in school lunch programmes. In response to this pressure, several municipal governments started measuring the ingredients' radiation levels. For

[15] Iida, Sato, and Kono, *Genshiryoku mura wo koete*; Japan Scientists' Association, *Kokusai genshiryoku mura*.

[16] Foodwatch, *Calculated Fatalities from Radiation*.

[17] Tokyo Shimbun, 'Shokuhin shōgai 100 mSv no mondaiten'; Nishi Nihon Shimbun, 'Prof. Nagayama of Kyushu University Proposes Food Standards'.

instance, an *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper article appearing in July 2011 listed several municipalities that were conducting tests including Yokohama city, Kawasaki city, Maebashi city, Musashino city, Kyoto city and Shibuya and Setagaya wards in Tokyo. In November 2011, Fukushima city started testing school lunches, the first in the prefecture.[18]

Even when the measurement programme nominally started, the movement had to be vigilant, as there were various ways of systematizing it. While schools may have started measuring the food used in the school lunch programme, not all foods were tested due to budget and time constraints, and sampling as well as frequency were big issues. Some municipalities just tested the entire meal as one sample, and others measured contamination levels in several but not all ingredients. The whole meal sample method meant that measurements were taken after the entire meal was cooked and had already been eaten by students, so it is mainly for research and tracking purposes, and does not reflect the mothers' wishes to prevent the intake of contaminated food by their children.[19]

The groups also had to watch the precision of measurement, particularly in terms of Minimum Detectable Concentration (MDC). The detectors that the national government provided to 17 prefectures had an MDC at 40 Bq/kg,[20] but many groups felt that this MDC was too high.[21] Some groups therefore focused on lowering the MDC used by municipalities. In Kanagawa, for instance, a group mobilized to have the MDC lowered to 3 Bq/kg.[22] Another group in Tokyo learned that their ward was introducing a detector whose MDC was 30 Bq/kg and lobbied to change it to a better detector with an MDC of 10 Bq/kg.[23]

[18] Asahi Shimbun, 'Kyūshoku ni hōshanō kijun, 1 kiro 40 bekureru'; Asahi Shimbun, 'Fukushima shi kyūshoku shokuzai no hōshasen kensa kaishi'.

[19] Makishita, *Hōshanō osen to gakkō kyūshoku*, 48–9.

[20] Ibid., 45.

[21] Mothers' Group to Investigate Early Radiation Exposure, 'Ninshikinochigai kara umareta bundan'.

[22] Yoshizawa, 'Hayashi shichō intabyū'.

[23] Tokyo Shimbun, 'Onaji kondate de bento fuan nuguenu haha, gyūnyū kyohi mo'.

An additional issue that the movement often brought up was the question of whether or not contaminated food should be used after being measured. In November 2011, the Ministry of Education issued a notice saying that the standard for school lunches should be 40 Bq/kg and if food tested above it, the schools should not use it.[24] The implied message was that if food tests lower than 40 Bq/kg, it can be used in school lunches even if it contains radioactive materials. Indeed, there were cases where municipal governments used foods with some contamination where it was below 40 Bq/kg. For instance, Sendai City in Miyagi Prefecture found 11 Bq/kg in a sample of mushrooms and still fed them to the children. Many groups therefore tried to pressure municipal governments into adopting stricter cut-off points.

Some school lunch movement groups also problematized the measurement programs' testing for limited types of radionuclides only. Almost all detectors used by municipal school lunch programmes are NaI scintillation detectors, which can only detect radionuclides that emit gamma rays such as iodine and caesium, but cannot detect others that do not emit gamma rays, such as strontium. The government surveys of soil and ocean have found strontium deposits from the nuclear accident, although they argue that strontium has only been found within the range of what was observed during the 1960s when atmospheric nuclear tests were at their height.[25] Some groups nevertheless lobbied for the measurement of these non-caesium radionuclides, albeit with full awareness of the difficulty and costliness of doing so. For instance, a group in Setagaya ward in Tokyo successfully lobbied the municipal government to measure strontium although it would take place only once a year.[26]

[24] Asahi Shimbun, 'Kyūshoku ni hōshanō kijun, 1 kiro 40 bekureru'. Note that this cut-off point is already much lower than the national standard. The official national standard for regular food has been 100 Bq/kg since April 2012.

[25] Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 'Gakkō kyūshokuhi'.

[26] Association to Protect Children in Shinagawa, 'Shinagawa ku'.

## School Lunch and Neoliberalization

At the core of parental concerns were structural factors that seemed to make school lunches more vulnerable to contamination. Neoliberal reform has profoundly transformed the school lunch programme since the 1980s, subjecting it to severe cost squeezes. In 1985, the Ministry of Education issued a decree on the rationalization of the school lunch programme, promoting outsourcing to the private sector and the use of consolidated food preparation centres over in-school preparation. Currently, less than 50% of schools prepare school lunches on site and the rate has been declining, while some schools are outsourcing preparation of lunches to convenience store chains like Seven Eleven.[27] The overall fiscal health of local municipalities also deteriorated due to the burst of the bubble economy, the subsequent decline in tax revenues, the aging population, and increasing social service costs. The Ministry of Home Affairs (*Jichishō*) instructed municipalities to reduce the number of public servants during an administrative reform in 1994, which pressured municipal governments to reduce the number of kitchen staff.[28] Some localities are known for high-quality school lunches such as Imabari city (Ehime prefecture), Kitakata city (Fukushima prefecture),[29] and Kikuchi City that use local organic produce in their school lunches.[30] However, the overall deteriorating fiscal health of many local governments has made the cost of school lunches a serious concern for many local governments.[31] For instance, Osaka city started to supply school lunches to middle schools by purchasing ready-made meals, but the quality was so bad and the quantity insufficient that students and parents complained.[32]

Furthermore, some families cannot afford to pay school lunch fees, which average 4,100 yen (about US $40) per month.[33] According to the

[27] Shirota, 'Gakkō kyūshoku'.

[28] Gakkō Kyūshoku News, 'Gōrikatsūchi'.

[29] Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 'Gakkō kyūshoku'.

[30] Watanabe, 'Kumamoto ken'.

[31] Schebath, 'Financial Stress in the Japanese Local Public Sector in the 1990s'.

[32] Asahi Shimbun, 'Ōsaka shi'.

[33] Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 'Gakkō kyūshoku'.

Ministry of Education's 2012 survey, about 1% of students were not paying school lunch fees.[34] The fiscal difficulties of both local municipalities and parents make school lunches highly cost sensitive.

After the nuclear accident, the price of foods from the affected areas declined. For instance, peaches from Fukushima witnessed a 49% decline in 2010 and pears a 38% decline in comparison with 2010. This was despite the fact that 2011 was generally a good year for farmers in Japan, with relatively higher prices for vegetables and fruits.[35] Given that the school lunch programmes had become very cost sensitive, the cheaper price of foods sourced from the affected areas made them potentially attractive as ingredients for school lunches. Some observers noted that the 'caesium beef' ended up in school lunches precisely for this reason.[36]

On the other hand, the economic stake in the school lunch programme is significant given its size and regularity. School lunches are big business, estimated to be worth 4.7 billion dollars annually.[37] Therefore, producers have a huge stake in having their foods served as part of school lunches. To give an example: one food item that was heavily contaminated by the nuclear accident is mushrooms. Mushrooms were likely to absorb caesium from the logs they grow on, and they were one of the foods that constantly appeared on the government contamination list. Seeing the reputation of their products decline sharply, producers countered this trend by holding a 'mushroom day' at Tokyo public schools, conducting classes on the nutritional benefits of mushrooms and donating mushrooms to school lunches that were fed to more than 29,000 kids in 2014. The project was

[34] Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 'Gakkō kyūshokuhi'. There have been controversies around whether the failure of some parents to pay the school lunch fee is due to true economic hardship or not. Some newspaper articles have tended to frame it as analogous to welfare cheating, which echoes the conservative inclination to demonize the poor for abusing social services. I could not find data to convincingly show that the failure to pay was not due to poverty. Furthermore, public assistance to the poor has been declining over the past decades, given the neoliberal restructuring of the welfare system in Japan. See Fujisawa 'Gakkō kyūshokuhimi'.

[35] Ouse, 'Fukkō kara 1 nen Fukushima yureru kome sanchi'.

[36] Kitamura, 'Kyūshoku ni tsukawareta'.

[37] Gakko Kyūshoku News, 'Gakkō kyūshoku no shijō kibo'.

funded by the Forestry Agency, which had budgeted \$20 million of the government's 'mushroom emergency rejuvenation and restoration' initiative.[38] It was couched as a programme to counter *fūhyōhigai* or 'harmful rumours' that caused consumers to avoid buying food that was deemed risky due to the nuclear disaster. Similarly, when mandarin oranges were found to be contaminated and removed from school lunches in Yokohama and Kamakura, the producer associations lobbied fiercely against such actions, which they deemed unnecessary because the contamination did not exceed the government standard. In Odawara city, mandarin orange growers lobbied the legislature to issue a declaration requesting municipalities not to avoid their product, as the contamination was well below the standard. And in Tochigi Prefecture, beef producers also lobbied the municipal government to serve their product in school lunches.[39]

## Gender Politics of School Lunches

In addition to neoliberal restructuring, another critical dynamic of school lunches in Japan is how it has been reconstituted as part of *shokuiku* (food education) since the 1990s.[40] Japanese school lunches are, in principle, mandatory to all students as they are considered part of education, and such views have been strengthened under *shokuiku* policies. This made it difficult for concerned parents to pull their children out of school lunch programmes.

Originally, the Japanese school lunch programme started as one of the government's anti-poverty and malnutrition campaigns that grew out of post-World War II food aid from the USA under the Licensed Agencies for Relief in Asia and Government Appropriation for Relief in Occupied Areas programme. Similar to the American school lunch programme, which has played an important role in absorbing surplus commodities,

[38] Japan Agricultural Newspaper, 'Genboku hoshi'.
[39] Nakano, 'Gakkō kyūshoku no hōshasen taisaku'.
[40] See also Assmann's contribution in this volume.

US food aid to Japan was tied to the USA's need to increase agricultural exports, and therefore played a geopolitical role also in the context of the Cold War.[41] With Japanese economic development, the school lunch programme's mandate shifted over time from anti-hunger to education, which was formalized in the *shokuiku* programmes in the 2000s. In 2004, the government established the Food Education Law, firmly positioning school lunches as part of *shokuiku* and the educational curriculum. According to this law, the objectives of the school lunch programme are to 'teach the contributions of various people to the production of food, to deepen understanding of traditional food, and to foster the spirit of cooperation, in addition to the intake of appropriate nutrition'.[42]

As school lunches had now become a formal part of children's educational experience, it was difficult for them to opt out of school lunches even when contamination had become a concern after the nuclear accident. Some parents did ask for special permission for their children to bring homemade lunches or to refuse food items that they deemed risky. The Japanese school lunch programme usually serves milk on a daily basis, and because of the experience of the Chernobyl accident, many parents did not want their children to drink milk. There are no comprehensive statistics on the prevalence of such solutions, but newspaper reports show that some, but not many, students were able to gain permission from the school authorities to opt out of all or part of the school lunch programme. In Iwaki city in Fukushima, for instance, 1,800 elementary and middle school children (out of about 30,000 students) did not drink milk in 2012.[43] Some parents also asked the schools to exempt their children from school lunches altogether and allow them to bring homemade lunches. For instance, a survey by the Fukushima City Education Council in February 2013 found, in addition to 204 elementary and middle school students who did not drink milk, 49 students who brought their own rice, and four who did not eat

[41] Levine, *School Lunch Politics*; Satō, 'Gakkō kyūshoku no kenkyū'.
[42] Cabinet Office, *Shokuiku hakusho*, 2008.
[43] Interview with the Division of School Lunch and Food Education, Iwaki City 2014.

school lunches at all.[44] However, not many were able to do it, and in most instances, permission was granted on an ad hoc basis.

Therefore, *shokuiku* had a strong influence on post-Fukushima responses. Here, it is worth asking how *shokuiku* policy came to be in the 2000s. The notion that students need food-related education sounds like a laudable idea, but it was driven by complex social and economic calculations.[45] The 1990s saw a series of damaging food-related scandals that shattered consumer confidence in food policy such as domestic cases of BSE (Mad Cow Disease) and contaminated frozen foods. There was also increasing concern over the health impacts of 'Western style' dietary life including the rise in obesity and metabolic syndrome. The government advocated what it called 'Japanese-style dietary life' (*nihongata shoku seikatsu*) as a healthier alternative. The push for Japanese-style dietary life was in turn intimately linked to the government's desire to promote Japanese agriculture and its concerns with declining food self-sufficiency.

I would like to highlight the deep-seated concern over the deterioration of the so-called traditional family as another key driver behind the *shokuiku* policy. Prominently featured as a rationale for the need for *shokuiku* was the notion of *koshoku*. *Koshoku* is a neologism that combines the Chinese character for 'alone' (孤 *ko*) and 'food' (食 *shoku*), and refers to the phenomenon of family members eating separately. Replacing the first *ko* with another Chinese character with the same sound (*ko*: 個) that means 'individual,' *koshoku* is also used to critique the behaviour of family members who do not share the same food at the dinner table but rather eat individual plates, presumably because they are eating store-bought food; combined, *koshoku* highlights a lamentable dietary behaviour in contemporary Japan.

Often accompanying such criticisms of *koshoku* have been the calls for the resurrection of *ikka danran* or families eating together, and the preservation of *katei ryōri* (home cooking). As Cwiertka and Koyama point out, the discourses of *ikka danran* and *katei ryori* are a relatively

[44] Yomiuri Shimbun, 'Gyūnyū nomazu beihan wa jisan'.

[45] Kimura, 'Nationalism, Patriarchy, and Moralism'.

new coinage.[46] Yet the debates surrounding *shokuiku* portray *ikka danran* and *katei ryōri* as an established tradition, the 'loss' of which is lamented in contemporary Japanese society. Family members sharing the same table and home-cooked meals are depicted as the cornerstone of a healthy diet, familial happiness, and the proper disciplining of children.

Interestingly, when *koshoku* is problematized, it is not the absence of fathers that is seen as the problem. Indeed, fathers have been absent from meals for many decades.[47] Even when Japanese workaholism and the 'worker bee' lifestyle gained much attention in the 1980s, fathers who could not eat dinner with their families did not become the object of social criticism. The current attention to *koshoku* is really about the absence of a mother who fails to attend to her children at the dinner table. The other *koshoku* – that different food is eaten at the table – also subtly places blame on mothers by implying that food is not home cooked but bought in from outside. Hence, although the moral problem seen in *koshoku* is broadly framed as the loss of a family and home-cooked meal, at its core is a societal ambivalence about contemporary family structures that diverges from what is seen as the 'traditional' family. In policy and media discussions about *shokuiku*, therefore, it was not the fathers who received the blame for the disappearance of home meals and the increasing use of pre-cooked food. It was the mothers who were always marked as the ones accountable for cooking. *Shokuiku* policy was then intricately tied to the insistence on patriarchal family structures and its division of labour.

## Gendered Sanctions

It might be expected that cost pressures and the mandatory nature of school lunches explained above would justify parental concerns. However, parents in the safe school-lunch advocacy groups, which

[46] Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*; Koyama, *Katei no kisei*.

[47] Ishige, 'Kazoku to kaji'; see also Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, 114; Bestor, *Tsukiji*, 157.

pushed for the monitoring of school lunch safety faced significant criticism from the government, school authorities, and the general public.

I interviewed the leaders of five safe school-lunch advocacy groups (two in Tokyo, one in Kanagawa, and two in Fukushima). All five groups were founded after the Fukushima nuclear accident to persuade the municipal governments and school authorities to recognize the risk and take countermeasures. The interviewees were all female, and the groups' memberships were also heavily feminized, although some fathers took part in them as well.

The most salient theme from the interviews was the criticism of *fūhyōhigai*, of which all groups were accused. *Fūhyōhigai* refers to declines in the sale of products from certain areas because of consumer belief that they may be contaminated, and the concept implies that this belief is erroneous. The government and mainstream media blamed *fūhyōhigai* for causing major economic damage, which the government estimated at 13 billion dollars in 2011 alone.[48] When the safe school-lunch movements raised concerns over the safety of radiation-contaminated school lunches, their actions tended to be seen as spreading *fūhyōhigai* – fanning baseless fears over radiation, inflicting pain on food producers and the areas affected by the disaster.

Criticism of the safe school-lunch movement was also clearly voiced in media reporting. For instance, a viewer commenting on a national television programme on school lunch safety issues wrote, 'Families who make children eat homemade lunch instead of school lunches are arrogant, selfishly concerned only about their own children. Not buying Tohoku produce is also a good example of *fūhyōhigai*, because it is said to be safe'.[49] Many school authorities chided parents who raised concerns over school lunches. The newspaper *Mainichi Shimbun* reported that the mother of an elementary school child in Fukushima who decided to prepare homemade lunches was phoned by the principal, who told her, 'school lunch is part of education. It is important to share

[48] Office of Prime Minister, 'Tōkyō denryoku'.

[49] NHK, 'Shutoken supesharu'.

the same meal'. A report in November 2011 by the non-profit organization Human Rights Now found many schools did not allow home lunches to be brought in, and the majority of parents did not dare to ask for this option. A mother of three was quoted as saying, 'I am afraid that people would see me as a "monster parent." There are fewer people who will speak up – because the people who would speak up have already evacuated.'[50] Concerned parents have been criticized not only by the schools but also by relatives and friends. Bullying is a significant concern. Students are reported to have been bullied as being *hikenmin* (anti-prefecture) for not drinking milk at school.[51] Mothers sometimes have to fight within their own households to voice their concerns. The comments of a mother of two children in Fukushima point to how tension can emerge between wife and husband: 'My husband says that my kids should not do differently when it is the government's decision to provide local milk and rice. I am opposed, but I cannot evacuate or get a divorce to refuse him.'[52] Similar tensions between mothers and fathers were also reported by Morioka Rika.[53]

That the movement that raised the alarm over radiation was indeed highly feminized was indicative of the gendered nature of the *fūhyōhigai* discourse. Because radiation contamination was rendered as a scientific problem, the *fūhyōhigai* discourse amplified the prevailing sexist stereotype of women as being weak on technical and scientific issues and targeted women in particular as being guilty of spreading false rumours. For instance, Matsunaga Kazuki, the author of *Okāsan no tame no shokuhin anzen kyōshitsu* (*Food Safety for Mothers*), argued that *fūhyōhigai* was caused by women who acted on their ignorance of food safety risks. As she wrote, 'After the Fukushima No. 1 reactor accident, it was women, particularly mothers, who were concerned *and confused* about food contamination'.[54]

[50] Human Rights Now, 'Fukushima, Kōriyama chōsa hōkokusho', 15.
[51] Mainichi Shimbun, Hōshanō busshitsu'.
[52] Human Rights Now, 'Fukushima, Kōriyama chōsa hōkokusho', 15.
[53] Morioka, 'Gender Difference'.
[54] Matsunaga, 'Tekisei shōhisha kihan'. Emphasis by the author.

Because the pollution concern was seen as baseless and anti-science, women who tried to alert the public were chastised in the name of countering harmful rumours. For instance, women in a group in Fukushima told me the following story: when they collected signatures to be submitted to the local government, the official petition had to list the real name of one of the members as the representative of the group. Using that name, an anonymous critic posted personal information about the member, including her address and photos of her house, on the web; the member also received anonymous faxes criticizing the group's actions as *fūhyō higai*. When the members went to the police because they felt their safety was endangered, the police were not sympathetic at all, telling them, 'You must have known that these things would happen, so we should give *you* crime prevention instruction'.

As feminist scholars have pointed out, the Western scientific paradigm tends to draw on a binary of men = rational vs. women = emotional, privileging the former as the backbone of science and reason.[55] Women's activism against environmental pollutants often encounters sexist policing that chastises them for being unscientific and emotional.[56] It is in this context of patriarchal gender ideology that many women in the safe school-lunch movements faced intimidation as they tried to raise concerns as mothers.

Hegemonic femininity and its insistence on proper womanhood also coloured the way in which the groups – many of them were women – had to negotiate potential criticism of being overbearing and interfering. Schools have historically been a highly feminized area, where many women participate not only as teachers but also as the rank and file of Parent Teacher Associations. As part of child-rearing in the shadow of largely absent 'worker bee' fathers who devoted themselves to Japan Inc., schools were areas where mothers were expected to contribute: from the daily management of school operations to the organization of various school events. This was the expectation particularly for stay-at-home

[55] Harding, *Whose Science?*; Keller, *Reflections on Gender and Science*.

[56] Blum, *Love Canal Revisited*; Foote and Mazzolini, *Histories of the Dustheap*; see, for instance Gibbs and Levine, *Love Canal: My Story*.

housewives or *shufu* in the post-war period. In the past few decades, Japanese mothers have become much more educated and the number of those working outside the home has been increasing; only 12% of women attended four-year university programmes in 1980, rising to 47% in 2014; moreover, 24% of women in the mid-1980s were in the workforce while 38% continue to work after childbearing today.[57] And yet, as the more educated and empowered women tried to participate in school matters, contemporary mothers tend to be seen as excessively 'nagging' and 'interfering'.[58] This kind of dynamic has been theorised by feminist scholars as 'the new sexual contract' under post-feminism – while women are nominally empowered, requirements of hegemonic femininity still remain intact.[59] Women are expected to shoulder burdens of societal reproduction (via nurturing and educating children) but they have to act in a properly gendered way – not to be aggressive and demanding, but to be collaborative and docile.

## Disaster and Gastronationalism

In addition to gendered stereotypes, nationalism also shaped the experience of the safe school-lunch movement. The Triple Disaster in 2011 brought forth a surge in nationalist discourses. While disasters heighten social schisms from divergent interpretations of risks and varying degrees of damages and recovery prospects, they can bring forth what is called a therapeutic community where people come together in times of disaster and exhibit strong social capital.[60] The events of March 2011 came to be imagined as a national crisis,[61] with the Emperor urging the nation's citizens to 'treat each other with compassion and overcome these difficult times'.[62] The slogan *Ganbarō Nippon* (Don't give up, Japan)

[57] Gender Equality Bureau, *Women and Men in Japan 2015*.
[58] Wakakuwa and Fujimura-Fanselow, 'Backlash against Gender Inequality after 2000', 342.
[59] McRobbie, *The Aftermath of Feminism*.
[60] Barton, *Communities in Disaster*.
[61] Sand, 'Living with Uncertainty after March 11, 2011'; Dudden, 'The Ongoing Disaster'.
[62] BBC News, 'Japan's Earthquake: Emperor Akihito "Deeply Worried"'.

became ubiquitous, appearing on posters and billboards.[63] Disaster nationalism naturalized and glorified the nation as a place of *kizuna*, or bonds.[64]

In this context, 'eating together' was equated with helping national reconstruction and supporting the devastated areas. Concerned with consumer avoidance of foods from affected areas due to the nuclear accident, the government started the 'Eat and Support' (*Tabete Ôen*) campaign in April 2011.[65] For instance, in August 2012, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (*Nōrinsuisanshō*, MAFF) and the Ministry of Economics, Trade and Industry (*Keizaisangyōshō*, METI) asked the private sector to encourage the purchase of goods from the affected areas. They also issued requests to local municipalities and universities to join the movement. Between April 2012 and September 2015, more than 1,000 events were held within this context.[66] In addition to holding expo-type events, the mass media were mobilized. Advertisements for beef from the affected areas – to combat negative images from the aforementioned 'caesium beef' scandal – were featured in popular magazines with mainly female readerships such as *Kyōno Ryōri, Esse, Sutekina Okusan, Saita, Orange Page,* often along with recipes for beef-based dishes. Advertisements featuring other foods from affected areas were also printed in major newspapers such as *Asahi* and *Yomiuri.*[67]

While the campaign ostensibly aimed to address the economic hardships for food producers in the affected regions, it was also a project of patriotism. The patriotic investment in 'eating together' in the government's campaign was evident, for instance, in a TV advertisement created for the 'Eat and Support' campaign. It featured TOKIO, a long-time popular singing group of five men. The ads started with a shot of one of its members eating a big rice ball, followed by the others

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[63] Hurnung, 'The Risks of "Disaster Nationalism"'.

[64] Sand, 'Living with Uncertainty after March 11, 2011,'; Dudden, 'The Ongoing Disaster'.

[65] *Tabete ōen* can be translated as 'eat and support' or 'eat to support.' Elsewhere, I have adopted the latter translation. Takeda (in this volume) uses the former but we are referring to the same campaign.

[66] Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, *Tabete ōen shiyō*.

[67] Reconstruction Agency, 'Nōsanbutsutō shōhi'.

biting into a whole cucumber, then an apple, a skewer of beef, and a tomato, all smiling happily. The voiceover said, 'Today, all of Japan is closely connected through our good food and our pleasure in eating together. *Itadakimasu!* [Bon appétit]'. This was followed by the slogan, 'Let's continue to eat to support!' spoken in cheerful unison by the stars. The advertisement finished with an image of the 'Food Action Nippon' logo which is a smiley figure with a red dot in the middle, invoking the national flag. 'Eating together' was a patriotic act of moral support and solidarity in a nation facing enormous challenges.

The Triple Disaster also raised the stakes in the national branding of Japanese food on the international market; gastronationalism. The nuclear accident prompted many countries to impose import restrictions on Japanese food products. Hong Kong, the USA, Taiwan, and Korea constituted Japan's main export markets before the accident (Hong Kong 25%, the USA 14%, Taiwan 12%, Korea 9% of total export value of 492 billion yen in 2010), and all four countries started to impose import bans on certain products from certain regions and/or the provision of radiation measurement certificates for the items to be imported.[68] The bans continued beyond 2011, and these major markets still have similar requirements on Japanese imported foods as of November 2015.[69] The Japanese government was highly concerned about these trade restrictions and sometimes took retaliatory action. For instance, it filed complaints in 2015 to the World Trade Organization against South Korea, claiming that its import restrictions were arguably scientifically unjustifiable. The imposition of trade restrictions also had domestic consequences, as the importing countries rationalized their decision on the basis of health concerns, thus going against the official Japanese position that Japanese food was safe.

[68] Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, *Fukushima genshiryoku*.

[69] Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, *Shokuryō, Nōgyō, Nōson Hakusho*; TV Asahi, 'Washoku kanren ga zoka'. Overall food exports have increased as Japan stepped up its campaign for *washoku* and other Japanese food items. Japanese exports of agriculture and fisheries products increased after a significant decline in 2011–2012. In 2014, it reached 612 billion yen, and the government is aiming to increase it to 1 trillion yen by 2020.

However, there was more than the economic stake in the idea of good Japanese food in the global arena. Food has been integral to the government's vision of a cool Japan, a strategy aimed at enhancing Japan's position in the world through 'soft power' or non-coercive, culture/value/moral-based attraction (see Assmann in this volume). Government policies have positioned Japanese food and *washoku* as quintessential Japanese soft power. Just as Japan embarked upon its 'soft power' diplomacy to push 'cool Japan', the nuclear accident cast profound doubt over its technological sophistication and exposed cultures of corruption and mismanagement. The nuclear accident seemed to further tarnish the image of Japan in the international community at a time when Japan was already struggling with its national branding[70] in the shadow of both China and a prolonged recession.[71]

The citizen movements that voiced safety concerns over food after the nuclear accident, such as the safe school-lunch movements, seemed to go against the grain of gastronationalism in times of perceived national crisis. School lunches in particular conjoin two sites that beckon powerful symbolic and moral investments: food and school. School lunches are a quintessential time for 'sharing the same pot of rice' (*onaji kamano meshi wo ku*) as a Japanese saying goes, which is the praxis of building solidarity and camaraderie. Eating together is not only about the sharing of nutrition, but also the sharing of happiness and hardship. Refusing to eat the same school lunch was interpreted not only as the manifestation of safety concerns but also as a sign of deteriorating bonds and national belonging.

Given that school lunches were a highly charged and emotive object in the context of post-disaster nationalism, the criticism the movement faced was particularly harsh. For instance, when the safe school-lunch groups asked for children to be able to opt out of the school lunch programme, they felt they were risking social ostracism. Interviewees talked about how school administrators were not receptive to their concerns, repeating what was relegated by the national government.

[70] Cf Hymans, 'East Is East, and West Is West?'

[71] McGray, 'Japan's Gross National Cool'; Valaskivi, 'A Brand New Future?'.

They talked about how they needed to be discreet; for instance, even when some of the mothers decided to pull their children out of the school lunch programme, they felt that such actions could trigger bullying and reactions from the school. They tried to make lunch boxes that had the same items as would be served that day for school lunch.

In sum, concerns over the radiation contamination of food went against gastronationalism in a dual sense; by going against the idea of high-quality Japanese food as a globally marketable 'cool', and by fracturing the notion of bonded Japanese subjects who share the same meal in both good times and bad. Even mentioning contamination seemed to be against the national yearning for a positive spin and the dictum that good Japanese citizens are forward-looking and positive thinking, all sharing the national aspiration for the 'rebirth' of the nation.[72]

## Conclusion: Gender Implications of Food Nationalism

By using the case of post-Fukushima school lunch politics, this chapter has elaborated the relationships between gastronationalism, disaster, and citizen activism and had shown the gendered discourses that shaped the dynamics among them. In this concluding part of the chapter, I would like to discuss more generally several themes that are worth exploring with regard to the relationship between sexual order, food, and nation-state. How does the gender perspective enrich our understanding of gastronationalism?

Firstly, because food and food preparation are commonly understood to constitute an essential part of the reproductive work shouldered mainly by women, social relationships around food – including gastronationalism – need to be addressed from a gender perspective. The case of the Fukushima accident raised a profound paradox. Preparation of

[72] Samuels, 'Japan's Rhetoric of Crisis', 2.

good food has historically been a core of proper Japanese womanhood, which explains why many mothers felt more concerned about food safety issues after the nuclear accident than fathers.[73] School lunches are a particularly poignant case as it is food fed to children – another feminized realm. Yet, when mothers tried to voice concerns in public, they were strongly chastised for spreading harmful rumours rather than being praised for the dutiful conduct of their maternal responsibilities. It appears that mothers are still expected to focus on the preparation of *ofukuro no aji* (mother's taste) as *yasashii okāsan* (gentle mother), rather than engage in political actions as radical citizens that might disturb the existing politico-economic establishment.

Secondly, gastronationalism, that is, viewing food through a cosmopolitan prism, features nation-states as the protectors of gastronomic traditions and foodways. Increasingly, food-related standards and rules are set internationally, among nation-states. This endows the nation-states with critical power to set and negotiate international rules and norms. For instance, when import bans were issued on foods from particular prefectures based on concerns over radiation contamination, the negotiation fell on the shoulders of the national government. This elevated role of the national government as the guardian of national foods tends to obfuscate the government's failures and complacency in facing the food safety challenges, as in the case of the Fukushima nuclear accident. Beyond the case of the nuclear accident examined in this chapter, the interpretation of the state as the protector of patrimony requires critical analysis. For instance, the framing of the state as the protector makes it difficult to see how for instance participation in free trade regimes has accelerated challenges to domestic food producers by inviting cheaper imports and by reducing subsidies to domestic producers. The idea of 'patrimony' – the inheritance from one's father – is worth dwelling on here; while gastronationalism showcases the nation-state as the ultimate guardian of food traditions and foodways, we need to ask whose traditions, food practices, and knowledge are valued. Given male dominance in politics and economics in Japan, women's knowledge and labour that is essential to local foodways might not be fully recognized and rewarded.

[73] Tateno and Yokoyama, 'Public Anxiety'.

Gastronationalism privileges the protection of local foodways as a national project by the state, but the real praxis of transmitting and preserving foodways takes place on the ground, by producers and consumers, and not necessarily via the market place.

Thirdly, gastronationalism envisions food as an international commodity, making it difficult to raise questions about its quality from within, as it would be seen as infringing on the nation's treasured pride. As we have seen, food safety concerns after Fukushima by the Japanese were interpreted as a reflection of a lack of patriotism, rather than as a patriotic act to provide the safest and most nutritious foods to Japanese children. Furthermore, the questioning of food quality – as in the case of women's concerns regarding the safety of school lunches – tends to be silenced by what I call 'food policing'; in the name not only of national interests but also of science.[74] This is because the food quality debate is increasingly scientized and tends to boil down to scientific and technical parameters. As the prevailing stereotype of women is that they are weak in technical and scientific matters, scientization of food quality issues tends to marginalize women's concerns. Their concerns are, as in the case examined in this chapter, rendered trivial because women are labelled as being unscientific and irrational.

The Fukushima nuclear accident posed serious challenges to the idea that Japanese food is safe, of high quality, and something of which Japanese people can be proud internationally. This chapter has shown how post-disaster nationalism and gastronationalism exerted complex influences on how the Japanese government and politico-economic elites tried to resurrect it from its tarnished reputation, with gendered consequences.

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[74] Kimura, *Radiation Brain Moms and Citizen Scientists*.

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**Aya H. Kimura** is Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Hawai‘i-Mānoa. She is the author of Radiation Brain Moms and Citizen Scientists: The Gender Politics of Food Contamination after Fukushima (2016, Duke University Press) and Hidden Hunger: Gender and Politics of Smarter Food (2013, Cornell University Press, Winner of the Rural Sociological Society Outstanding Scholarly Award). She has also edited Food and Power: Visioning Food Democracy in Hawai’i (2016, University of Hawaii Press, co-editor with Krisnawati Suryanata).

# National Solidarity of Food Insecurity: Food Practice and Nationalism in Post-3/11 Japan

Hiroko Takeda

The triple disaster in March 2011 triggered large-scale radioactive contamination in Japan's prime area of agriculture production, resulting in the intensification of the sense of food risk among Japanese people. Simultaneously, agricultural production was highlighted as a medium for building a sense of solidarity with the devastated area – consuming food produced in the Tohoku region was portrayed as an act that provided the devastated region with the support it needed to move towards recovery. To promote this, the Japanese government implemented an official campaign to increase awareness among consumers of the harm posed by 'reputation damage' concerning radioactive contamination of food in a circumstance where the regulatory framework for managing radioactive food contamination itself was not yet consolidated and there was no conclusive scientific view about the impact of consuming food contaminated by radionuclides. On top of this, normative discourses calling for consumers to exercise 'prudence' were spread

H. Takeda (✉)
Nagoya University, Nagoya, Japan
e-mail: h.takeda@law.nagoya-u.ac.jp

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through the mass media, and in this way, a national solidarity of food risk(s) was to be formed in post-3/11 Japan.

The overarching purpose of this chapter is to understand, firstly, whether such a solidarity of food risks was formed in post-3/11 Japan, and then, if so, even partially, how it operated politically and how individuals negotiated within it. To approach these questions, the first part of the chapter discusses the intricate relationship between the notion of risk and the sense of nationalism in the contemporary state governance system. The second part of the chapter goes on to examine the government campaign and elucidates the logic behind it. The third part of the chapter turns its attention to individuals' manoeuvring, that is, their responses to the government campaign and the normative discourses that urged the building of this solidarity. By taking these steps, the chapter tries to identify in a concrete manner the politics of food risk in post-3/11 Japan.

## Introduction

In the 1978 lecture series entitled 'Security, Territory and Population' at the Collège de France, Michel Foucault illustrated how strong concerns over 'food scarcity' on the government side prompted the development of what he called 'apparatuses of security', the governing mechanisms of the modern state that ensure 'security' within its bounded territory through implementing 'rational' governing techniques.[1] The scarcity of food was likely to stir up revolts in cities. To avoid such a situation, the French government of the mid-eighteenth century utilized knowledge of 'political economy' and attempted to ensure that a sufficient amount of grain was *freely* circulated among the national population. This entailed the expansion of the state's managerial functions over the whole 'history' of grain – from seeding to commodity exchange in the market and shops – by connecting up fragmented societal elements and

[1] Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, 29–53.

different actors to enable a dynamic flow of grain to continue. In this sense, the apparatuses of security are 'centrifugal':

> New elements are constantly being integrated: production, psychology, behaviour, the ways of doing things of producers, buyers, consumers, importers, and exporters, and the world market. Security therefore involves organizing, or anyway allowing the development of ever-wider circuits.[2]

The national and international political economy of food was, therefore, a system of securitization with which the national government stamped out risks of popular unrest and defended its legitimacy to rule within its bounded territory. Importantly, individuals were incorporated into this system of governing food security as *homo œconomics*, namely, a rational, independent and capable producer, trader, or consumer who autonomously acts according to liberal capitalist standards and principles to maximize personal economic gain. It is in this historical juncture where Foucault observed a prototype of the modern state system based on 'governmentality', Foucault's neologism referring to a specific type of rationality of government that enables individuals to optimize their life potentials, while disciplining them according to liberal capitalist principles.

When the so-called Triple Disaster – a monumental earthquake that was followed by a massive tsunami which triggered a major nuclear meltdown – happened in Japan in March 2011, the then national government run by the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) faced an urgent need to securitize food for its population. This task had been carried out in circumstances where the political system was overwhelmed by enormous damage caused by the Triple Disaster while many people remained in psychological shock – in other words, the Japanese state system was still caught in a state of crisis. The most severe damage from the Triple Disaster was inflicted on the north-eastern part of Honshū Island, generally called the Tōhoku region, which is a major food

[2] Ibid., 45.

production area in Japan. The earthquakes and tsunami on 11th March destroyed food production, processing, and distribution facilities and the direct economic damage to agriculture, forestry, and fishery industry in the region amounted to 242.68 billion yen.[3] In addition, the subsequent meltdown at the Fukushima Daichi Nuclear Power Plant caused large-scale contamination of natural resources used for food production (air, soil, sea, and water) as well as food itself by radioactive materials. As a result, a significant number of people living in and outside of the devastated areas faced intense food insecurity in terms of both food supply and food safety on top of the destruction and losses brought about by the Triple Disaster.

Just like the French government in the eighteenth century, the Japanese national government was required to manage food insecurity in the aftermath of the Triple Disaster and in so doing defend its legitimacy. Simultaneously, the task to govern food insecurity in the Japan of 2011 differs from that in mid-eighteenth-century France in the following two senses: firstly, food insecurity in post-3/11 was not limited to the problem of food scarcity (i.e. insecurity over food supply), and insofar as concerns over food safety are involved, the system of food governance needs to be backed up by scientific knowledge. As discussed in detail below, the introduction of scientific knowledge into the food governance system tends to deepen uncertainty over food safety and hence further intensify the sense of risk and insecurity.[4] Secondly, the state governing system in the industrially advanced countries has undergone a series of institutional reforms influenced by neoliberal principles since the 1970s, through which the 'apparatuses of security' – once consolidated as the Keynesian welfare state system in those countries – have gradually been dismantled and reorganized.[5] Japan is no exception to this process, and neoliberal reforms have been carried out in a

[3] MAFF, *Shokuryō, nōgyō, nōson hakusho*, 5.

[4] Beck, *Risk Society*, 56.

[5] Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*; also see Blyth, *Great Transformations*; Jessop, *The Future of the Capitalist State*. Burchell and Rose provide good overviews of the ways in which the mode of the operation of 'governmentality' changed in the advanced form of liberalism. See Burchell, 'Liberal Government and Techniques of the Self'; Rose, 'Governing "Advanced" Liberal Democracies'.

multitude of policy areas including the food regulatory system since the 1990s.[6] Accordingly, when the national government faced the challenge of post-3/11 food insecurity, it had to operate within the remits of a neoliberalized governing system of food. How then did the Japanese national government actually manage the task of governing post-3/11 food insecurity?

To consider this question, this chapter pays special attention to nationalistic discourses that advocated the importance of forming solidarity with the devastated area through the consumption of food produced in the region. The governmental 'Eat and Support' campaign (*Tabete Ōenshiyō*), which encourages Japanese people to consume food produced in the devastated area and provide support for recovery, was initiated in April 2011 by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF) and has been functioning as a vehicle to spread those nationalistic discourses. Today, the campaign is conducted under the umbrella of 'Food Action Nippon' (FAN), a government-led national movement started in 2008 that aims at improving the level of food self-sufficiency through raising awareness of the issue. A detailed examination of the Eat and Support campaign helps us to understand the political functions of nationalistic discourses in the governance system in advanced liberal capitalist societies and in so doing further highlights the ungovernable nature of food insecurity in today's political architecture in Japan.

The rest of this chapter is organized as follows: the next section discusses the complex and intricate relationship between the state governing system, notions of risk/insecurity and nationalism in the contemporary neoliberalized governance system. The third section briefly

[6] I have already discussed the neoliberal nature of institutional reforms since the 1990s in the areas of food regulation and family policy. See, for food regulation reform, Takeda, 'The Governing of Family Meals'; 'Securitizing Food in Japan', and, for family policy reform, Takeda, 'Structural Reform of the Family'; 'Gender-Related Social Policy'.

It is worth noting that the development of the Keynesian-type welfare state system in Japan was countered by the 'Oil Shocks' in the 1970s. This resulted in the limited scope of Japan's welfare programmes as demonstrated by persistency in terms of its relatively lower level of social spending, stronger familialism and a larger role assigned to corporate welfare provision than its counterparts in international comparison. See Takekawa, *Rentai to shōnin.*

outlines the institutional reforms implemented in Japan in the area of the food regulatory system since the 1990s with a view to understanding the institutional condition at the time of the Triple Disaster. The fourth section then examines the governmental campaign to promote agricultural products from the devastated Tōhoku region and considers its implications for Japan's food governance system. The concluding section summarizes the discussion and further explores problems concerning the food governance system and nationalism in today's Japan.

## Discourses of Risk and Nationalism in the State Governance System

In the face of the visible progress of globalization, economic structural changes, and neoliberal reforms, the transformation of the state governing system emerged as a critical issue in the studies of politics in the 1990s. One of the theses highlighted in the debate was the 'hollowing-out' of the state, which posited the diminishing of the state's capacity and power to govern vis-à-vis the development of transnational/regional governing authorities such as the EU, progress of delegation/devolution to local authorities and the rise of non-governmental actors (private sector actors, NPOs/NGOs, and so on) in the governing process.[7] The 'hollowing-out of the state' thesis was later countered by a series of scholars who regarded changes in state governance as qualitative transformations rather than quantitative reductions.[8] As Martin J. Smith has pointed out, the socio-economic environment in contemporary industrially advanced countries differs greatly from that in early modernity when the foundation of the modern state system was established, as do citizenry interests and expectations to which the state needs to respond. Naturally, the state today operates in a different way with a more decentralized, flexible governing

[7] Rhodes, 'The Hollowing Out of the State'; Strange, *The Retreat of the State*.

[8] Weiss, *The Myth of the Powerless State*; Gamble, *Politics and Fate*; Jessop, 'Capitalism and Its Future'; Jessop, *The Future of the Capitalist State*; Holliday, 'Is the British State Hollowing Out?'; Piers and Peters, *Governance, Politics and the State*; Sørenson, *The Transformation of the State*.

system. This, however, does not necessarily imply the withering away of the state's capacity to govern.[9]

From this debate, the term 'governance' came to the fore. 'Governance' in this context refers to a flexible, decentralized, and network-type governing system in which a multitude of actors jointly operate to make and implement public policies. This particular model of governing needs to be differentiated from the previous system due to the role assigned to the national government: in the governance system, the national government is positioned as just one of several facilitators – albeit an important one – that stimulate national economic growth. It is not expected to 'lead' the political process but to 'steer' it in cooperation with other (domestic, international, or transnational) actors.[10] In other words, the term governance has offered a new cognitive framework for understanding the transformation of the state functions discussed above, as summarized by Bob Jessop: 'from government to governance'.[11]

Smith observes that the notion of risk arises as 'a mechanism for justifying intervention or lack of intervention by government' over the course of the development of governance.[12] He further points out that the increased presence of the notion of risk in the policymaking and implementation processes poses some serious problems concerning the ways in which the state exercises power. To start with, despite the claim that risk is scientifically measurable, the framing of the meaning of risk itself is often so politically contentious that the notion of risk has been used by the state as 'a mechanism for controlling outcomes and assessing knowledge'[13]; in other words, legitimizing the state's policy decisions. In addition, the notion of risk is presented as a reference point with which individuals understand the world surrounding them and continuously monitor their behaviours. Finally, through the notion of risk which

[9] Smith, *Power and the State*, 101–108.

[10] Ibid., also see Bevir and Rhodes, *Governance Stories*.

[11] Jessop, 'Capitalism and Its Future'; Jessop, 'The Rise of Governance'.

[12] Smith, *Power and the State*, 199.

[13] Ibid.

projects the concerned matter through 'scientific' and 'rational' language, 'political issues are shifted into technical issues and depoliticized'.[14] By acknowledging these problems, Smith concludes that the term risk is not useful either as a policy tool or an analytical tool, since it is inherently political.

According to Ulrich Beck's *Risk Society*, which made the term 'risk' a buzzword in social scientific research, however, the political nature of risk is not just problematic but rather destructive to the operation of the political system. The modern nation-state system, Beck argued, cannot effectively deal with contemporary imminent risks such as environmental risk and has hence become obsolete as a political system, generating a risk of ungovernability; therefore, a temporal shift to Risk Society where the conventional democratic political system is destined to be dysfunctional needs to be acknowledged.[15] Nation-states have responded to the risk of ungovernability by implementing institutional reforms that confer regulatory authority to non-governmental actors who are supposed to be equipped with sufficient expert knowledge and professional skills to manage the concerned risk. In other words, in the theoretical milieu of Risk Society, it is the requirement of governing risks that drives nation-states to move towards a 'governance' type of the governing system. Yet, according to Beck, this has resulted in developing what he calls 'subpolitics' outside the formal political institutions, further extending political uncertainty and thereby exacerbating the ungovernability of nation-states.[16]

One possible outcome of the increased sense of the risk of ungovernability, that is, loss of control in the political system, is, according to Beck, the 'scapegoat society'. Once acknowledged, the risk of ungovernability needs to be displaced, as it otherwise stirs up insecurities and fears. This displacement is conducted by instilling particular groups of people with the perception of danger, and in this way, attention is diverted away from political inaction or the inability of nation-states to manage risk.[17]

[14] Ibid., 200.

[15] Beck, *Risk Society*, Chapter 8.

[16] Ibid.; Beck, *World Risk Society,* 5.

[17] Beck, *Risk Society*, 75.

Developing his discussion on population management in *Liquid Society*, Zygmunt Bauman supplements Beck's discussion on the 'scapegoat society' with a more concrete picture. For Bauman, the quintessential social dynamics in today's *Liquid Society* is the exclusion of 'them' from 'us': 'them' can be foreign people in the developing worlds on another continent, migrants, or asylum seekers flooding into 'our' land and threatening 'our' everyday lives, or simply social 'deviants' and outsiders (low-income earners, low achievers, gangs/'yobs', to name but a few), causing trouble in 'our' otherwise peaceful neighbourhoods. Simply put, 'them' is the Other who is perceived to pose risks and threats to the social order and the economic momentum. This urges 'us' to set up a 'solidarity of dangers, risks and fears' to protect 'our' world.[18] In this logic, as Bauman discusses, economic value according to capitalist principles functions as a crucial determinant separating 'them' from 'us' – 'them' occupying marginal positions in society as they produce little economic value, thereby labelled as 'wasted lives'.[19] The fall into the category of 'wasted lives' can be fatal, as – according to Bauman – the channel through which these wasted lives are 'recycled' and returned to the industrial force is brief and narrow, forcing many to remain confined in the bounded areas of exclusion (urban ghettos, refugee camps, prisons, and so on).[20]

Beck and Bauman's discussions suggest that ungovernability of risk, which exposes the ungovernability of today's governance system, tends to drive society to become more exclusivist. This is indicative when we consider the fact that the spread of nationalistic discourses directed at ethnic minorities/foreigners and those who are socially excluded can be widely observed across industrially advanced countries; take as an example, much of the Leave campaign rhetoric in the Brexit referendum.[21] In such discourses, the target group (e.g. migrants, 'dole-scroungers', and delinquent youths) are accorded blame and are thereby cast out as the

[18] Bauman, *Liquid* Love, 128.

[19] Bauman, *Wasted Lives*, 39–46.

[20] Ibid., 67–89.

[21] For a brief discussion of the term nationalism from a perspective roughly similar to my own, please see Miroslav Hroch, *European Nations*, Chapter 1.

Other while linked with social and economic risks (low wages, the worsening of working conditions, and a porous social safety net), namely, risks generally derived from structural problems in national and international political economy (globalized market competition, labour deregulation, reduced state welfare provisions, and so on). As a result, the state's inability to govern those risks is not questioned, while the sense of solidarity among the included against projected risks and fears is facilitated. That is to say, nationalistic discourses need to be understood as an integral part of the operation of today's neoliberalized governance system.

In the case of Japan, the acknowledgement of ungovernability exhibited by the nation-state system provoked debate among academics in the late 2000s over a question of whether or not nationalism can be revitalized and in so doing, employed as a political 'technique' to govern the Japanese state in a 'better' way. 'Nationalism' in this context is by no means fanatical immersion in the type of ultranationalist thinking observed in wartime Japan. Those who argued for the functional use of nationalism, summarized by a term 'nationalism as a technique' (*hōhō toshite no nashonarizumu*), were all well aware of the works of Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm and Benedict Anderson that exposed the socially constructed nature of the notions of nationalism.[22] Yet, inspired by Foucault's discussion on governmentality, nationalism in the discursive framework of 'nationalism as a technique' was positioned as a device to mediate individuals with the nation-state system and thereby helps the state to maintain its sovereignty. For example, Nakajima Takeshi, an influential social critic and at the time of the debate, associate professor of politics at Hokkaido University, has explained his vision of 'nationalism as a technique' as follows:

> I think nationalism has been a very effective technique to accrue a political share, and it will continue to be so, because of its underlying notion that a nation is sovereign with members who are equal in terms of having one vote.[23]

[22] Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*; Hobsbawn and Rangers, *The Invention of Tradition*; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

[23] Azuma et al., 'Kokka, bōryoku, nashonarizumu', 20.

In this political environment where nationalism was promoted as a governing technique, the Japanese national government was faced with the challenge of post-3/11 food security.

## Political Handling of Food Insecurity in Post-3/11 Japan

The food regulatory system in Japan underwent a series of major institutional reforms from the mid-1990s to mid-2000s, which covered various policy areas, as the following list indicates:

1. The revision of the Food Control Act into the Act for Stabilization of Supply-Demand and Prices of Staple Food in 1995;
2. The establishment of the Basic Law on Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas in 1995;
3. The Introduction of the Basic Plan on Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas into the policymaking process as a result of the previous item;
4. The instalment of the Basic Law of Food Safety and the subsequent establishment of the Food Safety Commission (FSC) in 2003, through which scientific risk assessment and risk communication became integral parts of the process of policymaking and implementation;
5. The revision of the Consumer Protection Basic Act into the Consumer Basic Act in 2004 and the subsequent establishment of the Consumer Agency in September 2009;
6. The deployment of the national food education movement based on the Basic Law for Food Education in 2005.

Due to the effects of these reforms, the food regulatory system in Japan started to shift towards a model of 'food governance', a term used by Andrew Flynn, Terry Marsden and their collaborators to describe outcomes of the food regulatory reform implemented by the New Labour government in the UK.[24] Food governance is essentially a neoliberal

[24] Flynn, Marsden and Smith, 'Food Regulation and Retailing'.

governing system in which food producers, retailers, and consumers are expected to autonomously act to optimize personal/individual interests, backed up by information provided by the national government. Through the institutional reforms since the 1990s, a more consumer-centred approach was introduced into Japan's food regulatory system, while the national government was accorded the role of information disseminator to facilitate its citizens' autonomous decision-making. At the same time, the Japanese case of food governance also displays some idiosyncratic qualities in comparison with the British case: first, deregulation in agriculture policy has frequently been slowed down through the presence of strong interest groups such as Nōkyō.[25] Second, as observed in the national food education campaign started in 2005, Japanese women are clearly positioned as the main managers of food practices in the home, being expected to play a principle role in the organization of food in everyday life.[26]

The DPJ achieved a full government change from the long-ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in September 2009. In terms of food regulatory reform, however, the impact of the government change was limited to the introduction of a new scheme of income compensation for farmers. Shōgenji Shinichi, an agriculture policy expert who was a member of various governmental committees on food and agricultural policies under both the LDP and DPJ governments, has observed that the DPJ's approach to the food regulatory reform lacked a clear strategy so that they were unable to formulate any meaningful policy proposal.[27] That is to say, the food regulatory system with which the DPJ tried to manage food insecurity in the aftermath of the Triple Disaster was mainly a legacy of the institutional reforms implemented by the LDP from the 1990s to 2000s.

As aforementioned, food insecurity incurred by the Triple Disaster was experienced in terms of the food supply as well as food safety.

[25] Nōkyō refers to cooperatives organized and operated by those who engage in the agriculture sector across Japan. Local cooperatives are assembled within the National Federation of Agriculture Cooperative Association (Zen-noh), which has been regarded as one of the biggest interest groups closely tied with the LDP.

[26] Takeda, 'Fūdo gabanansu; Takeda, 'Securitizing Food in Japan'.

[27] Shōgenji, 'Shin-nōsei wo dō miruka'.

According to a survey conducted by the MAFF in January/February 2012, 42.9 per cent of respondents answered that they were unable to purchase sufficient food due to the lack of supply or sales restrictions. As expected, the ratio for those living in Eastern Japan was higher than the national average, with a figure of 55.6 per cent, but the figure for respondents living in Western Japan was as high as 23.4 per cent. The personal experience of food scarcity was, therefore, not limited to the devastated and nearby areas.[28] Importantly, over 60 per cent of the respondents in the same survey acknowledged the need, first, to secure the transportation routes in a time of emergency, and second, to improve utility infrastructure such as water, electricity, gas and roads, and little difference was observed between those living in Eastern and Western Japan, indicating widespread anxieties over the food supply system in post-3/11 Japan.[29]

Furthermore, the sense of food insecurity was intensified by the spread of radiological contamination triggered by the meltdown at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. The Fukushima Nuclear Accident Independent Investigation Commission set up within the Diet (hereafter, the Diet Commission) estimates that the amount of radioactive materials released from the power plants was about one sixth of that of the Chernobyl accident, while the figure submitted by the Fukushima Nuclear Accident Independent Investigation Commission (hereafter, the Independent Commission) was about one-tenth.[30] Radioactive materials were dispersed not only into the air but also the sea water through the discharge of contaminated water, resulting in massive contamination of the natural resources in Japan's prime food production areas. Subsequently, shipping bans were placed on agricultural products from five prefectures (Fukushima, Ibaraki, Tochigi, Gunma, and Chiba). In Tokyo, the drinking of tap water was briefly restricted. High levels of radiological contamination were also detected

[28] MAFF, *Shokuryō, nōgyō, nōson hakusho,* 32.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Tokyo Denryoku Fukushima Genshiryoku Hatsudensho Jiko Chōsa Iinkai, *Kokkai jikochō hōkokusho*, 329; Fukushima Genpatsu Jiko Dokuritsu Kenshō Iinkai, *Chōsa/kenshō hōkokusho*, 44.

in agri-products from Iwate, Miyagi, Saitama, Kanagawa and Shizuoka besides the prefectures already mentioned. All in all, contamination caused by radioactive materials brought about devastating damage to agriculture and food industries in Eastern Japan, while individuals were left to face the daily task of dealing with the risk posed by contaminated food.

As such, the task of governing food insecurity in the aftermath of the Triple Disaster was overwhelming for both the government and individuals. Unfortunately, what emerged during this crisis was that the Japanese state was not equipped with the necessary measures to handle the situation; in other words, institutional deficiencies in the food regulatory system were present. To start with, immediately after the initial earthquake, MAFF set up an emergency food procurement team to facilitate the process of providing food aid to the devastated areas. Food manufacturers and retailers swiftly responded to the government call, and a stock was soon piled up. Yet, the delivery of food aid was delayed due to a lack of a system to organize administrative coordination between different ministries involved in the process (MAFF 2012: 9).[31]

More fundamentally, the Japanese government had no legal framework or administrative system in place to handle food contamination by radioactive material in the face of the nuclear disaster in Fukushima. The Nuclear Safety Commission (*Genshiryoku Anzen Iinkai*), an advisory council attached to the Cabinet Office, compiled a report entitled 'On Accident Prevention in the Areas around Nuclear Power Plants' in response to the Three Mile Island Nuclear Power Plant Accident in 1979, and the report has been updated over time to accommodate the latest scientific and technological developments of nuclear power stations. As explained in the August 2010 version of the report (the one applicable when the Fukushima disaster happened), the purpose of the report is to offer scientific and professional advice and guidelines for drawing up nuclear disaster prevention measures, which the national government, subregional authorities and business operators are obligated

[31] MAFF, *Shokuryō, nōgyō, nōson hakusho,* 9.

to set up under the Act on Special Measures concerning Nuclear Emergency Preparedness (*Genshiryoku Saigaku Taisaku Tokubetsu Sochi Hō*). The report has a section that contains index values for placing restrictions on food and drink intake in the case of a nuclear accident. On 17 March 2011, 5 days after the explosion of the nuclear power plants, acknowledging the fact that nuclear materials were released from the wrecked power plants, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) issued a note to local authorities, directing that the index values set in the Nuclear Safety Commission's report should be used as provisional regulatory standards to monitor and control radiological contamination of food as an effect of the Food Sanitation Law.[32] Yet, the provisional regulatory standards immediately caused controversy as acceptable levels were calculated at an annual effective dose of 5 mSv, higher than the 1 mSv prescribed in other laws regulating nuclear power, and hence, the values in the provisional standards appeared more relaxed than those for imported food introduced after the Chernobyl disaster.[33] On 20 March 2015, the MHLW officially requested the FSC to conduct a risk analysis of food contamination by radioactive materials, and on 29th March, the commission issued an urgent interim report which generally endorsed the adequacy of the provisional standards as an emergency measure. The final FSC report was released in October 2011, and a new set of stricter regulatory standards was introduced in April 2012. Throughout this process, highly contaminated foodstuffs as well as suspended products were spotted being shipped to and even sold in the market, eroding public confidence in the food regulatory system. Indeed, the number of public responses to a draft of the final FSC report exceeded 3,000 within a period of less than one month (from July 29 to August 27, 2011), and written messages from the public illuminated

[32] MAFF, *Shokuryō, nōgyō, nōson hakusho,* 53; Fukushima Genpatsu Jiko Dokuritsu Kenshō Iinkai, *Chōsa/kenshō hōkokusho*, 49.

[33] The Sievert is the unit of several biophysical metrics, but essentially parametrizes the average biological damage due to the interaction of radiation with specific biological tissues. For more information, see Cherry, Sorenson and Phelps, *Physics in Nuclear Medicine,* 407–408 and 417–424.

intensified concerns over the issue among Japanese people.[34] Yet, risk communication by the government did not seem to contribute to alleviating the anxieties felt by the Japanese people. Public polls conducted in April 2012 by Asahi and Yomiuri Shimbun, two major quality newspapers in Japan, indicate that over 60 per cent of respondents answered that they regarded the government's conduct on information delivery over the nuclear disaster as being inadequate.[35]

The lack of institutional arrangements to respond to food insecurity in the aftermath of the Triple Disaster and the resultant slow and faltering handling of the issue stirred fierce criticism of the then DPJ Kan Naoto government.[36] The approval rate of the Kan government was already slumping before the Triple Disaster, but, as Maeda points out, it declined even further as mass media reports on the government mishandling increased from May 2011,[37] and Kan decided to step down in August 2011. The Independent Commission report concludes that the government's conduct was 'inapt and ad hoc', carried out by 'a small number of politicians who lack expert knowledge and experiences', confirming the view of the government's failure in the management of the Triple Disaster and its aftermath.[38]

These analyses offered by the mass media and the Independent Commission are based on testimonies and personal accounts given by those who were involved in the governing process, and certainly contain useful insights into problems concerning the governing system in the context of securitizing food in a crisis. Simultaneously, Beck's theoretical discussions on the ungovernability of scientific risk raise some questions over these analyses which tend to *only* emphasize the Kan government's

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[34] The public comments can be accessed via the following link: https://www.fsc.go.jp/iken-bosyu/iken-kekka/kekka-risk_radio_230729.pdf.

[35] Fukushima Genpatsu Jiko Dokuritsu Kenshō Iinkai, *Chōsa/kenshō hōkokusho*, 121. Cabinet Secretary Edano Yukio in particular received strong criticism for his conduct regarding risk communication. See Ibid.; Yomiuri Shinbun Seiji-bu, *Bōkoku no shushō*.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Maeda, 'Minshu-tō seiken', 313–322.

[38] Fukushima Genpatsu Jiko Dokuritsu Kenshō Iinkai, *Chōsa/kenshō hōkokusho*, 119.

misconduct.[39] In *Risk Society*, Beck presents a long list of problems posed by scientific risk, which tends to result in the call for decisive political action. According to Beck, first, scientific risk, as being articulated and measured through highly professionalized knowledge, tends to extend the area of the unknown among non-professionals. Laypersons often lack the (economic, social, and educational) resources to access such specialized scientific knowledge, while there are always disagreements among scientific professionals, further complicating the process of understanding scientific risks. Second, technological and scientific efforts to control risk facilitate technological and knowledge innovations, through which new types of scientific risk are generated. Third, scientifically rational methods to manage risk can be irrational when they are applied in the concrete socio-economic environment. As Beck discussed, in the process of political and social decision-making, the drive for improvements in productivity (e.g. the use of nuclear power) needs to be balanced by the consideration of harmful social and economic side-effects (such as the occurrence of nuclear disasters), and in this sense, scientific rationality is not omnipotent.[40] All in all, scientific risk tends to self-propagate, and in so doing further extends the sense of uncertainty. This is why Beck argued that the acknowledgement of scientific risk can lead to the creation of a scapegoat society and undemocratic ruling: because it exposes human society to ungovernability.[41]

The risk posed by radiologically contaminated food falls into this category of scientific risk. To start with, to this day, there is no scientifically conclusive view about the impact of constant internal exposure to low-dose radiation through food and drink intake on human health. Japanese laws mandate 1 mSv as the maximum allowance of annual effective dose, in accordance with the recommendations by the International Commission

[39] My argument here is not to defend the DPJ's management of the Triple Disaster and its aftermath. Rather, I concur with the conclusion of the Independent Commission cited above. At the same time, I would argue that the LDP's performance would not have been largely different from the DPJ's, due to the institutional deficiencies and ungovernability of risk, if they had been in government. In other words, the main point here is that the problem was not only about Kan Naoto, as suggested by mainstream media sources.

[40] Beck, *Risk Society*, 50–62.

[41] Ibid., 74–75.

on Radiological Protection (ICRP) in 1991. As Kageura Kyō, a professor of Information Studies at the University of Tokyo, has already pointed out, however, this requirement was adopted by the government as a *socially* acceptable level of risk rather than based on rigorous scientific logic. In an explanation given by the Nuclear Safety Commission in 2001, the value of 1 mSv is regarded as 'a socially-acceptable level under which there is very little likelihood to cause biological damage'[42]: according to the Linear Non-Threshold (LNT) model adopted by the ICRP – which supposes a causal relationship between radiation exposure and the development of cancer – annual radiation exposure at the level of 100 mSv is estimated to increase the cancer death rate by 0.56 per cent (FSC 2011: 8).[43] At the same time, the scientific relevance of applying the LNT model to low dose exposure is itself contested. In other words, there were no clear scientifically agreed views on the ways in which individuals would be affected by consuming food contaminated by radioactive materials. This signals a crack in scientific rationality which, as Beck argued, invites ungovernability. Indeed, Beck straightforwardly pointed out the problem of ungovernability caused by radiological contamination in his short essay published in Japan in July 2011. In his words:

> Radiological contamination seizes the meaning, and citizens lose their capacity to make decisions over threats and dangers to their life conditions. Like in all other academic disciplines, the studies of radiation are mutually in competition. For example, there is a theory that supposes the genetic disorder is only caused when exposed to a certain level of radiation – perhaps. In contrast, there is a hypothesis that contends even a small dose of exposure damages genes, and the likelihood of genetic disorder increases as doses are accumulated temporally, spatially and socially. Generally, there is a veil of secrecy over the acculturated and long-term effects. As research progresses, new outcomes and hypotheses will be presented. At the same time, disaster victims start their own interpretations of contamination. General knowledge acquired through such activities is refuted as 'radiophobia'

[42] Kageura, *3.11-igo no hōshanō 'anzen'*, 35.
[43] Food Safety Committee, 'Hōshasei busshitsu', 8.

by scientific rationality. In any case, the boundary between the knowing and the unknown is not fixed.[44]

Subsequently, Beck offered two ways to overcome the ungovernability of radiological contamination by following the works of Georg Wilhelm Frederick Hegel and Carl Schmitt. On the one hand, the 'Hegelian scenario' seeks to form political action based on cosmopolitan cooperation, at both the national and global levels, and to challenge nationalism and the neoliberal alliance of capital and the state, when responding to nuclear disaster. On the other hand, the 'Schmittian scenario' prioritizes the normalization of threats of nuclear power, in other words, the state of (potential and real) exception, when taking political action. That is to say, the latter leads to a type of authoritarian politics in which nationalistic and populist discourses proliferate. The launching of the Eat and Support campaign by the Kan government, which will be examined below, makes us wonder whether the Japanese government took the latter option to manage food insecurity in post-3/11 Japan.

## The 'Eat and Support' Campaign

The 'Eat and Support' campaign was officially launched in April 2011. The statement jointly issued by the Minister of MAFF and the Minister of State for Consumer Affairs and Food Safety, Yamada Masahiko and Arai Satoshi, clarified that the purpose of the campaign was to support recovery of the devastated areas through the revitalization of the region. For this purpose, the message laid out that the government would first attempt to promote the active consumption of food products from the devastated areas by liaising with producers, and second, that it would disseminate accurate information in cooperation with consumer organizations. The statement also noted that the role of the campaign was to give a boost to private firms and civic organizations that had been

[44] Beck, Ulrich. 'Kono kikai ni', 9–10.

bridging the gap between producers and consumers.[45] In this sense, the campaign is indeed designed with the structure of governance: the campaign activities are carried out through individual actors (consumers, producers, private firms, and civic organizations) as autonomous enterprises, and the government assumes the role of a facilitator and information provider. Institutionally, as mentioned earlier, the Eat and Support campaign was subsumed under the banner of FAN, a governmental campaign that aims at increasing consumption of domestic agricultural products.

Once initiated, the Eat and Support campaign swiftly spread across Japan. As early as the June issue of the MAFF's PR magazine, *aff* (agriculture, forestry and fishery), dated 1 June 2011, the Eat and Support campaign was featured on the front page, reporting food fairs promoting agricultural products from the Tōhoku region and Ibaraki held in various places including MAFF's staff canteens.[46] Private actors were involved from a very early stage of the campaign. For example, on 22 May 2011, the seafood processing industry group organized a food fair in Tsukiji, an internationally known food market in Tokyo. The fair was initially planned to take place in April, but due to the condition of the devastated areas, it was postponed. The journal of the industry group, *Zensuioroshi*, reports 50,000 citizens in Tokyo participated in the event.[47] Large-scale food manufacturers and retailers such as Aeon, Rakuten, Ajinomoto and Yukijirushi, to name but a few, offered sponsorship to the national campaign, and the list of sponsors even includes co-ops and *Daichi wo Mamoru Kai* (The Association for Protecting the Earth), consumer cooperatives and a civic group that have been taking an alternative approach to food retailing while underscoring the importance of supplying safe food. Finally, the Eat and Support campaign was promoted through the mass media and the internet with advertisements and interview videos featuring food producers in the devastated areas as

[45] The whole text of the message can be read at: http://www.maff.go.jp/j/shokusan/eat/tabete/message.html.

[46] MAFF, *aff*, 2.

[47] Zensuioroshi, 'Chiiki kyōgikai dayori 66', 59.

well as pop stars, joyfully and ecstatically eating foodstuffs from these regions. In this way, the campaign seems to have intended to provide a platform on which an inclusive national solidarity could be cultivated.

In most cases, the Eat and Support campaign's PR materials, featuring food producers whose businesses were severely damaged by the Triple Disaster, follow a distinct narrative pattern: after their business was badly damaged by the Triple Disaster, the producers made tremendous efforts to rebuild production, offering consumers food products of which they were very proud. The rebuilding is still underway, but there are signs of improvement and progress such as good feedback and encouragement from prudent consumers. Thus, the producers need more support.[48] Food safety information is hardly mentioned in the stories, but for those wishing to access such material, there is an internet link to the MAFF website, which provides detailed but cumbersome information on radiological food contamination and decontamination of farming lands.

The rapid development of the Eat and Support campaign, however, was exactly concurrent with the process of setting up an administrative system of governing food insecurity posed by the radiological contamination of food. As mentioned earlier, the interim report on the provisional standards, issued by the FSC on 29 March 2011, provoked heated controversy because of its lax acceptable level of 5 mSv, but the MHLW decided to maintain the provisional standards, while the FSC continued its risk assessment. Public anxieties over contaminated food were, therefore, still mounting, without any prospects of being lessened when the Eat and Support campaign was initiated. This certainly raises a question: why did the national government embark upon the Eat and Food campaign when the regulatory system for governing radiological food contamination had yet to be consolidated? In these circumstances it became possible for the campaign to function detrimentally with regards to the management of risk through increasing uncertainty.

[48] Stories are generally taken from the Eat and Support websites (http://syokuryo.jp/tabete_ouen/) and its dedicated official YouTube site (https://www.youtube.com/user/tabeteouen).

Reading through policymakers' accounts and remarks, it can be argued that what prompted the national government to implement the Eat and Support campaign could be attributed to their strong concerns over so-called reputation damage (*fūhyō higai*), a term which became everyday vocabulary in the 2000s.[49] Reputation damage refers to a situation in which economic damage results from rumours and bad reputations derived from inaccurate information. In the case of post-3/11 food contamination, food producers expressed their worries that fears and anxieties over contamination might urge consumers to avoid buying and eating food products from the devastated areas, even in cases where the concerned products were safe enough to be consumed. This would lead to falling sales, generating financial losses which would be added to the already-sizable damage caused by the Triple Disaster. As food production is a prime industry in the region, from the governmental perspective, it was vital for the national government to save and revitalize the food industry to achieve recovery from devastation. Furthermore, the ill fate of the food industry in the devastated areas was also associated with profound financial implications for the government. As a food policy analyst, Yokota Shigenaga, argues:

> Whether we are able to successfully achieve revitalization of food production in the devastated areas will have great implications on the total sum of compensations and decontamination expenses. If consumers keep buying food without worrying about radiological contamination, the final cost that the state needs to bear can be lessened.[50]

Indeed, the Japanese government kept appealing to its people to respond to food contamination 'rationally and prudently' to counter reputation

[49] A quick search of the National Diet Library catalogue indicates their oldest material discussing reputation damage is an article on a court decision concerning reputation damage and the Nuclear Power Station in 1989. Then, there are four items in the 1990s. The first one is a JSPS research-in-aids report on nuclear accidents and accident compensation schemes for workers dating from 1994. The other three publications were released in 1999 (two on dioxin contamination in Tokorozawa and one on the Tōkai-mura Nuclear accident by renowned journalist Kei Kamata). All other items on the subject were published after the year 2000.

[50] Yokota, *Aratana risuku kari,* 66.

damage from the early stage. For example, on the day after the provisional standards were set, Chief Cabinet Secretary, Edano Yukio, asked Japanese people to 'react rationally and prudently' to a shipping ban placed on spinach as it was, said Edano, a 'precautionary measure' (*nenno tame no sochi*).[51] Furthermore, in one of the regular press briefings after the MHLW decided to maintain the provisional standards upon publication of the FSC interim report, Edano directly positioned rigorous implementation of the provisional standards as a means to alleviate reputation damage, while pledging to 'carefully monitor and regulate foodstuffs that should require a shipment restriction'.[52]

The public reactions to the 'Eat and Support' campaign appear to be ambiguous. On the one hand, in a survey conducted by the Consumer Agency in May and June in 2011, 82.1 per cent of respondents agreed to support the devastated areas by consuming food products from the region (actively agree accounted for 38.1 per cent, fairly agree 44.0 per cent). In the same survey, on the other hand, 72.3 per cent (actively 26.9 per cent, fairly 45.4 per cent) answered that they were concerned about the area of food production when shopping.[53] In a survey on consumer spending conducted by the Japan Finance Corporation in September 2011, 37 per cent of respondents answered that they would not buy foodstuffs produced in the devastated areas, while 19.1 per cent answered that they did not care about radiological contamination.[54] Finally, in an internet survey commissioned by the Japan Consumers' Cooperatives Union in September 2013 examining their members' reactions to radiological contamination, about 40 per cent of respondents answered that they were very concerned about production areas of food they purchased, while about another 40 per cent indicated that they were taking no action on food safety.[55]

[51] Kageura, *3.11-igo no hōshanō 'anzen'*, 111.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Consumer Affairs Agency, 'Shoku no anzen ni', 21–26.

[54] Yokota, *Aratana risuku kari,* 68.

[55] Katō, 'Intānetto monitā ankēto', 57.

How can we interpret these survey results? Certainly, differences in terms of the timing of the surveys, the phrasing of the questions and the sampling of respondents, in other words, technical issues concerning the survey methods, would all have had an influence. Simultaneously, there are also issues more fundamental to the management of risk. First, as Yokota has pointed out, the management of a particular risky situation through trading off different risks is essentially an individualized act. Each person is conditioned by their personal circumstances (age, gender, lifestyle, educational background, income level, and so on). Inevitably, individual differences in approaches to risk management ensue.[56] Second, political distrust and cynicism directed at the Japanese government was widely observed among Japanese people, raising some questions over the efficacy of the Eat and Support campaign as public policy. For example, public polls suggest that trust in the national government as an information source was significantly shaken in the aftermath of the Triple Disaster. While trust in the government in general declined during the period in which the DPJ was in office, according to a survey conducted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications in cooperation with the University of Tokyo, the scores for public institutions as a reliable information source on issues relating to the nuclear disaster and food safety were much lower than those of the mass media and Social Networking Services (SNSs).[57] Yabe Shirō, a social critic and activist, offers a more concrete interpretation of such data, based on his observation of fellow activist housewives. He wonders if people who have been discriminated against in society, such as housewives in Japan, would express their true sentiments on the government and professionals/experts. In his words:

> Housewives say, right away, they do not understand. Even when they fully understand, or more precisely, because they fully understand, they say they do not understand. When they beam with a grin and

[56] Yokota, *Aratana risuku kari,* 73–76.

[57] Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, *Jōhō Tsūshin Hakusho*, 274. A sociologist, Igarashi Yasuamsa, conducted a survey targeting young mothers in Kashiwa City, Chiba and reported the same tendency of a low degree of trust in the government as an information source. See Igarashi, *Minna de kimeta*, 43.

say they do not understand, that is a notice declaring that 'I do not trust your mere talk at all'.[58]

## Conclusion

The national government, nevertheless, continued with the Eat and Support campaign, which was carried over to the LDP government and is still active today. The campaign may not be given full credence by the Japanese public but is spreading discourses that emphasize the importance of building and maintaining solidarity with the devastated areas through consuming food products, and there is little open criticism. At the end of the day, the devastated areas still need a great deal of support by all means. So, discourses continue to circulate.

In this process, however, some crucial political questions seem to be marginalized. In particular, the following three points deserve further discussion. First, the Eat and Support campaign posits food insecurity in post-3/11 Japan as a problem between consumers and food producers. Efforts of hardworking food producers striving for recovery need to be met by prudency on the part of consumers who are supposed to select and buy food products wisely while showing compassion. In this way, the issue has been somehow settled between the acts of consumers and food producers, without the involvement of the national government and Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO). Second, the problems posed by the notion of 'acceptable levels' have been lost in the process.[59] If the meltdown had not happened in the Fukushima plants, there would have been no need at all for anybody to worry about contaminated food and hence there should have been no need to establish acceptable levels of radiological contamination (viz. the benchmark of a safe effective dose). Furthermore, just as the potential harm of constant low-dose internal exposure to radiological contamination is scientifically unspecified, objective standards of safety cannot be well-founded by

[58] Yabe, 'Hibaku fubyōdū ron', 174.

[59] Beck, *Risk Society*, 64–69.

contemporary scientific knowledge/logics. In the textbook case of risk management, a scientifically ambiguous case is dealt with by applying the 'precautionary principle', a method of risk management to design countermeasures by considering the worst case scenario.[60] Yet, the Japanese government's approach to the acceptable levels discussed above cannot be described as following the precautionary principle, since the index values in the regulatory standards changed over the course of time, which stirred controversy over the provisional standards. Nevertheless, this has been little problematized, as the government implemented the Eat and Support campaign. Third, the discourses of the Eat and Support campaign draw a clear boundary between 'us' and 'them': 'us' being hardworking food producers and prudent consumers, and 'them' being those who do not join such a community of food producers and consumers and share risks and burdens. As the public polls cited above suggest, this boundary could only be rhetorical and, hence, *imagined*. At the same time, it seems to be sufficiently powerful to drive marginalized actors such as women towards hiding their voices from the public authorities. All in all, the Eat and Support campaign in the aftermath of the Triple Disaster functioned (1) to return the Japanese food regulatory system to a previous approach centred around the food industry, and more importantly, (2) to depoliticize food insecurity in post-3/11 Japan by displacing the responsibilities of the national government and TEPCO over the nuclear disaster while presenting an imagined solidarity of food risk in Japan.

When observing the development of food insecurity and government responses, what is remarkable is, on the one hand, the resilience shown by the Japanese people. Civic groups were organized in response to food insecurity across Japan,[61] while radiological jargon and scientific knowledge have been quickly incorporated into their everyday vocabularies. Individuals, in particular women, have equipped themselves with relevant knowledge and skills and autonomously and competently organized their food practices. In other words, the Japanese version of a food

[60] Renn, *Risk Governance*; Sunstein, *Worst-Case Scenarios*.

[61] Igarashi, *Minna de kimeta*; Oguma, *Genpatsu wo tomeru hitobito*.

governance system that has emerged out of food regulatory reforms since the 1990s worked well in this regard.

On the other hand, the Japanese state somehow survived the process without major reforms in the policy areas of food regulation and nuclear power. The DPJ was certainly chased out of office, but this resulted in the comeback of the LDP, in other words, the political party which is responsible for the very policies that constituted an institutional setting of 'ungovernability' and is currently regressing nuclear policy back to the pre-Fukushima state by situating nuclear power technology at the centre of its growth strategy formulated under the banner of 'redeeming Japan' (*Nippon wo torimodosu*). Here, the state seems to be subjugated to the logics of capitalist economic development, varnished with a sense of nationalism based on the nationwide solidarity of economic growth and the avoidance of overt questions regarding food safety. Some Japanese people may be casting cynical eyes on this state, but it is still there, having done very little to improve the regulatory system to manage food and energy risks.

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**Hiroko Takeda** is a professor of Political Analysis at the Graduate School of Law, Nagoya University. She completed her Ph.D. at the University of Sheffield and taught at Cardiff University, the University of Sheffield and the University of Tokyo prior to taking up the current post. She specializes in political sociology and her research interests include gender and politics/political economy in Japan and East Asia, biopolitics/governmentality and governance, and political discourse analysis. Her major publications include; the Political Economy of Reproduction in Japan: Between Nation-State and Everyday Life (RoutledgeCurzon, 2005); 'Structural Reform of the Family and the Neoliberalisation of Everyday Life in Japan', New Political Economy, Vol. 13 No. 2, 2008, pp. 153–72; 'Gender-Related Social Policy' in Alisa Gaunder (ed.) The Handbook of Japanese Politics, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2011, pp. 212–22; 'Power over Family Policy: Governing of or Governing through Individuals', in Gill Steel (ed.) Power in Contemporary Japan, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, pp. 93–107.

# Discourse on Food Safety and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP): Perspectives from Japan

Cornelia Reiher

## Introduction

On 5 October 2015 the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement was finally reached in Atlanta. Among the 12 contracting partners were the USA, Canada, and Australia – major producers of agricultural products. Although TPP negotiations began in 2008, it was not until July 2013 that Japan joined in, against the backdrop of major protests. TPP opponents included agricultural cooperatives, consumer cooperatives, labour unions, consumer groups, women's networks, and opposition parties. Their banners at rallies in 2013 displayed messages such as 'Protect food safety, protect agriculture', or 'TPP destroys rural areas and farmers' livelihoods'. Many banners were explicitly anti-American with such slogans as, 'We are selling our country to America. We oppose the TPP.' Protests against the TPP had already started in 2011, when Japan's then Prime Minister,

C. Reiher (✉)
Freie Universitat Berlin, Berlin, Germany
e-mail: cornelia.reiher@fu-berlin.de

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Noda Yoshihiko, announced on 11 November that he would enter consultations with a view to participating in the TPP negotiations. Protests slowed down after Japan joined the negotiations in 2013 but grew stronger again in the second half of 2015, when the TPP negotiations entered their final stage.

The first wave of protests from 2011 against Japan's actual entrance into the negotiations in July 2013 focused strongly on food safety, food security, agricultural tariffs, and farmers' livelihoods. However, by October 2015 the focus of public discourse on the TPP had almost shifted away from food safety issues with the exception of tariffs on agricultural products. This is understandable because tariffs on rice, dairy products, pork, beef, and sugar were among the most controversial issues right up until the very end of the TPP negotiations. After the TPP deal had been reached, the public was informed that under the TPP, Japan's 778% tariff on rice would not change, but that Japan would raise its annual import quota for US and Australian rice over 13 years from 50,000 tonnes to 70,000 tonnes and from 6,000 to 8,400 tonnes, respectively, and that over 16 years, Japan's tariffs on imported beef would decrease from 38.5% to 9%.[1]

If the TPP is mostly about tariffs on agricultural products, why did its opponents in Japan fear that food safety standards would be degraded? This article analyses the arguments brought forth by TPP opponents and in newspapers who claimed that the TPP would harm the safety of food products sold in Japan. In order to find out how food safety and agricultural trade liberalization are linked in the discourse on the TPP, I will compare the discourse from 2011 to 2013, when Prime Minister Abe first announced that Japan would join the TPP, with the discussions after October 2015, once the TPP agreement had finally been reached. Furthermore, I will discuss stakeholders' arguments against the backdrop of the actual content of the TPP's Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) chapter that was released in early November 2015.

[1] Rafferty, 'Too Early for TPP Cheers'.

I will argue that the discourse on agriculture and food safety with regard to the TPP in Japan is structured in the same way as preceding debates about agricultural trade, where food security and food safety are always linked. The agricultural lobby and consumer advocates, who are not necessarily allies in other matters, present imported food as less safe than Japanese food to Japanese consumers. Food safety issues are often discussed within the 'Us vs. Them' dichotomy, referring to foreign foods as 'dangerous' and domestic foods as 'safe'.[2] As a reaction to globalization processes, food nationalism occurs in Japan, attempting not only to protect consumers' health but also to protect local agriculture. However, this argumentation is misleading, because the TPP is not so much about struggles between nation states or about Japan losing its sovereignty to the USA, but rather about consumers and farmers in all TPP countries losing their rights to safe food and democratic discourse to transnational corporations (TNCs).

In this chapter, I will firstly introduce the TPP and food safety issues linked with TPP negotiations. This is followed by a brief overview of the discourse on food safety and trade in Japan since the 1980s. I will then analyse the discourse on food safety and the TPP from 2011 to 2013 to identify the convergence of food safety issues with agricultural trade in newspaper articles and in statements of three organizations that, as members of the Stop TPP Network, are prominently opposed to the TPP: Consumers Union of Japan (*Nihon Shōhisha Renmei* or CUJ), New Japan Women's Association (*Shin Nihon Fujin no Kai* or *Fujinkai*), and the Japan Family Farmers Movement (*Nōmin Undō Zenkoku Rengōkai* or *Nōminren*). This will be followed by an analysis of the food safety arguments brought forward in newspapers and by the abovementioned three organizations in the October 2015 discourse about TPP before highlighting the actual contents of the TPP and its SPS chapter. I will conclude with a comparison of the arguments produced from 2011 to 2013 and in October 2015 and the content of the TPP's SPS chapter. The chapter is based on the analysis of various materials and data including TPP documents, newspaper articles mainly from Asahi Shimbun and material from the anti-TPP movement. The data also include participant observations at

[2] Reiher, 'Japanische Lebensmittel'.


**Fig. 10** The texts read: (left) 'let's protect food safety! against TPP' and (right) 'we don't need TTP'. Both signs are by *shin nihon fujinkai* members. (picture by author)

anti-TPP demonstrations (Fig. 10) and qualitative interviews with different stakeholders conducted in 2012, 2013, and 2015 in Japan.[3]

## The TPP and Food Safety

The so-called TPP is a free trade agreement that was under negotiation for several years. It was originally formed in 2006 as the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership – a free trade agreement now in effect

[3] Translations of Japanese texts and quotes from interviews are my own. Names of interviewees are pseudonyms. Field research in March 2013 was funded by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS).

between Singapore, New Zealand, Chile, and Brunei, the so-called P4. In 2008, the USA, along with Australia, Peru, and Vietnam, joined the negotiations. Malaysia followed as the ninth negotiating partner in October 2010, while Canada and Mexico entered the TPP talks in October 2012. In 2011, Japan's then Prime Minister Noda Yoshihiko, announced that he had 'decided to enter into consultations toward participating in the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations with the countries concerned'.[4] The decision was welcomed by most of the business community but strongly opposed by the agricultural lobby, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (*Nōrinsuisanshō*, MAFF) and divided both the ruling Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) and the then opposition Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). Farmers, agricultural cooperatives (JA), and the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives (*Zenchū*), who have worked against free trade agreements in the past, have been particularly vehement in their stance against the TPP because it aims at abolishing all tariffs on agricultural products.[5] In the December 2012 lower house election, the DPJ lost its majority to the LDP, who had opposed the TPP before the election. However, in March 2013, Prime Minister Abe Shinzō declared that Japan would join the TPP negotiations. This came as a shock to Japan's domestic farm lobby,[6] but nevertheless, Japan joined the TPP negotiations at the 18th TPP meeting in Malaysia, in July 2013.

The TPP covers the following issues: 'market access for goods and services; government procurement; foreign investment; technical barriers to trade; trade remedies; sanitary and phytosanitary measures; intellectual property rights; worker rights; and environmental protection'.[7] TPP negotiations were strongly criticized by NGOs in all countries concerned because they took place behind closed doors. While representatives from TNCs and so-called official corporate 'trade advisors' had access, the public, press and parliaments of those countries involved in the

[4] Terada, 'Japan and the Trans-Pacific Partnership', 1.

[5] Ibid., 2.

[6] George Mulgan, 'Japan's TPP "Shock"'.

[7] Cooper and Manyin, 'Japan's Possible Entry', 2.

negotiations could not see any documents other than those that had been leaked to the public.[8] The TPP is also criticized because rather than promoting free trade, it promotes managed trade that favours each country's most powerful business lobbies. TPP opponents also fear that with TPP's investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS)[9] provisions, foreign investors can sue governments over lost potential future profits.[10]

Although not necessarily addressed in the negotiations, the food safety issues discussed with regard to the TPP were: food additives, the abolishment of the import ban on gelatine and collagen made from US beef, and a simplification of the approval procedure for post-harvest fungicides. Some post-harvest fungicides are considered food additives in Japan and therefore must be labelled as such. Under the TPP, these substances could be classified as pesticides and, thus, mandatory labelling would no longer be necessary.[11] In 2013, there was lots of speculation about changes in the labelling of GM foods, because no information on the content of the TPP's SPS chapter had been released. With regard to the SPS chapter, it was unclear whether the TPP could actually affect national SPS measures at all. On the one hand, food safety standards are defined according to 'scientific principles and analysis'[12] in international agreements such as the Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement). On the other hand, states can adopt more restrictive standards 'when the scientific data warrant additional restrictions'.[13] In any case, proponents of agricultural liberalization argue that if the USA were to demand that Japan adopt the US national food safety standards, this would be a violation of international law.[14]

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[8] Uchida, 'Dai 16 kai Shingapōru TPP'; CUJ, 'Civil Society'.

[9] Investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) is an instrument of public international law that grants a foreign investor the right to use dispute settlement proceedings against the government of the host country if it violates the rights that were granted to the foreign investor.

[10] Rafferty, 'Too Early for TPP Cheers'.

[11] Oyamada, 'Oshiete! TPP 4', 7.

[12] Echols, *Food Safety*, 4.

[13] Busch and Bain, 'New! Improved?', 326.

[14] Yamashita, 'Misunderstanding over Food-Safety Standards'.

## Food Safety and (Agricultural) Trade

Food safety is 'a realm of negotiation between processors, governments, the general public, producers and others who have many goals they wish to optimize or maximize in addition to food safety itself'.[15] Therefore, food safety is the result of social negotiations and constructions. In Japan, many stakeholders are involved in the negotiations of what safe food is and Japanese consumers have been concerned about food safety issues since the 1960s.[16] Safe food at this time basically meant the use of few pesticides or none at all.[17] Since the 1980s, the discourse on food safety in Japan has been strongly connected with trade and foreign pressure (*gaiatsu*).[18] In 1989, farmers protesting against US demands for rice liberalization used slogans similar to those of the anti-TPP protests today, to demand the protection of food safety and to address the problem of food security and rural livelihoods.[19] In a similar manner, the movement against the liberalization of food additives in the 1970s and 1980s argued that this would be a 'threat to the health of Japanese consumers', a 'jeopardy to the future of Japanese agriculture' and an 'American occupation of Japanese stomachs'.[20]

A comparable rhetoric was part of the protest against the partial liberalization of the rice market in 1993. The opponents of rice importation referred to the risks emanating from foreign rice that 'contained chemicals from insecticides and from the processing'.[21] Although *gaiatsu* from the USA was perceived as a threat to domestic food safety and Japan's (food) sovereignty, Ohnuki-Thierney states that *gaiatsu* was also a 'welcome catalyst for internal changes'.[22] Similar contradictions can be found within the discourse on the TPP today because, for example, not all farmers oppose the TPP. In fact, some see it as a chance to change the

[15] Busch, 'Grades and Standards', 177.
[16] Naikakufu, *Kokumin Seikatsu.*
[17] Jussaume et al., 'Food Safety'.
[18] Maclachlan, *Consumer Politics*, 188.
[19] Davis, *Food Fights over Free Trade.*
[20] Maclachlan, *Consumer Politics*, 191.
[21] Ohnuki-Thierney, 'Structure, Event and Historical Metaphor', 236.
[22] Ibid., 246.

entrenched structures of state support for farmers.[23] In the late 1990s and early 2000s, genetically modified organisms (GMO) became another important food safety concern that was closely related to increasing food imports.[24] In 2004, a few hundred Japanese consumers from the NO! GMO campaign went to Canada and the USA to deliver a petition against GM wheat, signed by 414 organizations representing 1.2 million Japanese people. Two months later, Monsanto announced the suspension of all development of GM wheat.[25] The movement achieved mandatory labelling of GM foods in Japan.

Against the backdrop of partial agricultural trade liberalizations from the early 1990s, it is also not very surprising that in the 1990s, Japan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) began promoting the preservation of Japan's food self-sufficiency. MAFF claimed that this was necessary in order to ensure a stable supply of food at stable prices whilst maintaining food safety. Japan's food self-sufficiency rate has decreased steadily from 73% (based on calories) in 1965 to 40% in 1998. Since then, it has stabilized at approximately 40% on average (MAFF 2011), which, compared to other (developed) countries, is very low.[26] Before 2000, due to agricultural protectionism and high food prices, the interests of farmers and consumers were perceived as conflicting. Politically, the discursive combination of producers' and consumers' interests became necessary in order to justify MAFF's rejection of agricultural trade liberalization. Due to the lack of competition in the food market caused by this rejection, food prices in Japan remained high.[27] Consequently, consumers had to believe that domestic products were safer than imported foods to justify the high prices for domestic food produce. According to a study by Naoi and Kume,[28] the reason for the acceptance of agricultural protectionism is consumers' solidarity with Japan's farmers. Since 2000, however, Japanese consumers have been

[23] Interview with farmer Takamura Michihiko, Ōita, 2013.

[24] Yamaguchi and Suda, 'Changing Social Order'.

[25] Chan, 'Another Japan Is Possible', 136.

[26] MAFF, *Heisei 22 nendo shokuryō jikyūritsu wo meguru jijō.*

[27] George Mulgan, *Japan's Interventionist State.*

[28] Naoi and Kume, 'Explaining Mass Support for Agricultural Protectionism'.

faced with successive food scandals, many of which have involved Japanese producers. The mass media, nevertheless, mostly focused on food scandals involving imported foods.[29] Subsequently, imported food has been considered dangerous, although more than half of the food that Japanese consumers buy and eat today is imported. Overall, due to the discursive conjunction of food risks and food imports for several decades, imported foods are considered more dangerous in Japan than domestically produced foods (*kokusan*).[30]

## Discourse on Food Safety and the TPP: 2011–2013

Japanese newspapers usually mentioned food safety concerns (among other concerns) when discussing the TPP before and shortly after Japan joined the TPP negotiations. In November 2011, when Prime Minister Noda announced he had decided to enter into TPP consultations, Asahi Shimbun published 309 articles with TPP in the headline. 282 articles mentioned agriculture and 51 brought up food safety in connection with the TPP.[31] When food safety was mentioned, it was usually together with concerns over the future of Japan's agriculture and food security, but often without explaining the concrete relationship between the two. This quote by a JA representative from Kitakyūshū, in the Asahi Shimbun from 2011, is a typical example of this rhetoric:

> If cheap food is imported to Japan because of the TPP, this would mean a deadly blow to Japanese agriculture. But can the safety of our food be

[29] Kawagishi, *Shoku no anzen wa doku made shinyō dekiru no ka*?, 17.

[30] Reiher, 'Japanische Lebensmittel sind die sichersten der Welt'.

[31] In March 2013, when Prime Minister Abe announced that Japan would join the TPP, Asahi Shimbun published 386 articles on the TPP; 232 of them discussed agriculture and 43 addressed food safety concerns.

> guaranteed in that case? I cannot forget the scandal about the poisoned dumplings from China.[32]

It seems quite obvious that Japanese farmers fear for their livelihoods when domestic rice, wheat, and beef are deprived of tariff protection. This might be especially true for rice farmers. Interestingly, imported foods are automatically equated with low prices and risk without further explanation. The *gyōza*-scandal from 2008 is an oft-cited example, although China is not even a TPP partner. Other newspaper articles that elaborate on the food safety issue in relation to the TPP show similar contradictions and are rather suggestive. For example, an article from the Asahi Shimbun[33] quotes complaints from Monsanto about mandatory labels for GMO foods, although GMO labelling was not a topic in the TPP talks. Speculation over the content of the TPP talks was built on experience from earlier bilateral trade negotiations with the USA and structured discourse about the TPP. This is partly due to the fact that information about the actual content of the talks was difficult to obtain before the TPP deal was reached in 2015. This allowed and still allows for much speculation. Newspaper coverage in Japan was prompting fears that the TPP may undermine food-labelling requirements for food additives and genetically modified food, as well as standards on pesticide residues.

It was not only the mass media that were sceptical about the TPP's impact on food safety. Since November 2011, various stakeholders in Japan have protested against the TPP. Most of the rallies were jointly organized by agricultural and consumer groups. JA, for example, collected 11.7 million signatures on a petition opposing Japan's participation in the TPP in 2011.[34] Food and food safety were prominent issues within the protests against the TPP. In the following, I will focus on three organizations that strongly oppose the TPP and are members of the Stop TPP Network: CUJ, Fujinkai, and Nōminren. All three

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32 *Asahi Shimbun*, 'TPP hantai, JA Kitakyūgakisei. Tokubetsuketsugi wo saitaku' [Against TPP. JA Kitakyūshū Shows Grit and Adopts a Special Resolution], January 14, 2011, 25.

33 Oyamada, Kenji, 'TPP kōshō 5', 7.

34 George Mulgan, 'Japan's TPP "Shock"'.

organizations are also active on a global scale and participate in TPP negotiations, protests at G8 summits and WTO meetings as stakeholders from Japan's civil society.

Founded in the late 1960s, CUJ is a Tokyo-based consumer advocacy organization that represents the interests of consumers throughout Japan. The CUJ deals with various aspects of consumer rights and appeals to Diet Members and ministries regarding consumer issues by, for example, writing open letters. As a member of the Seikyō Network[35] the organization also receives money from Seikyō. It is closely linked to the NO! GMO campaign that successfully pushed the government to establish GM labelling in the 1990s. CUJ has been critical of the WTO and Preferential Trade Agreements (PTA) since the 1990s and its representatives participated in anti-globalization protests in Seattle, Cancun, and Taiwan. CUJ invites international specialists on trade and food safety to Japan and cooperates with international organizations, in addition to providing information and commenting critically on the TPP since 2008.[36] My informant, Mr. Ide, who works at the CUJ office, participated in the Brunei Round of the TPP in August 2013 as a representative of CUJ. In a report for CUJ's website, he described how he had witnessed first-hand how civil society stakeholders were denied access to the negotiations while global business representatives received special treatment.[37] Accordingly, the CUJ's critique of the TPP targets the global 'free trade system' as a whole for its 'economism (the reduction of all social facts to economic dimensions)'[38] and its inequalities and the WTO in particular.[39] A CUJ representative also states that the WTO is dominated by the USA and by multinational

[35] Seikyō is a network of consumer co-operatives that cater to 20.6 million members in Japan. The umbrella organization Nisseikyō consists of regional chapters whose main focus is the provision of goods, especially food, via delivery or co-op supermarkets. Seiyō co-operates with other smaller consumer co-ops that only cater to consumers in some areas of Japan like Seikatsu Club or Pal-System on a number of political issues such as environment, peace and consumer advocacy (see Hartmann, *Konsumgenossenschaften in Japan*).

[36] Interview with Ide Hiroyuki, Tokyo, 2012.

[37] CUJ, 'Civil Society'.

[38] CUJ, 'Why Are Consumers Opposing TPP?'.

[39] Ibid.

corporations such as Monsanto and stresses the importance for consumers and farmers to form grass-roots movements to monitor it.[40]

Regarding food safety and its relationship with the TPP, Mr. Ide from CUJ states that 'the safety of food in Japan is highly endangered' because 'the US will probably demand that Japan adjusts its food safety standards in line with America's, although American safety standards are very low'.[41] The CUJ takes a stand against the global free trade system and the TPP that is critical of global capitalism and the WTO in general, which it considers as dominated by TNCs and the USA. This is perhaps the reason why Mr. Ide fears that American food safety standards could become relevant in a multilateral PTA. Thus, food risks are assigned to the US, whose food safety standards are generally regarded as 'low'.[42]

Founded in 1989, Nōminren promotes the direct sale of agricultural products, it lobbies politicians and helps farmers to achieve more autonomy from JA and retailers through all kinds of activities. Nōminren is politically independent and runs its own food safety research centre where it conducts monitoring for pesticides and radioactivity. While the other two groups do not concentrate solely on TPP-related issues, this has been at the forefront of Nōminren's work for some time. It is a prominent topic on Nōminren's website and was made all the more apparent during a March 2013 visit to its Tōkyō headquarters, which was plastered with anti-TPP posters and banners. Nōminren believes one of the most important issues that could be affected by the TPP is the labelling of GM food. Standards and thresholds for food additives and pesticides are also a cause for concern to the movement. One representative argued in our interview that the voluntary No-GMO label is being 'attacked by America',

> [If Japan joined the TPP], food labelling in Japan would definitely change. Thresholds for food additives and pesticides would be relaxed. [. . .] But I think what is actually necessary today is exactly the opposite policy by

[40] Chan, *Another Japan Is Possible*, 137.
[41] Interview with Ide Hiroyuki, Tokyo, 2012.
[42] Ibid.

> the government. Standards should become far stricter. [ . . . ] I think that it is the state's responsibility to ensure the life and health of its citizens. From this perspective, the current policies of the Japanese government are very strange. [ . . . ] But if we join, we will call on the people who do not want to eat imported foods to eat the safe food we produce. This is the kind of movement we will start and we will boycott imported foods.[43]

This quote clearly defines food imports as a threat to domestic food safety. The actor held responsible for protecting the Japanese people from food risks is the Japanese government, which is criticized by Nōminren. Finally, Kobayashi calls for a boycott of all imported foods, regardless of their place of origin and whether they are considered 'safe' according to current Japanese standards.

Fujinkai was founded in 1962 by the famous feminist Hiratsuka Raichō. It is committed to the protection of women's and children's rights against the danger of nuclear war, it opposes the revision of Japan's peace constitution and militarism, works for better living conditions, food safety, national independence, and more democracy in Japan. The organization considers the TPP to be part of the American domination over Japan and is strongly opposed to it. It locates the TPP within the discourse of US military bases and the post-war history of US-Japan relations. Therefore, a representative of Fujinkai fears that the USA will apply pressure on Japan to accept the lower American standards for food safety if Japan joins the TPP.[44]

> We oppose the TPP because the safety of our food is endangered. In America there is no labelling for genetically modified foods. [ . . . ] For many years the US has been demanding that Japan abolish its GMO labelling. When it comes to food additives [ . . . ], the US pressures Japan to allow more, in addition to demanding the legalization of postharvest chemicals. For the simple reason that they want to export more food to Japan, the US claims Japanese safety standards for GMO, food additives, pesticides and herbicides are too strict. Therefore, they want them to be

[43] Interview with Kobayashi Jirō, Tokyo, 2013.

[44] Interview with Machida Yōko, Tokyo, 2013.

> relaxed. If we join the TPP, the US will demand this to abolish non-tariff barriers to trade.[45]

This quote suggests that 'our' Japanese food is safe, while the USA is putting pressure on Japan to import GM foods and other 'dangerous' foods, thus endangering the health of Japanese consumers simply for economic reasons. Again, as is the case with the arguments of the CUJ and Nōminren, of all the nations participating in the TPP, the USA is the 'significant Other'[46] that poses a threat to Japan's food safety. In summary, newspapers and TPP opponents alike view the TPP as a threat to food safety. The threat is further identified as pertaining to 'unsafe imported foods' entering Japan due to lower agricultural tariffs on the one hand and changing food safety and/or labelling standards caused by US pressure on the other. Only the CUJ addresses the problem of global capitalism and free trade, while the majority stick to (food) nationalism and a kind of anti-American rhetoric familiar to the Japanese public ever since the US-Japanese trade friction of the 1980s.[47]

## Discourse on Food Safety and the TPP: October 2015

Due to the lack of transparency, stakeholders and mass media did not know what kind of food safety issues were really discussed in the TPP negotiations in 2013 and were often forced to speculate over their content. Speculation continued even after the TPP agreement was reached in October 2015, because the TPP documents, including the SPS chapter, were not released until early November. In October 2015, Asahi Shimbun published 201 articles with headlines that featured 'TPP'. 140 of those articles dealt with issues related to agriculture, including the import quota for rice, dairy

[45] Ibid.

[46] Clammer, *Japan and Its Others*, 45.

[47] See, for example, Ishihara and Morita's 1989 book *Nō to ieru Nihon*. Kobayashi Yoshinori's 2012 manga *Han TPP ron* is a recent nationalist publication about trade, Japan and anti-Americanism in the context of the TPP.

products, pork, and beef, agriculture in general and the expected effects on farmers, and Abe's support programme for farmers. Some articles featured stories about farmers, especially pork and beef farmers. The tenor of most of these articles is rather alarming, because they create a vision of a vanishing Japanese agricultural sector (*nōgyō naku naru kamo*).[48] This notion was most prominent in regional editions of the newspaper.

Food safety and health issues were in the headlines of only seven articles, although 40 articles briefly mentioned food safety, mostly in relation to the expected increase in beef and pork imports. Regional, prefectural, and local governments and assemblies sent numerous petitions to central government and the ministries related to TPP demanding more information about TPP's impact on regional economies and especially agriculture and food safety. In a petition from the assembly of mayors from cities on Kyūshū (*Kyūshū Shichō-kai*), for example, the government was asked to respond to the increase in competition caused by the rising number of cheap imports and to guarantee food safety and strengthen Japan's domestic agriculture.[49] This indicates that municipalities, especially in rural areas, were anxious about the possible negative effects on local and regional economies.

The Asahi Shimbun reports that several meetings and information events by MAFF officials have taken place all over the country to inform farmers, the food industry, prefectural and local officials, and other stakeholders of the impact the TPP will have on the food and agricultural sector. Most farmers, consumers, and local government officials quoted in these articles equated imported foods with less safe or unsafe foods and usually asked government officials whether imported foods were really safe.[50] Government officials gave replies such as, 'I don't see that there is a threat to food safety in Japan' and emphasized the opportunities for small and medium-sized food businesses under the TPP.[51] Farmers stressed the safety of their own produce and promised

[48] See, for example, *Asahi Shimbun*, 'Shōhisha, nesagari kitai, shoku no anzen ni fuan mo, TPP gōi', 34.

[49] Ōhata, 'TPP no taisaku ya shinkansen seibi yōbō', 29.

[50] Kamiji,'TPP genjō kara', 32.

[51] Kyōya, 'Shokuhin jigyōshara to TPP iken kōryū', 26.

Japanese consumers that they would continue to produce safe food for them. Several articles that cover these events also refer to stakeholders' concerns over whether or not all relevant documents had been made public or if more information regarding food safety and agricultural tariffs was yet to be revealed.

The price disadvantages of domestic food products were discussed in the newspaper articles as well, but the discussion was usually combined with remarks about the good reputation of safe regional ingredients and food products. The articles often quoted farmers or government officials who said they expected consumers to pay more for safe domestic products.[52] The emphasis on food safety seems to be a strategy employed to distinguish between domestic food products and imported food products and to legitimize higher prices for domestic goods, for example, with regard to domestic rice.[53] However, the assumption that Japanese food is safe *per se* or even safer than imported foods is not called into question, neither by farmers and the food industry nor by the journalists who write these articles.

Among the seven articles that explicitly cover food safety issues, one article reflects critically on food additives. It comments that although the approval and regulation of food additives have already caused conflict in the food trade between the USA and Japan, these issues were not included in the TPP talks and are not covered in the TPP document. Therefore, the authors expect food additives to create problems when the TPP is finally enacted. They also share the view that cars and other topics were privileged over food safety issues.[54] In the column 'Oshiete! TPP' (Educate us about the TPP!), the Asahi Shimbun dedicates the fourth part of the series to food safety regulation under the TPP. It features a table that clarifies the status of five food safety issues that have been discussed in the TPP: (1) the obligation to label GMO food still stands, (2) food safety standards for imported foods will not change and are still based on WTO rules, (3) the labelling obligation for fungicides

[52] Honda, 'Shinsaigo', 28.
[53] Takahashi,'Yunyūmai ni yasusa de shōbu?', 6.
[54] Ōta and Fuji, 'Shokuhin tenkabutsu', 5.

used on imported oranges is still in force, (4) the approval procedure for food additives will not change, and (5) the Food Safety Commission (FSC) has decided to lift the import ban on gelatine and collagen made from beef. Oyamada claims that many people are worried that food safety standards could be weakened after the TPP agreement comes into force. He quotes an agricultural specialist from Tokyo University who argues that although there are no changes in food regulation now, it is likely that the USA will provide fitting 'scientific evidence' that supports its economic goals.[55]

Another article deals with food safety concerns related to lower tariffs for beef and pork. It states that although gastronomy and food processing companies welcome cheaper meat imports, many consumers are worried about their safety. A restaurant owner is quoted who describes the paradoxical situation of being happy about lower costs but at the same time having doubts about the safety and quality of imported foods. The same paradox is apparent in consumers' attitudes towards imported foods. The consumers interviewed automatically assume that there are food safety problems related to imported foods such as pesticides, fungicides, and growth hormones. Nevertheless, they want to buy cheap imported food although they acknowledge that this might hurt domestic farmers and/or is possibly less safe.[56] The other articles, however, simply state that there will be no change in Japan's food safety regulatory system, quoting the Cabinet Office's TPP Affairs Bureau.[57]

Immediately after the TPP deal was reached in October 2015, statements were released by the organizations involved in the anti-TPP movement discussed above. The CUJ criticized the agreement and announced action against it. In its public statement, the organization acknowledged that the deal on automobile parts was achieved by compromising on agriculture and that this deal was achieved in favour of TNCs and on the back of consumers' lives. They blamed the LDP for lying in its 2012 election campaign when it promised not to join the

[55] Oyamada Kenji, 'Oshiete! TPP 4', 7.
[56] *Asahi Shimbun*, 'Shōhisha, nesagari kitai', 34.
[57] Kiyoi, 'Shoku no anzen' seido henkō nashi', 5.

TPP negotiations. The TPP agreement broke not only this promise but also the resolution passed by the Diet in April 2013 securing the exclusion of rice, grain, beef, pork, dairy products, and sugar from the negotiations, with a view to revitalizing these sectors and to protecting food safety and food security. The content of the TPP outline as adopted in Atlanta contradicts these election pledges and resolutions. According to the CUJ, the TPP threatens people's rights to food safety and pharmaceuticals, and threatens farmers' rights to small-scale agriculture.[58]

In its statement, Fujinkai argued that under the TPP, 'the Japanese people's economic sovereignty has been sold out [ . . . ] to the US'.[59] With regard to food, they brought forward the argument that Japan's food self-sufficiency and sovereignty are being threatened by the new import quotas for rice and the lower tariffs on beef and pork. Furthermore, they argued that Japan's agriculture and food safety were being sacrificed in favour of the profits of transnational corporations in the automotive and pharmaceutical sectors. They criticized the Investor-State Dispute Settlement instrument as a means by which American rules will be forced upon other companies and states. Fujinkai announced increased mobilization, both domestically and internationally to stop each country's parliament and especially the Japanese parliament from ratifying the treaty and to effect Prime Minister Abe's resignation.[60]

In their statement, Nōminren also harshly criticized the Abe government for making concessions to the USA on agricultural tariffs for products the LDP promised to exclude from the negotiations. The organization stressed that the TPP would have a serious impact on food safety and citizens' health. The focus of the public statement, however, was clearly on agricultural tariffs. Food safety was hardly mentioned. Most of the text blames the government for failing to negotiate a deal that is in the interest of the Japanese people. The negotiations are criticized for their opacity and undemocratic character

[58] Nihon Shohisha renmei, 'TPP Ōsuji gōi ni kōgi shi'.
[59] Shin Nihon Fujin no Kai, *Danwa.*
[60] Ibid.

and the unequal access to documents by TNCs. Nōminren also tries to mobilize against the TPP and against Prime Minister Abe to prevent the ratification of the TPP and to drive Abe out of office.[61]

In the discourse about the TPP in October 2015, food safety issues were mentioned less frequently than in 2011–2013. Nevertheless, the conjunction of food risks and imported foods stayed intact. This is especially evident in the newspaper articles that follow a logic according to which lower agricultural tariffs lead to an increase in food imports that will not only cause the ruin of the Japanese agricultural sector and Japanese farmers' livelihoods, but at the same time threaten consumer health, because they are assumed to be less safe than domestic food products. Food safety plays only a minor role in the short public statements released by TPP opponents after the TPP deal was reached. However, the statements do mention the threat of the TPP to food safety and the fact that food safety was sacrificed in favour of other economic sectors.

## The TPP's SPS Chapter

In early November 2015, the outline of the TPP agreement was finally released; almost a month after the agreement was reached in Atlanta. The SPS chapter is 18 pages long and has several objectives, among them 'to ensure that sanitary or phytosanitary measures implemented by a Party do not create unjustified obstacles to trade'.[62] However, the SPS chapter does not address any of the controversial issues feared by TPP opponents such as pesticides, food additives, or GM food labelling. The TPP's SPS chapter introduces a system where TPP partner countries audit each other's food safety authorities and inspection systems. It also sees the establishment of a committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures to effectively implement the SPS chapter.[63] However, the SPS

[61] Nōminren, *Danwa.*
[62] USTR, 'TPP SPS Chapter', Article 7–2.d.
[63] Ibid.

chapter does not say anything about the consequences if a country's inspection system is found to be 'inappropriate' or when disputes are brought to the SPS committee. Although the document does not contain any direct indication that changes in food safety standards and other SPS measures will become necessary, it does not explicitly state that SPS measures cannot be changed. According to the WTO's SPS agreement, SPS measures have to be based on a scientific risk analysis.

Most of the features of the SPS chapter are quite similar to other PTAs' SPS chapters.[64] However, agricultural policy specialists criticize the TPP contract because the SPS chapter does not cover any controversial issues such as GMOs. Instead, it hides them in Chapter 2 on 'National Treatment and Access for Market Goods',[65] so that 'controversies over GMOs or synthetic biology would be judged based on the criteria of market access rather than risk assessments of their safety for human health or the environment'.[66] Furthermore, there is no reference to the relationship between Articles 2–29 from Chapter 2 and the SPS chapter. In fact, the text reveals very little about how governments will provide the 'appropriate level of sanitary or phytosanitary protection'. The language of the chapter is very general and vague. Key words are 'appropriate', 'reasonable', 'rational', and 'science' or 'scientific'.[67] The reference to science is not only vague but the applicability of 'science' to SPS measures is further qualified according to whether trade and regulatory officials deem the SPS measures to be economically feasible.[68] While the focus of the Codex Alimentarius[69] is to avoid unjustified differences in the level of consumer health protection, the main objective of the TPP's SPS chapter is to enable food and agricultural trade.[70]

[64] Stoler, 'TBT and SPS Measures in Practice'.

[65] USTR, *TPP Full Text*, Chapter 2, Article 29.

[66] Suppan, 'The TPP SPS Chapter', 1.

[67] USTR, 'TPP SPS Chapter'.

[68] Suppan, 'The TPP SPS Chapter', 2.

[69] Codex Alimentarius is a collection of internationally recognized guidelines and recommendations related to food safety issues, to which the WTO refers for the resolution of trade-related disputes on food safety standards.

[70] Suppan, 'The TPP SPS Chapter', 3.

Of course, the concept of 'science' and an 'objective scientific base' for food safety standards has also been criticized with regard to the WTO's SPS Agreement as well as national food legislations.[71] Yet the 'scientific' decision as to whether a country's SPS measures are deemed non-tariff barriers to trade or necessary to protect domestic consumers is also an object of political and economic consideration. Suppan fears that the 'science' referred to in the text could be the kind of unpublished corporate science studies he has frequently observed as being used to justify US rule-making and commercial approvals.[72]

The Japanese Cabinet Office's TPP Affairs Bureau has not specifically mentioned any of these problems. In a statement released in October 2015, the bureau commented that the SPS chapter will improve Japan's food exports and, although it exceeds the WTO's SPS Agreement, the chapter will not destroy Japan's food safety or necessitate changes in Japan's current food safety regulatory system. The Cabinet Office's summary of the TPP only briefly mentions that 'an exchange about GMO is determined' in the chapter about market access.[73] In conclusion, the SPS chapter itself still does not give any concrete hints as to how controversial food safety issues are going to be treated under the TPP, but it does suggest that there is a tendency to favour economic objectives over the protection of consumer health.

## Conclusion

Within the discourse on food safety and the TPP, the journalists and TPP opponents quoted here assume that imported foods, which will increase due to lower agricultural tariffs, threaten food safety in Japan. The relationship between agricultural tariffs and food safety, however, is not explained in further detail. This is true for the discourse from 2011

[71] Busch and Bain, 'New! Improved?'; Carruth, 'Socio-economic foundations', Echols, *Food Safety*; Reiher, 'Lebensmittelstandards als "Black Box"'.

[72] Suppan, 'The TPP SPS Chapter', 3.

[73] Naikakufu Kantei TPP Seifu Taisaku Honbu, *Kantaiheiyō*.

to 2013, as well as in 2015. Newspaper articles and critiques by TPP opponents are mainly directed at the US and Japanese governments. Only the CUJ's critique on the TPP targets the global free trade system as a whole, but also characterizes it as being dominated by the USA. Food risks are assigned to the USA, although the TPP is not a bilateral PTA between Japan and the USA. The anti-TPP rhetoric easily relates to existing anti-American sentiments and earlier discourses on the liberalization of agricultural trade within Japanese society. It is argued that by not joining the TPP, risks to food safety could be diminished. The actor held responsible for securing food safety is the Japanese government, who is being urged not to sign the TPP, or at least to negotiate more favourable conditions.

The main difference between the discourse on food safety issues under the TPP between 2011 and 2013 and in October 2015 is that food safety issues became less important. GM food and pesticides were no longer mentioned after the TPP deal was concluded. This is due to the release of the TPP's SPS chapter and other information about the results of the TPP negotiations, according to which Japan's food safety and food labelling standards will not change. However, so far, neither the mass media nor TPP opponents have addressed the problem of GMOs in the TPP document or the problem of 'science' and the idea of the dominance of economic feasibility over health protection; but these issues are closely related to the growing influence of TNCs under the TPP. Representatives of TNCs are already involved in the setting of food safety standards by participating in meetings of international organizations such as Codex Alimentarius.[74] Their representatives are also involved in negotiation processes on food safety standards and assessment committees in Japan. Here, representatives from the food industry are generally in the majority and a lack of transparency is still quite common.[75] Even if representatives from the food industry are not members of these committees, they have a lot of power because the definition of threshold levels and admission procedures for GMOs is

[74] Reiher, 'Lebensmittelstandards als "Black Box"'.

[75] Maclachlan, *Consumer Politics*, 185.

often based on 'scientific' data provided by TNCs, because only they have the resources to afford the commissioning of their own studies.[76] With the ISDS provisions and the TPP's shift from health protection to economic feasibility with regard to SPS measures, the power of the already influential TNCs in the food and agricultural sector will continue to grow. Thus, instead of juxtaposing Japan and the USA in the Japanese TPP debate, more attention should be paid to the role of transnational corporations and the private (food) sector.

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**Cornelia Reiher** is an assistant professor for Japanese Society at Freie Universitaet Berlin. Her current research focuses on globalization, rural Japan, food safety and food policies in Japan and the global agro-food system. Her recent publications include Umkämpftes Essen - Produktion, Handel und Konsum von Lebensmitteln in globalen Kontexten [Contested Food: Production, Trade and Consumption of Food in Global Contexts]. Website: www.geas.fu-berlin.de/people/faculty/reiher.html

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