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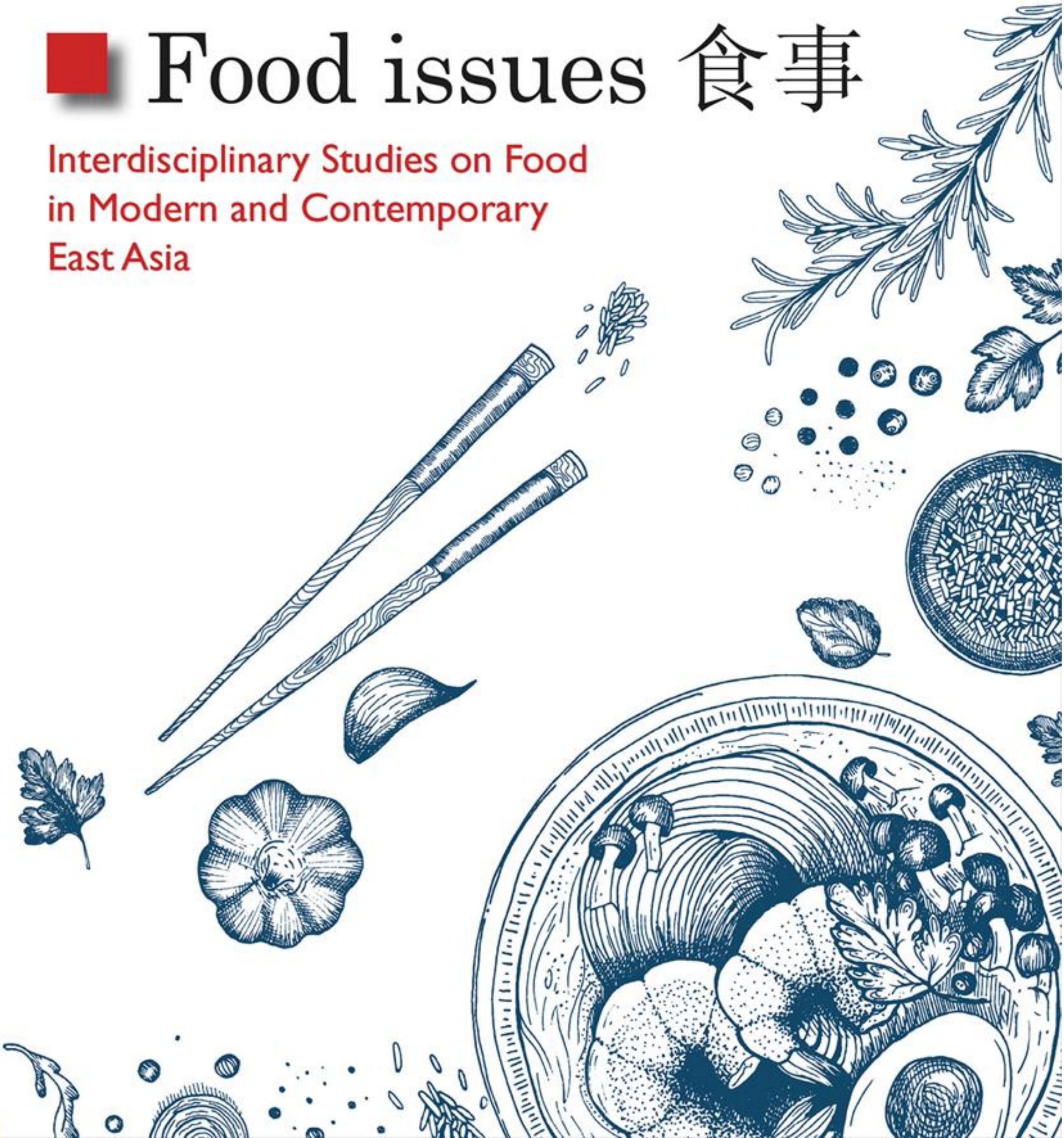
# Food issues 食事

## Interdisciplinary Studies on Food in Modern and Contemporary East Asia



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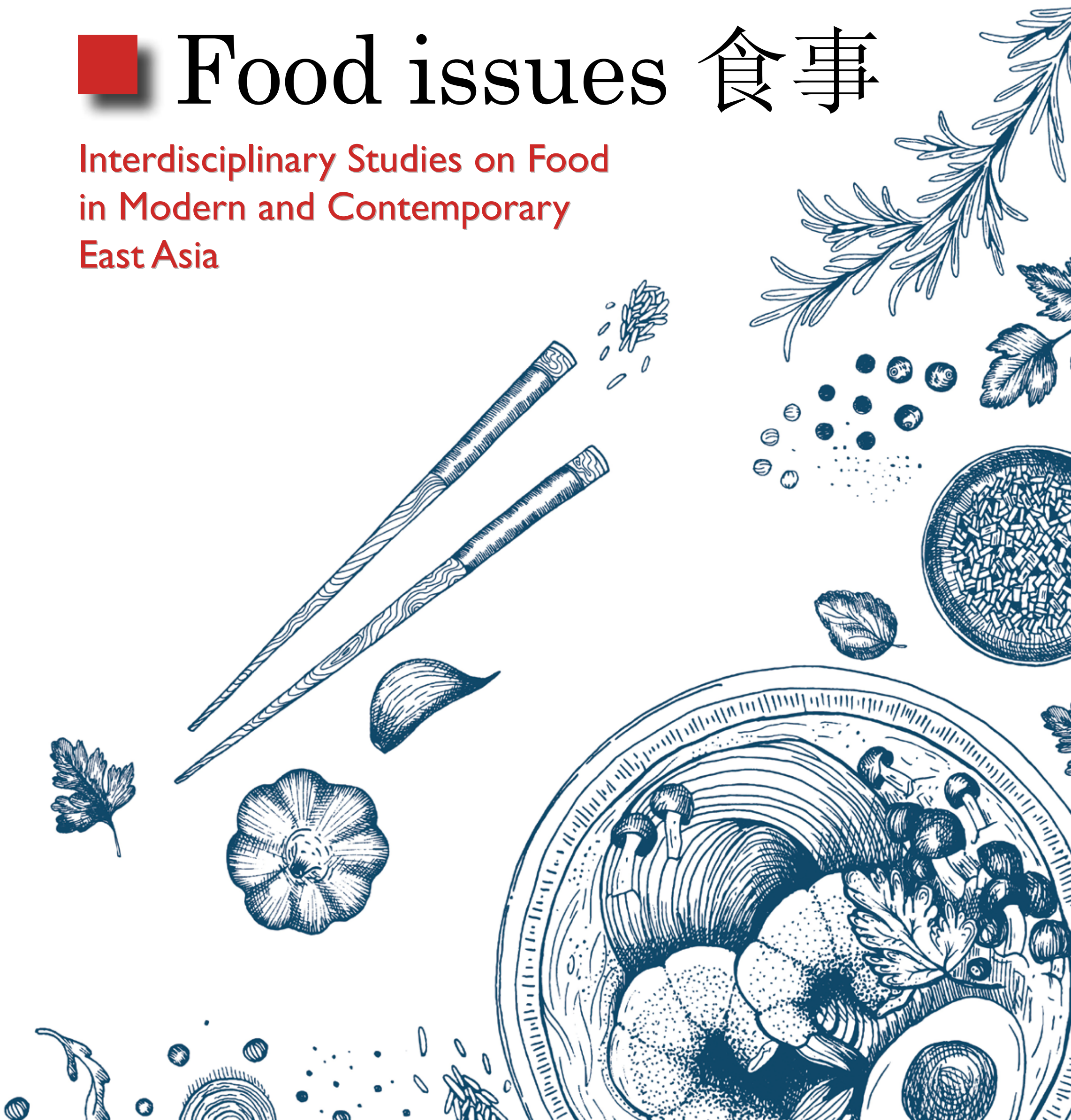

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# Food issues 食事

## Interdisciplinary Studies on Food in Modern and Contemporary East Asia

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CHINESE STUDIES

# Preface

Miriam Castorina, Diego Cucinelli

For the fifth collection in the *Florientalia East Asian Studies Series*, we chose the title *Food issues* 食事. *Interdisciplinary Studies on Food in Modern and Contemporary East Asia* to celebrate how food represents a central topic in our society and a focal theme in literature and art of all times. We asked the scholars to think over about Food from multiple perspectives, from the representation of food and drink consumption in literature and art to its implications with spirituality and politics. We believe that the essays of the scholars hosted in this volume might enrich the field of Chinese and Japanese studies through the paths they trace with their research.

This volume gathers essays by eleven essays interested in different research areas within the field of East Asian studies. The essays— organized in a Japanese section and a Chinese section—cover a wide range of topics ranging from literature, religion, Media production, linguistic and lexicon analyses, investigations on the relation between food and cultural identity.

The Japanese section contains essays dealing with spirituality, modern and contemporary literature, and politics. The opening article by Chiara Ghidini explores some aspects of the relation between Buddhism and *washoku*, the traditional dietary cultures of the Japanese. More specifically, Ghidini's research focuses on *shōjin ryōri*, the Buddhist devotional cuisine or "temple food". The second essay is by Sasaki Yūki and aims to examine the way Food is depicted in *Kabe* (1951), the first collection of works by the modern Japanese writer Abe Kōbō. In this essay, Sasaki looks at Food as one of the indicators to support the worldbuilding and the actions of the characters in the entire work. The third contribution is by Yamada Natsuki and explores the representation of Food in the world of *manga*.

Miriam Castorina, Diego Cucinelli (edited by), *Food issues* 食事. *Interdisciplinary Studies on Food in Modern and Contemporary East Asia*, © 2021 Author(s), content CC BY 4.0 International, metadata CC0 1.0 Universal, published by Firenze University Press (www.fupress.com), ISSN 2704-5919 (online), ISBN 978-88-5518-506-6 (PDF), DOI 10.36253/978-88-5518-506-6

In particular, Yamada analyses Tezuka Osamu's famous work *Ashita no Jō* (1968) and uses Food as a filter for a psychological analysis of the characters. The fourth essay is by Yamasaki Makiko and deals with the representation of Food in some of Murakami Haruki's works. More specifically, Yamasaki will examine juxtapositions of Food and Sex from Murakami's earliest works to the recent ones, such as *Onna no inai otokotatchi* (2014) and *Kishidanchōgoroshi* (2017). The fifth essay is by Francesco Eugenio Barbieri and aims at analyzing the representation of Food and Eating in seminal works by Japanese author Tawada Yōko. In particular, Barbieri will analyze the connection between Food and metamorphosis and the representation and the metaphor of food in Tawada's works. Finally, the essay by Felice Farina and deals with contemporary history and politics. In particular, Farina will explore the political construction of *washoku* by analyzing Japan's recent strategy of gastronationalism and gastrodiplomacy.

The essays included in the Chinese section investigate Food issues from multiple perspectives: literature, lexicography, media, and cultural identity. The first essay by Mario De Grandis and Filippo Costantini takes into consideration two fictional works by the "Tibetan" author Alai both entitled "Yü 鱼" ("The Fish"). In these two stories, Alai addresses the food taboo related to fish present in some areas of Tibet displaying two approaches that are not only different but in some way diametrically opposite. Thanks to a careful close reading of the works, and supported by a solid anthropological scholarship related to the fish taboo, De Grandis and Costantini demonstrate how the "fish-taboo issue" is instrumental to the author to undermine the stereotyped image of Tibet and, on the contrary, "aims at subverting essentializing portrays of Tibet".

In the second essay, Serena De Marchi explores Food issues in terms of hunger and imprisonment as depicted in the works of three contemporary Chinese writers. Hunger is one of the great protagonists of China's recent history, especially in the period of the so-called Great Famine (1958–1952). Starting from a brief historical reconstruction of the causes and 'numbers' of this "national starvation", the scholar examines the deprivation of food in labor camps experienced and/or narrated (as in the case of Yang Xianhui's *Chronicles of Jiabiangou*) by the authors, its implications on the lives and bodies of the prisoners, and its influence on the Chinese prison camp literature.

The third article reconstructs the difficult but also creative stages of the compilation of the *Dizionario dei vini e dei vitigni d'Italia* (*Dictionary of Italian wines and grape varieties. Italian-Chinese*). The authors—Chiara Bertulessi, Emma Lupano, Bettina Mottura, Natalia Riva, Zhou Yunqi—illustrate here the strategies adopted in the compilation of the work, with special regard to the necessary work of cultural and linguistic mediation such work requires. Not only does this essay help to better understand the translation processes and sociolinguistic negotiation that the authors adopted in compiling the work, but it also enhances the high value that such a lexicographical work can be as a tool for wider dissemination and a better understanding of the Italian culture in China, in particular the Italian culture of wine.

In “The dining table revolution in China”, the fourth essay of the Chinese section, Elena Morandi focuses on Chinese food practices and especially that of sharing food, which is a fundamental element of the Food culture in China but has been dramatically transformed by the advent of COVID-19. Through the reading of some important Chinese magazines and newspapers, Morandi gives an interesting account of the public concern that arose from the virus which involved government authorities, celebrities, tycoons, and academicians around this brand new “table revolution”.

In the essay which concludes this volume, Cristiana Turini approaches the question of cultural identity in multiethnic China through Food as a means of constructing identity and establishing meaningful relations not only within a community but also with “spirits, gods, and demons”. The scholar takes as her case study the value that customs and traditions relating to food and its preparation have in the religious beliefs and practices of Naxi people living in the Lijiang area.

We are grateful to all the contributors and the referees who participated in the volume and helped us with ideas and suggestions, creating a fruitful climate of academic collaboration and exchange.

JAPANESE STUDIES

# Japanese *shōjin ryōri*: the green competition from Buddhist temples to TV shows

Chiara Ghidini

**Abstract:** Registered in 2013 by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as Intangible Cultural Heritage, *washoku*, the "traditional dietary cultures of the Japanese," includes the so-called *shōjin ryōri*, an expression dated to the early modern period and related to the Buddhist avoidance of meat eating. Since its early appearance, *shōjin ryōri* has undergone a variety of changes, and its evolution up to contemporary times is relevant to Japan's cultural history. Traditionally, vegetables (*sōjimono*) were not thought of as precious or tasty ingredients. However, during the Kamakura period (1185–1333), the introduction of vegetarian dishes made to resemble fish and fowl, both in shape and flavor—the so-called *modoki ryōri*—attracted people's attention, contributing to the spread within Kyoto and the Japanese archipelago of a tastier and aesthetically pleasing Buddhist vegetarian cuisine. Throughout the 15th century local specialties and banquet cooking culture were extremely important: mountain products were generally still deemed inferior compared to sea and river ones, but in a text belonging to the *irui gassen mono* genre, the *Shōjin gyorui monogatari*, the reader witnesses the triumph of vegetables over the army of fish and animals. During the Meiji era (1868–1912), Buddhist vegetarianism faced the rise of a different culinary culture, whereby eating (beef) meat turned into a symbol for physical strength, both the individual one of young male citizens and the collective one of Japan as a new-born nation. Even part of the Buddhist clergy chose to embrace the meat-eating culture. Today, *shōjin ryōri* coexists with vegetarian choices based on different theoretical tenets, and is promoted by NHK Television within programs designed for a global audience and aimed to advocate the Cool Japan strategy as well as in TV shows like *Yamato amadera shōjin nikki*, focused on the everyday (cooking) life of Buddhist nuns in a secluded temple within Nara prefecture. While encouraging local (and Buddhist) vegetarian food literacy, this program also fulfills the government agenda in terms of rural rejuvenation policies and the promotion of *washoku* (which includes *shōjin ryōri*) as a brand to be popularized both within and outside Japan.

**Keyword**: Buddhist vegetarian cuisine, rural rejuvenation, Buddhist temples, NHK Television.

**要旨**: 2013年にユネスコから無形文化遺産に登録された「日本人の伝統的な食文化」である和食には、仏教の肉食忌避の思想に由来する精進料理が含まれている。精進料理は、その登場以来、さまざまな変化を遂げてきた。伝統的に、野菜（精進物）は、貴重な、またはおいしい食材とは考えられていなかった。しかし、鎌倉時代（1185–1333年）になると、形も味も魚や鳥に似せた野菜を中心としたモドキ料理が注目を集め、仏教の食事が普及した。地元の特産品と宴会料理が重要な役割を果たした15世紀を通じて、山の産物は一般に海や川の産物に比べて劣っていると見なされていたが、異類合戦物のジャンルに属する『精進魚類物語』では、野菜が魚や動物の軍隊に打ち勝ってしまう。明治時代には、精進料理は新しい食文化の台頭に直面した。獣肉（主に牛肉）を食べることは、若い男性の国民だけではなく、若い国家である日本全体の体力の象徴にもなり、仏教共同体の一部でさえ、肉食文化を受け入れ始めた。昨今では、ベジタリアン料理と併存する精進料理は、クールジャパン戦略の一部として促進され、また、奈良県中部の人里離れた寺の尼僧の日常的な食文化がテレビで紹介されたりしている。この番組は、地元と仏教の食品リテラシーを奨励すると同時に、地方の活性化およびブランドとしての（精進料理を含む）和食を推進することで、日本政府の政策に沿っていると思われる。

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キーワード：精進料理、仏教、ＮＨＫ

I bite into a persimmon
and the temple bell tolls
at Hōryūji
Masaoka Shiki

Registered in 2013 by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as Intangible Cultural Heritage, *washoku* 和食, the "traditional dietary cultures of the Japanese," includes the so-called *shōjin ryōri* 精進料理, an expression dated to the early modern period[1] and today variably translated as Buddhist vegetarian/vegan cuisine, zen cuisine, devotional cuisine or "temple food."

*Shōjin* meals were introduced in Japan following the Buddhist practice of abstaining from eating meat. According to historian Ueda Jun'ichi, however, religious and devotional factors alone could hardly account for the popularity of *shōjin ryōri* throughout Japanese history and outside the Buddhist clergy. Ueda believes that the additional element playing a key role in the acceptance of *shōjin ryōri* among ordinary people, other than the introduction of new cooking methods from China involving extensive use of wheat flour and vegetable oil, was the *modoki* もどき (imitation, mock) culinary technique, often employed in this type of vegetarian cuisine. Simulating or recreating a non-vegetarian dish was bound to be appreciated and acknowledged as part of Japanese cultural expressions centered on the notions of *tsukurimono* (artificial, temporary creations) and *mitate* (visual transposition).[2]

Traditionally, vegetables (*sōjimono* 精進物) were not thought of as precious or particularly tasty ingredients. Sei Shōnagon 清少納言 (10th–11th century) made this clear in her *Makura no sōshi* 枕草子 (The Pillow Book):

> That parents should bring up some beloved son of theirs to be a priest is really distressing. No doubt it is an auspicious thing to do; but unfortunately most people are convinced that a priest is as unimportant as a piece of wood, and they treat him accordingly. A priest lives poorly on meagre food [*sōjimono no ashiki wo uchikuhi* さうじもの(精進物)のあしき(悪しき)をうちくひ], and cannot even sleep without being criticized. (Shirane 2007, 250)

To the extent that literary texts can be dealt with as historical evidence, it appears that during the Heian period vegetarian food was related to Buddhism and perceived as "bad" or tasteless.

During the Kamakura period (typically 1185–1333), the introduction of vegetarian dishes made to resemble fish and fowl, both in shape and flavor, at-

1 Before the expression *shōjin ryōri*, within textual sources meals that made no use of animal ingredients following the Buddhist practice of abstaining from eating meat were called *shōjinmono*, or *sōjimono*. See: Mami 2019.

2 Ueda 2017, 177–80.

tracted people's attention: in the *Heikoki* 平戸記, a diary compiled by Taira no Tsunetaka 平経高 (1180–1255), there is mention of mock fish, a vegetarian dish having both the shape and the flavor of fish, offered by a *nenbutsu* monk named Monshin and welcomed by those present with much astonishment due to its probably unexpected rich taste (Ueda 2017, 181).

Later, in the Muromachi period (1336–1573), *modoki* cuisine appeared on the *shōgun*'s table and was offered to zen monks belonging to the powerful Gozan system.[3] While still including fish and fowl, official meals also featured *modoki* dishes such as the *sanbōzen* 三峰膳, a broth decorated with the shape of the three picks of the immortal islands of Penglai, Fangzhang and Yingzhou (Ueda 2017, 182).

It is useful to point out that, even though vegetarian cuisine was indeed connected with Buddhism, historically Buddhist monks and nuns did not necessarily embrace vegetarianism. In particular, the True Pure Land school (*jōdo shinshū* 浄土真宗), which gained much popularity around the Sengoku period (1467–1615), was famous for allowing both marriage and meat consumption (*nikujiki saitai* 肉食妻帯).

Unlike a more frugal Buddhist vegetarian meal, the *modoki* technique encouraged the development of *shōjin ryōri*, meant both as a cooking method and as food presentation, into an attractive culinary genre, but wild plants and vegetables failed to gain an upgrade from "*ashiki*" (bad) to superior ingredient even in later periods. The *Shijōryū hōchōsho* 四条流庖丁書 (late 15th century), to quote an example, contains a hierarchical categorization related to the taste of food products in which mountain ingredients (including vegetables) are deemed inferior compared to sea and river ones (Ueda 2017, 180).

However, in a text dated to the same period, the *Shōjin gyorui monogatari* 精進魚類物語 (The Tale of Vegetables and Fishes), vegetables prevail over sea and river food. Usually defined as an early example of the *irui gassen mono* 異類合戦物 (tales of battles between nonhuman beings) genre, this tale describes a battle between anthropomorphized vegetarian and non-vegetarian food. Partly a parody of the famous *Heike monogatari* 平家物語,[4] it contains Buddhist overtones, as one may infer from the final victory of the vegetarian army, comprised of vegetables, seaweeds, beans, mushrooms and fruits, over the army of *bibutsu* 美物 (tasty food), which includes fishes, shellfishes, fowl and other animals. The battle is initiated by the Roe (*hararago* 鮞) brothers, when they notice with great disappointment that in an official ceremony held on the first day of the eighth month of the first year of a fictional Fish-Bird era (*gyochō gannen* 魚鳥元年), Nattō Tarō 納豆太郎, Lord Bean (Mame Go Ryō 豆御料)'s son, has gained a privileged seat near Go Ryō 御料, Emperor Steamed Rice. Eventually, Go Ryō ends up eating the losers, who had previously built a fortress in a castle called *Nabe no jō* 鍋ノ城, the Hot Pot Castle.

[3] The politically influential Gozan (Five Mountains) system of ranking Zen temples was established towards the end of the Kamakura period.

[4] The history of the ur-text and of the surviving copies as well as the differences between different versions are discussed in Follador 2020.

The final triumph of the vegetarian party may hint at the superior value of Buddhist vegetarian cuisine, but, as Komine Kazuaki has argued, the real protagonist of the story appears to be Rice, a symbol for the emperor, who looks at the battle from the vegetarian food's side, while vegetables and fishes are the personifications of warriors (Kazuaki 2010).

During the battle, some lives are taken and married couples undergo the pain of separation. Tai no Akasuke Ajiyoshi 鯛赤助鯇吉 (Sea Bream the Red Good-Taste), soon to be killed in action, returns his wife Iso no Wakame 磯ノ和布 to the house of her father Konbu 昆布. The farewell poems that the bride and groom exchange are to be read in culinary terms as the combination of vegetables and fish through the employment of *konbu dashi* (kelp stock). Once dead, Tai no Akasuke becomes an ox-headed demon (*gozu* 牛頭) in the Buddhist hell: an *ushi oni* 牛鬼 (ox demon), or, in culinary words, *ushioni* 潮煮, the boiled sea bream that Emperor Steamed Rice eventually eats (Hokiichi 1959, 638).

According to Komine, since the Goryō's consumption of fish dates to the ninth lunar month, there may well be a relation with the so-called *shōjindoki* or *shōjin hodoki* 精進解, which marks the end of the ritual observance of a vegetarian diet. Komine rightly points out that, apart from its obvious Buddhist implications and parodic effects, the whole story appears to revolve around issues related to food rituals and taboos (Komine 2010, 17).

Judging from the attention paid to food provenance and seasonal ingredients, *Shōjin gyorui monogatari* can be added to the variety of texts testifying to the development of food culture in Muromachi Japan, a crucial topic addressed by historian Haruta Naoki, who has emphasized the relevance throughout the 15th century of seasonal products, local specialties and a cooking culture mainly centered on ceremonial banquets (Naoki 2008).

Research on *shōjin ryōri* is particularly connected with pre-Meiji historical documents and with the Kyōto area. While pointing out the necessity for a more thorough analysis of vegetarian food in rural regions, Ueda corroborates the perspective of Jesuit Luís Fróis (1532–97), according to which the capital used to set the standards for the provinces in terms of customs, and maintains that it is likely that *shōjin ryōri* gradually spread to the rest of the archipelago exactly because it had been accepted in Kyōto (Ueda 2017, 190–1).

While Kyōto played a key role in the development of *shōjin ryōri*, during the Edo period (1603–1867) Nagasaki, where Jesuits like Fróis had settled back in the 16th century and Ming Chinese traders were active, was the birthplace of a different type of Buddhist vegetarian cooking, *fucha ryōri* 普茶料理. A cuisine bearing strong Chinese influences, with respect to ingredients and preparation as well as to philosophical theories and healing notions (Marra 2011), *fucha ryōri* is particularly linked with the Ōbaku 黄檗 zen school and his Chinese founder in Japan, Ingen *zenji* 隠元禅師 (1592–1673), who, after reaching Nagasaki, went on to establish the Manpukuji 萬福寺 in Uji, near Kyōto, in 1661.

Famous for its rich taste, wheat dumplings, generous use of vegetable oil for frying ingredients and sugar, *fucha* cuisine also included—and still does—*modoki* dishes. The first book entirely devoted to this type of vegetarian cuisine, the

*Fucha ryōrishō* 普茶料理抄, dates back to 1772 and contains details on eating utensils, instructions on how to brew tea, a variety of recipes and a list of vegetables organized according to the four seasons.

In its manifold varieties, Japanese premodern and early modern cuisine, including the vegetarian one, aimed, as Eric Rath argues, to make food signify something invisible (Rath 2010, 7), something that reached far beyond its obvious materiality. However, it did not merely conjure the invisible, a fantasy, but also marked visible ethical and social distinctions. As for vegetarian cuisine, it did so both in terms of a taboo etiquette to observe in specific times and in terms of a more permanent dietary choice based on ethical and religious grounds.

Japanese premodern and early modern foodways (encompassing ingredients, preparation, presentation, consumption, table manners, and the naming of a given dish) evolved during the Meiji period (1868–1912), as a different culinary vocabulary began to circulate. The introduction of terms like *yōshoku* 洋食 (Euro-American cuisine) and, later, *washoku* responded to different historical, socio-political and cultural circumstances. The focus on nation-building and international ambitions contributed to the definition of food in an increased binary fashion, staging a modern *gassen* 合戦 (battle, competition) between the gastronomic identities of Self and Other.

The changed attitude toward the consumption of (beef) meat, seen as food to strengthen the young male generation for the sake of an equally young nation, affected Buddhist vegetarian cuisine to the extent that, as Richard Jaffe has maintained, "clerical meat eating came to be viewed as a necessity if the Buddhist clergy were to contribute to the Japanese effort to create a modern imperial nation-state on par with the Euro-American powers." (Jaffe 2005, 255) The Meiji government, especially in its initial years, implemented aggressive policies against Buddhism. Following the 1872 edict, clergy's legal privileges were abolished, while monks were allowed to marry, eat meat, wear ordinary clothes and give up tonsure (Jaffe 2021, 95–113). In 1873 the same rules and permissions were extended to Buddhist nuns: "From now on nuns may freely grow their hair, eat meat, marry, and return to lay life." (Jaffe 2021, 82) Ordained members of different Buddhist schools, especially Jōdo, Sōtō, Shingon and Tendai, engaged in vibrant debates, criticizing the first edict as an illegitimate State interference in *vinaya* matters and opposing Jōdo *shinshū* supporters of *nikujiki saitai* (Jaffe 2005, 262–73). On the contrary, debates related to nuns, their place within monastic institutions and their destiny once returned to lay life appear to have been rather limited (Cogan 2006).

Buddhist endorsement of meat eating for the sake of the nation persisted throughout the 1930s. The words of Sōtō priest Furukawa Taigo 古川碓悟, an advocate of the Imperial Way and of the New Mahāyāna Buddhism, are useful to illustrate the mobilization occurring at the time and the way it affected ordained members of a variety of Buddhist groups, including the Zen schools:

> If Buddhist clerics aim even a little bit for the flourishing of the national polity (*kokutai*) and the development of humanity, they resolutely must shed the corpse

> of the passive thought of the Buddhism of India and must, when circumstances require, openly nourish their body and mind through eating meat and press on with their duty. (Jaffe 2005, 272)

During the 1920s and early 1930s, however, the practice of vegetarianism following the Buddhist tenets on transmigration and the principle of causing no harm to living beings found an interesting voice within the world of Japanese literature through the lay practitioner, scientist and writer Miyazawa Kenji 宮沢賢治 (1896–1933). Born into a family affiliated to the True Pure Land school, Kenji converted in his youth to the Nichiren school and became temporarily involved with the prominent lay organization Kokuchūkai 國柱會 (Pillar of the Nation Society), established by Tanaka Chigaku 田中智學 (1861–1939), which connected the *Lotus sūtra* with the government, saw the *kokutai* as the realization of the wise Buddhist ruler, and revived Nichiren's rigorous propagation practice of *shakubuku* 折伏.[5] Kenji's turn to vegetarianism in 1918 is documented in a letter to his friend Hosaka Kanai and was mostly due to his pondering over the paradigm of autophagy, whereby life revolved around the act of preying on each other (Kilpatrick 2013, 20), the persuasion that all living beings ought to be protected, and the doctrine of transmigration:

> Suppose I were the fish, and suppose that not only I were being eaten but my father were being eaten, my mother were being eaten, and my sister were also being eaten. And suppose I were behind the people eating us, watching. "Oh, look, that man has torn apart my sibling with chopsticks. Talking to the person next to him, he swallowed her, thinking nothing of it. Just a few minutes ago her body was lying there, cold. Now she must be disintegrating in a pitch-dark place under the influence of mysterious enzymes. Our entire family has given up our precious lives that we value, we've sacrificed them, but we haven't won a thimbleful of pity from these people." I must have been once a fish that was eaten. (Sato 2007, 12–3)

Besides his short story, *Furandon nōgakkō no buta* フランドン農学校の豚 (The Frandon Agricultural School Pig),[6] written in the 1920s but published only after his death, in which Kenji dwells on global animal welfare, of particular interest is *Bijiterian taisai* ビジテリアン大祭 (The Great Vegetarian Festival, also published after Kenji's death), a fictional report on an international gathering of vegetarians held in a mountain village within the island of Newfoundland. In this story, Kenji divides the vegetarian frame of mind into two main groups: the empathizers (*dōjōha* 同情派), who treat other living beings as equals, and the preventionists (*yobōha* 予防派), who avoid eating animals in order not to contract diseases, such as rheumatism and gout. Among the attendees, a Shinran school Buddhist believer born in a Christian country takes the floor, dwelling on Buddha's choice to stop carrying out ascetic practices:

[5] On Kokuchūkai, see Stone 2019, 631–60.

[6] This short story is available also in English translation: Kenji 2012.

> Śākyamuni, in search of a path of renunciation, spent six years practicing abstinence and austerities [*shōjin kugyō* 精進苦行] in a forest on Mount Dandaka, eating only one grain of rice and a single sesame seed each day. In the end, he became aware that this was of no use, so he descended the mountain and bathed in the river. He accepted milk cream [*kurīmu*] offered by a village girl and experienced ecstasy [*hōetsu/ekusutashī* 法悦/エクスタシー].[7]

Then, he addresses the still debated issue of Buddha's last meal, and emphasizes the need for Buddhists to follow the entirety of his virtues, not mainly food restrictions:

> Today vegetarians are stricter in terms of food than the ancient Indian sages. This is a distortion, for, while they are strict with food, they do not follow the other rules established by Śākyamuni. In particular, I want all vegetarians to keep this in mind. In his final years, Śākyamuni, having perfected his thought, was not a complete vegetarian. Behold, he accepted the food offered by a blacksmith named Cunda, which was essentially pork.[8] This pork meat caused gastrointestinal damage that could not be cured. And that's why, at the age of eighty-one, he experienced *nirvāṇa* in Kushinagar. Fellow Buddhists, look at Śākyamuni and learn from him. Use his actions as a model! Become like him, learn and practice all his virtues on a scale of 1/20,000, 1/50,000, or 1/200,000! Only then will vegetarianism be good.[9]

Towards the end of the story, the protagonist, also a Buddhist believer, speaks to the audience, aiming to unveil the mistakes he detected in the previous speech:

> The previous speaker advocated the *nikujiki* theory, denying vegetarianism from a Buddhist perspective. I can't help but pointing out his mistakes as a disciple of Śākyamuni. [ … ] We, as Buddhists, must first and foremost be prepared to follow the Buddhist scriptures. It is clear from the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* that the five types of purified meat were allowed only for those who were inexperienced in training [ … ]. I will omit to mention the different dietary systems within Buddhism since someone else plans to address this issue. However, the previous speaker made a mistake when he said that Śākyamuni's last meal was pork meat: it was one type of mushroom.[10] [ … ]
> The spirit of Buddhism is compassion, it is love with perfect wisdom, which is the compassion of the Tathāgata. The point of departure in Buddhism is that all living things, us included, want to be set free from this condition of suffering. [ … ] All living things have undergone transmigration after transmigration for immeasurable *kalpa*. [ … ] One soul at one point perceives itself as a person. At one point as

7 The Japanese text of *Bijiterian taisai* is available on <https://www.aozora.gr.jp/cards/000081/files/2589_25727.html> (2021-01-09). Original text: Kenji 1989. The English translation of all quoted passages is by C. Ghidini.

8 Whether it was pork or vegetarian food given to pigs is the core of the ongoing debate.

9 <https://www.aozora.gr.jp/cards/000081/files/2589_25727.html> (2021-01-09).

10 The term in Pāli is *sūkaramaddava*, referring either to pork meat delight, or to food appreciated by pigs.

> an animal. At one point, one is even born in heaven. In the meantime, it moves closer and further away from other souls. As a result, the living things around us are friends, lovers, siblings, parents and children, and so have been for a very long time. When they separate from one another, they no longer know each other. Limitless combinations are possible in a limitless span of time. [...] People of different religions would find this idea too serious and frightening. But this world is indeed terrifyingly serious.[11]

In his "great vegetarian festival's illusion" (*gensō* 幻想),[12] Miyazawa Kenji, whose approach to vegetarianism has been defined by Roger Pulvers as a prophetic green vision (Pulvers 2013), seems aware of current international debates, sheds light on the different positions about meat consumption or abstinence within Buddhism and in other religions, and explains the vegetarian/vegan choice in terms of empathy or of a more pragmatic quest for individual health.

Buddhist support of militarism, its changes after the promulgation of the new Constitution, wartime malnutrition, food supplies from colonial territories and the attempts at configuring new types of dietary regimes have been important themes in studies (respectively) on Buddhism and foodways during interwar and occupied Japan, leaving little margin for an in-depth enquiry into the development of *shōjin ryōri*.

Today, Buddhist vegetarian/vegan cuisine, including Japanese *shōjin ryōri*, and animal ethics across and beyond Asia have gained some popularity within the context of an increasing academic and general interest in ethical eating, based on the awareness about the moral consequences of food choices. Bypassing a historical reconstruction of its practice and textual occurrences, most informative material intended for the general public sponsors *shōjin ryōri* as a traditional alternative lifestyle in touch with nature's seasonal cycle and actively endorsing the necessity of securing a sustainable future, as well as part of the potentially life-changing touristic experience of *shukubō* 宿坊 (temple stay).

Although "enchanted" and exotic publications on Japanese cuisine are still thriving, recent research has questioned the very definition of *washoku* as it was presented in the UNESCO nomination, exposing the promotion of Japanese cuisine as part of the nation-branding agenda, and shedding light on the politics of cultural heritage and gastrodiplomacy, aimed, amongst other things, to increase trade and tourism.[13] Included in the category of *washoku*, *shōjin ryōri* partakes of such dynamics, contributing to the colorful mosaic of what we have come to know as Cool Japan.

*Cool Japan* is also a popular TV program on NHK World-Japan—the international service of Japan's public media organization NHK designed for a global audience—, aimed to show "what makes Japan cool" and rediscover the charms of Japanese culture that Japanese people tend to overlook. *Cool Japan* broadcast-

11 <https://www.aozora.gr.jp/cards/000081/files/2589_25727.html> (2021-01-09).

12 I am referring to the last sentence of his short story.

13 See, for example, Bestor 2018. See also Felice Farina in this volume.

ed a special on *Shōjin ryōri* (rerun in 2021) addressing Japanese Buddhist cuisine from the viewpoint of "foreigners" (*gaikokujin* 外国人):

> In recent years, the number of vegetarians has been growing around the world. Healthy meals in which vegetables are central are popular in the West, where lifestyle related diseases are becoming more serious. What's receiving attention amidst such circumstances is Buddhist cuisine. Buddhist cuisine exists in Asian countries such as China and Korea as well, but Japan's Buddhist cuisine is attracting attention coupled with the Japanese food boom and the popularity of tourism in Japan. There are casual Buddhist cuisine restaurants, and new styles for foods such as sweets and ramen are appearing one after another. We uncover the appeals of Japan's Buddhist cuisine from the perspective of foreigners.[14]

In this program, designed to entertain and quite explicitly endorsing the Cool Japan strategy, global aspirations for ethical and healthy eating and living relate to Japanese Buddhist cuisine, and "foreigners" (vegan, vegetarian or none of the above) from different continents are given the floor to comment on and experience *shōjin ryōri*, eventually reaching a verdict to be shared with the audience.

If the special on *shōjin ryōri* was intended for a global audience, *Yamato Amadera shōjin nikki* やまと尼寺 精進日記 (A Buddhist Vegetarian Diary in a Yamato Convent), a series broadcasted on NHK Educational TV (*NHK kyōiku terebijon* 教育テレビジョン) and now available on DVD and in mook form, was tailored for a Japanese (or Japanese speaking) audience with stronger pedagogic purposes.

The "protagonist" of *Yamato Amadera shōjin nikki* is the secluded Otowasan Kannonji 音羽山観音寺, a temple in the countryside of Sakurai (Nara prefecture), the "heart of the Yamato area," traditionally dated back to the 8th century. Situated at the end of a steep unpaved slope up a mountain road, Kannonji is run by the chief priestess (*jūshoku* 住職), Gotō Mitsuei, belonging to the Pure Land Yūzū *nenbutsu* 融通念仏 school,[15] her assistant, Sasaki Jitō, and the helper, Macchan. The temple, considered part of a *reijō* 霊場 (pilgrimage grounds charged with prodigious powers), where people devoted to Kannon in the Nara period used to gather, has as its object of worship (*gohonzon* ご本尊) the statue of Thousand-armed Thousand-eyed Eleven-faced Kannon (*Senju sengen jūichimen Kanzeon bosatsu* 千手千眼十一面観世音菩薩), associated with stories of prodigious healing from eye afflictions (*ganbyō reigen* 眼病霊験). Kannon's healing water—as the new webpage of the temple,[16] which explicitly cites the NHK program, informs its readers—is still served together with each *shōjin* meal.

The inspiring and unusual everyday life in a non-urban Buddhist temple is one of the aspects that prompted Toda Yumiko 戸田 裕美子 to devote a TV program

[14] https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/tv/cooljapan/20210424/4008234/ (2021-01-09).

[15] Ryōnin (1073–1132) is the Tendai monk who founded the Yūzū school. From a Buddhist perspective, the notion of *yūzū* refers to the interrelationship of all things and the ability for any individual meritorious action to benefit many.

[16] https://www.otowasankannonji.org/ (2021-01-09).

to Kannonji and its seasonal *shōjin ryōri*. Toda recalls her first visit to the temple, where she had chosen to try *shukubō* after overhearing people praising the kindness of its nuns and the special food they served, almost entirely made of ingredients grown *in loco*.[17] Living in harmony with the surrounding nature as a small supportive community, laughter, hard work, training, knowledge and transformation of natural ingredients into delicious meals, ceremonial dishes, and Mitsuei's wise yet simple glance on food as life are the main features of *Yamato Amadera shōjin nikki*. While being entertained, the audience learns more about seasonal vegetables and flowers, as well as about the hardships and joys of secluded yet "enlightened" rural life.

The popularity of *Shōjin nikki* owes much to the choice of showing on television a rural temple usefully located in one of the most historically charged areas of Japan and following the everyday life of three women (two nuns and Macchan) running it with patience, attentiveness, and an expression of grateful astonishment on their faces. On the one hand, this TV program has (temporarily?) benefitted Kannonji and its surrounding area, encouraging spectators to turn into occasional pilgrim-tourists and experience the temple life and food in person. On the other hand, as a tribute to local food products and cuisine, it has also contributed to the government agenda in terms of regional revitalization. A stay for two in the *Shōjin nikki* temple is one of the many gifts from Nara prefecture offered in exchange for the donation of an amount of a person's residence tax to that regional area in the *furusato nōzei* ふるさと納税 (hometown tax) system, a program introduced by the government in 2008 to rejuvenate rural areas of Japan.[18] In theory, taxpayers should donate to their hometown (*furusato*), but, in practice, they are free to direct their tax payments to any Japanese prefecture or municipality[19] and will receive a gift (usually local goods and accommodation packages) worth approximately thirty per cent of the donation value. One is left to wonder about the actual regional benefits of a return gift such as the *shukubō* in a temple made famous through a television program: the risk of the *furusato nōzei* system, as Anthony Rausch (2017) has compellingly argued, is that the taxpayer may be more inclined to think in terms of individual reward and select the gift on the basis of its subjective attractiveness than to make an informed choice which takes into account the real needs of that specific region.

Besides the paradoxes within the *furusato nōzei* system, national concerns about the decline of regional communities and of the Japanese countryside are a relevant element in *Yamato Amadera shōjin nikki*. The program offers its audience educational values and inspiration by portraying as daily rituals the everyday (cooking) activities of Buddhist nuns immersed in the rural landscape and enhancing their knowledge about local seasonal vegetables and vegetarian recipes. This way, *shōjin ryōri*, historically associated with ceremonial banquets

17 *Yamato amadera shōjin nikki* (Tōkyō: NHK shuppan, 2020), 2–3.

18 See: <https://www.furusato-tax.jp/product/detail/29206/4653169> (2021-01-09).

19 After the Tōhoku triple disaster in 2011, for example, many taxpayers chose to donate part of their residence tax to disaster relief.

held in the capital or in early modern urban contexts, is promoted as a different type of slow, yet hard-working, life, one that, however, people at large can only experience occasionally. In the interplay between global, national and local policies related to sustainability, edible identities and food security, Kannonji cuisine is branded as a "spiritual" and rural declination of *washoku*, endowed with the potential for attaining better health of both body and mind.

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# 作品集『壁』における食の表象 − 安部公房はその文学に食をどう描いたか

# Representation of food in the collection of works *Kabe*: How Abe Kōbō wrote about food in the literature[1]

Yūki Sasaki

**Abstract:** This paper aims to examine the way "food" is depicted in "Kabe (The Wall)" (1951) written by Abe Kōbō. "Kabe" is Abe's first collection of works, and it consists of three parts: "S.Karuma-shi no Hanzai (The Crime of S. Karma)" (1951), "Akai Mayu (The Red Cocoon)" (1950), and six other works. Based on discussions in previous studies, I first aimed to clarify where Abe's "consistent intention" in his "Postscript" can be found from the perspective of quantitative text analysis using KH Coder. Then, I chose "food" as one of the indicators to support the worldbuilding and the actions of the characters in the work. I pointed out that the variety of both food and drink is limited, also there are no significant descriptions of taste, and that it can be inferred that what people eat is divided according to their positions in the story. In "Kabe", the description of "food" is used as a trigger for the characters to move on to the next action.

**Keyword**: Abe Kōbō, "Kabe", quantitative text analysis

**要旨:** 本稿では、安部公房　『壁』(月曜書房、1951) を取り上げ、その「食」の描かれかたを考察する。『壁』は安部にとって最初の作品集である。三部構成をとり、「S・カルマ氏の犯罪」(『近代文学』[1951・3]、第25回芥川賞受賞作品)、「赤い繭」(『人間』[1950・12]、第2回戦後文学賞受賞作品) など6作を収める。安部は、この作品集の「あとがき」で、「この三篇は、三部作と断ってありますとおり、だいたい一貫した意図によって書かれたものです」と記す。本稿では先行研究での議論を踏まえつつ、まずは、安部が「あとがき」に示す「一貫した意図」がどこにみられるか、KH Coderを用い、計量テキスト分析の観点から明らかにすることを目指した。その上で、作品世界や作中人物の行動を支える一つの指標として「食事」を取り上げた。食べ物、飲み物いずれにおいても種類が限られていること、味覚に関わる目立った描写がないこと、作中人物の立場によって口にするものが分けられていると推測できることなどを指摘した。『壁』において、「食」の描写は、作中人物たちが次の行動に移る際のきっかけとして用いられていると考えられる。

**キーワード:** 安部公房、『壁』、計量テキスト分析

## 1. はじめに

本稿では、日本現代文学における「食」の描かれかたについて、安部公房『壁』(月曜書房、1951) から考える。以下、2.では、安部公房の略歴

[1] 今回、安部公房文学の「食」について検討する機会をくださったDiego Cucinelli先生に、この場をお借りして改めて感謝申し上げます。

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および戦後の言論統制を概観し、本稿での論点を述べる。3.では、計量テキスト分析の手法を用い、『壁』の全体を整理した後、「食」に関連する用例をみていく。4.では、『壁』を通して安部が何を目指そうとしたか、それに「食」がどう関わっているか、考えを述べる。

## 2. 安部公房と1950年代

### 2.1 安部公房

安部公房（1924–1993）は、満洲医科大学で栄養学を専攻した父・浅吉と、社会主義運動やプロレタリア文学に関心を寄せていた母・ヨリミの間に、二男二女の長男として、東京で生まれた。翌年、当時の満洲国奉天市（現・中華人民共和国遼寧省瀋陽市）に渡った安部は、高校入学までの大半の時間をそこで過ごす。40年、奉天第二中学校を16歳で修了後、単身上京、旧制成城高等学校理科乙類に入学する。卒業後は、東京帝国大学（現・東京大学）医学部医科に入学、日本の敗戦が近いと聞き知った44年に再び奉天に渡る。46年に引揚げ船により満洲から日本に戻った安部は、高校時代の担任であった阿部六郎（1904–1957）を介し埴谷雄高（1909–1997）に送られた「故郷を失ひて」第1章の『個性』掲載（1948・2）をもって文壇に登場する。本稿で取り上げる『壁』もまた初期に位置づけられる。

安部には、広く知られている作品の一つに『砂の女』（新潮社、1962）があるが、第14回読売文学賞を受賞した後、様々な言語に翻訳され、1968年にはフランス共和国で最優秀外国文学賞を受賞した。それに続き、他の作品も翻訳版が発表される[2]など、国内外に多くの読者を持つことが想像できる。著作集および全集として、『安部公房戯曲全集』（全1巻、新潮社、1970）、『安部公房全作品』（全15巻、新潮社、1972–1973）、『安部公房全集』（全30巻、新潮社、1997–2009）などがある。また、2012年には最初期の短編「天使」が発見され、『新潮』（2012・12）に掲載された後、当該作品を含む初期短編11編からなる『＜霊媒の話より＞題未定 安部公房初期短編集』（2013、新潮社）も編まれた。

### 2.2 『壁』と同時代評、1950年代の安部

次に、作品集『壁』の文献情報を確認していく。この作品集は、「序文」[3]と「あとがき」をのぞき、第一部、第二部、第三部に分かれる。

[2] 『安部公房全集』30（新潮社、2009）所収「被翻訳作品目録」によれば、2008年6月時点で翻訳されている作品は、「作品数75、言語数43、項目数340、雑誌掲載64点、安部公房の著書228点」「共著58点」である。なお、ここには同一出版社による重版は含まれない。

[3] 石川淳（1899-1987）による。

それぞれの表題作は「Ｓ・カルマ氏の犯罪」[4]、「バベルの塔の狸」[5]、「赤い繭」であり、このうち、第三部の「赤い繭」は、「赤い繭」「洪水」「魔法のチョーク」「事業」からなる。それぞれの作品は、『壁』に収められたのとは別に雑誌[6]にも発表されている。表1は、それぞれの作品について、主な作中人物と語り手を整理したものである。

表1

| 部 | 作品名 | 主な作中人物（職業） | 語り手 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 一 | Ｓ・カルマ氏の犯罪 | 「Ｓ・カルマ」（N火災保険・資料課）<br>「Y子」（N火災保険・タイピスト）<br>「名刺」 | 一人称（ぼく） |
| 二 | バベルの塔の狸 | 「アンテン」（貧しい詩人）<br>「とらぬ狸」 | 一人称（ぼく） |
| 三 | 赤い繭 | 「おれ」<br>「女」<br>「彼」 | 一人称（おれ） |
| | 洪水 | 「ある貧しい、しかし誠実な、哲学者」<br>「液体労働者」<br>「大工場主」<br>「政府の高官」<br>「国王や元首たち」 | 非人称 |
| | 魔法のチョーク | 「アルゴン君」（貧しい画家）<br>「イヴ」（ミス・ニッポン） | 非人称（焦点化：アルゴン君） |
| | 事業 | 「私」（すぐれた司祭、食肉加工業） | 一人称（私） |

これらの作品について、曾根博義［編］『文藝時評大系　昭和編II』（全13巻・別巻、ゆまに書房、2008–2009）をもとに、同時代評を整理した（表2）。

一見して、「Ｓ・カルマ氏の犯罪」（第一部）に関する言及が多いこと、次に「赤い繭」（第三部）に関する言及が多いことがわかる。この二作に対する言及回数が多いのは、この二作が文学賞[7]を受賞したことが関わっているだろう。

ここで、1950年前後の日本の状況を確認しておきたい。特に、作家であった安部公房が影響を受けたと考えられる、言論に関する状況をみてい

4 初題「壁—Ｓ・カルマ氏の犯罪—」。1950年3月5日擱筆。

5 1950年5月13日擱筆。

6 初出は以下のとおり。「Ｓ・カルマ氏の犯罪」（『近代文学』1951・2）、「バベルの塔の狸」（『人間』1951・5）、「赤い繭」（『人間』1950・12）、「洪水」（『人間』1950・12）、「魔法のチョーク」（『人間』1950・12）、「事業」（『世紀群』1950・12、奥付なし・推定）。

7 なお、「赤い繭」が受賞した戦後文学賞は、月曜書房が創設した賞である。審査員は、野間宏、椎名麟三、花田清輝、佐々木基一、埴谷雄高。

こう。よく知られているとおり、第二次世界大戦後、日本では言論統制が敷かれた。それを示したのが、表3である。

表2

| | 53 | 52 | | | | | | | | | | | 51 | | 50 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 03 01 | 06 30 | 12 23 | 12 01 | 10 04 | 10 03 | 09 30 | 09 24 | 05 01 | 03 09 | 03 07 | 03 03 | 01 01 | 12 06 | 11 29 |
| 作品名 S・カルマ氏の犯罪 | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | | |
| 作品名 バベルの塔の狸 | | | | | | | | | ● | | | | | | |
| 作品名 赤い繭 | | | | | | ● | | | ● | | | | ● | ● | ● |
| 作品名 洪水 | | | | | | | | | | | | | ● | | |
| 作品名 魔法のチョーク | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 作品名 事業 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 執筆者名 | 河上徹太郎 | 豊田穣 | 青野季吉 | 河上徹太郎他 | 浅見淵 | 豊島与志雄 | 仲郷三郎 | 平田次三郎 | 荒正人 | 本多秋五 | 山本健吉 | 寺田透 | 石上玄一郎他 | 十返肇 | 平田次三郎 |
| 所載誌名 | 東京新聞夕刊 | 中部日本新聞 | 北国新聞 | 文学界 | 東京新聞夕刊 | 朝日新聞 | 神戸新聞 | 図書新聞 | 中京新聞 | 東京タイムズ | 日本読書新聞 | 東京新聞 | 文学界 | 日本読書新聞 | 図書新聞 |

表3

| 事項 | 月日 | 年 | 月日 | 『壁』所収作品 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| GHQ　各報道機関にプレスコード通達<br>（General Headquarters） | 9/19 | 1945 | | |
| CCDによる雑誌検閲（事前検閲）開始<br>（民間検閲局:Civil Censorship Detachment） | 9 | | | |
| CCDによる雑誌検閲（事後検閲）開始<br>※「極右極左」28誌は継続して事前検閲 | 12 | 1947 | | |
| GHQ　事前検閲　中止 | 7 | 1948 | | |
| ほとんどの雑誌が事後検閲の対象に | 8 | | | |
| CCDによる雑誌検閲　廃止 | 10 | 1949 | | |
| | | 1950 | 10 | 事業 |
| | | | 12 | 赤い繭／洪水／魔法のチョーク |
| | | 1951 | 2 | S・カルマ氏の犯罪 |
| | | | 5 | バベルの塔の狸 |
| 1952年までGHQ／SCAPによる日本占領は継続<br>（連合国軍最高司令官総司令部:Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers） | | | | |

戦後の言論統制は、1945年9月、GHQ（General Headquarters）が各報道機関にプレスコードを通達したことから始まった。それをうけ、CCD（Civil Censorship Detachment）が雑誌検閲を始めた。最初は事前検閲であったが、1947年には事後検閲に切り替わった。1948年にGHQが事前検閲を中止したことにより、ほとんどの雑誌が事後検閲の対象になった。その後、49年にはCCDによる雑誌検閲は廃止された。ただし、1952年までGHQ／SCAP（Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers）による日本占領は継続した。『壁』に収められる作品はすべて、この間の時期に擱筆し[8]発表されたわけだが、安部は、検閲を警戒していた可能性[9]もある。

### 2.3 問題の所在

さて、『壁』の「あとがき」には、次のように書かれている。

> この三篇は、三部作と断ってありますとおり、だいたい一貫した意図によって書かれたものです。壁というのはその方法論にほかなりません。壁がいかに人間を絶望させるかというより、壁がいかに人間の精神のよき運動となり、人間を健康な笑いにさそうかということを示すのが目的でした。しかしこれを書いてから、壁にも階級があることを、そしてこの壁があまりにも小市民的でありすぎたことを思い、いささか悔まずにはいられませんでした。

2.2で挙げたとおり、『壁』に収められた作品は、作品集に収められる以前に雑誌に掲載されており、先行研究の多くは個別作品の考察である。本稿では、それぞれの作品が作品集『壁』としてまとめられた意味、つまり、「三部作」としての『壁』が「一貫した意図によって書かれたもの」であるとする理由、しかしながら、「壁にも階級があることを、そしてこの壁があまりにも小市民的でありすぎたこと」に気づいたというのはどこに現れるかをみていきたいと考えている。本稿では、「食」への着目を通して、食にまつわる描写が『壁』の各作品にどう現れ、それがどういう効果をもたらしているか、ということを考えたい。

[8] 「S・カルマ氏の犯罪」について、安部は「ひどく不遇な作品だった。書きあげてから半年だったか一年だったか、ほとんど全部の雑誌社を転々としたあげく、どうにか近代文学にひろってもらった。つまりそれだけ型破りで、新しかったわけである」と述懐している。「「壁」の空想力」『読売新聞』（1954・11・15）朝刊8面。

[9] 安部の生前未発表作品の一つに「保護色」（1951・5）がある。『安部公房全集』3（新潮社、1997）所収。安部は自身が作品集のあとがきを書き終えた後、石川淳に序文の礼を書簡（1951・5・19）に認めている。安部は雑誌『群像』への掲載を望んだが、それは叶わなかった。この経緯については、拙稿「安部公房「保護色」の素材と方法―シュルレアリスムとマルクス主義理論の実践として―」『京都大学国際交流センター論攷』（2016・2）1-19頁で論じた。「保護色」以降に発表された作品では、ギリシア・ローマ神話やイソップ寓話に材を取ったものが増える。「保護色」が雑誌に掲載されなかったことが、作家活動に関する新たな方法を見出す機会となったと考えている。

## 3. 計量テキスト分析による結果・考察

### 3.1 『壁』のテキストの特徴をみる

分析にはKH Coder[10]を用いた。今回の分析にあたり、いくつかの手順を踏んだ。具体的な手順は以下のとおりである。

① データをテキストファイル[11]にする。
② KH Coderで、「前処理」→「複合語の検出」→「茶筌を利用」で解析。
③ ②の結果をもとに、元のファイルに処理を行う。
A）「・」「＝」「＋」「×」を読点に置換。
B）「？」「！」を句点に置換。
C）「……」「――」を削除。
D）数式を「X」に置換。
E）算用数字をすべて全角に置換。
④ KH Coderで、②の手順で再解析。

まずは、『壁』の作品全体をみておきたい。最初に確認するのは、文の長さである。KH Coderの「文書の単純集計」をもとに、各作品について、文の長さの平均をとった（表4）。

表4

| 部 | 作品名 | 文の長さの平均 |
|---|---|---|
| 一 | S・カルマ氏の犯罪 | 16.2　(47009字/2910文) |
| 二 | バベルの塔の狸 | 16.5　(24925字/1507文) |
| 三 | 赤い繭 | 15.9　(1647字/103文) |
| | 洪水 | 24.6　(2459字/100文) |
| | 魔法のチョーク | 13.5　(6374字/472文) |
| | 事業 | 22.5　(2996字/133文) |

これら、『壁』に収められた各作品の文は相対的に長いのか、あるいは短いのか、他の日本近現代文学作家による作品と比較してみよう。前川（1995）[12]には、夏目漱石、川端康成、太宰治らの作品が並ぶ（表5）。

[10] 計量テキスト分析を行うソフトウェアである。URLはhttps://khcoder.net/。製作者の樋口耕一氏（立命館大学）の名前の頭文字から命名されている。計量テキスト分析について、樋口（2020）は、「計量的分析手法を用いてテキスト型データを整理または分析し、内容分析（content analysis）を行う方法である」と定義する。

[11] Excelを用いた。一番上の行に「テキスト」「部」「章」を記し、テキストは一段落を一つのセルにまとめる。

[12] 前川守『1000万人のコンピュータ科学〈3〉文学編　文章を科学する』（岩波書店、1995）8頁。

『壁』と発表年が近い作品としては、太宰治の「斜陽」や「人間失格」がある。前川が分析した作品のうち、文の長さの平均がもっとも短いのは、志賀直哉「暗夜行路」の25.6である。一方、『壁』において、文の長さの平均がもっとも短い作品は「魔法のチョーク」で13.5、もっとも長い「洪水」でも24.6であり、『壁』に収められる作品は文の長さが極めて短いことがわかる。[13]

表5

| 作家 | 作品（発表年） | 文の長さの平均 |
|---|---|---|
| 夏目漱石 | 吾輩は猫である (1905) | 29.8 |
| 夏目漱石 | 坊っちゃん (1906) | 30.9 |
| 志賀直哉 | 城の崎にて (1917) | 28.8 |
| 志賀直哉 | 暗夜行路 (1921) | 25.6 |
| 川端康成 | 伊豆の踊子 (1926) | 30.2 |
| 川端康成 | 雪国 (1935) | 55.5 |
| 谷崎潤一郎 | 細雪 (1943) | 170.1 |
| 太宰治 | 斜陽 (1947) | 71.4 |
| 太宰治 | 人間失格 (1948) | 48.7 |
| 井上靖 | 楼蘭 (1958) | 47.8 |
| 大江健三郎 | 万延元年のフットボール (1967) | 43.0 |
| 村上春樹 | 羊をめぐる冒険 (1982) | 36.7 |
| 吉本ばなな | キッチン (1987) | 35.7 |
| 吉本ばなな | うたかた (1988) | 41.2 |
| 村上龍 | 五分後の世界 (1994) | 46.2 |

### 3.1.1　『壁』において多く用いられていることば

次に示すのは、『壁』全体で頻出していると考えられる語彙である（表6）。多い順に60の語を示し、作中人物名を表す語には網掛けを施した。

表6

| 抽出語 | 出現数 | 抽出語 | 出現数 | 抽出語 | 出現数 | 抽出語 | 出現数 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ぼく | 748 | 目 | 97 | 被告 | 77 | 胸 | 60 |
| 言う | 365 | 分る | 95 | パパ | 75 | 自分 | 60 |
| 思う | 233 | 考える | 92 | 出る | 72 | 部屋 | 60 |
| 見る | 161 | 人間 | 91 | 知る | 72 | 一つ | 57 |
| Y子 | 142 | ドクトル | 89 | 行く | 69 | 上る | 55 |
| 声 | 137 | 手 | 89 | 目玉 | 69 | 聞く | 55 |
| おれ | 120 | 前 | 83 | ドア | 67 | 立つ | 55 |
| 壁 | 120 | 名刺 | 81 | ユルバン | 67 | 音 | 54 |
| 顔 | 106 | 見える | 80 | 影 | 67 | 眼 | 54 |
| 狸 | 98 | 名前 | 78 | 教授 | 60 | 証人 | 52 |

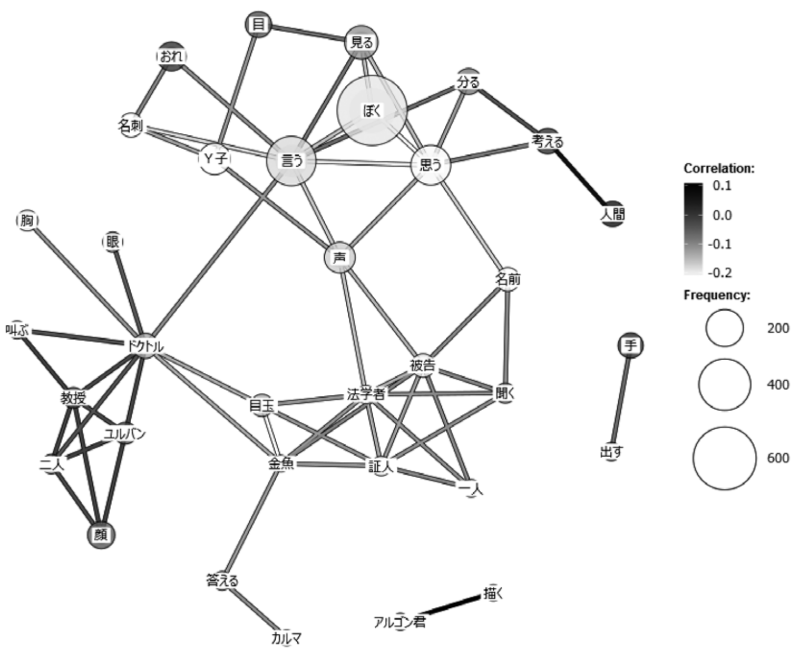
13　ただし、前川の調査で示される文学作品のほとんどは、中長編であり、純粋に比較できるものではないことは注意すべきである。

作中人物の名前の他に、「言う」「思う」「見る」「分る」「考える」といった動詞が多く使われていることがわかる。それぞれの動詞がどういうことばとともに使われているか、3.1.2でみてみよう。

### 3.1.2 『壁』における頻出語の共起関係

次に、『壁』において出現パターンが互いに近い語彙はどういうものだったかをみていくため、共起ネットワークを作成した（図1）。

図1




線の色の濃さは、相関性（Correlation）の強さを意味し、また円の大きさは、頻度（Frequency）の高さを表す。この図から、例えば、「ぼく」ということばは「言う」「思う」「見る」「分る」と一緒によく使われていることがわかる。

### 3.1.3 『壁』それぞれの部において特徴的なことば

次に、『壁』それぞれの部において高い確率で現れた語彙をまとめた（表7）。先ほどと同じく、作中人物をあらわす語彙には網かけを施した。これらは、データ全体に対して、それぞれの部において特に高い確率で出現している語彙である。

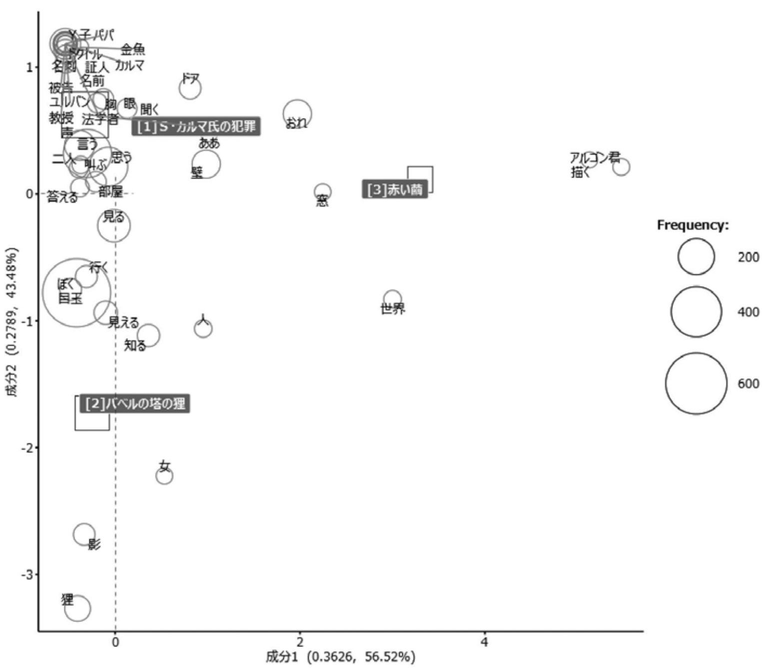
表7

| S・カルマ氏の犯罪 | | バベルの塔の狸 | | 赤い繭 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 言う | .093 | ぼく | .164 | おれ | .056 |
| 思う | .055 | 狸 | .062 | アルゴン君 | .048 |
| Y子 | .042 | 影 | .035 | イヴ | .033 |
| 声 | .035 | 見る | .030 | 壁 | .033 |
| 見る | .031 | 見える | .021 | 描く | .032 |
| ドクトル | .030 | 知る | .021 | 世界 | .030 |
| 名刺 | .026 | 目 | .021 | 家 | .024 |
| パパ | .025 | 考える | .020 | チョーク | .022 |
| 名前 | .023 | 人間 | .020 | 手 | .020 |
| 被告 | .023 | バベルの塔 | .019 | 事業 | .019 |

数値はJaccardの類似性測度

第一部では「言う」「思う」が、第二部では「ぼく」「狸」が、第三部では「おれ」「アルゴン君」「イヴ」がそれぞれの部を特徴づける語彙といえる。続けて、三部それぞれの部分に特徴的な語彙を調べるため、対応分析を行った（図2）。

図2



対応分析では、どの部分にも偏りなく現れる語彙は、原点（0,0）の近くに出てくる。例えば、「部屋」「思う」「答える」「叫ぶ」「二人」「壁」などがそれにあたる。偏りなく現れるというのは、つまり、それぞれの部を特徴づける語彙ではない、ということを意味する。[14]それに対して、原点からみて例えば、「アルゴン君」や「描く」などは原点から遠く離れており、第三部「赤い繭」に特有の特徴的な語彙だといえる。

### 3.2 『壁』にみられる「食べる」こと「飲む」ことの描写

ここからは、内容に注目して分析を進めていこう。まずは、作中で描かれる食べ物に関して、出現数の多い上位10種を表8に示した。

表8

| 抽出語 | 出現数 | 抽出語 | 出現数 |
|---|---|---|---|
| コーヒー | 18 | 水 | 5 |
| パン | 14 | 茶 | 4 |
| 肉 | 13 | ウィスキー | 2 |
| リンゴ | 10 | 塩豆 | 2 |
| バター | 9 | チーズ | 2 |

以下、KH CoderのKWIC[15]コンコーダンスを用い、作中での「食べる」「飲む」の描かれかたをみていく。

#### 3.2.1 第一部「S・カルマ氏の犯罪」

第一部「S・カルマ氏の犯罪」には、「食べる」が六例、「飲む」が四例ある。すべて語り手「ぼく」が口にするものであり、「スープ」「パン」「塩豆」「水」「お茶」が挙げられる。「カメレオンの涙」とは、過マンガン酸カリウム水溶液[16]のことか。

14　これらから、「一貫した意図」に関して新たな着眼点を見出すことができるかもしれない。別稿を設けたい。

15　Key Words In Contextの頭文字。

16　Japan Knowledge Lib参照。「漂白、殺菌剤などに用いる」。https://japanknowledge.com/lib/search/basic/?q1=%E3%82%AB%E3%83%A1%E3%83%AC%E3%82%AA%E3%83%B3%E6%B6%B2（2021年4月1日閲覧）
第二部「バベルの塔の狸」には、「カメレオン水、すなわち過マンガン酸カリ液に人間の目玉をひたし、火であぶって生きながらの乾燥目玉をつくることを思いついた。カメレオン水の効用を、うがい薬だけなどと考えている人間は浅はかなものさ」とある。

| 前接 | | 後接 |
|---|---|---|
| 空腹のせいかもしれないと思って、食堂に行き、（そうでなくても行ったのでしょうが、）スープ二杯とパン一斤半を | 食べ | ました。数量までわざわざ書いたのは、むろんそれがぼくの普通量でないことを明示するためです。 |
| ところがそうしている間にも、その変なことはいよいよ変になり、胸はますますからっぽになって行くので、ぼくはそれ以上 | 食べる | のをやめました。<br>おなかはとっくに一杯になっているのでしたから。 |
| 数学者がまた怒鳴りました。「それで被告がどうした。」／「被告は今朝わたしの店にきてパンを | 食べ | ました。」「それで。」 |
| 「それで。」「被告はパンを | 食べ | てしまいました。」「盗んだのだな。」と法学者が上ずった声で言いました。「いいえ。」と少女はびっくりして言いました。 |
| しばらくうとうとして、時計を見ると十一時半でした。名刺はまだ帰っていませんでした。／塩豆をひとつかみ | 食べ | て、水を飲むと、急に睡たくなりました。着替えをすませ、今度は本格的にベッドにもぐりこみました。 |
| 塩豆をひとつかみ食べて、水を | 飲む | と、急に睡たくなりました。 |
| 大きなあくびを両手の中にうずめ、顔を上げるともう外が明るくなっていました。昨夜の残りの塩豆を | 食べ | 、水を飲むと、<br>急に心がふさぎ、悲しくなりました。 |
| 昨夜の残りの塩豆を食べ、水を | 飲む | と、急に心がふさぎ、<br>悲しくなりました。 |
| 異様な物音が、ぼくのすぐわきで起り、それが実になんとも形容しがたい音なので、ぎょっとして顔を上げると、白い球状の金属が上に向いた管状の口から白い蒸気をはき、激しく身をふるわせているのでした。／それは電熱器にかけたやかんで、いつのまにかぼくはまた部屋にいるのでした。／そんなに | おいしい | と思ったことがないほど、<br>おいしいお茶でした。 |
| 水道の管に口をつけて、胃に重味を感ずるほど | 飲み | ました。時計を見ると、やはり十二時を指していました。 |
| 瓶には「カメレオンの涙」と書いてありました。／一寸口をつけてみましたが、どうも | 飲む | 気にはなれませんでした。 |

この他、語り手「ぼく」が「小麦粉をフライパンにかける」[17]場面が描かれる。ただし、「ぼく」がそれを口にすることはない。

17　中国料理の一つ「餅」（饼bǐng）の可能性もある。佐藤美智子・小原楓『満洲料理法　一品料理の部』（初版は満洲事情案内所、1942、披見本は大空社出版、2020）189頁に「餅」の項目があり、安部も幼少期を過ごした旧満洲で食べていたか。
材料／メリケン粉コツプ五杯／方法／１　メリケン粉を水でねる、麺棒で延ばし生粉をふる、その上にラードを少し引いて生粉を又その上に少しふる／２　それをくる／＼巻いて四糎位の長さに庖丁で切る／３　それを押つぶし麺棒で平にのばす、直径八―一〇糎位／４　ラードを鍋に引き、火にかけて両面を焼く

ぼくは鼻をすすりながら小麦粉をフライパンにかけて焼きました。／丁度焼け終ったとき、誰かドアをノックするものがありました。はっきり理由は分りませんでしたが、何かしら理由を感じて、ぼくは返事をせずにドアをにらみつけました。／しかしその誰かは、返事を待たずに勝手に入ってきてしまいました。田舎にいるはずのパパでした。／〔略〕／「パパ、どうしたらいいでしょう？」パパは静かに顔をあげ、ぼくを見ました。それからゆっくりと言いました。「それは何んだ？」小麦粉が真黒に焦げて煙をはいているのでした。ぼくは慌ててスイッチを切り、「ぼくの朝食です。」パパは実は小麦粉のことなんかどうでもよかったらしく、うなずきもせずに妙なことを言いだすのでした。「おまえは、ここを、どこだと思う？」「ぼくの部屋です。」

### 3.2.2 第二部「バベルの塔の狸」

第二部「バベルの塔の狸」には、「食べる」「飲む」いずれも用例なし。ただし、語り手「ぼく」が「K. Anten's coffin／（K・アンテンの柩）」を「K. Anten's coffee」と「読みちがえ」た場面が描かれる。

コーヒー？ぼくのコーヒーだって？／ぼくは驚いてしまいました。いったい何んだっていうんだろう。随分沢山なコーヒーだ。ざっと見積っても五百ポンド、時価で四十万円、大変なものだ。だが、それをどうしようっていうんだろう？影を喰った代償にとでもいうつもりなのだろうか？いくらなんでも、それはあんまりだよ。たとえ、世界中のコーヒーを集めてきたって、コーヒーはコーヒーにすぎない。／〔略〕／が、次の瞬間、ぼくは箱の文字をひどく読みちがえていたのに気づきました。最後の二字はeeではなくinなのでした。

### 3.2.3 第三部「赤い繭」

第一作「赤い繭」には、「食べる」「飲む」いずれも用例なし。

第二作「洪水」には、「飲む」が二例ある。「大工場主」が口にするものとして「コーヒー」「ウィスキー」、また、「ある政府の高官」が口にするものとして「水」が挙げられる。

| 前接 | | 後接 |
|---|---|---|
| ある朝、ある大工場主が、コーヒーを | 飲も | うとして唇をつけた瞬間、そのたった一杯のコーヒーに溺れたり、グラス一杯のウィスキーに溺れたり、 |
| ある政府の高官などはこう告白している。『私は水を | 飲む | とき、コップの中の水を見て、それがもはや水であるとは思えない。 |

第三作「魔法のチョーク」には、「アルゴン君」が口にするものとして「パン」「リンゴ」「バター」「砂糖」「水」「米らしいもの」「弁当」「コーヒー」「ウィスキー」「チーズ」が挙げられる。「アルゴン君」はチョークを使い、壁に「野球のグローブのようなジャムパン」「バター入

りのロールパン」「大人の頭ほどもある食パン」「煉瓦ほどもあるバターの塊」「コーヒー」「マッチ箱ほどの角砂糖三つ」を描き、次の日には「パンとバターと、サージンのかん詰と、それにコーヒー」を描く。この他に、「アルゴン君」が想像する食べ物として「肉屋で揚げている豚肉」「下のおかみさんが焼いている魚、多分鯖」「パン菓子」「かん詰」「ミルク」「牛肉」が描かれる。なお、「魔法のチョーク」においてもっとも多く現れるのは「コーヒー」であり、七回に上る。

| 前接 | | 後接 |
|---|---|---|
| そら、パンの肌をすべってゆくこの指の感触。思いきって、この | 舌ざわり | 。—アルゴン君、これでも信じられないというのか? |
| リンゴはリンゴの味(これは雪リンゴだ)。パンはパンの味(アメリカの味だ)。バターはバターの味(包紙のレッテルと同じ中味。マーガリンではない)、砂糖は砂糖の味(甘い)。ああ、全部本物の味だ。ナイフは光っていて、顔がうつる。/気がつくと、いつの間にか | 食べ | おわっていて、アルゴン君はほっとした。しかし何故ほっとしたのか、その理由を想い出すと、急にまたあわてだした。例の赤いチョークを手にとって、しげしげと観察する。 |
| 共同水道で、掌にうけた水をたてつづけに一リットルも | 飲む | と、まだもやにつつまれて明けきらぬ寂しい街に出た。 |
| 食堂の炊事場から流れ出している下水の上に身をとどめ、ねばねばしたタール様の汚水に手をつっこみ、何やら引出した。籠になった金網だった。それを近くの小川で洗うと、 | 食べ | られそうなものが残った。とりわけ、米らしいものがその半分を占めているのが心強かった。そこに金網をしかけておくと、一日で一回分の食物にありつけることを、最近彼はアパートの老人から聞き知ったのだった。老人は、丁度ひと月ほど前から、その分だけおから[18]が買える身分になったので、食堂の下水を彼にゆずってくれたのだった。 |

[18] 「生活と芸術に体当り　愛の『巣箱』の新進作家」『サン写真新聞』(1951・4・25)2-3面には、安部公房と妻・眞知子への取材が掲載されている。ここに、「食うや食わず」の生活が続き、「オカラ」を食べていたという眞知子のことばが確認できる。

『東大の医学部を卒業するころ　医者にはなるまいと決心したんです』　長髪をかきあげながら　第2回戦後文学賞に輝く27歳の安倍公房君はいう　昭和23年『終りし道の標』以来　特異な筆体で書き続けて来た努力が実を結び　近作の寓話『赤い繭』(雑誌人間)が　今回の受賞作品となったもの　結婚生活既に4年　美術学校出身の婦人真知子さん(24)は『2　3年は食うや食わずでした　薪を拾い　オカラにショーユの日が幾日も………』と苦しくも堪えてきた2人の貧乏物語を続ける　『でもこの人のためには　かえってよかったと思います　少くとも観念的でなくなりましたから』　公房君は素直にうなずく　幾度か間借を追われたあげく　ここ文京区茗荷谷　猪野毛さんの好意で　物置半分を借り受けたのが去年の10月　床も壁も　すべてが2人の手で作られた　冬の夜　隙間もる粉雪が　原稿用紙をぬらしたこともあったが　新しい生活への喜びは　3坪半の小屋を忽ち愛の『巣箱』に変えてしまった『装飾的なマチスより　生命感のあふれるピカソの方が好きです』と真知子さん　『僕は古代や中世に憧れるんですよもっと社会性のある芸術をというのが念願ですね』と公房君

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 昨日の御馳走を想い出すと、これはまたなんて泥臭く、まずいことだろう。だが、魔法ではなく、実際に腹の足しになるということはかけがえもなく大事なことであったから、拒むことができない。喉の動きを一口ごとに意識しなければならぬほどまずくても、 | 食べ | なくてはならぬのだ。くそ、これが現実というやつさ。 |
| アルゴン君はこわばった無表情でうなずき、いつものように弁当を | 分け | てもらい、自動的に深く頭を下げたまま外に出た。 |
| さらに途中の古本屋で目にとまった料理全集を一冊。余った金でコーヒーを | 飲ん | だ。そのコーヒーは、壁から描き出したコーヒーとくらべて、いささかもすぐれた点があるとは思えなかった。 |
| まあ、たのしみは先にとっておいたほうが賢明と、ウィスキーとチーズを描いて、ちびちび | やり | ながらゆっくり考えることにした。 |

第四作「事業」は、事業家「私」が、「人口過剰」を「合理的」に解決する方法として「食用を目的とする殺人の合法化」を目指すとともに、「人肉ソーセージ」を作るための機械「ユートピヤ」の申請書「作制」のために、「彼の中の彼」に相談するという内容である。[19]ここでは、「食べる」「飲む」いずれも用例はないが、「人肉」に関する記述がみられる。

| 前接 | | 後接 |
|---|---|---|
| さて、私の新しい事業がいかなるものであるか、賢明なる貴下にはすでにお気付きのことであろう。いかにも、そのとおり、一言にして言えば、蛋白源を鼠肉から、より豊富で採取に便利な、しかも一段と | 口当り | のいい人肉に切替えたわけである。 |
| ねがわくは、近い御来訪をお待ちする。心からの歓迎が貴下をお迎えするであろう。当日のメニューには、腹にバターと香料をつめ、蜜につけた六ヶ月の胎児（食べごろである。とりわけ軟骨の | 歯ざわり | は格別である。）の丸焼が、特に附け加えられ、用意されるであろうことを、お誘いの言葉として申しそえておく次第である。 |

　　たくましく　そしておおらかに芸術に生きぬく若い力を　今日も晩春の陽光が包んでいる　庭の焼跡に残った1本の若木も　相寄る魂の成長を見守っているようだ………（原文ママ）

公房と眞知子は47年4月に結婚。この新聞記事には、安部夫婦の家が茗荷谷にあることが書かれているが、48年1月までは仮住まい先を転々とする生活を送っており、48年1月から50年10月までは、画家・板倉賛治宅に間借りしていた。眞知とも名乗った安部眞知子は、安部作品の装幀、挿絵を手がけることもあった。例えば、「魔法のチョーク」『世紀群』（1950・12、奥付なし・推定、広島大学中央図書館佐々木基一記念文庫で確認、請求番号：ササキ/5772）の扉も眞知が担当。

19 ロシア文学にソーセージがモチーフとなる『羨望』（Olesha, I͡Uriĭ Karlovich作、原題 *Зависть*、1927）がある。「事業」とのつながりはあるか。

### 3.3 同時代との関連性

『壁』それぞれの作品において、作中人物たちはなぜ食べるのか。それは、空腹を満たすため、栄養補給のため、すなわち生理的欲求を満たすためである。食に楽しみを見出しているものは、第三部の後半二作「魔法のチョーク」の「アルゴン君」および、「事業」の「私」の各一例のみである。

それに対し、飲み物は、どうだろうか。『壁』において作中人物たちが飲むもの、それは大きく分けて三つ、すなわち、水、コーヒー、ウィスキーである。このうち、コーヒーとウィスキーは、嗜好品といえるものである。特に、コーヒーは、『壁』全体を通して、一八回現れる。なぜコーヒーが描かれるのか、1950年前後の新聞記事を参照しつつ、同時代の状況をみていこう。まず、1948年の『読売新聞』の記事[20]を引用する。ここには、「輸入コーヒー」を希望する「一般家庭」に「配給する」ということが書かれる。

> 農林省は近く六大都市および広島、福岡、札幌の三都市の一般家庭に輸入コーヒーを年内に希望配給する、数量は一世帯当り四分の一ポンド（約五十円）配給方法は食料品公団を通じかん詰登録店から購入

次の1950年の『朝日新聞』の記事[21]には、「戦後初めて」「コーヒーが輸入され」ることが書かれ、広く味わえるようになることへの期待がみられる。

> 戦後初めてインドネシア、中南米から香り高いコーヒーが輸入される、通産省で三十日発表した日本・インドネシア通商協定やさきに発表された日伯通商協定中にふくまれているもので、通産省ではコーヒーその他で年間約一千トン程度輸入したいといつている、コーヒーの第一船はおそくも八月中旬には入港するという、このコーヒーが入れば一般家庭はもちろん喫茶店などで本場のジャワ、ブラジルコーヒーが現在の市価の半値ぐらいで味えるようになる

上の『朝日新聞』と同日に発行された『読売新聞』の記事[22]では価格の目安が確認できる。[23]

> 卅日正式調印された対インドネシアとの通商協定によりヤシ油、生ゴム、マンガン鉱などとともに待望のコーヒー、ココア豆が年間一千トン前後輸入されることになったが、さしあたり七月—九月間に二三

[20] 「配給　輸入コーヒー」『読売新聞』（1948・11・5）朝刊3面。

[21] 「お待かね、輸入コーヒー　ジャワから来月中旬には第一船」『朝日新聞』（1950・7・1）朝刊3面。

[22] 「珈琲党に朗報」『読売新聞』（1950・7・1）朝刊2面。

[23] 「バベルの塔の狸」（1950・5・13擱筆）にはコーヒーが「五百ポンド、時価で四十万円」という記述がある。作品の記述を信用するなら、この二か月で価格が急激に変動したと考えられる。裏を返せば、戦後から1950年7月までの日本において、嗜好品としてのコーヒーの価値は極めて高かったといえるのではないだろうか。

> 百トンは入荷する見込みで、お値段もポンド七、八十セント（二百五十円―二百九十円）見当で喫茶店の一ぱい五、六十円のコーヒーも半値近くになるだろうとは通産省市場三課の見通し

併せて、ウィスキーもみておこう。次の引用は、『朝日新聞』の記事[24]であり、ここにウィスキーに関する記述がある。

> ウィスキー　いわゆる雑酒類は四月からすべて統制を外された。麦芽から蒸留した本物を三年以上タルで貯蔵したものをわずか含む一級品、銘柄指定のサントリー、ニッカ、トミー、モルト、キングなどが七二〇cc一三五〇円もするのに、最近本物三割以上のレア・オールドと称する特級品が一本千八百円でお目見得した。酒場ではハイボール百円、レア・オールドが百三十円。酒の広告が新聞に現れるようになったのも、質の向上を目指す自由競争の現れだが、とにかく高い。

記事の一行目に「統制を外された」という表現がみえる。戦後しばらくは言論だけでなく食料品にも統制があった。表9には、主な食料品の統制撤廃の時期を示した。

表9

| 事項 | 月日 | 年 | 月日 | 『壁』所収作品 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 野菜・魚※価格急騰により翌年3月再統制 | 11 | 1945 | | |
| 果実 | 10 | 1947 | | |
| 酒類 | 12 | | | |
| 野菜 | 4 | 1949 | | |
| | | 1950 | 3 | S・カルマ氏の犯罪（擱筆） |
| 魚 | 4 | | | |
| パンなど米以外の主食品 | 5 | | 5 | バベルの塔の狸（擱筆） |
| 調味料（みそ・しょうゆなど）<br>コーヒーの輸入再開 | 7 | | | |
| | | | 10 | 事業 |
| | | | 12 | 赤い繭／洪水／魔法のチョーク |
| | | 1951 | 2 | S・カルマ氏の犯罪 |
| 雑穀（米・麦以外の穀物） | 3 | | | |
| | | | 5 | バベルの塔の狸 |
| 砂糖 | 4 | 1952 | | |

## 4. おわりに　今後の展望

3.3 で、『壁』の作中人物たちは、生理的欲求を満たすために食事をしているのではないかと述べた。『壁』では、いわゆる基本五味[25]とよばれ

[24] 「戦後酒の生態」『朝日新聞』（1950・6・15）朝刊4面。

[25] 「甘味」「酸味」「塩味」「苦味」「うま味」の五つ。野林厚志［編］『世界の食文化百科事典』（丸善出版、2021）524頁。

るものが描かれることはほぼなく、また、食事を楽しむ場面が描かれることもない。一方で、食べ物の描写には、因果関係を示す表現[26]が共起している用例がみられ、食べ物を描くことは、食べ物そのものというより、次の動作を導く役割を付与するためであるとも考えられる。

それと同時に、同時代評の中に「乾いた文体」[27]をしているというものも確認できるが、即物的ともいえる表現になっているのは、当時安部が強い関心を寄せていた実存主義の影響があるとも考えられるが、それでも『壁』において「食事」は描かれるのはなぜか。その理由を考えたとき、食べ物や飲み物によって作中人物の属性、性格を規定しようとしたのではないかとも考えられる。例えば、飲み物の中で最も多く登場する「コーヒー」についても、それを飲むのは、「大工場主」（「洪水」）であり、この人物は雇用者である。一方で、雇用者以外が「コーヒー」を口にする場面は描かれない。[28]つまり、安部は飲み物によって階級の違いを表現しようとしたのではないか。しかしながら、それを明確にするためには、飲み物の種類を限定する必要があり、それが「小市民」（『壁』「あとがき」）、つまり、「資本家と労働者の中間に属する人」[29]のような人物像に集約されることにつながってしまったのではないか。安部自身、『壁』の文体、特に第一部「Ｓ・カルマ氏の犯罪」の文体には意識的であった[30]

[26] 例えば、「昨夜の残りの塩豆を食べ、水を飲むと、急に心がふさぎ、悲しくなりました。」（「S・カルマ氏の犯罪」）、「共同水道で、掌にうけた水をたてつづけに一リットルも飲むと、まだもやにつつまれて明けきらぬ寂しい街に出た。」（「魔法のチョーク」）などがそれに該当するといえよう。

[27] 河上徹太郎・河森好蔵・中村光夫・山本健吉「座談会　今年の小説の収穫は何か」『文学界』（1951・12）内、山本健吉の言。

[28] 雇用者でない作中人物のうち、「コーヒー」を飲んでいたのは、「貧しい画家」である「アルゴン君」（「魔法のチョーク」）である。ただし、彼が飲んでいた「コーヒー」は、壁に描き出した「コーヒー」であり、壁に描き出した金で得た「コーヒー」であった。

[29] Japan Knowledge Lib参照。https://japanknowledge.com/lib/search/basic/index.html?q1=%E5%B0%8F%E5%B8%82%E6%B0%91（2021年4月1日閲覧）

[30] 安部公房「私の文章」『言語生活』49（1955・10）56-58頁。後、「S・カルマ氏の素姓」と改題され、『猛獣の心に計算器の手を』（平凡社、1957）に所収。

> あのころ私はしきりとナンセンスな文章を書くように努力していた。私の文章—S・カルマ氏の犯罪の—を分析してくださった市川〔孝〕氏が、説明的であり、蔓衍体であると指摘した部分などは、むしろその意識的な工夫である。これが意識的であることは、私の他の作品と比較してㅁいただけば分かることと思う。／〔略〕／「ので」「から」等の接続助詞の多出も、同様に理屈よりはぎごちないものだ。関節の単純さのために、すべての行動をたやすく予見でき、予見できすぎることによってかえって謎めいてくる、あのマリオネットのとぼけたおかしさに近いものだ。あるいは即物性から飛躍できない、子供の「理由さがし」のこっけいさに似たものだ。

空腹のせいかもしれないと思って、食堂に行き……（イ）

（そうでなくても行ったのでしょうが）……（ロ）

の関係について、いま少し立入ってみれば、この主人公の発想が、単に（イ）と（ロ）が反復であるだけでなく、（イ）自身の中に、（ロ）が出てくる必然性をすでに内包していたのだということが分かる。彼はまず自分の空虚感に不安を感じ、その理由をさがそうと努力する。そこで空腹のせいかもしれないと思って、食堂に行くのだが、本当に

ようであるが、文体を実験しようという考えがかえって、限界を『壁』に与えてしまったのではないか。

安部が、「多様な文体や方法上の実験を試み」たというのは、本多秋五[31]のことばであった。後年、安部は『壁』に「強い愛着を感じて」おり、「思いだすたびに、自分の空想力の豊富さに、われながら感嘆する」[32]と語っている。しかしながら、これまでの研究では、多様な文体というのはあくまで印象にとどまっており、それがどのように変わったのかは明らかにされていない。安部が作中で使った語彙や表現を計量的にみていくことで、具体的にどのように文体が変遷していったかを知ることができると考える。今後、どのような表現に安部らしさがみられるのか、それも含め、安部文学を探っていきたい。

### ［付記］

安部作品及び発言の引用は、特記したものを除いて『安部公房全集』（全30巻、新潮社、1997・7〜2009・3）に拠った。
その他の引用は、特記したものを除いて初出に拠り、漢字は通行の字体を用いた。ただし、固有名詞など必要と思われる個所には、旧字体や異体字・俗字の類を残した場合がある。
〔　〕内の注記および引用文中の傍線は佐々木により、改行は「／」で示した。

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不安を感じている人間なら、こんな考え方はしないはずだ。論理を追うことになれている人なら、その場合、もっと本当に理屈っぽく考えるだろう。なれていない人なら、もっと衝動的に行動するだろう。

31 本多秋五『物語戦後文学史』完結編（新潮社、1965）。

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# 手塚治虫とグルメマンガをつなぐもの―「あしたのジョー」の減量

# The one which connects a gourmet cartoon with Osamu Tezuka: Cutting of *Joe of tomorrow*

Natsuki Yamada

**Abstract**: I talk on change in the nature of the character in the cartoon through description of a food and the genre called a gourmet cartoon again. Specifically, the process until the character will be the existence which 'mediates between a story with a reader' is analyzed so that it may be seen in the gourmet cartoon. First I pay attention to Tezuka Osamu early-stage work, Takamori Asao original work and Chiba Tetsuya taking pictures "Joe of tomorrow". And it is considered about the thing description about life and death there foreground propizes through a food. Further, it is confirmed that the effort and the growth drawn closely in "Joe of tomorrow" are formalized since putting it in the after work. It is inspected that the autonomy of the character becomes self-evident by this thing. And it is also inspected that the genre as the gourmet cartoon is formed consequently.

**Keyword**: character, physicality, gourmet cartoon, *Ashita no Jō.*

**要旨**: 食の描写、またグルメマンガと呼ばれるジャンルを通して、マンガにおけるキャラクターの性質の変容について論じる。具体的には、グルメマンガのように、キャラクターが「読者と物語を媒介する」存在となるまでの過程を見る。まず手塚治虫初期作品と、高森朝雄原作、ちばてつや作画「あしたのジョー」の生死をめぐる描写が、食を通して前景化する現象について考察する。そして、「あしたのジョー」では緻密に展開される努力、成長が、以降の作品においては形式化され、そこでキャラクターの自律的な存在としてのあり方が自明化し、グルメマンガというジャンルも成立していくことを検証する。

**キーワード**：キャラクター、身体性、グルメマンガ、「あしたのジョー」。

## 1. はじめに

本稿では食の描写を通して、マンガにおけるキャラクターの性質の変容について論じる。

近年、マンガにおける食への注目が盛んになっている。例えばマンガ評論においては、2011年に斎藤宣彦『マンガの遺伝子』[1]、2013年に南信長『マンガの食卓』[2]、2017年に杉村啓『グルメ漫画50年史』が[3]、それぞれ刊行されている。これらは食を通じてマンガ史を捉え直す試みであり、

[1] 斎藤宣彦『マンガの遺伝子』（講談社現代新書、2011年，12月）。ただし一冊通してではなく、食について論じているのは「第七章　料理マンガは「魔球」がいっぱい！」のみである。

[2] 南信長『マンガの食卓』（ＮＴＴ出版、2013年，9月）。

[3] 杉村啓『グルメ漫画50年史』（星海社新書、2017年，8月）。

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他にも2010年代では、岩下朋世「キャラクターと囲む食卓―グルメマンガの実用性とリアリティ」[4]、食文化雑誌「vesta」の「特集　料理とメディア」[5]、西村大志「食―ひとり飯にみる違和感と共感とゆくえ」[6]、吉村和真ほか「マンガが描く食―「目玉焼きの黄身 いつつぶす？」と行為としての〈食べること〉」などの論考をあげることができる[7]。

こうした状況には、食を含め、読者への情報提供を主眼とするジャンル―所謂情報マンガの需要の高まりが関わっているだろう。石ノ森章太郎『マンガ 日本経済入門』（全四巻、日本経済新聞社、1986年4月-1988年11月）のベストセラーに代表されるように、情報マンガが興隆する1980年代以降、読者が「マンガのキャラクターたちのことばを「事実」として受け止め」、「フィクションであると同時に、より強く「事実」を伝える伝達ツールとも見なす」状況が訪れており[8]、そのような中で、「多彩な知識や情報をわかりやすく読者に伝えることを目的とするストーリーマンガ」は、「いまや一世を風靡しているジャンル」となっている[9]。

情報マンガには、ビジネスマンガ、学習マンガ、歴史マンガなど多々あり、食を通して様々な食材、料理法、飲食店などを紹介するのがグルメマンガである。その大きな特徴としてあげられるのが、キャラクターと読者の関係性である。先述の岩下の論を確認すれば、「一級品」のグルメマンガとは、「それ自体で完璧に読者を満足させること」がなく、読者に「ある種の欲求不満をもたらす」ものであるという。

> 欲求不満というのは、要するに空腹感だ。（略）優れたグルメマンガが満たすべきは、第一にこのシンプルな条件であるはずだ。／しかし、そうである以上、優れたグルメマンガはどうしても即物的で通俗的なものにならざるを得ない。この通俗性は、このジャンルに属する作品が、読者をテクストからひき離し、〝食欲〟という現実的な欲望に導くところにある。

4 岩下朋世「キャラクターと囲む食卓―グルメマンガの実用性とリアリティ」（「ユリイカ」, 2011年9月）。

5 「vesta」（2014年冬号）の「特集　料理とメディア」では、川口いしや「インターネットと食事―『美味しんぼ』から『孤独のグルメ』へ」、竹内オサム「マンガは〝食〟をどう描いているのか」、村瀬敬子「料理をめぐるメディア文化」が、〈食〉とマンガを論じている。

6 西村大志「食―ひとり飯にみる違和感と共感とゆくえ」（山田奨治編著『マンガ・アニメで論文・レポートを書く―「好き」を学問にする方法』ミネルヴァ書房、2017年4月）。

7 　吉村和真・おおひなたごう・佐藤守弘（問題提起＋司会）「マンガが描く食―「目玉焼きの黄身　いつつぶす?」と行為としての〈食べること〉」（日本記号学会編『の記号論　食は幻想か?』新曜社、2020年 6月）。

8 伊藤遊「（いまどきマンガ塾）震災や原発、積極発信―読み手、事実伝えるツールと認識」（「朝日新聞」大阪、2014年 5月, 30日夕刊）。

9 すがやみつる「機能マンガとジャーナリズム―ノンフィクションマンガの確立に向けて」（前川修・奥村弘編著『マンガ／漫画／ＭＡＮＧＡ―人文学の視点から』神戸大学出版局、2020年 3月）。ただし、ここでは「情報マンガ」とは区別された、「実用マンガ」という言葉が使われている。

そして「読者をテクストからひき離し、〝食欲〟という現実的な欲望に導く」際に注目されるのが、作中で料理、食事をするキャラクターである。「キャラクターに感情移入しながら、距離をとって客観視する」「共体験」に、マンガ読者の「基本的なスタンス」があるとする泉信行『漫画をめくる冒険　読み方から見え方まで　上巻・視点』（ピアノ・ファイア・パブリケーション、2008年6月）の論を踏まえ、岩下は、「モーニング」に長期連載中の、うえやまとち「クッキングパパ」などを例に、「虚構的な対象としてのキャラクターこそが、読者と物語を媒介する」と述べる。つまり、キャラクターが「料理を作ることや食べる」ことは、読者に「感情移入」を促し、一方で、あくまでもマンガ内の「虚構的」存在であるために、読者を「客観」的にもさせる。そうした「共体験」は、読者に、自身が他ならぬ現実世界に身を置く存在であること、読後には「感情移入」をしたキャラクターと同様に、「食欲」を満たすべき存在であることを認識させるのである。

以上のように、グルメマンガにおいてキャラクターは、「即物的で通俗的」━決まりきったパターンの「物語」の中にあり、同時にそこから切り離された、自律的な存在としても機能する。これより、マンガの歴史においてキャラクターが、そうした形で受容されるようになるまでの過程、具体的には、食という身体性を伴う生々しい行為を経ることでキャラクターが、「読者と物語を媒介する」存在となる過程を見る。まず手塚治虫初期作品と、そして高森朝雄原作、ちばてつや作画「あしたのジョー」の生死をめぐる描写が、食を通して前景化する現象について分析する。そして「あしたのジョー」では緻密に展開される努力、成長が、後の作品において形式化されることによって、キャラクターが自律的な存在であることが自明となり、ジャンルとしてグルメマンガが成立していく意味について検証する。

## 2. 手塚治虫初期作品における食と性

日本のマンガは、手塚治虫『地底国の怪人』（不二書房、1948年2月）により、初めてストーリー性を獲得したとされる。ここで言うストーリー性とは、主要なキャラクターの悲劇的な死によってもたらされるものである。「地底国の怪人」の耳男は、元は科学者に改造されたウサギであり、手術によって人間に近い存在となるものの、自身が人間とは異なることに悩み始める。つまり内面の深化が為されるのであり、そのために最終場面での死は、悲劇性を帯びる。藤子・F・不二雄は次のように述懐する。

> 『地底国の怪人』のラストで、読んでいたぼくら（引用者注━藤子・F・不二雄と藤子不二雄Ⓐ）はのけぞりました。なんと耳男が死んでしまったのです。こんなかわいい副主人公を、ここまで読者に感情移入させながら死なせてしまうなんて「こんなのありか!?」

／ありだったんですね。手塚先生が子供漫画に悲劇の要素を取りこんだ。これが最初の作品だったのです。[10]

「地底国の怪人」以前のマンガのキャラクターにおいて、傷つき、悩み、そして死に至るような身体性は希薄であり、必然的に悲劇性も発生しなかった。そこに耳男が描かれたのである。続く手塚治虫『ロストワールド』（不二書房、1948年12月）では、自身の「およめさん」にするために植物の「人間」化を研究する豚藻博士が登場する。そして、豚藻によって改造され、「意識」「理性」を持つことになった植物人間あやめ、もみじを通じて、マンガに初めて性が表現される。物語終盤で、あやめはママンゴ星に敷島博士と取り残される。それによって二人は、ママンゴ星の「アダムとイブ」として「子孫」を残す未来が示唆され、末尾において、あやめの身体も女性性を伴う表象となる。

更に注目すべきは、あやめと対の存在であるもみじを通して、食が性に直結する行為のように描かれる点である。先述のママンゴ星に向かうロケット内で、もみじは飢えたアセチレン・ランプに食べられてしまう。その場面について小野耕世は次のように述べる。

おそらく、こんなに官能的で刺激的なエピソードが、少年マンガのなかに描かれたことはかつてない。いや、相手が植物だからこそ、この場面はなお妖しさを増すのではないか。（略）／この場合、女を食べるという行為は、すぐに性交行為につながる。子どもマンガなのだから、ここでセックスを描くわけにはいかない。しかし、女を食べることに替えたことによって、むしろ、セックスを描くよりも、結果的には目もくらむほどの刺激的な効果をあげたとさえいえるのだ。[11]

上記を踏まえて先述の吉村和真は、「1970年代以降に広がっていくとされるグルメマンガ以前の歴史のなかで、実は「食べる」という行為が、男女関係や性の問題という別次元の行為として、描かれ、読まれていたという事実」を認識する必要があるとし、「『ロストワールド』によって、戦後のマンガには「食べる」という行為にある呪縛がかけられた」、「手塚の影響はこんなところにもあった」と述べる。

吉村が「グルメマンガ以前の歴史」と位置づけているように、ここでの食は、「グルメ」―美食に通じるもの、食文化を通じて食欲を喚起させるものではなく、個体維持のための生、種の保存としての性を、それこそ「即物的」に想起させるものとなっている。もみじが食べられて生命を失う描写と、新たな生命、子孫を残すことになるあやめの描写によって、性

10 藤子・F・不二雄「解説」（手塚治虫『地底国の怪人』角川文庫、1994年 11月）。

11 小野耕世「葉緑素を持った女陰―手塚治虫マンガにおける〈変容譚〉をめぐって」（竹内オサム＋村上知彦編『マンガ批評体系　1―アトム・影丸・サザエさん』平凡社、1989年 2月。初出は「季刊レビュー」1979年 3月）。

が表現されるのである。つまり、あやめともみじは、耳男と同様に、死や性などの身体性を伴うキャラクターとして描かれたのである。

手塚治虫初期作品では、このような形でキャラクターの身体性が強められ、以降のマンガでも、例えば1950年代から60年代にかけての、リアリズムの追求を試みる劇画の隆盛にも象徴されるように、キャラクターの葛藤する心理や傷つく身体、性や死などが描かれていく[12]。

それでは、マンガにおいて身体性を強めることに寄与した食を、どの段階からキャラクターは楽しめるようになるのか。身体性を支えるためのもの、比喩的に言えば、身体性の伴うキャラクターとしての個体維持のためのものから、如何にして「呪縛」は解かれ、楽しむためのもの、読者に「感情移入」を促すものとして食は表現されていくのか。その確認のため、次にグルメマンガの成立過程を検証していく。

## 3. グルメマンガの誕生

> 物語のワンシーンとして食事が描かれるのではなく、食事や料理そのものをテーマとしたマンガがある時期から登場してきた。いわゆる「グルメマンガ」と呼ばれるジャンルである。[13]

以上からは、マンガにおける食が、キャラクターの身体性を支える役割（「呪縛」）から解放されたこと、楽しむための食、「食事や料理そのもの」の描写が生まれたことが窺える。それは、どのようにして可能となったのか。

一般的にグルメマンガの祖は、1970年発表の望月三起也「突撃ラーメン」（「週刊少年ジャンプ」1970年2月23日−5月25日）、一ノ木アヤ作、萩尾望都画「ケーキ　ケーキ　ケーキ」（「なかよし」1970年9–10月）とされ[14]、加えて先述の南信長は、「突撃ラーメン」「ケーキ　ケーキ　ケーキ」を「始祖とするには異論はない」とするものの、「前者は多くの読者に支持されたヒット作とは言いがたく、歴史的影響力は小さい。後者は少女マンガ史に残る一作だが、ケーキなどの菓子類はここでは別枠と考えたい。そういう観点から、現在のジャンル的隆盛につながるグルメマンガの原点を求めるなら、やはり『包丁人味平』ということになる」と

[12] もともと簡素な線で描かれ、身体性が希薄であったマンガのキャラクターが、傷つき血を流し、内面を深化させるなど身体性を強めていく中で起こる、マンガ表現としてのせめぎ合いについては拙著『ロボットと〈日本〉―近現代文学、戦後マンガにおける人工的身体の表象分析』（立教大学出版会、2013年3月）、拙著『石ノ森章太郎論』（青弓社、2016年11月）参照。

[13] 南信長（注（2）に同じ）。

[14] 斎藤宣彦（注（1）に同じ）、杉村啓（注（3）に同じ）。ただし後者は、亀井三恵子「台所剣法」（「しんぶん赤旗」1970年10月28日―2015年7月3日。隔週連載）もあげている。

し、1973年発表の牛次郎作、ビッグ錠画「包丁人味平」（「週刊少年ジャンプ」1973年6月25日―1978年11月7日）をあげる。

先述の杉村啓は、グルメマンガ最初期の一九七〇年を、ファーストフードやファミリーレストランなど「外食産業」が興隆し、「社会全体が「食」に興味を持った時代」とする。そして同時期のマンガについて「1970年は劇画ブームの真っ最中（略）。週刊少年マガジンで、1966年に『巨人の星』（原作：梶原一騎、作画：川崎のぼる）が大ヒット。他にもさいとうたかをや水木しげるといった、劇画で活躍していた作家が執筆し、劇画ブームを起こしていた」と言及した上で、劇画の「スポーツ根性物」が、グルメマンガを生んだと指摘する。「父と子の物語であり、復讐譚」の「突撃ラーメン」では、「多くのスポ根の特訓」と同様の「復讐のための過酷な料理修行」が為され、「包丁人味平」では、「スポ根ものに見られるような、試合で勝敗を決するという方式」、「打ち勝つため」の「過酷な修行」などの構造が「換骨奪胎」、「応用」される。先述の斎藤宣彦も、1980年代以降の作品、牛次郎作（のち原案）、ビッグ錠画「スーパーくいしん坊」や、寺沢大介「ミスター味っ子」も含めて「スポ根の変形」とし、「何らかの問題を解決するために特訓し、無事何かの料理が作れて解決する、というのは、魔球や必殺技の完成のために特訓する『巨人の星』や『タイガーマスク』的なスポ根ものと同根」と述べている。また、「包丁人味平」の画のビッグ錠による次の回想からも、連載を開始するにあたって「スポ根」が想定されていたことが窺える。

> 当時はスポ根とは縁のなかった僕には、料理人の世界となると（略）どこか暗いイメージがつきまとって、そんな話、しかも少年誌でうけるのかなあと不安でしたが、第一回目の原作を読んだ時、そんな不安はふっ飛びました。なんたって、いきなり骨だけの鯛を泳がすんですから。〝こりゃ、いける!!〟と直感しました。[15]

つまり食は、野球などのスポーツと同等のものとなる。1940年代末の手塚治虫初期作品では、食は体内に取り込むためのものであり、性や生命維持などに関わる表象として、マンガのキャラクターの身体性を強めていくものであった。それが1970年代のグルメマンガ黎明期では、「試合」に向け食の技術を磨き、知識を深めるためのものに変化する。

以降、美食や食文化に関わる描写がより精緻に為され、グルメマンガは一大ジャンルとなる。本稿ではその前段階として、「スポーツ根性物」によってキャラクターの身体性が強固となる過程を検証する。手塚治虫初期作品、1950年代後半から60年代にかけて隆盛する劇画によってマンガの身体性が徐々に強められたことは確認したが、確固たるものとなるのは、見ていくように「あしたのジョー」においてである。注目すべきは、「過酷な修行」に伴って強固となるキャラクターの身体性のあり方に、食が大い

[15] ビッグ錠「味平に再会して……」（牛次郎作、ビッグ錠『包丁人味平』（第12巻、集英社文庫（コミック版）、1996年7月）。

に関わる点であり、それが構造としてのみ「換骨奪胎」、「応用」されることで、グルメマンガが生まれることである。言い換えれば、グルメマンガによって努力、成長の形式化が為されることで、楽しまれるものとしての食、「食事や料理そのもの」の描写が可能となるのである。次より「スポーツ根性物」とグルメマンガをめぐる、食を通したつながりと断絶について検証していく。

## 4. 「あしたのジョー」の減量

先述の「巨人の星」、「タイガーマスク」に加え、「あしたのジョー」（「週刊少年マガジン」1968年1月1日ー1973年5月13日）の原作者（名義は高森朝雄）でもある梶原一騎は「スポーツ根性物」を代表する作家である。そして、ちばてつやを作画とする本作は、「スポーツ根性物」という枠組みを超えた、戦後マンガを代表する作品の一つとして受容されている[16]。

> 東京の下町に現れた不良少年・矢吹丈はボクシングの天性の資質を元ボクサーの丹下段平に見込まれるが、詐欺や窃盗などの罪で警察に逮捕された挙句、東光特等少年院に送られてしまう。だが少年院からの脱走を邪魔した先輩院生の力石徹がプロボクサーと知って、段平の指導の下、ボクシングの腕を磨くジョー。先に少年院を出た力石を追って、退院後、段平が開いたボクシングジムに身を寄せたジョーは、ライセンス取得のために新人王・ウルフ金串にケンカを売って注目を集め、プロデビューを果たす。そして金串に勝ち、力石に挑むが、無理な減量でバンタム級のジョーとの対戦に応じた力石は、ジョーのクロスカウンターを破って勝利したものの試合後に他界。そのことがトラウマとなって再起不能に陥りかけたジョーだったが、無冠の帝王、カーロス・リベラと戦うことでトラウマを克服し、強敵を次々撃破。ついには世界バンタム級チャンピオン、ホセ・メンドーサとのタイトル戦で雌雄を決する。[17]

以上があらすじであり、力石徹と矢吹丈（以下、ジョー）の成長の過程は、マンガ（表現）史においても大きな事象とされている。その成長について、大塚英志は[18]、マンガにおける「生身の少年の身体」の「発見」とし、夏目房之介は[19]、力石とジョーの〈人間〉化、「青年化」とした上で、力石の死が「当時の青年読者にとって（略）衝撃的で「リアル」」であり、「マンガの登場人物に強いリアリティを感じ、まるで実在のように

16 『大アンケートによる少年少女マンガベスト100ー第1位は「あしたのジョー」！』（文春文庫、1992年8月）で一位に輝いたことは、しばしば参照される。

17 ちばてつや『ちばてつやが語る「ちばてつや」』（集英社、2014年5月）。

18 大塚英志「梶原一騎　未完のビルドゥングスロマン」（大塚英志＋ササキバラ・ゴウ『教養としての〈まんが・アニメ〉』講談社現代新書、2001年5月）。

19 夏目房之介『マンガの深読み、大人読み』（イースト・プレス、2004年10月）。

思いなす青年層読者」が生まれたこと[20]、「マンガが社会現象化する時代に入」ったことを指摘する。力石とジョーの成長する姿を通して、マンガのキャラクターが「実在」のごとく受容されるようになったとすれば、そうした「リアリティ」は、どのように生まれていったのか。

そこで重要となるのが減量である。夏目は、ジョーよりも、力石の方が先に〈人間〉化したとする。ジョーとの対戦を控え、フェザー級からバンタム級へ移行するために地獄の減量を行う中で、力石の身体および内面がまず精緻に描かれるようになる。そして力石の死後には、追うようにジョーが成長することで、「力石の青年化」が「受けつ」がれる。同じく、マンガにおける「生身の少年の身体」の「発見」を指摘する大塚英志も、キャラクターの身体性が強固なものとなる契機に、力石の減量をあげる。

力石とジョーの成長については別の機会で詳細に論じたが[21]、本稿で改めて減量に向き合うにあたって注目するのは、「あしたのジョー」において食材が「うまそう」に描かれていることである。

> ああ　これ　ジョーの体力回復にええやろ思うてうまいもんぎょうさん仕入れてきましたでえ／（略）／へへへ　さすがは食欲の秋でんなあ／あちこちの店先にはいろいろうまそうなもんが....

以上は、ジョーの友人のボクサー、マンモス西のセリフである。直後には段平に「西よ....おめえもプロ・ボクサーのはしくれならちっとは食っていいものとわるいもんの区別くらいしたらどうなんだ　それじゃなくてもジョーはいま寝たっきりでウエートがどんどん増えているんだぞ」と語られ、ソーセージ、ドーナツ、チョコレート、バターなどが「目の毒」として川に捨てられてしまうが、ここでは食材が、それだけ「食欲」を喚起させる「うまいもん」として描かれている。

既に指摘されているように、ちばてつや作品には食事の場面が多い。その点について先述の南信長は、手塚治虫作品と比較する中で言及している。キャラクターを「物語を演じる役者であり駒である（ゆえにスターシステムが成り立つ）」ように描く手塚作品では、「食の名シーン」が「あまり見当たら」ず、登場する場合も「ストーリー的に必要」であるために表現されているに過ぎず、「食べる喜び」が「伝わってこない」が、キャラクターが「物語の中の人生を生きている（かのように描かれている）」ちば作品では、「食事シーン」が対照的に表現されているという。

その対照性について補足をすれば、江口寿史は「ちばてつやは（略）人生を　人間を描く作家だ　それも深く丹念に」[22]、「主人公だけでなくそのまわりの一人一人がちゃんとそれぞれの人生を生きている　それぞれの

[20] 注 (19) に同じ。

[21] 拙著『「ドヤ街」から読む「あしたのジョー」』（昭和女子大学近代文化研究所、2020年10月）。

[22] 江口寿史「ちばてつやに会った夜のこと。」（「文芸別冊［総特集］ちばてつや―漫画家生活55周年記念号」2011年2月）。

人生のからみあいがストーリーになるのだ」、「図抜けたストーリーテラーだが登場人物は物語を進めるための駒でしかない手塚治虫とはその点が両極といっていいほど違う」と評する。手塚との対比ではないが、先述の夏目も「ちばは、登場人物にまるで家族のような深い愛情をもつ作家である。物語の必要によって動く（あるいは動かす）のではなく、自身の必然で動く人物を描こうとする。／登場人物が決定的に不幸になるのを嫌うのも、ちばにとって登場人物が実在同然に愛すべきものだからだ」と述べる。また、加藤幹郎は空間描写の分析によって[23]、ちば作品が「寄り道という非経済的な運動」に満ちていること、「主役と傍役、前景と後景、中心と周縁の区別」を取り払い、そこに読み手が「いつのまにか鷹揚な主人公や脇役と同じ律動を刻んでいることを発見」するような、「遊びの時間」に満ちていることを指摘する。それは手塚作品に見られる「物語の経済的で直線的な展開」とは決定的に異なるものであり、「寄り道」のような「歩み」が展開されることで、主役も脇役も含め、その世界に生きる人びとは、物語に従事する登場人物としてではなく、言うなれば「実在同然」の「愛すべき」存在として描出されることになる[24]。

つまり、ちば作品における物語は、結末に「直線的」に向かわない。「ストーリー的に必要」でない「時間」を過ごす姿も含め、キャラクターは「それぞれの人生を生きている」かのように描かれるのであり、食はそうした日常を体現する行為として表現されるのである。そうしたキャラクターのあり方を、「実在」のごとき「リアリティ」を有するものとして描いたのが「あしたのジョー」であり、「うまそう」な食材、「食欲」とともに、食べられない苦しみ（減量）までも表現されるのである。

実際に見てみると、「あしたのジョー」では冒頭から、ドヤ街での「犯罪」によってジョーに収集され、路上でたたき売りにされる缶詰、チョコ、ビスケットといった食材が、同時代のマンガに比して詳細な商品ラベルや、殺到する客の描写などによって、「うまそう」に表現される。また、そこで活き活きと為される「商売」（「犯罪」）は、「生まれてこのかたなにひとつとして人なみにあたえられたものはなかった」と語るジョーが、身に着けざるを得なかった生きる術のようにも描かれており、言うなれば、「食欲」をかき立てる「うまいもん」は、貧しさや

[23] 加藤幹郎『表象と批評―映画・アニメーション・漫画』（岩波書店、2010年4月。引用箇所の初出は、加藤幹郎「愛の時間―いかにして漫画は一般的討議を拒絶するのか」（米沢嘉博編『マンガ批評宣言』亜紀書房、1987年2月）。

[24] ちばてつやの下でアシスタントをしていた川三番地によれば、ちば作品の空間描写は手前と奥でパース（遠近法）が違う場合があり、「手前となる絵のパースを誇張することで全体の世界観が広がってくる技法」がとられているという（「あしたのジョーに憧れて」（「月刊少年マガジンプラス」2015年,07-08号、「月刊少年マガジン」2015年4月、「月刊少年マガジンＲ」2015年, 001号、2-4号、2016年, 2, 4-6号））。直接的に加藤（注（23）に同じ）の指摘と関わるものではないが、ちば作品が「主役と傍役、前景と後景、中心と周縁の区別」を取り払う空間の描写をしているという議論に関わるものと思われる。

飢えから逃れるための手段として表現されている。他にも、少年院を出たジョーとマンモス西が働く乾物屋の林屋では、缶詰、しらたき、たまご、のりなど賑やかに店頭に並べられる数々の食材が、やはり殺到する客の様子にも示されるように、ドヤ街の人びとの生活、「人生」を支えるものとして表現されている。

つまり、「地底国の怪人」「ロストワールド」など手塚の初期作品において、キャラクターの身体性を支えるためのものであった食は、ここでは人びとの生活を送る姿や、生きる術などを表現するもの、言い換えれば、キャラクターの「一人一人がちゃんとそれぞれの人生を生きている」ことを物語るものとなっている。そうした描写に加え、更に「あしたのジョー」では、先述のように「ウエート」、減量の問題によって、「食欲」と同時に禁欲──「食って（略）わるいもん」「目の毒」が表現される。力石の際には、唯一の夕食であるリンゴにかじりつく姿や、深夜に常軌を逸した様子で水を求める姿、ジョーの際には、干からびて皮だけになったミカンに「むしゃぶりつく」姿や、減量を止めさせようとする段平に次々と差し出される焼鳥、うなぎ、サンマなどの「におい」に誘惑され苦しめられる姿などが描かれる[25]。

こうした描写を通して、力石やジョーの生き様がより精緻に表現され、「実在」のごとく受容される「リアリティ」が生まれていったとすると、そこに、マンガにおける食材が、「食欲」をかき立てる「うまそう」なもの、「うまいもん」として表現されていく過程が連動していることが窺える。しかし、この「食欲」はあくまでも作中に留まるものであり、「読者をテクストからひき離し、〝食欲〟という現実的な欲望に導く」グルメマンガの機能とは異なるものである。「あしたのジョー」は、読者に「ある種の欲求不満」を抱かせ、「食欲」を喚起させる類のマンガではない。それは「即物的で通俗的」──決まりきったパターンの「物語」ではなく、描かれる「食欲」も力石やジョー固有のものであり、キャラクターが「読者と物語を媒介する」存在ではないからである。食材は「うまそう」なもの、「うまいもん」として表現されるものの、禁欲的な減量も含め、身体性を強固にするものとして「食欲」が描かれるのであり、その意味で「呪縛」はここでは未だ解かれないのである。

それではこうした「あしたのジョー」から、どのように、楽しむためのもの、読者に「感情移入」を促すものとしての食が表現され、グルメマンガは生まれるのか。最後に見ていく。

## 5. 努力、成長の形式化

ここまで、手塚治虫初期作品への着目を契機に、「あしたのジョー」における減量などを通して、食とキャラクターの身体性の関わりについて見

25 ジョーの減量の対として、ジョーと対戦する東洋チャンピオン金竜飛の幼少時のエピソードがある。詳細は拙著（注（21））参照。

てきたが、「食事や料理そのもの」が「テーマ」となり、ついに食材がキャラクターに楽しまれ、享受されるようになる際、注目すべきは、努力、成長が形式化することである。

「外食産業」が興隆し「社会全体が「食」に興味を持った時代」、消費社会化を体現するように、グルメマンガでは「うまいもん」の表現が作品の中心となり、ライバルに「打ち勝つため」の「過酷な修行」、「試合」は、料理の技術を磨き、食の知識、情報を披瀝する場となる。その際、「あしたのジョー」であれば力石、ジョーなど「それぞれの人生」に固有で「自身の必然」として描かれた努力、成長の過程が、構造としてなぞられ、「換骨奪胎」、「応用」されることで、「即物的で通俗的」―決まりきったパターンの「物語」と化していく。

具体的に、「現在のジャンル的隆盛につながるグルメマンガの原点」の「包丁人味平」を見ると、「あしたのジョー」との差異が窺える。「あしたのジョー」では、過酷な減量により「試合」後に死んだライバルの力石をその後も想い続け、自らの身体の成長や蓄積されるダメージに向き合いながら戦うジョー―力石の行為を反復するように減量も為される―が描かれる。一方「包丁人味平」では、「試合」ごとに強大化するライバルがその都度登場し、かつての存在が顧みられることはない[26]。「うまいもん」を表現する「修行」、「試合」が繰り返され、そこで、より強敵とされるライバルが次々に現れる展開において、描かれるキャラクターの努力、成長は形式化する。力石、ジョーの身体性が強固となる過程とは異なるものであり、そのことは、「包丁人味平」において、禁欲ではなく「料理の魔術」によってあっさりと減量に成功し世界タイトルの防衛を果たすボクサーの姿が「物語のワンシーン」、一エピソードとして描かれることにも窺うことができる。

こうしたあり方については、鳥山明「ドラゴンボール」など他の「週刊少年ジャンプ」作品に対する、竹熊健太郎の次のような言及が参考となるだろう。

> アンケート主義とあいまって、あらゆる連載が毎回試合を行うことで「強いやつのインフレ現象」を示すに及んで、私ははっきりついて行けないものを感じた。それはもはや、少なくとも私の考えるストーリーとは呼べないからである。[27]

ライバルがその都度現れる、「強いやつのインフレ現象」において、キャラクターの努力、成長の形式化、身体性の希薄化が起こり、「ストー

[26] 例外的に「カレー戦争」で重要人物として描かれた柳大吉が、最終「試合」となる「第一回全日本ラーメン祭り」においてライバルとして再登場する。

[27] 竹熊健太郎「伊藤剛『テヅカ・イズ・デッド』を読む（2）」（「たけくまメモ　編集家・竹熊健太郎の雑感雑記＆業務連絡」2005年9月30日、http://takekuma.cocolog-nifty.com/blog/2005/09/post_16da.html。2021年8月15日参照）。

リーとは呼べないもの」、本稿の文脈で言えば「即物的で通俗的」━決まりきったパターンの「物語」が生まれていく。

ただし、こうした身体性の希薄化は、「地底国の怪人」以前への後戻りではない。逆説的に言えば、「あしたのジョー」において力石、ジョーの「人生」が精緻に表現され、「実在」のごとき「リアリティ」が生みだされたために、努力、成長の形式化は可能となっている。

「地底国の怪人」を契機にキャラクターの身体性が強められていくことは確認したが、元々手塚のマンガは、戦前のディズニー映画やアメリカのコミックの影響、引用から出発しており、デフォルメという手続きを経ない、対象から切断された「記号的表現」である[28]。そうした非リアリズムの「記号的表現」において身体性を強めていくことの困難を、大塚英志は「アトムの命題」と定義し[29]、「成熟の不可能性を与えられたキャラクターは、しかし、いかにして成長し得るのか」と問いを立てる。そして大塚は[30]、キャラクターの成長と「破滅」を「巨人の星」、「あしたのジョー」、「タイガーマスク」などで繰り返し描く梶原一騎を「「アトムの命題」を最も忠実に継承した作者の一人」とし、「ジョーは戦後の少年まんがヒーローとして恐らく初めて自分の成長しようとする身体を発見」したと指摘する。

一方、足立加勇は[31]、世界チャンピオン、ホセ・メンドーサとの戦いで「倒されても何度でも立ち上がる」ジョーの姿に、現在のマンガ、アニメなどに見られるパターン化の嚆矢を指摘し、そこから「アトムの命題」を転倒した「ジョーの命題」を立てる。そのパターンは仲間との「絆の絶対性」に依拠するものであり、戦いでどのように困難な状況に陥っても、最終的に「精神」力により復活を遂げる展開を指す。それまで傷つき苦境に陥っていたキャラクターは、突如リアリズムとは異なる「再生可能」な「記号」の身体となり立ち上がる━そうした「死と再生の儀式」が繰り返されているという。やはり「週刊少年ジャンプ」作品である尾田栄一郎「ONE PIECE」などを例に、足立は次のように述べる。

> マンガ・アニメに負わされている課題は、「傷つかない記号」で「傷つく身体」を表現するという「アトムの命題」ではない。実際に負わされている課題は、キャラクターは「傷つく身体」を持っているという前提で「傷つかない身体」を実現せよ、という「アトムの命題」を転倒させたものなのである。

28 手塚治虫インタビュー「珈琲と紅茶で深夜まで」(「ぱふ」1979年10月)。

29 大塚英志『アトムの命題』(徳間書店、2003年4月)。その象徴が、死んだ子どもの代替として作られたロボットであり、ロボットであるが故に成長ができないアトム(手塚治虫「鉄腕アトム」)の身体である。

30 注(18)に同じ。

31 足立加勇『日本のマンガ・アニメにおける「戦い」の表象』(現代書館、2019年6月)。

別の機会で言及したように、少なくともジョーを「死と再生の儀式」の嚆矢として位置づけるのは困難である。「倒されても何度でも立ち上がる」姿は、ホセ戦以前、既に金竜飛との戦いの際に描かれており、それが「男の絆」や力石を想う力で勝利を収めるといった単線的なものでないことを検証した[32]。しかし、「あしたのジョー」以降のマンガ、アニメにおけるパターン化、「死と再生の儀式」の指摘は重要であり、足立は「今日では、キャラクターが、傷つき、病気にかかり、老い、そして死ぬことはすでに自明の前提であ」って、「死と再生の儀式で人々が求めているのは、自明の前提ではなく、その前提を覆す奇跡である」と述べる。つまり、「傷つく身体」（リアリズム）と「再生可能」な「記号」の身体の往還、パターン化であるが、それは「地底国の怪人」から「あしたのジョー」にかけて身体性が強められ、マンガのキャラクターが「「傷つく身体」を持っているという前提」が成立していったからこそ可能なものである。

そしてこの「前提」は、グルメマンガによる「うまいもん」の表現の中心化、努力、成長の形式化の根底にあるものでもある。つまり、「あしたのジョー」以降のマンガ、アニメの描写において、「奇跡」、「儀式」のために為される、突如リアリズムとは異なる「再生可能」な「記号」の身体への変容が、「前提」により可能となっているのと同様に、「あしたのジョー」の構造を「換骨奪胎」、「応用」するグルメマンガにおいても、「うまいもん」の表現を中心化するために為される、努力、成長の形式化、身体性の希薄化は、「前提」によって可能となっている。

これらは決まりきったパターンの「物語」であるが、それ故にキャラクターは、「自身の必然」として為される努力、成長の過程が「それぞれの人生」固有の「物語」となる力石、ジョーらとは異なり、「物語」から切り離された、自律的な存在として機能し易くなる。そうしたあり方は、キャラクターの影響力がより増している近年の状況に連なるものでもある。「自己同一性を保ちながら複数のコマに姿を現すばかりでなく、複数のメディアを越境していける存在」、「断片化し複数化したイメージを繋ぐ媒介物であり、さらにマンガから異なるメディアへの越境するもの」、「それ自体が一つの媒体（メディウム）」と指摘されるように[33]、キャラクターは、近年一つの大きなメディアとして捉えられるようになっており、それは、「意味」よりも視覚などの「感覚」に「主眼が置かれる」状況、デジタル技術によりデータ「処理」「加工」が容易となっている状況を物語るものでもある[34]。

32 注（21）に同じ。

33 前川修「はじめに―マンガ、映像、触覚」（前川修・奥村弘『マンガ／漫画／MANGA―人文学の視点から』神戸大学出版会、2020年3月）。

34 岡本裕一朗『哲学と人類　ソクラテスからカント、21世紀の思想家まで』（文藝春秋、2021年1月）。

　こうした潮流の黎明期に、グルメマンガの成立は関わっている。そこで生まれる、楽しまれるものとしての食の描写は、人間の営みでありながら、逆説めくが、リアリズムの身体―力石やジョーのような―から切り離されることで可能になっている。そのような転倒は、まさに情報、知識を食べる消費社会のあり方、情報マンガとしての要素を、その後、色濃くしていくグルメマンガの性質を象徴していると言える。つまり、身体性を支えるもの、「人生」を支えるものではない食が描かれることで「呪縛」は解かれるのであり、そこで、固有の「物語」と切り離され、自律的な存在となるキャラクターにより、「うまいもん」の表現は読者に紹介され、「食欲」を喚起させるのである。

　以上見てきたように食への注目は、キャラクター自体が一つのメディア化する状況にも象徴されるような、情報の消費が更に増大していくあり方を考察するための、有効な視座となるのである。

　付記　引用は、手塚治虫『地底国の怪人』（角川文庫、1994年11月）、手塚治虫『ロストワールド』（角川文庫、1994年11月）、高森朝雄原作、ちばてつや作画『あしたのジョー』（全12巻、講談社漫画文庫、2000年6月ー11月）、牛次郎作、ビッグ錠『包丁人味平』（全12巻、集英社文庫（コミック版）、1995年12月ー1996年7月）に拠った。

# 村上春樹作品における〈食〉と〈性〉– 初期作品と阪神淡路大地震以後の作品との比較を通して
# “Food” and “Sex” in Murakami Haruki’s literature

Makiko Yamasaki

**Abstract:** Murakami’s early writings are littered with names of various foods and dishes. Often appearing in the context of descriptions of dates with girlfriends or lovers, they in turn become associated with sexual interactions. However, they are not the sorts of dishes one expects to see in a conventional Japanese household. They are almost invariably foreign dishes or mere accompaniments for drinks. Whilst the famines of wartime and postwar Japan did much to disrupt traditional household diets, Murakami’s predilection for foreign cuisine distances his writings even further from Japanese territory. This tendency is particularly evident in his early works. As has been well documented, following his eight-year sojourn abroad, the Great Hanshin Earthquake of January 1995, and the sarin gas attacks by the Aum Shinrikyo on the 20th of March that same year, Murakami’s perspective shifted from one of “detachment” to one of “commitment”. However, an examination of food-related passages—and the sexual interactions that often follow—reveals a different picture. Despite Murakami’s shift to “commitment”, these scenes consistently depict a self-contained protagonist who makes no effort to allow women entry into his inner life. The protagonist is either unwilling or unable to comprehend the woman-as-other, a stance that I argue persists until the 2010’s. Accordingly, this paper will examine juxtapositions of food and sex from Murakami’s earliest works to *Onna no inai otokotatchi* (*Men Without Women*, 2014) and *Kishidanchōgoroshi* (*Killing Commendatore*, 2017).

**Keyword**: food consumption, sex, evasion, Murakami Haruki.

**要旨**: 村上春樹の初期作品には多くの食品名が登場し、恋人やGFと飲食を共にし、その後性関係を結ぶ場面が見られるが、その料理名はカタカナ語もしくは酒肴的なもので、伝統的な家庭料理は登場しない。日本は戦時下に極度の食糧難に陥り、築いてきた家庭の味が継承されなかったが、村上作品ではあえて日本的なるものからの離陸するための方法として、カタカナ語の食品が選ばれている。特に初期作品では顕著である。8年間の海外生活を経て帰国し、1995年1月に村上春樹の故郷・阪神地区を襲った大地震と、同年3月20日のオウム真理教教団による地下鉄サリン事件以降、村上がデタッチメントからコミットメントへと変換したことは周知されている。作品中の食行為に注目して時系列で見ていくと、飲食をともにし性交しても、その女性たちを自分の心の中に入れようとしない自己完結型の主人公像は一貫して変わらない。女＝他者を理解することを欲求しない、または断念している姿が見出せる。そこから動き始めたのは2010年代以降の作品である。『女のいない男たち』（文藝春秋、2014年4月）、そして『騎士団長殺し』（新潮社、2017年2月）に至るまで、本論ではこの流れを食と性表現で見ていく。

キーワード : 食行為、性、疎隔、村上春樹。

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Makiko Yamasaki, 村上春樹作品における〈食〉と〈性〉– 初期作品と阪神淡路大地震以後の作品との比較を通して / *“Food” and “Sex” in Murakami Haruki’s literature*, pp. 59-75, © 2021 Author(s), CC BY 4.0 International, DOI 10.36253/978-88-5518-506-6.07, in Miriam Castorina, Diego Cucinelli (edited by), *Food issues* 食事. *Interdisciplinary Studies on Food in Modern and Contemporary East Asia*, © 2021 Author(s), content CC BY 4.0 International, metadata CC0 1.0 Universal, published by Firenze University Press (www.fupress.com), ISSN 2704-5919 (online), ISBN 978-88-5518-506-6 (PDF), DOI 10.36253/978-88-5518-506-6

## 1. はじめに

日本近現代文学の作家において食通といえば谷崎潤一郎（1986–1965年）や檀一雄（1912–1976年）を思い浮かべるが、戦後生まれの生存している作家では誰を思い浮かべるだろうか。戦中の食糧危機で、代々継承されてきた家庭の味、俗にいう〈おふくろの味〉が分断されてしまったといわれているが[1]、飽食の時代といわれて久しい現代において生み出されている文学作品中を見渡しても、管見ながら意外なことに数は多くないように思える。

例えばタイトルから食を連想させる吉本ばなな（1964年〜）『キッチン』（『海燕』1987年11月）での食事は、主人公・みかげが居候する家の主人・えり子に玉子がゆときゅうりのサラダを作り、えり子がそれをおいしそうに食べる場面が唯一あるだけである（グレープフルーツのジュースとラーメンを作るシーンはあるが、食する場面はない）。その続編である『満月』（『海燕』1988年２月）では母親（もとは父親）であるえり子を亡くして元気を失っている雄一のためにみかげは、「サラダ、パイ、シチュー、コロッケ、揚げ出しどうふ、おひたし、春雨と鶏のあえもの、キエフ、酢豚、しゅうまい……国籍がめちゃくちゃだったが」といった料理を作る。雄一を慰めるための食事にしては、どこか温もりにも欠けるし、あまりにも大枠的な料理名である。彼女はこのとき大学を中退して料理研究家のアシスタントをしているので、教室で習った基本ベースの料理を、雄一を励ますために腕を振るったのかもしれない。みかげの作った料理は、雄一がえり子の死を受け入れがたく苦しみ、その悲しみを内に籠めたまま言葉や行動に移せないでいる状態を緩和させることには成功したようだ。ワインと共にみかげの料理をすべて食べつくした後に雄一は、えり子を亡くした悲しみを初めて語ることが出来たからである。

そして、雄一はその後、感情の表出行為ともいえる旅に出る。その旅先に、みかげは出張先でたまたま入った店での飛び切り美味なカツ丼をテイクアウトして、雄一の宿泊先に運ぶのだ。周知のとおり、食はここでは、心を慰藉する愛の代替行為として描かれているが、みかげが供するそれは、家庭で自ずと育んだ独自の秘伝的な伝統を継承したものではなく、外部で習得したもの、もしくはたまたま旅先で出あったカツ丼である。みかげは、両親を早くに失い祖父母に育てられ、継承されるべき家庭の味を持たない。雄一も親類縁者をもたず幼くして母を亡くした後は、父が文字通り母となって雄一を育てた。雄一の家も素晴らしいソファはあっても食事のためのテーブル、つまり家族で囲むべき食卓はなく床に置いて食べている。家庭が育んだ食によって支えられるべきものを持たない二人の孤

[1] 岩村暢子『〈現代家族〉の誕生　幻想系家族論の死』（勁草書房、2005年6月）に詳述。

独、身寄りのなさが食行為で示されている。そして二人は、お互いに異性としての好意を持ちつつも、その空隙を性関係で埋めようとはしない。

それでは村上春樹（1949年〜）の場合はどうだろうか。彼の作品には家庭の味を継承した食品群は出てこない。サンドイッチ、パスタ、ピザ、ハンバーガー、オムレツなど、ほとんどカタカナ用語の食品群である。彼が描く作品中での食行為は、何を表現しているのか、そして、それに性がかかわっているのかどうか、関わっているとしたらどのようにかかわっているのかを以下の本章で年代順に確認してくこととする。

## 2. 初期作品にみられる独身男性のアーバンライフと食

文芸月刊誌『群像』1979年６月号掲載、群像新人賞受賞作『風の歌を聴け』でデビューして以来、日本の文学シーンを画期的に変えた村上春樹の初期作品に常套的に登場する独身の男性主人公は、『羊をめぐる冒険』（『群像』1982年8月）や『ダンス・ダンス・ダンス』（講談社、1988年10月）に見られるように独身男性がバーでオムレツをとって夕食を済ませたり、彼女や友人のために手早くさっと料理を作り、しかもそれを彼女、彼らたちは満足しながら食べるおしゃれなイメージが村上作品愛読者にはあるだろう。例えば『世界の終りとハードボイルド・ワンダーランド』（新潮社、1985年6月）9章にある図書館司書の彼女に「私」の自宅まで本を持ってきてもらうまでの間に作る簡単な夕食のメニューを思い出してみよう。「梅干をすりばちですりつぶして、それでサラダドレッシングを作り、鰯と油あげと山芋のフライをいくつか作り、セロリと牛肉の煮物を用意した。出来は悪くなかった。時間があまったので、私は缶ビールを飲みながら、みょうがのおひたしを作り、いんげんのごま和えを作った」は、作品中でも記憶に残る食事場面である。司書の彼女が本を携えて着くや否や、片っ端からこの料理を平らげたので、「私」は「厚あげを強火でさっと焼いておろししょうがをかけ、それをさかなにウイスキーを飲んだ」が、その厚あげも彼女が所望するので、「私」はウイスキーだけを飲むことになる。食欲旺盛な彼女にさらに「私はかつおぶしで簡単にだしをとってわかめとねぎのみそ汁を作り、ごはんと梅干しを添えて出すが、彼女はあっという間にそれをたいらげてしまった。」などが典型例である。

村上春樹の場合、食と性が結び付けられて描かれており、この出会ったばかりの司書の女性とすぐに性行為に及ぶが、「私」はなぜか勃起しなかった。不能に陥ったのは東京オリンピック（1964年）の年以来はじめてのことであり、35歳の「私」は「少なからずショックを受け」、また、「それほど簡単に女の子と性的関係に入ることができたのもはじめてだった。たぶんそれは私が夕食をごちそうしたせいだと思う。」（9章）と解釈する。たしかに手料理は親密さを増し、心を許す効果があるだろう。しかし、せっかくの好機も「私」自身が食べたわけではないのに胃がイルカのお腹みたいに膨らんでいるような気がして、下腹部に力が入らない。

彼女の旺盛な食べっぷりに同化してしまったかのようだが、実はパラレルワールドの偶数章で「僕」のナイーブな問題の核となる「特殊性」の符号、「胃拡張、長い髪、図書館」を呼び起こしたからであることがほのめかされている。ここでは珍しくパラレルワールドの奇数章と偶数章が交わるのである。このように村上春樹の作品中においての食行為は、ある世界間を結び付ける役割として機能しており、その世界を牽引していくものとして描かれている。特に手料理による場合には、その効果を多分に発揮するようだ。

食についての「私」の見解も語られていることにも注目しよう。この司書の女性との一件のあとに「私」は、仕事の依頼者である博士の孫娘、ピンクの太った女の子から早朝の電話で起こされ、24時間営業の青山のスーパーマーケットで待ち合わせをすることとなった。博士の身の上に不穏なことが起き、このままでは世界が終わってしまうから助けに来てほしいといわれたのである。スーパーマーケットに午前5時28分に到着し、彼女を待つ。その際に、店内の壁に貼られているポスターを眺めながら牛乳とサンドイッチを食べるのだが、酒類売り場に貼られている全部で15枚のポスターを見ながら、ウイスキー商品ポスターの写真のほとんどはオン・ザ・ロックのグラスが写されているのみで、そこにはつまみが写っているものはないという共通性に気が付く。その理由を「私」は、「酒の純粋性が失われる」、「つまみが酒のイメージを固定してしまう」、「人間の注意がつまみの方にそれてしまうから」と考える。彼の目を通して、食が付与されることの意味がここでクローズアップされるのである。つまり食が介在すると、そのもの自体の純粋性が捨象されてしまうということだ。それほど食は、人々の興味や関心を引き付けるものなのである。物語を構築していくうえで、注意深くならざるを得ないだろう。

村上春樹の初期作品で都市生活者の主人公たちが作るメニューは、吉本ばなな『キッチン』同様に代々引き継がれた家庭料理が作られることは無く、ビールや洋酒に合った酒肴的なものがほとんどである。老舗の料理屋の名前もほとんど挙げられてはいない。なお、少し横道にそれるが、村上春樹作品では『羊をめぐる冒険』で、いるかホテルのマネージャーからワインを贈られる場面は登場するが、本格的にワインが意味を持って登場するのは　『スプートニクの恋人』（講談社、1999年4月）である。若い女性・すみれが年上の女性・ミュウに強い恋心を抱く、村上春樹作品にとっては新たな局面を切り開いた中編である。ミュウがワイン輸入の仕事をしていて、すみれはその仕事を手伝い、ワインの手ほどきを受ける。ワインは大人の成熟した女性と組み合わされて登場している。

また、しばしば彼の初期作品にはサンドイッチが多く描出され、移動中もしくは移動先で供される食べ物として登場する。『ノルウェイの森』（講談社、1987年9月）で「僕」（＝ワタナベ）が直子の療養する阿美寮を訪問するため、京都までの新幹線の中で朝食としてとるサンドイッチ（第六章、章の数字表記は原文ママ）、また、『世界の終わりとハードボ

イルド・ワンダーランド』では訪問先のピンクの太った女の子が作る飛び切りおいしいサンドイッチ（5章）、そして短編『午後の最後の芝生』（『宝島』、1982年8月）でも庭の芝刈りを依頼された訪問先で、クスノキにたとえられる大柄な依頼人の女性が作る「僕」の昼食としてのサンドイッチが登場する。一方で、和食に関しては『ノルウェイの森』の小林緑が、手の込んだ家庭料理を与えられずに育ったことを不満に思って、自ら和食の料理本を見てブラジャーを買うためのお金を貯めて和食を作るためのキッチン器具を購入して料理を習得し、見事な京料理を「僕」にふるまうシーンがある（第四章）。緑の場合も伝統的な家庭料理は外部（書物）から習得するもので、家庭から引き継いだものではない。

これらの理由を考察するにあたって、結論から先に言えば村上春樹の日本的なるものからの離陸＝デタッチメントするための方法として用いられており、登場人物に注意深くドメスティックな食行為を回避させたと考えられる。それでは次章以降で80年代の日本の世相を背景に、初期作品にみられる村上春樹のデタッチメントを貫く方法を食行為の表現から確認したうえで、彼が日本を離れ、イタリアを含む8年間の海外生活を経て帰国した1995年を転換点とするコミットメントへの変換以降の村上の小説における食表現を時系列に沿って見ていくこととする。

## 3. 80年代の高橋丁未子の批評を軸に

村上春樹作品中の食に注目した評論に、高橋丁未子『羊のレストラン―村上春樹の食卓』（CBSソニー出版、1986年7月）がある。また、台所でよむ村上春樹の会編『村上レシピ』（飛鳥新社、2001年6月）は書名タイトルから窺えるように料理ブックとして楽しめるものとして上梓されている。近年の研究論文では、松本海「村上春樹『風の歌を聴け』に現れる〈食〉―蔓延する「ビール」と、ものさしとしての「冷蔵庫」―」（早稲田大学大学院紀要（65）2020年3月15日）など村上春樹初期作品を改めて「食」に注目して論じる論考も生まれている。

ここでは、現在あまり顧みられることのない高橋丁未子の80年代半ばに見られた評論に焦点を当て、その論じられ方を通して当時の時代背景を確認していこう。前掲書『羊のレストラン』の帯には「村上春樹の世界を酒・料理・食卓空間から探る『風の歌を聴け』から『パン屋再襲撃まで』」と銘打たれ、1979年～1986年までを対象とした日本経済が好調で文化も活気を持っていた時代を感じさせる勢いのある批評だ。特に注目すべきユニークな点は、村上作品で最も魅力に乏しい主人公の生は前掲の『世界の終りとハードボイルド・ワンダーランド』の「私」だと高橋丁未子が述べているところである。その理由は何だろうか。本作は偶数章の「僕」を主人公とした「世界の終り」と計算士を生業とする「私」が主人公となる奇数章の「ハードボイルド・ワンダーランド」が交互に語られるパラレルワールドが繰り広げられる小説である。計算士の「私」の仕事は

特殊なものであり職業寿命が15年と短く、そのため高額収入を得ている。彼の将来の生活設計は、十分な金を貯め、年金と合わせてのんびりと暮らし、ギリシャ語とチェロを習い、うまくいけば山に別荘を買い、その山荘には「ちゃんとしたキッチンのついた小奇麗な山小屋。私はそこで本を読んだり、音楽を聴いたり、ヴィデオ・テープで古い映画を見たり、料理をしたりして過ごすのだ。」（13章）とある。高橋はこの山小屋にきちんとしたキッチンを不可欠なものとしてあげることに「そんじょそこらの男の週末料理派とは一線を画するようだ。料理に対する〈私〉の箴言は、彼の『おいしい生活』への並々ならぬエネルギーが顕著に表れているようだ。それは〈私〉のこの世界での最後の朝まで貫徹される。」（10頁、傍点原文ママ）と揶揄的に述べるのである。

「最後の朝」は、「私」の命があと24時間もないとわかった時に、司書の女性を夕食に誘い、イタリア料理のレストランで思う存分の料理とデザートとエスプレッソを満喫し、その後、彼女の家でピザをつまみにして酒を飲み、そしてその後、性交する。翌朝、「私」の人生が残り数時間で終わろうとするときに、彼女のキッチンで「私」は朝食を作るのだ。「トマトを湯むきし、にんにくとありあわせの野菜を刻んでトマト・ソースを作り、トマト・ピューレを加え、そこにストラスブルグ・ソーセージを入れてぐつぐつ煮込んだ。そしてそのあいだにキャベツとピーマンを細かく刻んでサラダを作り、コーヒーメーカーでコーヒーを入れ、フランス・パンに軽く水をふってクッキング・フォイルにくるんでオーブン・トースターで焼いた」（37章）と、初めて訪れた他人の家のキッチンで冷蔵庫にある食材を生かしての料理の腕を振るう。高橋はこの場面のことを指して「彼の『おいしい生活』への並々ならぬエネルギーが顕著に表れている」と指摘する。

高橋の言う「おいしい生活」は、1982年に、当時著名なコピーライターとして活躍していた糸井重里が、西武百貨店のキャッチコピーとして考案した言葉のことである。中央学院大学講師の永野俊雄によれば、「『おいしい生活』とは、食品やレストランを宣伝するコピーではなく、衣食住のみならず、余暇生活などあらゆる生活場面で、物質的、精神的、文化的に豊かな生活を提案する広告コピーであった」という（「特集サラリーマンの生き方―企業と個人の関係を探る―その１「おいしい生活」と企業福祉」『くらしと保険』No.351、2003年8月、5頁）。つまり、村上春樹が颯爽とデビューし、注目され始めた80年代の幕開けは、敗戦後の日本・東京が焼け野原から７年間の占領期を経て、高度経済成長期を迎えてようやく物質的、精神的、文化的に豊かな生活を手に入れた時代であり、そうした豊かさを背景に持つ主人公の欲望や指向性のスノッブさを高橋は揶揄的に批判しているのである。

高橋丁未子はなぜこれほどまでに「私」が料理に、そして生活に固執するのだろうと疑問を投げかける。そして、「私」は自身の世界が終わってしまうことを博士から知らされたときに漏らす言葉に高橋は注目する。

「家族もいませんから、今僕が消滅したって誰も困りはしません。友だちもいないから、僕がいなくなっても誰も悲しまないでしょう。それはよくわかります。でも変な話かもしれないけど、僕はこの世界にそれなりに満足していたんです。どうしてかはわからない。あるいは僕と僕自身が二つに分裂してかけあい万歳みたいなことをやりながら楽しく生きていたのかもしれない。それはわかりません。でもとにかく僕はこの世界にいたほうが落ち着くんです」（25章）を引用して高橋は、〈私〉の生活とは自分の中に完璧なひとつの家庭をつくってしまうことだったのではないだろうかと答えを導き、ひとりで家庭を作っている「私」が両性的存在になっていたとのユニークな指摘をしている。

ここでの「両性的」という言葉には解説を加える必要があるだろう。日本は2021年現在、ジェンダーギャップ指数2021では120位と低く、いまだに性別役割が根強く残っている国である。村上春樹がデビューする4年前の1975年8月末にインスタントラーメンのテレビコマーシャルで、若い女性と8歳ぐらいの幼女が「作ってあげよう～、シャンメン、フォー・ユー」と歌いながら「私作る人」と自分を指さし、若い男性が「僕食べる人」と、3人でラーメンを食べるCM放映が、「国際婦人年をきっかけとして行動を起こす女たちの会」約500人によって「食事づくりはいつも女性の仕事という印象を与え、男女の役割分担を固定化してしまうものだ」と抗議した（『朝日新聞』朝刊1975年10月28日23面）。当時の世論は、このクレームに驚いており[2]、CMどおりの役割が依然として主流であった。そうした固定化された性別役割世界の中で「私」は、そうした世相を切り捨てるかのように作る人（女性役割）と食べる人（男性役割）の両方を一人でするために、両性的という言葉を高橋丁未子は用いているのだ。『世界の終わりとハードボイルド・ワンダーランド』の「私」は、離婚経験者の35歳で独身生活を送り、作る人と食べる人を一人で行って、誰も己の中に入れない。もう一人の自分を立ち上げて他者を介入させないようにしている「私」の姿は、村上春樹が初期作品で好んで登場させていた双子も想起されるかもしれない。つまり二人に分裂させて一人の世界を完成させているのである。

以上のように、高橋丁未子の評論を軸に「おいしい生活」が提案されていた村上春樹初期作品発表時の日本の社会状況、つまり経済的に向上し、ようやく文化や精神面への豊かさが志向され始めた背景や、料理は女性が

[2] 『朝日新聞』朝刊1975年10月28日23面によると、同年10月27日にCMの中止を決定したとある。ハウス食品広報室長は、「社内でも十分議論をつくしたわけではないが、女性グループの申し入れの内容が、真剣なものであることは十分承知しているし、ともかく無視はできないというのが結論だ」とし、「ラーメンの消費そのものが冷え切っていることもあって、CMが有名になったわりには、あまり売れなかった」とある。弁護士・鍛冶千鶴子「基本的には、男女の分担を固定化する考え方にはがまんできないので、一つの前進とみるべきでしょう。」、評論家・上坂冬子は「茶の間の大多数の主婦は、そんなものに神経をいら立たせてはいない。そんな感覚では、男女差別の本当のポイントからははずれてしまう。」などの言説が挙げられている。

作るものであるとする固定化された当時の日本のジェンダーロールを示した。特に後者においては、日本的な性別役割を敢えて切り離すために料理を作る人を「私」はこなしていることが確認できる。初期作品における村上春樹のデタッチメントの方法は、他者と深く交わることなく、一個の自分を二分させ、掛け合い漫才のように一人二役で生きてきた都会生活者を主人公に据えて、日本的なるものの価値観を切り離し、自己完結型の像を物語世界に展開したものであった。

## 4. 語られ始めた家族のこと

日本近代文学の系譜には根強く私小説の伝統があるなかで、村上春樹はデビュー時から一貫してほとんど家族については語ってこなかった。2009年エルサレム賞受賞スピーチが、父親について初めて公に語ったことであり、その契機となったのが父親の死であろう。およそ10年後『猫を棄てる　父親について語るとき』（文藝春秋、2020年4月）を刊行して自らの親のことを詳しく語ったが、この著書の副題にあるように父親について語った本書には、母親のことはあまり語られていない。父親が家業の住職を継ぐことを強く引き留める母親の姿を描き出していることと、「僕の母親は大阪の船場の古い商家（戦争中の爆撃で焼けてしまったが）の長女として育った、それなりに派手好きな人だった」（26頁）と触れられている程度で、母からどのような食育を受けたのかもほとんど明かされていない。しかし、ファッション系女性週刊誌『an・an』（マガジンハウス）に2000年３月17日-2001年3月3日の1年間連載されたエッセイを加筆してまとめた『村上ラヂオ』（2001年6月、マガジンハウス）には、うなぎ、すき焼き、コロッケが好きな食べ物として描出されているなかで、母親の作るちらし寿司が楽しみであったことが語られている（126頁）。前掲『猫を棄てる』では、母親も父親同様に優秀な国語教師であったが、春樹を育てるために専業主婦になったことが綴られており（78頁、81頁）、それも併せて考えれば家庭の味は育まれていただろうことが推測できる。また、通常は論文などには引用されにくい芸能人のゴシップ記事が多く掲載される女性週刊誌を紐解くとなかなか興味深い言説に出会う。『週刊女性』1989年3月7日号には「小学生の頃は、食べものの好き嫌いが激しくて、給食もうどん以外は何も食べられない子でした。」（小学校の同級生）などの同級生の発言が掲載され、『海辺のカフカ』（新潮社、2002年9月）で描かれる四国のうどんが想起される。記事ではほかにも、母は医者の娘、父は京都大学文学部卒で名門・甲南学園の国語教師、村上春樹は教養豊かな家庭のひとり息子に生まれて、大事に育てられた、ただ、感受性が異様に鋭く、それは食べ物の嗜好にまで強く出ていたと、幼馴染じみが証言している。小学生時代の彼は、クラスでマラソンが一番遅く、鉄棒にも弱く、ちょっとしたことですぐに泣く子だったが、作文とマンガがとてもうまく、ガスパ、ブーターマンという自分で作ったキャラクターを描きまくっていた。ブーター

マンというのは彼が太っていたので、自分をブタになぞらえたものだという。そんな彼を両親はやさしく見守っていた。「彼の両親が車の免許を取った時、2人は一緒の車に乗るのはよそう、と約束したそうです。万が一のことがあったら、春樹が困るからというんです」（小学校6年生の担任だった小谷喜代子先生）という言説が掲載されている。しかし、この記事を全面的に信じることには多少の疑いの余地はある。前述したように『猫を棄てる』で村上は、母親は医者の娘ではなく、大阪の船場の古い商家の長女と語っているからだ（26頁）。そうはいっても村上の母親はまだ存命中であり、父親のことを語ったのは父親の死後であることを考慮に入れると、村上自身の言葉をそのまま信じてよいかどうかもわからない。

前出『an・an』2011年3月30日-2012年4月4日号、および『ＧＩＮＺＡ』2012年4月号に掲載されたエッセイを加筆修正してまとめた『サラダ好きのライオン　村上ラヂオ３』（マガジンハウス、2012年7月）には、「京都はぐじの蕪蒸しのおいしい季節になりましたね。」（173頁）と京都以外ではなじみのない京都の冬の郷土料理である料理名をさらりと載せている。先ほどの母親が作るちらし寿司とともに彼自身は生育した地である関西の確かな食育を受けていると思わせられる。

実は前掲書『村上レシピ』では、3作目の『羊をめぐる冒険』で初めて和食の食べ物であるいくら弁当を登場させているが（北海道・札幌から旭川に向かう列車内で食する）、それまではカタカナの食べ物ばかりでフォークとナイフを使って食べるか、手づかみで食べるかの物ばかりだったことをイラストレーターの安西水丸に訊かれて、「恥ずかしくてなかなか和食は書けなかったと告白」（62頁）している。つまり、これらのエピソードから引き出せる村上春樹作品に登場する食のセレクトは、生育された家族から距離をとるためのものとしての食であった。そこには彼がデビュー当時から意識的に土着的な日本近代文学を切り離したうえで彼自らの作品世界を出発させた方法意識を読み取れるだろう。

以上のように彼がデビュー作から意識的にドメスティックな諸要素を切り離し、翻訳調の文体を用いて〈日本的なるもの〉から距離を置いたデタッチメントの方法を、作中の食行為表現を通じて見てきた。では、ギリシャ、イタリア、アメリカの海外生活8年間を経て1995年１月17日に起きた阪神淡路大震災と同年3月22日に起きたオウム真理教のサリン事件を契機にアタッチメントへと変換した以降の村上作品で描かれる食行為はどのように描かれているだろうか。次章では震災以降に見られる村上春樹作品における食行為の表現の変化を見ていこう。

## 5. 震災のあとで

ドメステティックなものからの離脱を掲げてきた村上春樹の作品中の食行為も、阪神淡路大震災後の作品から食表現も大きく変わってきている。拙稿でもすでに論じたように村上春樹は中華料理が苦手であり、ラー

メンも食べることが出来ない[3]。これまで登場人物の食行為もパスタやうどんを食べる場面はあっても、ラーメンを食べるシーンは見られなかった。ところが、文芸月刊誌『新潮』誌上において、連作「地震のあとで」と銘打たれて発表された一連の短編群の筆頭作品である『UFOが釧路に降りる』（『新潮』1999年8月）では、珍しくも主人公・小村は「ラーメン」によって救われている。これは大きな変換点であり、注目されるべきことであろう。

秋葉原にある老舗のオーディオ機器専門店でセールスの仕事をしている小村は、突然、妻から離婚を言い渡された。妻は阪神淡路大震災直後の惨状を映し出すテレビ放映を朝から晩まで5日間見続け、突如山形の実家に帰り、戻ってこなかった。「あなたが私に何も与えてくれない」「あなたの中に私に与えるべきものが何ひとつない」という理由に対して、訳が分からないまま離婚届けに押印し妻の実家に送った。その二週後の二月に、一週間ほど有給休暇を取ることになった小村は、同僚の佐々木から飛行機の往復チケット代を持つので北海道の釧路まで小さな荷物を届けてほしいと依頼される。

小村は釧路空港で待っていた佐々木の妹のケイコに箱を手渡した後、同行していた彼女の友人のシマオと3人で街道沿いにあるラーメン屋でビールを飲み熱いラーメンを食べる。観光地としても名高い北海道・釧路なのに「ホタテラーメン」、「海鮮ラーメン」などのヴァリエーションが明示されず「ラーメン」という一般名詞であっさり表現されていることは、小村の傷心や感情の起伏が描かれず、淡々と起きた事柄をわからないなりに受け入れていくことで処理していく小村の在り方にマッチしている。釧路空港で飲んだコーヒーは、砂糖を入れたにもかかわらず味がしなかったのに、「ラーメンはとてもうまかったし、食べ終わったときにはたしかに気持ちが少し落ち着いていた」ことから、ラーメンは震災後の離婚という不意の出来事を、離人症的ともいうべき、他人事のように淡々と受け止めて

[3] 拙論「村上春樹が描く上海—『トニー滝谷』における父子の傷」（高綱博文・木田隆文・堀井弘一郎編（アジア遊学236）『上海の戦後』（勉誠出版、2019年7月）179-183頁にすでに書いたように、村上春樹が中華料理を食べられないそのルーツは、子どもの頃に父親から聞いた父親の青年期に出兵した先の戦地・中国での体験談を聞いたことによる。拙論で触れた資料以外で、今回新たに付加する資料として本文中にも上げた『女性自身』2017年3月7日号（通関2763号）「村上春樹の意外な素顔エピソード12」（頁52－54）にある言葉を紹介する。『女性自身』本誌では『一冊でわかる村上春樹』など、村上作品の解説書を執筆する「村上春樹を読み解く会代表の齋藤隆一に意見を聞きながら記事をまとめている。「村上氏の中華料理嫌いはかなり徹底していて、横浜駅にさえ降りたくないとも語っています。お酒好きの村上氏の作品には、ビールに日本酒、ウイスキーなどかなりの種類のお酒が登場しますが、これまで紹興酒が登場したことは一度もないですね。取材旅行で中国に行ったときは、食べられるものがなくてかなり苦労したと語っています。／　また学生時代のお金がないときに食べるものといえばインスタントラーメンが定番ですが、村上氏の場合はパスタ。冷蔵庫にある食材をすべて出して、パスタとあえて食べていたそうです。」（54頁）と、ラーメンすら食べられないことが記されている。

過ごしていた小村に、現実味を回復させる食として機能している。突然の離婚事態に茫漠とした彼の体に入れる食べ物としては、「ラーメン」という単純な一般名詞の方がしっくりとくるであろう。

本作品は全編を通じて、自分の身に起こっていることなのに、どこか他人事のように感じているかのような小村の描出をはじめ、震災状況を映し出すテレビ画面から離れない妻の心情、運搬を頼まれた箱の中身の謎、佐々木ケイコが兄・佐々木から小村の妻が亡くなったと伝え聞いたとする行き違いも未解決のまま放置されている。また、ラーメンを食べ終わって案内された宿泊先は墓石屋とラブホテルが交互に林立する通りにあるラブホテルであり、この配置もあたかも死と性の両極に振り子が降られて安定性に欠けるし、そもそも客人ともいえる初対面の小村に宿の紹介としてラブホテルを案内すること自体が奇妙である。しかも、シマオが話す熊退治の鈴を鳴らしながら山中でセックスをした話は、彼を性的に誘惑するためのものなのか、それとも、これまで人間が食べてきた食行為が、熊に食べられるかもしれないという逆転を示唆するものなのかが考えられるが、いずれも転覆され脅かされる不安感を与える。そうした不穏な世界に包まれながら、小村自身は投宿しナッツを食べながらビールを飲んで、シマオとの性交を試み（失敗に終わる）、そしてようやく東京から釧路まで運んできた箱の中身のことが気になり始める。シマオからひっそりとした声で「小村さんの中身が、あの箱の中に入っていた。」「だからもう小村さんの中身は戻ってこない」と聞かされた時、ようやく小村は「圧倒的な暴力の瀬戸際に立っていることに思い当たった」ことに気が付く。言ったことは冗談だと否定するシマオであるが、ラストは彼女の「まだ始まったばかりなのよ」という意味深長な言葉を置いて作品は閉じる。

以上に述べてきたように、小村にとっては困惑し混乱させられ自分の身に起こっていることを受け止めかねる徹底して不安定な世界、つまり「圧倒的な暴力の瀬戸際」にいながら、それに気が付かないでいた小村に息を吹きかけるのが、ハンバーガーでもピザでもパスタでもない、さびれた店での「とてもうまかった」ラーメンであったことは、これまでの村上春樹作品との大きな変換点であり、すでに日本的な土着性を捨象する必要がなくなったことを示している。

次に見る2009年に発表された短編『蟹』（『めきらやなぎと眠る女』新潮社、2009年11月所収、書き下ろし作品）[4]も、不穏な世界が描かれ、これ

[4] 本作が収められている短編集『Blind Willow, Sleeping Woman（めくらやなぎと眠る女）』は、外国の読者に向けて編まれた自選短編集でKnopf社のゲイリー。フィスケットジョンのアドバイスを受け、大幅に書き換えたものが収められている。『蟹』に関しては書き下ろし作品本邦初出とあるが、Crabs（Stories Magazine 2003.4）と付記されている。また序文で、短編集『回転木馬のデッド・ヒート』（講談社、1985年11月）所収の『野球場』の登場人物の一人が書いていた小説を作品化したものと言及されている（村上春樹「日本版の読者に」11頁）。『野球場』の登場人物は、25歳の銀行員で、原稿用紙70枚ほどの小説（習作）を書いて「僕」に郵送してきた。彼の字は唄でも歌うようなおおらかな文字で「僕は生まれてこの型これほど美しくて趣のあるペン字を見

までほとんど登場してこなかった食品である蟹が登場する。ただし、その不穏な世界は震災後の日本ではなく、バブル経済崩壊後の日本に生きる20代の男性が置かれた世界のそれである。本作は村上春樹の作品群でも珍しく三人称の語り手によって叙述されている。「男」「彼」「青年」「俺」の４つのヴァリエーションが組まれ、その時々によって語り分けられている。語り手は、男性主人公を恋人の「女」と対するときは「男」、客観的な視点の際の「彼」、恋人の彼女がリードしているときや無垢な問いを抱くときは「青年」、そしてその「青年」があることに気付き、認識を更新した後は「俺」として、それぞれ使い分けることで、統一化された自己にゆさぶりをかけている。

28歳で大手の銀行勤務の「男」、もしくは「彼」、「青年」、「俺」は、26歳の私立女子中学校の英語教師の「女」、「彼女」と休暇を取ってシンガポールに4泊5日のバカンスに出かけた。初日の夕方、裏通りに小さな食堂を見かける。モルタルづくりの平屋建て、メニューは外に出ておらず、時間が早いせいか老人二人が黙々と食べている以外、客はほとんど入っていなかった。調理場の窓からは、「魂のしっぽみたいなかたち」の白い湯気が上がっている。その店に入ろうと女は男を誘う。それに対し、「清潔だと思う？」と青年は躊躇するが、「遠くまで旅行に来たんだもの、少しぐらい冒険しなくちゃ。ホテルのレストランで食べてるばかりじゃつまらないじゃない。」と促す。彼女の勘は当たり、美味で安価なその店に4日間とも通い詰めた。

朝は海に行ってたっぷり泳ぎ、日光浴をして街を散歩し土産物などを買い、夕方にはその食堂で蟹料理を食べ、ホテルに戻って時間をかけてベッドで交わるという休暇を二人は過ごす。東京での忙しい生活が非現実的で遠い世界の出来事に見えてくることを二人は話題にする。旅行の最後の4日目の夜に青年は、夕食で食した胃の中にあった蟹をすべて吐いてしまった。その白い蟹肉には、無数の白い小さな虫が付着してその塊を動かしていた。同じ食事をした彼女は何事もなく眠りについている。明日は帰国という前夜、彼女とも、いや、自分自身ともうまくやっていけないことを彼は知るという内容である。

彼らは休暇中、おそらく近代的なホテルのレストランの食事と裏通りにある粗末なつくりの食堂での食事、その往還を通して変化を遂げていったと考えられる。旅行者が自国の貨幣を現地の通貨に換金し、その国の物価で飲食を楽しみ、土産物などを買う。そこには、どこか不均衡な思いが伴うはずだ。旅は、そうした世界観の崩壊ともいうべき何らかのバランス感覚を麻痺させるものを誘引する。そもそも日本人が海外旅行を楽しむようになった嚆矢は、海外旅行が自由化された1964年のことであり、そのときの旅行者の人数統計は12万8千人、この後の10年間の伸び

たことは一度としてなかった」ゆえに、その文字に魅かれて彼の小説を読むことにしたと、その小説の内容が本作『蟹』のあらすじと同一のものである。

率は毎年平均36%、その後2000年まで平均伸び率6%となり、1780万人に達した[5]。しかし、2007年ごろから「若者の海外旅行離れ」が指摘され、実際に20代の日本人の海外出国率を見ていくと1996年は24・6%、2008年以は18.4%となり6ポイント低下、日本人全体の出国率の前者は13.4%、後者の2008年は12.7%と0.7%の低下にとどまっている[6]。金融バブル崩壊90年代初頭直後はまだ海外旅行者数は伸び続け、1990年代前半まで80年代同様に20代女性は海外旅行マーケットの先頭を走っていたが、90年代後半になって停滞が続き2000年を超えて約15年間停滞状況が続いた。女性だけでなく同年代の男性旅行者数も同時期に大きく減少している。その理由はバブル後の雇用制度の大変動にさらされたために、上の世代に比べて若い世代が生活防衛を重視して消費全般に控えた態度をとるようになり、海外旅行に対しても冷淡であるという。また、この時期、市場の女性比率が男女半々に近い水準に近づき、並行してバリやタイ、韓国など近隣諸国に旅行先を選ぶ女性旅行者が増えた[7]。こうした時代背景の中で、豊かな国・ニッポンから金融バブル後の「失われた20年、30年」と言われ経済不況に見舞われている日本は、根本からの復調は見られず、コストのかかる欧米旅行から近隣諸国の国にバカンスに行く若者が増えた時代背景が本作にはある。

本作でのカップルも二十代であり、彼女は「ものを食べるって、みんなが思っているよりも大事なことなの。人生にはね、ここでひとつおいしいものをたべなくちゃならないっていうポイントがちゃんとあるの。そしてそういうときに、おいしいレストランに入るか、まずいレストランに入るかによって、人生ってがらりと変わっちゃったりもするわけ。つまりさ、塀のこっち側に落ちるか、向こう側に落ちるかみたいに」と言う。彼は「人生っていうのはけっこう恐ろしいものなんだ」と相槌を打つ。ホテルと旅先の食堂の往還で彼の塀の内か外か、その境界線に足を置いて、その不均衡さで自己が揺らぎ始める。彼女は自分たちが塀の内側に落ちたと思っているが、彼が4日間の蟹の食事で気づいたことは、自分たちが近代的で清潔なホテルに身を置くポジションから、モルタルづくりの色の褪せたキャンバス地のパラソルがテーブルの頭上に乗った裏通りの飲食店で黙って食べている老人としての生へとポジションが変更されたことだった。つまり、塀の外側に落ちたのである。80年代の経済的な繁栄を謳歌していた活気ある日本の終焉が「俺」には見える。

5 吉永淑雄,瀬戸敦子（岐阜女子大学文化創造学部）「日本人の海外観光旅行の変容―海外旅行自由化以降に注目して―」（『岐阜女子大学紀要』第48号,　2019年2月）20頁。

6 中村哲「若者の海外旅行の実態と意識に関する時系列比較２―2016年調査と2019年調査の比較―」（『玉川大学観光学部紀要』第6号,　2018年）5頁。

7 黒須宏志（JTB総合研究所フェロー）「海外渡航自由化50周年に向けて」<https://www.tourism.jp/tourism-database/column/2014/02/overseas-travel-liberalization/>. 2014年2月12日更新。

> 世界は変化を遂げたのだ、と青年は思った。いろんなものごとの順番があらかた入れ替わってしまって、もう元には戻らないのだ。すべての事物は、こうして変更を受けたまま前に進んで行くしかないのだ。明日になれば東京に帰る。もとの生活に戻っていく。表面的には何事もなかったみたいに。しかし俺はおそらくもう、この女とうまくやっていくことはできないだろう、俺が昨日まで彼女に対して感じていた気持ちは、もう二度とよみがえってこないだろう、青年にはそのことがわかった。それだけじゃない、俺はもう自分自身とさえうまくやっていけないかもしれない。俺たちは、ある意味では、高い塀の外側に落ちてしまったんだ。音もなく、痛みもなく。そして彼女はそのことに気づいてさえいない。」（傍点原文ママ、317−318頁）

果たして村上春樹の作品世界を一気に見た場合、一人二役で自己完結していた初期作品から彼の作品が時を重ねることで変容していった姿を見出せるであろうか。引用文で語られる青年、俺、この女、彼女、俺たち、この表記を通して見ていくとき、「俺たち」には彼女は含まれていない。「彼女は気づいていないのだ。そしてそれがいちばんの問題なのだ」と語り手は青年の目を通して語る。彼女は食のセレクトで塀の内側に落ちたと自認していたが、実はそうではなく塀の外側に落ちていることを「俺たち」は気づいている。4日間連日寝食を共にしても、塀の内側にいると錯覚に陥っている彼女をそのままにして「俺はおそらくもう、この女とはうまくやっていくことはできないだろう」とし、気づいている「俺たち」と気づかない彼女とを分断させている。翻って言えば、いまだ、村上春樹の作品は2000年代を過ぎても『めくらやなぎと眠る女』（『文学界』1983年12月）で描かれたように、めくらやなぎのはびこる丘に彼女を置き去りにしたまま去って行く男たちの物語は変わらないのだ。「俺たち」は前述した初期作品の掛け合い漫才をして自己完結的に生きる一人二役の「私」の成れの果ての姿である。そこには性関係を結んでも、けっして自己の中に入れようとしない強固な男の姿がある。

## 結びにかえて──「女のいない男たち」からいる男への変容

さて、このように村上春樹作品の食行動を中心に時系列的に見てくると、そこに貫いている村上春樹の作品の特徴は、直近の短編集のタイトルともなっている『女のいない男たち』（文藝春秋、2014年4月）で改めて体現されていると言えよう。女性たちと食事をし、性交し、それでも固く心を閉ざして彼女たちを中には入れようとしない村上春樹の作品群は、依然として「女のいない男たち」の物語である。紙幅の都合で前掲短編集『女のいない男たち』所収の6編すべてを紹介することはできないが、そのなかの2編の短編『ドライブ・マイ・カー』（『文藝春秋』2013年12月）と『独立器官』（『文藝春秋』2014年3月）を見て本論の結びに変えたい。本作から、動きが見え始めるのである。

『ドライブ・マイ・カー』は、俳優を生業としている49歳の「家福（かふく）」が20年間連れ添った妻を子宮がんで亡くし、妻が生前に4人の男性と肉体関係を結んでいたことに傷つき、彼女はなぜそうしなければならなかったのか、その理由を知りたいという思いに駆られて悶々と苦しむ男の物語である。家福は、演じる舞台に通う交通手段として、二十代半ばの運転のうまい女性・渡利みさきを雇う。女性ドライバーであることに偏見を抱いていた家福だったが、彼女の運転の技は優れたものだった。家福は妻の死後、妻と性関係にあった家福より6，7歳年下の男性に近づき「友人」となった。妻がどうしてその男と寝ることになったのか知りたくて近づいたのだ。相手の男性・高槻とは月に二度、半年ほど都内のバーで定期的に会い、酒を飲み交わす。この作品には食事場面はない。ちなみに渡利みさきも口にするのは煙草だけである。

高槻に家福は「僕にとって何よりつらいのは」「僕が彼女を—少なくともそのおそらくは大事な一部を——本当には理解できていなかったということなんだ。そして彼女が死んでしまった今、おそらくはそれは永遠に理解されないままに終わってしまうだろう。深い海の底に沈められた小さな堅い金庫みたいに。そのことを思うと胸が締めつけられる」と語る。高槻はそれについてしばし考えて、そして口を開いた。「しかし、家福さん、誰かのことをすべて理解するなんてことが、僕らに果たしてできるんでしょうか？　たとえその人を深く愛しているにせよ。」「結局のところ僕らがやらなくてはならないのは、自分の心と上手に正直に折り合いをつけていくことじゃないでしょうか。本当に他人を見たいと望むのなら、自分自身を深くまっすぐ見つめるしかないんです。僕はそう思います」という。家福にとっての問いは、なぜ、妻が自分以外の男と寝なければならなかったのかということだった。高槻は、「誰か」のことを理解するなどは不可能だから、せいぜい自分の心と向き合うことが大切だと述べる。この答えを聴いた後、家福は、突然、高槻と関係を断つ。

渡利みさきは、妻が家福のほかの男性と寝るのは、心を惹かれてのことでなく、病のようなものであり、考えてどうなるものではない、みさきが幼少期に父に棄てられ、母親から虐待を受けてきたのも病がしたことで、考えても仕方がない、呑み込んでただやっていくしかないという。この言葉を聞いて家福は車内で「少し眠るよ」とこたえ、言葉を発することなく運転し続けるみさきに感謝するところで終わる。

家福にとっては高槻の言葉は受けいれられず、みさきの言葉は受け入れられたようだ。この差はいったい何だろう。他者との関係は、理解しようとしても無駄で、高槻はその分、自分を掘り下げろと言い、みさきは呑み込んでただやっていくことを勧める。全く異なるベクトルの答えであるが、共通しているのは他者理解への断念である。差は、高槻の場合は相手を自己の問題から引き離し疎隔することで対応する、みさきはただ呑み込むこと、つまり理解はできないが受容することを提案する。丸呑み行為は、咀嚼してから呑み込む食行為と異なり、消化に相当な時間がかかるで

あろう。もしかしたら消化できないかもしれない。だが、その時間がかかる受容行為を家福は選んだと考えられる。受容行為はこれまで本論で見てきた作品群には見られない初めての流れであることを指摘しておきたい。

本論の最後に紹介する『独立器官』は、「僕」（谷村）が語る渡会医師の恋煩いによる拒食による衰弱死が描かれる。渡会は52歳で、親から引き継いだ六本木の医院で美容整形外科医をしている独身主義者であり、交際する女性は人妻か本命の恋人を持つ女性に限り30年ほど過ごしていた。彼はカクテルも作れるし、肉じゃがからスズキの紙包み焼まで、一通りの料理を作ることが出来る。語り手・谷村は、彼とスポーツジムで出会い、スカッシュの相手として交際し、ゲームが終わると生ビールを共に飲む仲だった。そうした会話のなかで複数の女性と知的な会話と食事とセックスを楽しむ都会的でスマートな渡会の生活を谷村は知るのだが、やがて渡会は16歳年下の人妻に恋をし、その思いを和歌「逢ひ見ての　のちの心に　くらぶれば　昔はものを　思はざりけり　権中納言敦忠」に託して、恋しく思う女性と会って身体を重ね、後に感じる深い喪失感を語る。渡会は彼女と1年半付き合い、自分とはいったい何者なのか内省的に考えるようになった。この苦しい恋煩いを語るとき、二人の間にはフライドポテトとピクルス、生ビール、そしてブラック・アンド・タンの大きなグラスを傾けている。

「私が得意なことと言えば、おいしいピノ・ノワールを選んだり、顔の利くレストランや鮨屋やバーを何軒か知っていたり」するぐらいで、「アウシュビッツに送られたら、そんなものは何の役にも立ちません」と渡会は口にする。「自分とはいったいなにものなのだろう」、この問いの出口らしきものは見つからず、彼女に恋をしてからは、これまでの遊戯的な恋愛生活に興味が持てなくなり、命を懸ける初めての想いに身を焦がす。思い浮かぶのは彼女の事ばかりの状態に陥った彼が、拒食に陥ったのは、恋する彼女には夫以外に本命の男性がいて、その男性と駆け落ちをして渡会のもとを去ったことによる。二か月足らずで彼は拒食による心不全で死去する。死去したとき体重は半分になっていた。

谷村は渡会を語り始めるとき、「内的な屈折や屈託があまりに乏しいせいで、そのぶん驚くほど技巧的な人生を歩まずにはいられない種類の人々」の一人としている。「そして彼らが何かの拍子に、どこかから差し込んできた特別な陽光に照らされ、自らの営みの人工性に、あるいは非自然性にはっと思い当たると、事態は時として悲痛な、また時として喜劇的な局面を迎えることとなる」と語る。あらかじめ、この語り手は渡会を「技巧的な人生、人工性、非自然性」の枠組みで語るのだが、渡会の聞き手である谷村の人生は語られない。都会の生活者で絵に描いたように恵まれた環境に育った渡会の恋煩いによる死、悲喜劇ともいえる52年間の人生の晩年の出来事を語る谷村は何者なのか。物を書いて生活しているとあり、また、渡海が谷村に残した形見であるスカッシュのラケットが軽すぎるとい

う谷村は、渡会を上回る相当な人物なのか。谷村は、この物語の最後にある達観を述べて幕を閉じている。

すべての女性には、嘘をつくための特別な独立器官のようなものが特別に生まれつき備わっているという渡会が残した言葉をあげ「僕らの人生を高みに押し上げ、谷底に突き落とし、心を戸惑わせ、美しい幻を見せ、時には死にまで追い込んでいくそのような器官の介入がなければ、僕らの人生はきっとずいぶん素っ気ないものになることだろう。あるいは単なる技巧の羅列に終わってしまうことだろう。」「自分がなにものであるか、末期近くなって彼には答えらしきものが見えてきたのかもしれない。そして渡会医師はそのことを僕に伝えたかったのかもしれない」と谷村はこの物語の筆をおく。語り手・谷村は自分を一応の安全圏に身を置きながら、人が人と関わることの恐ろしさを、同時にその素晴らしさを語る。自分の身を安全な場所に置かなければ、「女のいる男たち」の物語は、なかなか語れはしない。

以上に見てきたように、飲食を共にして性交し交際しても、それでも自己の中に女性＝他者を入れない村上春樹の作品群の根本には、『独立器官』で見たように「女」への恐怖があるだろう。自分とは異なる特別な器官を持ち、男たちを翻弄する存在としてある。だから、登場人物たちは容易に自己の中に入れず、かたくなにドアを閉め続けた。しかし、そうした身を守る行為は、人生の後半期になっていかに味気ないものなのか、そして最も大切なことは、そうした「女」の存在がなくては、自分が何者であるかがわからないと認識するに至っている。それを谷村の語りを通して表現しているが、本論のテーマである村上春樹作品の食と性をめぐる表現は、日本的なるものからの離陸から始まり、そうした時空間の中で自己を二つに分裂して自己対話を行い、やがて他者へ向けてその理解への矛先を向けるが、それはあまりに難しく、2014年の段階では、まだ丸呑みして受容する方法しか達していない。しかし、それでも2010年代の村上春樹作品には大きな動きがあったことを記して、この論の終わりとしたい。2017年2月『騎士団長殺し』（新潮社）を発表し、6年間の結婚生活を突然の妻からの申し出によって離婚し、傷つき、放浪し、やがて別れた妻が産んだ子を、自分の子として育てていこうと決め、実際に育てている男性主人公・「私」の姿を映し出して作品を終えている。呑み込むことが出来ない現実を、「父親」を引き受け、少しずつ消化していくさまは、これからの村上春樹作品でも見いだせるのではないかと思われる。

# Digesting the foreign. Food and Eating in the works of Tawada Yōko

Francesco Eugenio Barbieri

**Abstract:** This paper aims at analyzing the representation of food and eating in seminal works by Japanese author Tawada Yōko. The first part of this contribution will analyze the connection between food and metamorphosis, focusing especially on *Das Bad* and *Yōgisha no yakōressha*, works that belong to an earlier stage of the production of Tawada. The second part of this contribution will specifically inspect the representation and the metaphor of food in the works written in the aftermath of the 3.11 such as *Kentōshi*, *Fushi no shima* and the poem *Hamlet no see*.

**Keyword**: food, eating, metamorphosis, foreignness, Tawada Yōko, 3.11.

**要旨**: 本論文の目的は、日本の作家多和田葉子の代表的な作品における食物と食べることの表現を分析することである。第一部では、特に「Das Bad」および「容疑者の夜行列車」の中で、食べ物と変身の関係を分析する。第二部では、「献灯使」、「不死の島」、「ハムレットの海」などのよく知られた作品を例に、3.11後に書かれた作品における食物の表現とメタファーを具体的に分析することである。

**キーワード**: 食べ物、食べる、多和田葉子、変身、３.１１。

Japanese writer 多和田葉子 Tawada Yōko is today one of the most renowned examples of transcultural writer in the international literary scenario. Born in Tokyo in 1960, she obtained a degree in Russian literature from the prestigious Waseda University. After her degree, she left Japan and traveled through Russia on the Trans-Siberian Railway. In 1982 she arrived in Germany, where she still lives nowadays. At first she settled in Hamburg, a city where she remained until 2006, and then she relocated to Berlin. In these years she continued her studies with a MA and a PhD. Alongside her academic research, she started writing prose, poetry and theatrical pieces, first in Japanese and then, as she became progressively confident with the language, in German.

Critics agree that Tawada's migration experience is totally different from the case of a relocation that is motivated by financial or political purposes: she did not leave her home country in search for a better life or better economic conditions. On the contrary, her migration is somehow related to an intellectual dimension, the circulation of ideas, and a natural curiosity for different worlds and cultures. For this reason, her writing production in German (the language of her "host country") is radically different from what falls under the definition

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of "Gastarbeiterliteratur", or "Literature of the Migration". Tawada's work, written in the two languages, is what we can define a literary case not only in her native country or in her adoptive one, but also on a more global scale of literary circulation. In one of his most recent publications, world literature scholar David Damrosch defines Tawada as a "contemporary global writer" (Damrosch 2020, 9). This is evidenced not only by a rising commercial success, but also by a steadily increasing number of studies, articles and books from Japanese, European and American scholars worldwide, which established what I would define a proper "Tawada-phenomenon" spreading among contemporary literary critics. Additionally, we could define her work as the result of a curiosity that is first of all intellectual and ethnological. It is a personal research that is located in a space that is not national anymore, but rather global, in order to meet and, when possible, merge different cultures and forms of expression.

In my opinion, this is the main aspect that differentiates her from the German "Migrant literature", especially if we consider the peculiar characteristics and themes of her writing. Tawada herself defines her literature as "exophonic". She heard the term "exophony" for the first time in 2002, during a symposium in Senegal organized by the Goethe Institut in Dakar, to which she had been invited as a writer who used German for her literary production (Tawada 2012a, 3). She perceived the term "exophony" as something with a more omni-comprehensive meaning in comparison to terms like "creole literature" (クレオール文学) or "migrant literature" (移民文学). In her opinion, exophony (エクソフォニー) can be defined as a "general state of being outside the mother tongue" (母語の外に出た状態一般を指す).[1] Suga underlines how the exophonic dimension of Tawada consists in her use of the foreign language, in this case German, for daily interactions and creative purposes: indeed, exophony is the basis of her poetics (Suga 2007, 26–7).

A particular characteristic of her writing is a constant re-adaptation of traditional literary genres, also obtained through an intense reflection on the nature of language itself and on the migration intended as a general, global phenomenon; this encompasses not only the relocation of people for economic purposes, but also the movement around the globe for intellectual and artistic research and performance. The textual and rhetorical strategies used by Tawada in her writings are mainly two: the first and more frequent strategy is the use of irony to deconstruct stereotypes and to criticize our superficial vision of other cultures and forms of expression. The second one is what the author herself has defined as a "mixed-writing". This is a merge of cultural traditions, both Japanese and European, but also the simultaneous use of two languages, Japanese and German, often with an experimental purpose.

Since relocating to Germany in 1982, in her whole literary production Tawada has constantly reflected on issues such as the construction of identity of the

[1] Tawada 2012a, 3 (all translations from Japanese to English are my own for the purpose of this article).

migrant subject, as well as on the forms of cultural contamination in the global world. Therefore, recurrent and symbolically inescapable themes in Tawada's work are metamorphosis and transformations, intended both in a physical and textual sense: the main characters of her novels are often undergoing radical changes in their body appearance, transforming themselves into animals, changing sex or becoming hybrid mythological and legendary creatures. This topic has been the object of several studies and it is very easy to connect the theme of the metamorphosis to the changes that the migrant subject undergoes during the process of relocation and adaptation into a new environment and a new culture. Additionally, the metamorphosis is, for Tawada, often linked to the foreign language acquisition process: by increasingly mastering the foreign idiom, the individual evolves and changes from the person that he/she was before confronting with a different culture.

On the other hand, a theme that in my opinion is worth exploring further is Tawada's representation and use of food—simple food and most of the times traditional Japanese ingredients like fish or plain rice, but also fruit, vegetables and bread. Food is used by the author as a narrative metaphor that varies according to the different situations and the message that she wants to convey to the reader. According to Hui, in Tawada the mouth of the protagonist is a sort of transformative space in which foreign languages and, more in general, foreignness start to be digested and assimilated (Hui 2020, 200). In this sense Hui re-reads the concept of exophony in Tawada as a sensibility for consuming new words of a foreign language that is similar to eating food, a process that happens in a voracious and naive way. For both Tingting Hui (2020, 201) and Chantal Wright (2008, 27), exophony is a matter of literary style more than literary content.

According to what has been expressed so far, this contribution will analyze the representation of food in some of the most famous novels and stories by Tawada, with the aim to understand the functions of the act of eating in the text, as well as how food is used as a narrative device to catalyze the narration, to develop the events and to symbolize meanings. To do so, I will draw examples from a selection of narrative and lyrical works, chosen among the vast literary corpus of the author on the basis of their wide circulation and relatively big impact on critics and readers globally. Most of these works have had several translations in different languages that have made them accessible to a wider transnational audience.

One of her earlier and most famous writings is called *The bath* (the German title is *Das Bad*, and the Japanese one is *urokomochi* (うろこもち), which I would translate with *With scales*). Although very short, this novel has a very complicated plot, dense in symbolic meanings, which is open to many interpretations. It was originally written in Japanese at the end of the Eighties, but, as stated by Tawada in the 覚え書き *oboegaki* (memorandum) of the Japanese/German edition, since she was not famous in Japan at the time, it was published first in its German translation made by Japanese literature scholar Peter Pörtner (Tawada 2010, 189). The text raised the interest of critics and publishing houses and various additional translations were realized from the German one. Tawada admitted that it was very interesting to see how many versions of an unpublished book were coming out, so she deliberately decided not to release the original Japanese one until 2010, when an edition with parallel Japanese and German text was published (Tawada 2010, 188–9). The novel is one of the most cited works in the large production of Tawada and it gained critical attention not only in Germany and Japan but also worldwide, thanks to the English translation published in 2002. It is the story of a Japanese woman who lives in Germany, whose occupation changes many times throughout the novel (is she a model? an interpreter? maybe a typist?). One day, while she's working on a translation service, she loses her tongue after eating a fish at a business lunch.

In *The bath* we encounter different metamorphoses related and activated or accelerated (or both) by a common factor: eating. The first one is narrated at the very beginning of the book. It has the form of a traditional Japanese story, told by the I-narrator herself while realizing that she is starting to transform into some kind of fish-woman:

> Once upon a time there was an impoverished village in a valley where no rice would grow. A pregnant woman was so hungry that when she found a fish one day she wolfed it down raw without sharing it with the other villagers. The woman gave birth to a lovely baby boy. Afterwards, her body grew scales, and she turned into an enormous fish. She could no longer survive on land, and went to live all by herself beneath the river.[2]

The act of selfishly eating all by herself and not sharing the food with the other villagers causes a punishment that transforms her into a fish. Eating is related to something magic, but eating in Tawada can also be connected to something nightmarish and unnatural, as narrated in the second story related to the act of ingesting food, a few pages after:

> Once, a long time ago, there was a village in which lived a gluttonous woman. She worked hard and had a good disposition, and so she was well-liked in the village, but she ate so many helpings of rice that her husband thought it strange. Moreover, she forbade others to watch her eat, and would take her meals alone at night in the barn. One night the man crept up to the barn to watch, and he saw that each of the woman's hairs had turned into a snake and was eating rice. Astonished, the man got out his rifle and shot the woman dead.[3]

These two stories, as aforementioned, anticipate some kind of metamorphosis that the narrator of the main story is undergoing. The first story is narrated when, one day, she wakes up and finds her body all covered in little scales; the second one is inserted when she sees her hair full of spores of poisonous mushrooms and carcasses of winged insects. These two stories about food-caused metamorphosis seem to anticipate what is going to be the real change in the

[2] Tawada 2002a, 4.

[3] Tawada 2002a, 8.

main character's body: she will transform into a hybrid between a human and a fish, a woman covered in scales.

Chapter 3 is the turning point of the narration. The protagonist works as an interpreter; one day, she receives a call from a Japanese firm that has arranged a lunch for its German clients, and asks her to do a consecutive translation on that occasion. Here, we are said that:

> When my work takes me to an exclusive restaurant, I always order sole. Sole, unlike flounder, never tastes bland, and it's also not fatty like salmon. I don't know anything more delicious in Western cuisine. But it's not just because of the taste I insist on sole. It's the word itself. [...] When I eat sole, I'm never at a loss for words with which to translate.
>
> On this day, however, one large fish was ordered for the whole party, so I wasn't able to order sole.[4]

Unfortunately, in the English translation, the real wordplay made by the author could not be rendered. But, if we go back to the original Japanese text and its German translation, the meaning of this passage is more than clear: "sole" in Japanese is 舌びらめ *shitabirame*, and in German is *Seezunge*. Both words have something in common in their respective language: they contain the word "tongue". In German is *Zunge* and in Japanese is 舌 *shita*. The first thing that we are told is that, if the narrator doesn't eat a sole, she would not be able to find the words for her translation. This is one of the most studied and cited examples of linguistic puns by Tawada and, as Rainer Guldin underlines (2020, 67), the preference of the narrator for this specific type of fish is a deliberate metaphor used by the author to signify that, by eating the sole, the protagonist is actually gaining an help and a boost with her work as an interpreter. What gives her the ability to translate is the act of eating a fish that contains the word "tongue" in its name, as if the narrator needs to properly eat a tongue: the protagonist of the narration confesses here that it's through this specific type of food, with these specific properties, that she acquires or at least improves her ability to speak another language, because food helps her translating when words don't come to her mind. We can observe that eating and interpreting are two very similar things: both actions involve "chewing" some foreign entities, words or edibles, in one's own mouth. This act of chewing results then in two different outputs: on one hand it introduces nutrients for the body and on the other it produces foreign words directed to the external.

But during the luncheon, another type of fish is served. The character loses the ability to speak properly and she is not able to eat her usual sole in order to have an additional support to her translating activity. Soon afterwards, she loses consciousness and she dreams of a fish eating her tongue. When she wakes up, rescued by a mysterious woman, her tongue has disappeared. The loss of her physical tongue coincides, of course, with the loss of her ability to speak. This is

[4] Tawada 2002a, 14.

anticipated by another food image: at the restaurant, during the luncheon, the big fish that is taken to the table it is described as follows:

> At this point, the master chef and his assistant carried in a large fish [ ... ]. The white, swollen belly of the fish looked like a fat woman's thigh, and perhaps because of this, the arrival of the fish at the table was greeted with suppressed laughter. The fish's back was blue-green and thickly covered with translucent scales. One chef skillfully slid a knife from tail to head, stripping away the scales. There was a burst of applause. The eyes had already been removed. The open mouth had no tongue in it. The chef rapidly cut up the body and divided it among eleven plates. Finally, only the eyeless fish-head and backbone remained.[5]

In this sense, the main course of the lunch anticipates the destiny of the protagonist, who will remain mute for the rest of the novel, with the tongue ripped away and stolen by a sole in a dream. Without her tongue, of course she loses the ability to talk and, all in all, her identity as a mediator between two different cultures.

Christine Ivanovic and Miho Matsunaga underline how in Tawada's novels the act of eating is very often responsible for a change, a metamorphosis. Eating and drinking, or in a broader sense introducing something into one's body, brings something strange, magic, demonic, prohibited in the body itself (Ivanovic and Matsunaga 2011, 118). Corporeal transformations involve not only the appearance, but also the innermost essence. This metamorphosis is represented mainly as a corporeal change, but I believe it can be interpreted as a refined textual strategy that the author uses to mirror the transformations undergone by the migrant subjects when they relocate in a place different from their homeland. With the migration, they also metaphorically relocate in a new language, a virtual space that they have to occupy, that they have to "ingest and digest" we might say, in order to acquire the ability to speak the idiom. When moving to a new country, the migrants bring with them their own subjectivity and their cultural experience, a heritage that is enriched and transformed by the contact with a new culture, by the everyday life in a distant place and its values, customs and lifestyles. An invisible but important transformation that Tawada chooses to represent through the topos of bodily metamorphosis, in this case triggered by food.

There are many more examples of food related to metamorphosis in Tawada's works. Many of the themes and motifs that are present in *The bath* will recur also in another publication: *Yōgisha no yakōressha* (Night train with suspects 容疑者の夜行列車, 2002b), a collection of thirteen short episodes all related to the theme of the travel by train. An originally stylistical feature of the text is the second person narrator (あなた *anata* in the original Japanese) instead of the more traditional third person narrator or first person narrator. Also, the sex of the protagonist of the episodes remains deliberately unclear

[5] Tawada 2002a, 16.

until the end of the book (Königsberg 2011, 103). With these techniques, Tawada achieves a higher degree of depersonalization of the protagonist of her stories, and enacts a narrative perspective that points in the direction of the reader who, therefore, is assigned with a higher potential of identification with the sequence of events.

As Ivanovic and Matsunaga point out (2011, 118), the seventh chapter of *Yōgisha no yakōressha*, titled *Habarofusuku e* (To Khabarovsk ハバロフスクへ), contains an example of representation of food whose ingestion is later linked to a metamorphosis of the main character. The protagonist of the story wakes up during a night-journey on a train through Siberia, with the urge to use the restroom but, unexpectedly, somehow she falls off the train and finds herself in a desolate and frozen place in the middle of the steppe. There is nothing in sight so she starts following the railroad and finally finds a small group of houses. The narrator enters one of those houses to look for a shelter where she finds a mysterious man who, to warm her up, offers her some sort of sweet and sour apple mousse:

> 「石炭ストーブが燃え、その上に鍋がかけてある。中から湯気が立ち、りんごを煮ているような甘酸っぱいにおいが立ちこめていた。それは何ですか、と尋ねると、男は答える代わりに、木の腕に鍋の中のものを盛ってテーブルの上に置いた。黄色いどろどろとした物が入っていた。舌が焼けるほど熱く、木の匙ですくって、飲み下すと身体の中を熱い柱が伸びていくようだった。」

> A coal stove was burning, and steam was coming from the pot boiling at its top. The smell was sweet and sour, as if apples were being simmered. When you asked what it was, instead of answering, the man poured the contents of the pot inside a wooden bowl and placed it on the table. There was a yellowish sludge inside. It was so hot that it burned your tongue, and when you took a wooden spoon and swallowed it down, it was as if a hot pillar was growing into your body.[6]

After the ingestion of this local delicacy, the narrator is invited by her host to take a bath into a big tub of apparently hot water. While undressing, the protagonist notices that she has transformed into an androgynous being:

> 男は満足そうにうなずいたが、その場を去ろうとしない。あなたは、仕方なく、服を脱ぎながら、いつの間にか両性具有になっている自分の身体をそれほど驚きもせずに眺めていた。

The man nodded, satisfied, but refused to leave. While reluctantly taking off your clothes, you looked at your body, that had somehow become hermaphrodite, without much surprise.[7]

[6] Tawada 2002b, 89–90. There is a complete English translation of the story, realized by Jessiqa Greenblatt and published in the collection *Digital Geishas and Talking Frogs: The Best 21st Century Short Stories from Japan*, edited by Helen Mitsions, Cheng & Tsui Company, Inc., 2011. However, the translation of the Japanese passages quoted in this contribution are by the author.

[7] Tawada 2002b, 92.

The metamorphosis that is triggered by the ingestion of food is here different from the previous metamorphosis. It is true that, in the works of Tawada, the identity of the foreign person who travels or relocates abroad has always been presented as a fluid concept. In the case of *The bath* the protagonist changes her appearance and gradually transforms into a fish-woman, while in *Yōgisha no yakōressha*, and in particular in this example from chapter 7, the character becomes androgynous. Specifically, this case is not a transformation of the protagonist into the opposite sex, but a stage in between in which the protagonist has both male and female physical attributes. The development of the male part, especially the growth of the male sexual organ and its consequent turgidity, is triggered by the ingestion of the aforementioned apple mousse:

> さっき食べた甘酸っぱいりんごムースが腸の中で酸酵し始め、下半身がなんだか落ち着かなくなってきた。
>
> The sweet and sour apple mousse you had eaten earlier began to ferment in your bowels, and your lower body started to feel somehow unsettled.[8]

We should also note that the growing of a new and "foreign" sexual organ, just near the one the narrator was born with, might also be seen as an anticipation of the final revelation of the sex of the protagonist. At this point of the narration, the male host pushes the protagonist underwater and this androgynous being starts to drown. In this moment she feels that the boundary represented by the body seems to dissolve as she is not able to understand whether the water comes from outside or inside herself:

> それはあなたを包んでいるのか、それとも、あなたの中から流れ出てきたものなのか、外と中とが溶け合って、どうでもよくなってくる。
>
> Whether it surrounded you or flew out of you, the outside and the inside melted together and it didn't matter anymore [...].[9]

Instead of drowning and dying, she wakes up back in the train and she realizes, as we readers do at the same time, that it was all just a dream.

In this work Tawada is clearly problematizing and denying the idea of a fixed, predetermined identity. Both the use of the second person *anata* and the metamorphosis of the protagonist into an androgynous being reflects the attention of Tawada for the dissolution of clear boundaries, in this specific case the dichotomies character/reader and male/female. Instead, she loves in-between spaces, ravines (or to use the Japanese word 狭間 *hazama*) between languages, cultures and identities: in those places her literature takes form and develops. For Tawada, these are the best places to reside because they are spaces from which

8 Tawada 2002b, 93.

9 Tawada 2002b, 94.

one can observe two different realities from a privileged external, nevertheless still close position. The fact that the very narration of the events in chapter 7 of *Yōgisha no yakōressha* is happening in a dreamlike space seems to reinforce this interpretation, as dreams can be seen as space suspended between reality and imagination. Also in this case, this transformation is caused by the ingestion of food, a sort of not specified dish made with apples. The same thing can be assumed for the metamorphosis of the protagonist of *The bath*, anticipated and thematized by metaphors related to food, whose body remains in an intermediate state between a human being and a fish, without ever completing her transformation into an aquatic animal.

In the examples above we have noticed how Tawada uses food as a sort of starter for metamorphosis and how these changes are not radical transformations, rather states in-between that might symbolize what Tawada considers a privileged position from which observing reality, and maybe writing about it.

Food assumes a different role in some of the production written after the events of March 2011, where, in works that deal in a more straightforward way with the disaster, it starts to be associated with something dangerous or poisonous.

Tawada reflects on the possible dangers of the contamination of food in a poem called *Hamuretto no umi* (The sea of Hamlet ハムレットの海).[10] The poem is written in Japanese but it contains many English words: code-mixing and the interplay of multiple idioms in a single poem is not new in the poetic production of Tawada.[11] Nevertheless this piece of literature is peculiar because it is one of the few that does not involve the relationship between German and Japanese but it presents language puns between Japanese and English. The English words and lines of the poem are taken from the Shakespearean soliloquy, the famous "To be or not to be" speech pronounced by Prince Hamlet in the third act of the homonymous play. Generally considered as one of the masterpieces of world literature, it is a reflection on the polarity between life and death and uncertainty and doubt. Its impact in time has been huge and even today it continues to have a great echo in media and cultures around the world.

Tawada's poem draws inspiration from Shakespeare in order to express people's anxiety and doubts after the Fukushima accident, in particular concerning the contamination of land and food. After the disaster, many people believed that products coming from the area of Fukushima might have been contaminated. One of the central points expressed in the poem is whether is it safe to eat; this doubt is conveyed in the very first lines of the composition, in which Tawada plays with the homophony between the Japanese *kue* (to eat 喰え) and the first syllable of the English word "question", the central word and concept of the Shakespearean soliloquy:

[10] Sometimes it is also called *Hamlet no sea* or *Hamlet no see*. I was not able to trace the exact writing date of the poem, but I suppose it was written shortly after the triple disaster, around 2011.

[11] See for instance Mazza 2016.

> 喰え、喰え、クエスチョン、
> 食べられるのか、
> フクシマのトマト、フクシマのキャベツ、フクシマの大根、
> です、と書いてある　やおやのマジックペンで
> 喰え、喰えず、クエスチョン、
> that is the question: Whether 安全か危険か
> 危険だけど健康　いいえ　安全だけと病気にはなる[12]

The act of eating becomes an act of doubt, and the question here is whether it is safe to eat the products from Fukushima. The poem seems to offer no definitive answer but just continuous contradictions, an uncertainty that reflects the great state of anxiety and of doubt that permeated Japanese people immediately after the catastrophe.

Another important manifestation of this new idea of food in the work of Tawada can be found in the story *Fushi no shima* (*The island of eternal life* 不死の島, 2011), included in *March was made of yarn* (2012b), a collection of pieces on the 3.11 disaster written by famous Japanese writers and translated in English.

Here there is only a brief mention to food, which is represented again as something potentially damaging and poisonous. The story opens with the first-person narrator that is coming back to Berlin from a trip to New York. At the airport, passing through the passport control, when handing her Japanese document she is immediately looked at as if both herself and the passport were contaminated or dangerous. She then has to reassure the immigration officer that, despite being of Japanese nationality, she is coming from New York and she is, indeed, resident in Germany. In addition, the narrator is travelling with a suitcase full of Japanese food bought in the United States, a suitcase that has been lost in the trip:

> The suitcase I'd checked in New York did not arrive in Berlin. I went to the Lost and Found, and while I was writing down the color and the shape of the suitcase, together with my address in Berlin, and other necessary information, something awful occurred to me. In downtown Manhattan I loaded up with Japanese food that wasn't available in Berlin, such as soba noodles made from mountain potato, fermented soybeans, seaweed in vinegar, and spicy fish roe, all of which I'd packed in my suitcase. If it was opened, those packages, covered with words in Japanese,

[12] The full text is available here: https://www.lyrikline.org/en/poems/hamlet-no-see-13807 (last access: September 23rd, 2021).
I would translate the part quoted in the text as follows:
Eat, eat, question
can you eat it?
Tomatoes from Fukushima, cabbages from Fukushima, radishes from Fukushima
is written with the magic pen of the greengrocer
eat, can't eat, question
that is the question: whether safe or dangerous
dangerous but healthy—no—safe but you get sick

> would surely be confiscated as dangerous material and sent to a Radioactive Waste Management Facility. The fermented soybeans might even be mistaken for peanuts that had undergone some rapid mutation due to radiation.[13]

In this passage we see how traditional food is considered dangerous, mainly because it is supposed to have a connection with the nuclear accident that happened in Japan that same year. Especially *nattō* (納豆), fermented soybeans, a peculiar Japanese food that most foreigners find disgusting because of its stinging scent and unconventional taste, might be misunderstood and mistaken for some sort of corrupted form of life because of its singular slimy consistency. And it does not matter if it was bought in the United States and not in Japan: as far as the food is recognizably Japanese it is immediately associated with danger in those days after the catastrophe. Here, Tawada is clearly ironizing and problematizing stereotypes against Japanese people, using food as a metaphor for the fear of the foreign. The same fear is symbolized in the opening scene, where the immigration officer is afraid to touch the Japanese passport because it might be contaminated. As noted by Seungyeong Kim, passports are the symbol of predetermined identities (Kim 2020, 260) that bind the protagonist to a dimension of foreignness: even if she is able to demonstrate that she has a permanent resident permit stamp, the officer is still nervous (Tawada 2012b, 3).

Later in the story we are informed that the protagonist went to New York in order to buy a plane ticket to go back to Japan from an illegal travel company operating from the back of a small vegetable shop in Manhattan. But once she got there, the agency had disappeared, and the same destiny would occur to her suitcase containing all the Japanese food she bought in New York. Apparently, any relation with Japan, expressed in terms of food, strangely disappears without a specific reason, as to underline the isolation in which the country finds itself after the nuclear catastrophe.

Tawada's renown masterpiece of the post-Fukushima period is *Kentōshi* (published in Japanese in 2014 and translated in English in 2018 with both the titles *The last children of Tokyo* and *The emissary*, 献灯使). This novel, the first long piece of writing that deals with 3.11 events, is a re-elaborated version of some themes of Tawada's previous works. It was written shortly after the accident and after a visit that Tawada made to Fukushima (Kim 2020, 254). The English translation by Margaret Mitsutani was awarded the National Book Award for Translated Literature in 2018 and, since then, the novel has been translated in several foreign languages.

The novel tells the story of a Japan that is devastated by a terrible and unnamed accident. This catastrophe moves and isolates the archipelago further into the Pacific Ocean, more distant from the coastline of continental Asia. The accident and its physical consequences result in an isolationist policy of the national government that bans all international travels, and cuts off every communication and connection

13 Tawada2012b, 4.

with the rest of the world, creating a situation similar to the one experienced by Japan during the Tokugawa period. But *Kentōshi* is, most of all, a story of inversion and distortion of the normal course of events, a betrayal of the expectations of the reader. Occurring sometime after the terrible accident, the normal logic here is completely distorted: old men start to live a very long and apparently healthy life, while young children, especially those born after the unnamed accident, become weaker and, as time passes, more and more dependent on the elders' care. This subverts the usual course of events where children initially depend on the care of the adults who, in turn, become old and rely on the assistance of the young that have now grown up.

*Kentōshi* tells the story of Yoshirō and Mumei, respectively grandfather and grandson. Yoshirō takes care of all the needs of his grandchild Mumei who, instead of growing healthy and strong, as the reader would expect, is everyday weaker. His health gets worse as he progressively loses his teeth and his bones are unable to absorb calcium from food. This is not a characteristic of the young protagonist alone, but is a common feature of all the Japanese children that are born after the unnamed accident. The book is pretty much the story of the everyday life of these two characters in the shadow of the aftermath and, as noted by Dan Fujiwara, can be divided into two main parts. The first part occupies the majority of the narration and it is the very accurate description of a Tuesday morning in the life of Mumei and Yoshirō. In the second part, which corresponds to the end of the book, Mumei is chosen as an emissary to India for a mission to an experimental laboratory where scientists are trying to find a cure for the condition affecting these children. The narrative is a sort of long description of the present conditions in which the protagonists live, interrupted by frequent flashbacks of Yoshirō's previous life in the form of recollection, not organized in chronological order (Fujiwara 2020, 156).

Even if the story does not deal with food as its primary topic, there are several passages in which food and the act of eating are described as problematic for the protagonists. These passages are generally associated by an upturning of the function and the purpose of the act of eating itself. The difference from the previous generation is expressed not only in terms of assimilation of food, which remains the main divergence, but also in terms of treatment of the food itself:

> Yoshirō's generation were brought up believing that there was a proper way to eat fruit: *this* was the way you peeled an orange; you use *this* sort of spoon to scoop out grapefruit sections. They believed that by standardizing the eating process into a ritual, they could soothe their cells into ignoring the sourness of the fruit, which actually warned of danger. Mumei's generation could never be deceived by such a silly trick, originally meant to fool children. No matter how they ate fruit, alarms went off throughout their bodies. When Mumei ate kiwi fruit he had trouble breathing; lemon juice paralyzed his tongue. And it wasn't just fruit. Spinach gave him heartburn, while shiitake mushrooms made him dizzy. Mumei never forgot for an instant that food was dangerous.[14]

[14] Tawada 2018, 45.

If people born before the mysterious accident were educated to eat while performing certain movements, a custom anthropologically interpreted by Tawada as a ritual to help exorcise the dangers of food, this is not possible for the new generations because their relationship with edibles has been radically twisted. Normally, one would expect to absorb the beneficial properties of the single food, like vitamin C in citrus fruit for example. In Tawada's narration, for the younger generations it becomes, instead, a source of danger and of potential poisoning; in the story every food is associated with a specific damage to a determined organ or apparatus, and its nourishing properties are substituted with the side effects that most surely will occur if a child born after the accident ingests that specific edible.

In another very important moment in the story that presents an overturning of the concept of food as beneficial, Tawada problematizes what can be identified as the most important and symbolic archetype of nourishing food in human history: breast milk. Mumei's mother dies of birth and Yoshirō is left alone taking care of the newborn grandson. Of course, he cannot breastfeed the baby, and the toddler needs to be fed with bottled milk. He then discovers that not only Mumei, but every child is given artificial milk, as it appears that the milk produced by women is not safe anymore. It still is highly nutritious, but it also contains poisonous elements that make it undrinkable:

> Though Yoshirō had assumed that only babies without mothers were given formula, he now saw that all the mothers were bottle-feeding their babies. No breast milk was guaranteed to be safe, one of the nurses explained. Breast milk contained, along with its life-giving nutrients, a high concentration of poison. There was no cow's milk in the formula either.[15]

This is actually the only declared contaminated food that appears in the novel, as the other groceries appear to be relatively safe for adults and old people, they are just dangerous for the new generations whose bodies are not able to process them anymore.

The transformation occurs again in the bodies of the people after the disaster and it reflects again in the relationship between the body and the food:

> Every bit of food he put in his mouth was a challenge to be met. If sour orange juice bit into his stomach wall, he'd lose all his nourishment and burden his digestive system as well. Taking a breather after yesterday's grated carrot, his stomach would then be desperately battling today's bean fiber, not producing enough digestive juices to win, which caused Mumei's tummy to swell up with gas.[16]

Food represents danger in *Kentōshi*, but only for those generations born around and after the accident: apparently, elder people have not lost the ability to eat and correctly digest groceries. It could be argued that, if ingesting food

[15] Tawada 2018, 73.

[16] Tawada 2018, 94.

is akin to ingesting the foreign—introducing some external element into the body and transforming it into something useful for one's own self—then the fact that newborns in Japan cannot process food can be due to the absence of contact of the country with the outside world. As Hui maintained, we can parallel the process of ingestion and digestion of food with that of internalizing a new language: "Foreignness is to be digested, consumed and incorporated" (Hui 2020, 200). On the basis of this, I read the fact that the children born in a country with no contact with the foreign have lost their ability to digest and incorporate food as a metaphor for their inability to deal with foreignness at large. Their impossibility of ingestion can therefore be interpreted as a symbol of the political and cultural closeness of the country that has stopped connections with the outside world. The theme of food as metaphor for foreignness was already introduced by Tawada in *Fushi no shima*, where groceries, especially the Japanese delicacies that the protagonist was carrying in her suitcase, could be seen as a potential danger just because of their exotic, almost dangerous aspect. Finally, in *Hamlet no um*i one of the themes was the urgency of eating and the uncertainty related to the contamination of food in the immediate aftermath of the 3.11 catastrophe.

Food and the act of eating recur often in Tawada's works, and they perform a diverse number of thematic and literary functions. As it is common in her oeuvre, it is impossible to provide an omni-comprehensive and unambiguous definition, a fixed paradigm of interpretation. Indeed, Tawada constantly plays with her literature, evolves and changes it continuously.

With the help of the examples shown above, it is therefore possible to notice how metamorphosis, one of Tawada's main elements, can be triggered by some external factors such as the ingestion of food. In *The bath*, the loss of her physical tongue symbolizes the loss of her capacity of being a medium between two different worlds and cultures. The protagonist of the story is in an intermediate state, halfway in between her old country and a new one: a new identity starts to emerge from the transformation, an identity that the migrant subject is going to acquire as a result of a process of syncretism between his/her own culture and the foreign one. Transformations of the body, changing the outer appearance of the self, are directly linked to the transformations of the innermost essence of the human being: the migrant positions himself between different languages, spaces and cultures, in the spectrum defined from domestic to foreign. This gradually results in a progressive but radical change. In *Yōgisha no yakōressha,* food once again triggers a transformation into an androgynous creature, another entity positioned in an intermediate place, between male and female, another theme dear to Tawada.

Food also acquires other functions in the author's work and it's closely related to the representation of the aftermath of the nuclear disaster of March 2011, especially as a metaphor of foreignness. In *Hamlet no umi* the question whether to eat or not is closely linked with the possibility of continuing one's own existence instead of surrendering to the hamletian sea of troubles. In *The island of eternal life,* food is used to symbolize, together with the passport, the prejudice and the stereotype against foreign people, especially Japanese nationals in the aftermath of the nuclear disaster. Finally, in the renowned *The emissary*, I would read the impossibility for the new generations of ingesting food as the impossibility to deal with foreignness and to enter in contact with a foreign culture or at least foreign elements, due to the dystopian condition in which the country has been relegated. This might also be read as a warning sign that Tawada is trying to convey, as an invitation to always be open to the foreigners and the other.

As we have seen, food has a wide range of functions in the work of Tawada Yōko and is a literary and narrative symbol that can be traced in a variety of writings that belong to different periods, with a diversified number of functions. I believe that further investigations of this topic would shed light on some fascinating and unexplored aspects of the production of the author.

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# The politics of *washoku*: Japan's gastronationalism and gastrodiplomacy

Felice Farina

**Abstract:** In this paper, we will explore the political construction of *washoku* by analyzing Japan's recent strategy of gastronationalism and gastrodiplomacy. We will argue that the definition of *washoku,* as inscribed in the UNESCO's International Cultural Heritage List in 2013, is the result of a process of invention of tradition whose aim is to homogenize and preserve national identity and project this identity abroad. While emphasizing the role of food as an essential element of national identity, we will also show that the promotion of *washoku* is also motivated by the need to address several issues of broader domestic politics. Starting from the assumption that Japan's low food self-sufficiency rate could be improved only by increasing the demand for Japanese food, the government implemented a strategy of promotion of *washoku* at home (gastronationalism) and abroad (gastrodiplomacy) in order to increase both the domestic consumption of traditional food and the export of agrifood products.

**Keyword**: washoku, gastronationalism, gastrodiplomacy.

**要旨**: 本稿は日本の「伝統的な食文化」とされる和食に焦点をあて、その食文化の美食ナショナリズム(gastronationalism)と美食外交 (gastrodiplomacy)の施策を検討することを目的とする。2013年12月4日に「和食；日本人の伝統的な食文化」がユネスコ無形文化遺産(ICH)リストに登録されて以来、日本政府は和食の魅力を軸として国内外での和食振興と日本産食品の輸出の推進に取り組んでいる。本稿では和食という概念の分析を通して、その概念が文化遺産としての国家が均質なナショナル・アイデンティティーを形成しようとしてきた伝統の創造的過程の結果であると主張する（美食ナショナリズム）。一方、海外での和食の振興政策はそのアイデンティティを日本国外に投影し、日本産食品の輸出を増加しながら、食料自給率も増加するための政策であると強調する（美食外交）。

**キーワード**: 和食、美食ナショナリズム、美食外交。

## 1. Introduction

Food plays an important role in our daily lives, not only for its indispensable role as source of dietary energy but also for its profound implications for national identities and politics. Numerous studies have shown that food and food habits represent emblematic elements of culture and operate as markers of individual and collective identities (Appadurai 1988; Bourdieu 1979; Montanari 2013; Lupton 1996; Ohnuki-Tierney 1993; Belasco and Scranton 2002; Bell and Valentine 1997; Pilcher 1996). Indeed, in the same way as language or religion, food plays a fundamental part in delineating distinctive boundar-

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ies between "us" and the "others" through a process of selection, remaking and even invention of national traditions (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). For these characteristics, states and state-backed organizations have often exploited food for their national objectives, putting a particular significance to specific foods and playing a fundamental role in the process of creation/invention of national cuisines (Ichijo and Ranta 2016).

Foods and nations are also linked through marketing and promotional campaigns. Recently, the constant expansion of the food industry and agribusiness has accelerated the process of commodification of food, and many governments have implemented strategies aimed at promoting their national cuisine abroad to increase food export or tourism. These strategies are not limited to highlighting the economic or nutritional advantages of one country's cuisine, but they also have the aim of projecting a certain image and certain values of a nation worldwide (Zhang 2015; Ichijo and Ranta 2016, 107).

In recent years, the Japanese government has become increasingly aware of Japan's contemporary cultural appeal and has been among the most active nations in exploiting cultural resources to boost its international influence (Otmazgin 2018). Among these resources, food has acquired an increasingly central role in the promotion of Japanese culture abroad and has become one of the most distinctive elements of its national identity. UNESCO's recognition of *washoku* (Japan's traditional cuisine) as Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) in 2013 represents one of the most evident results of this strategy and one of the most striking examples of how national cuisines are "projected on a global screen of cultural identities (cultural defined) and cultural politics for national recognition, as well as to promote domestic goals of cultural identity formation" (Bestor 2014, 61).

If a critical evaluation of *washoku* from Japanese scholars is lacking,[1] a situation remarked by Cwiertka and Yasuhara (2020), English-language literature has shown greater dynamism in the critical analysis of *washoku*, by putting emphasis on how the concept has been constructed by Japanese government and on the process of inscription in the ICH list (Bestor 2018; Cwiertka and Yasuhara 2020; Cang 2018, 2019; Ichijo and Ranta 2016).

In this paper, we will try to explore the political construction of *washoku* focusing not only on the implications related to identity and nationalism but also on the food security motivations behind it, an aspect often overlooked in literature. In doing this, we will concentrate on the dual nature of Japanese government's strategy, at home and abroad. On the one hand, we will analyze the process through which Japan's government has tried to create a homogeneous national culinary consciousness (gastronationalism), epitomized in the official definition of *washoku*. We will show that the main goal of this process is the increase

[1] Though acknowledging that *washoku* is a recent word, most of Japanese scholars tend to reaffirm the long historical roots of *washoku*'s characteristics without critical evaluation (Harada 2005, 2014, 2015; Kumakura and Ehara 2015; Ehara 2015). An exception is represented by Ōmori Isami (2017, 2019), who in her works investigates the critical role of media in the redefinition of *washoku*.

in consumption of local agricultural products in order to improve the low food self-sufficiency rate of the country. On the other hand, we will analyze the strategy of the promotion of *washoku* internationally, through which the government attempts to increase the appeal and desirability of Japanese culture, values and ideas, strengthening the association of some foods with a specific image of the country (gastrodiplomacy). We will argue that Japan's gastrodiplomacy is not a mere act of popularization of traditional food worldwide, but, just as gastronationalism, it is strictly related to the food security of the country, as the main objective of the government is to raise food export, in order to foster agricultural production and improve self-sufficiency.

## 2. Food and national identity: gastronationalism and gastrodiplomacy

Food and food habits can be considered as some of the most quintessential expressions of national identity. Every human society develops its own food preferences and ways of eating, giving birth to what we usually call "national cuisines". Warren Belasco has defined national cuisine as a "shared set of 'protocols'", characterized by five main elements: a limited set of basic food; a distinctive manner of preparing food; a distinctive way of seasoning dishes; codes of etiquette; and a distinctive infrastructure or "food chain", from which food moves from farm to plate (Belasco 2008, 15–20). All these characteristics are not fixed in space and time but are in fact highly variable and, in most cases, only recently "constructed". National cuisines are in a process of constant reinvention, absorbing new influences and letting some traditions die out. Here it is possible to observe a fundamental contradiction in the food-nationalism nexus: the cuisine which we consider to be specific to a particular place is not a tradition that has been going on continuously in the same way since ancient times but is the result of an uninterrupted process made of movements, cultural contaminations, innovations and mixing. If a nation is an "imagined community", the nation's diet is a "feast of imagined commensality" (Bell and Valentine 1997, 169). As Cook and Crang (1996, 140) observe:

> Food do not simply come from places, organically growing out of them, but also make places as symbolic constructs, being deployed in the discursive construction of various imaginative geographies. The differentiation of foods through their geographies is an active intervention in their cultural geographies, rather than the passive recording of absolute geographic difference.

As already mentioned above, there is a rich literature dealing with the relationship between national cuisine (more broadly, food) and nationalism. Among them, sociologist Michaela DeSoucey's work on *foie gras* and contemporary European food politics (2010) offered an original analytical approach to the study of food and nationalism and proposed the concept of "gastronationalism". She defines gastronationalism as "a form of claims-making and a project of collective identity", that "is responsive to and reflective of the political ramifications of connecting nationalist projects with food culture at local levels" (DeSoucey 2010, 433). Moreover, gastronationalism "signals the use of food production, distribution, and consumption to demarcate and sustain the emotive power of national attachment, as well as the use of nationalist sentiments to produce and market food" (DeSoucey 2010, 433). According to her, gastronationalism is a defensive strategy aimed at re-establishing those symbolic boundaries threatened by the homogenization of diets promoted by globalization, because, as she points out, the "attacks (symbolic or otherwise) against a nation's food practices are assaults on heritage and culture, not just on the food item itself" (DeSoucey 2010, 433). In the case of gastronationalism, the state plays a central role in the market, acting as an ideological agent and a broker for food production and distribution as cultural goods, not only to protect material interests but also to draw national boundaries between national foodstuffs and foreign foodstuffs (DeSoucey 2010, 434–5).

If, through gastronationalism, states strengthen national identity and national symbolic borders, it is through gastrodiplomacy that they promote this identity abroad to enhance their international image. Gastrodiplomacy can be defined as the use of food as a tool of a country's public diplomacy.[2] Some authors use the term "gastrodiplomacy" interchangeably with the expression "culinary diplomacy" (Wolf 2006; Chapple-Sokol 2013), however we here accept the distinction made by Paul Rockower (2014), who argues that the two terms involve two different levels of diplomacy. According to Rockower, culinary diplomacy can be defined as the use of food and cuisine as "a medium to enhance formal diplomacy in official diplomatic functions" (Paul Rockower 2014, 14). In this sense, culinary diplomacy seeks to increase bilateral ties by strengthening relationships through the use of food and dining experiences as a means to engage visiting dignitaries. In comparison, gastrodiplomacy has a broader dimension and can be defined as "a public diplomacy attempt to communicate culinary culture to foreign publics in a fashion that is more diffuse" (Paul Rockower 2014, 13). Compared to culinary diplomacy, then, gastrodiplomacy seeks to influence a wider public audience rather than only high-level élites.[3] In this sense, it is clear that gastrodiplomacy is not a mere promotion of one country's cuisine abroad, but it is a way to increase the appeal and desirability of its culture, people, values, and ideals, strengthening the association of some foods with that country, and obtain also economic outcomes, such as food export or increasing tourism.

## 3. *Washoku* and Japan's gastronationalism

On 5 December 2013, "Washoku, traditional dietary cultures of the Japanese, notably for the celebration of New Year" was formally inscribed in the Representative List of the Intangible Heritage of Humanity by the United Nations Edu-

[2] If traditional diplomacy involves government-to-government relations, public diplomacy involves the way in which governments talk to global publics and try to inform, influence and engage those publics in support of national objectives and foreign policies (Snow 2008, 6).

[3] The same two concepts have been named by Sam Chopple-sokol, respectively, "private culinary diplomacy" and "public culinary diplomacy" (Chopple-Sokol 2013, 162).

cational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In the nomination file submitted by the Japanese government to the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in March 2012, *washoku* is defined as a "social practice based on a comprehensive set of skills, knowledge, practice and traditions related to the production, processing, preparation and consumption of food. It is associated with an essential spirit of respect for nature closely related to the sustainable use of natural resources" (UNESCO 2013, 3). The file goes on affirming that *washoku* "is practiced all over the territory of the State" and "has developed as part of daily life" in which it "has important social functions for the Japanese to reaffirm identity, to foster familial and community cohesion, and to contribute to healthy life, through sharing traditional and well-balanced meals" (UNESCO 2013, 4). It also states that the basic knowledge and skills of *washoku* are transmitted from parents or grandparents to their descendants at home in order to preserve the *ofukuro-no-aji*, the "taste of mother's cooking" (UNESCO 2013, 4). According to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan (MAFF), a *washoku* meal is built around rice at its heart, with the addition of one soup and three side dishes (one main dish and two secondary dishes), according to the principle of *ichijū sansai* ("one soup, three side dishes") (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan, MAFF 2013, 17). It is characterized by four main elements that are based on the common principle of the respect of the nature (*shizen no sonchō*): 1) the use of various fresh ingredients, whose natural tastes are wisely preserved; 2) a well-balanced and healthy diet; 3) an emphasis on the beauty of nature in the aesthetic of a plate; and 4) a connection with annual festivals and events (MAFF. n.d. a).

We can clearly see that what has been recognized as *washoku* is not a particular food item or a specific cuisine itself. Contrary to what might seem, the lack of reference to specific gastronomic practices or recipes is not an act of negligence but, as Cwiertka and Yasuhara (2020) argue, it was a deliberate strategy guided by "ignorance and error, omissions, inventions, and exaggerations" (Cwiertka and Yasuhara 2020, 119), whose aim was to easily meet the UNESCO's criteria that are closely related to the social and cultural aspects of food as a lived experience in a specific socio-cultural context. What the Japanese government indicates as the main elements of *washoku* are nothing more than a forced interpretation (if not a real manipulation) of a stereotypical idea of the culinary tradition of Japan. This manipulation is immediately clear from the very definition of *washoku* itself. In the Japanese language, *washoku* literally means "Japanese food" (*wa* is a word often used to refer to Japan and *shoku* means food or eating). It is a relatively new word, first appearing in the Meiji period (1868–1912) in opposition to the new foods and culinary trends introduced by Western countries, which were generally referred to with the expression *yōshoku* (lit. "western food"). Since then, the word *washoku* has been used as a common noun who simply meant "a Japanese meal/Japanese meals", without any particular connotation. It has also been proved that it came into use primarily in the context of department store restaurants, in contrast to the idea of *washoku* as a traditional home-cooking practice, as it has been defined in the UNESCO nomination, which can be thus considered “an imaginative interpretation of an ordinary noun” (Cwiertka and Yasuhara 2020, 45).

The role of rice in the Japanese diet is another problematic aspect. The idea of rice as a central staple of the Japanese has long been debated by scholars, who are divided between those who claim that rice had been the staple food for all Japanese throughout history and those who argue that rice was limited to a small segment of the population, mainly the élite, whereas most of the population consumed millet and other miscellaneous grains as basic food (Ohnuki-Tierney 1993, 30–43). More recent studies have demonstrated that rice became prominent only at the beginning of the 20th century and replaced all the other grains only in the 1960s (Cwiertka and Yasuhara 2020; Francks 2007). Also, the claim that *ichijū sansai* is a traditional feature of the Japanese daily diet is a mystification. The *ichijū issai* pattern (one soup and one side dish) was the most common among Japanese whereas the *ichijū sansai* structure (originated from the ceremonial banquets in the medieval period) was not institutionalized as an everyday food practice until the 1950s and the 1960s (Cwiertka and Yasuhara 2020, 27). Moreover, the *ichijū sansai* style might not necessarily promote good health (Minari *et al*. 2015). It must be also pointed out that while the respect for nature is considered the basic principle of *washoku*, many of the ingredients used in traditional cuisine, such as fish or soybeans, are now imported or produced in ways that cannot be considered nature-friendly (Kodama 2017).

But why did the Japanese government put so much effort into this reinvention of national cuisine? The operation of reinvention of *washoku* and its inscription in the ICH list is not a mere act of nation-building through food but it must be evaluated in the general context of Japan’s national food security strategy. Food security is a crucial issue in Japanese politics, because since 1945 the food self-sufficiency rate[4] of the country has constantly declined reaching 38% in 2020, one of the lowest percentages among industrialized countries (MAFF. n.d. b). A low food self-sufficiency rate is considered a risk factor because it makes Japan extremely dependent on importations and, consequently, more exposed to the fluctuations of the international food market. The profound change in lifestyle of Japanese consumers from a traditional diet to a westernized one, with an increase in the consumption of meat, wheat, oils, dairy products, and a consequential decrease in the consumption of “traditional” food, such as rice, is considered one of the main causes behind the decline of the food self-sufficiency rate (MAFF 2006a, 16). For this reason, in 2005, the government introduced the Basic Law of Food Education (*shokuiku kihonhō*), whose objective is

[4] The food self-sufficiency rate usually used by the MAFF is based on caloric intake and refers to the ratio of calorie supply from domestically produced food to the total calorie consumed by each person daily. This means that over 60% of the calories that each Japanese consumes every day come from imported food. For an analysis of the reasons behind Japan’s food self-sufficiency decline see: George Mulgan (2004), Suzuki (2013), Kako (2009), Farina (2017).

the increase in consumption of local agricultural products, by promoting a nationalistic idealization of Japanese food, with rice as main staple food, and by associating local products with healthiness and imported foods with unsafeness (Assman 2015; Kimura 2011). Following the enactment of this law, a nationwide food education campaign was launched to promote *washoku* into school lunch programs and encouraged local exchanges between local producers and local schools. One of the objectives of the campaign is to raise the awareness of the food self-sufficiency issue, by encouraging school children to calculate the food self-sufficiency rate of the food they were offered at home, in an attempt to contain the globalization of food consumption among young Japanese (Assman, 2017, 128–30). However, the Fukushima nuclear disaster in March 2011 raised serious concerns about the safety of Japanese food and many consumers started to avoid agricultural products from Tōhoku, a major producer of fresh vegetables and fruits.

The incident sparked a new sense of urgency about the need to promote and consume Japanese food. A successful inscription of traditional Japanese cuisine in the UNESCO ICH list was believed to be able to deal with the confusion and loss of confidence generated by the incident (Akagawa 2018, 209–10). The incident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in March 2011 also prompted the authorities to review the *shokuiku*. As Reiher (2012) has suggested, the risk of nuclear contamination made clear that the focus on public health and the consumption of local products, present within *shokuiku*, was no longer helpful for the promotion of a traditional diet. For this reason, the Shokuiku council decided to shift the focus from the consumption of local food produced in the same prefecture to the food produced all over Japan (Takeda *et al.* 2016, 281). The new Basic Plan for *Shokuiku*, settled in March 2011, also stressed the importance of family meals and home-cooked meals, presenting them as an established tradition that has been lost in contemporary Japanese society, despite the fact that family or home meals are indeed relatively new to Japan (Takeda *et al.* 2016, 280). The new approach, which accentuated the national character and the home cooking nature of *washoku*, together with the urgency to rehabilitate the image of Japanese food as safe for health, paved the way for the definition of *washoku* proposed to UNESCO and eventually inscribed in the ICH list.

## 4. *Washoku* in the world: Japan's gastrodiplomacy strategy

When in 2002, Douglas McGray coined the expression "Japan's gross national cool" to indicate Japan's cultural influence, he could not imagine that it would gain so much popularity in the media and among academics that even the government of Japan decided to use it to define the strategy of promotion of Japan's cultural and creative industries. In his article, McGray argued that, despite the severe economic recession that the country had been facing since the bursting of the speculative bubble in the 1990s (the so-called "lost decade"), Japan still was a cultural superpower thanks to the success of its content industry worldwide. Stimulated by the "Cool Japan" thesis, the government started a new industrial policy to stimulate the economy by supporting the content industry. One of the first acts was the establishment in 2003 of the Task Force on Contents (*kontentsu senmon chōsa kai*), one of the three task forces of the Intellectual Property Strategy Headquarters (*chiteki zaisan ryaku honbu*, IPSH), a governmental agency set up within the Cabinet Office that acts as an intermediary between the various government ministries. The members of the Task Force on Contents were mainly intellectual property policy experts from the private sector, whose main task focused on the management of media contents, such as music, movies, game software and animation.[5]

In 2004, the Japan Brand Working Group (*Nihon brando wāking gurupu*, JBWG) was organized within the Task Force to conduct more in-depth discussions about national branding. During its third meeting on January 21, 2005, the group discussed about the role of food in Japan's branding strategy, and they recognized that, despite the popularity of Japanese restaurants around the world, most of them did not provide the "correct (*tadashii*)" Japanese food culture to their customers and so efforts were needed to promote the "correct knowledge and techniques (*tadashii chishiki to gijutsu*)" of Japanese food by putting emphasis on the healthiness of the Japanese diet.[6] But to do this, it was first necessary that the Japanese themselves had a balanced and healthy diet.[7] One month later, the JBWG compiled its first report entitled *Promotion of Japan Brand Strategy – Conveying to the world Japan's attractiveness* (*Nihon brando senryaku no suishin – Miryoku aru Nihon wo sekai ni hasshin*). In the report, culinary culture was identified as one of the three most important contents of cultural diplomacy along with fashion and local brands, that would help Japan to become a "loved and respected" country (*aisare, sonkei sareru Nihon*) (JBWG 2005a). The report also underlined the need of establishing a strategy for improving food education at home and promoting Japanese food abroad (JBWG 2005a). The *shokuiku* campaign would be implemented the same year. For JWBG, Japan needed to implement a twofold strategy—creation and promotion of a traditional diet at home and branding Japanese food abroad—in order to increase food exports. It is interesting to note that the report speaks of "Japanese food culture (*Nihon no shoku bunka*)" and "Japanese food (*Nihonshoku*)" and never uses the word *washoku*.

Following the publication of the JWBG report, the secretariat of the IPSH set up the Committee for the Promotion of Research on Food Culture (*Shoku bunka kenkyū suishin kondankai*), who brought together representatives from the private and public sector and whose president was Mogi Yūzaburō, chairman of Kikkoman. The Committee's main task was to conduct research on Japanese food culture and suggest concrete actions to promote Japanese cuisine at home and abroad. The Committee reiterated the strategic role of food as tool

5 Chiteki zaisan ryaku honbu, Kontentsu senmon chōsa kai [Intellectual Property Strategy Headquarters, Taskforce on Contens] 2003.

6 Nihon burando wākingu gurupu [Japan Brand Working Group] 2005b.

7 Nihon burando wākingu gurupu [Japan Brand Working Group] 2005b.

to promote a positive image of Japan abroad and outlined the situation of Japanese restaurants abroad in terms of number, preparation techniques and customers (Committee for the Promotion of Research on Food Culture 2005). It also recommended some practical actions to be undertaken by the government, including the creation of relevant texts about the standards of Japanese cuisine, the establishment of culinary training courses for foreigners, the strengthening of the collaboration between the farmers and the restaurants, and the introduction of traditional Japanese cuisine to foreign tourists in Japan (Committee for the Promotion of Research on Food Culture 2005).

In 2006, the first big international campaign for the presentation of Japanese food and food culture abroad—named "Washoku-Try Japan's Good Food"—was launched. The campaign was established as a joint project between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) and aimed to spread Japanese food culture and increase the export of Japanese agricultural, forestry and fishery products through the presentation of Japanese dishes at special events held by Japanese diplomatic mission abroad.[8] On 27 November 2006, MAFF officials proposed the institution of a certification system for Japanese restaurants outside Japan to ensure the authenticity of Japanese food served abroad (MAFF 2006b and MAFF 2006c). The monitoring of the "authenticity" of Japanese cuisine abroad was strongly criticized and labeled as "sushi police", an expression that inspired a series of computer-graphic animated short films where the three protagonists, members of a government special police unit, travelled all over the world to crack down on restaurants serving "unauthentic" sushi (Cang 2019, 2–3). In 2007, in reaction to this criticism, the MAFF later changed the name to "recommendation (*suisen*)" instead of "certification (*ninshō*)" and transferred the project to a non-profit organization called the Organization to Promote Japanese Restaurants Abroad (JRO) (MAFF 2007).

The MAFF is not the only ministry involved in this strategy. Also, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) have been playing an active role in promoting Japanese cuisine abroad. In a 2010 report, titled "Towards Nation Building through Cultural Industries", the METI emphasized the importance of cultural industry as nation's "soft power" resource. Among other things, the report highlighted the importance of exporting agricultural crops, processed foods, and tableware together in the marketing of Japanese cuisine, in order to carry with it the elements of Japanese "authentic" culture (Farrer 2015, 11). On the other side, the MOFA created the Public Diplomacy Department in August 2004, composed by two divisions, the Public Diplomacy Planning and the Cultural Affairs Division. This department aims at combining "public relations and cultural exchange in a more systematic way" (Diplomatic Bluebook 2005, 207) and indicates "Japan brand" as one of the main pillars of Japan's economic diplomacy in 2011 (Ber-

8 For a list of these events see: MAFF 2011.

geijk *et al.* 2011, 61) and *washoku* as a vehicle to promote understanding of and trust in Japan (MOFA 2014, 38).

The inscription of *washoku* in the UNESCO ICH list in 2013 was therefore the result of the gastronationalism and gastrodiplomacy strategy implemented by the Japanese government since the early 2000s. With the international recognition of *washoku*, the Japanese government's strategy shifted to focus more on increasing food exports. In August 2013, the MAFF outlined a new strategy to increment the export of food products up to one trillion yen by 2020 (it was over five hundred billion in 2013). This strategy has been nicknamed the "FBI strategy" since it aims at undertaking three main activities, namely, the promotion of the use of Japanese ingredients in the various cuisines of the world ("made from Japan"), the development of food industries and the promotion of Japan's food culture ("made by Japan"), and the expansion of Japan's food export ("made in Japan") (MAFF n.d. c).

The importance of foreign markets has been confirmed in the 2015 Basic Plan for Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas, where, though re-emphasizing the importance of increasing consumption of traditional food to raise the food self-sufficiency rate, for the first time the MAFF referred to both "domestic and foreign demand (*kokunaigai no juyō*)" of Japanese food, highlighting the strategic role of food export in improving national food security (MAFF 2015, 15). In order to better understand the productive capacity of Japan, the Plan established a new indicator—the "food self-sufficiency potential (*shokuryō jikyū ryoku*)—that, compared to the food self-sufficiency rate, shows the possible per capita caloric supply per domestic food produced using all farmland in Japan, including abandoned, but recoverable farmland (MAFF 2015, 24). The new indicator changes the perspective about the relation between self-sufficiency and food security. Through the food self-sufficiency potential, it is easier to understand Japan's capacity to cope with any crisis of food import that might arise, but it is also possible to highlight to which extent Japan is able to respond to a major increase in external demand of agricultural products (MAFF 2015, 24). For this reason, in the 2016 White Paper, the MAFF declared that "the government will continue to improve food self-sufficiency potential and the food self- sufficiency ratio through efforts such as the increase in the demands of domestic agricultural products at home and abroad including exports" (MAFF 2016, 10). This requires, according to the report, to enhance competitiveness of Japan's agriculture through some important reforms—such as reducing costs of farming inputs, development of manpower, structural reform of distribution and processing, etc.—but also through the development of strategic export system (MAFF 2016, 4).

In order to develop this export system, the MAFF established the Executive Committee for the Export Strategy (*yushutsu senryaku iinkai*) and formulated the Export Expansion Policy (*yushutsu kakudai hōshin*), where seven categories of food and agricultural products to promote abroad were identified—seafood products, rice and rice-made processed foods, forest products, flowering trees (bonsai), vegetables, beef meat and tea (MAFF 2015b). In the same year, the ministry implemented a new more detailed strategy. The new strategy is based on seven main actions—the collection of data concerning the export markets; the promotion of Japanese food culture by highlighting the "good quality" of Japanese food and agricultural products; holding regular events where to promote Japanese foods and improve logistic networks; supporting the creation of overseas sales bases; reviewing the current regulation and help foreign buyers to buy directly from Japanese wholesalers; relax export regulations; and renovate the procedures for food export (MAFF 2016b).

The Economic Partnership Agreement signed between Japan and the European Union in 2017 can be seen as an important result of this strategy and perfectly represents the change of attitude of the Japanese government towards the liberalization of the agri-food market. In fact, if in the past the aspects relating to greater concessions in the agri-food sector caused tensions in the negotiations of economic partnership agreements because of the fear of any damage to Japanese agriculture, the Japan-EU EPA is now presented as an important opportunity for Japan to increase agri-food export towards EU's countries and thus improve national production (MAFF 2019).

## 5. Conclusion

In this paper, we have tried to demonstrate how food occupies a prominent place in one country's discourses on nationalism and foreign policy. We have shown how national cuisines constitute an effective tool in the hands of governments to spread and preserve a specific and homogeneous idea of national identity but also to project this identity abroad in order to enhance one's country image among foreign audience and get some important economic results in the field of food security, such as the increase of food exports. The analysis of Japan's gastronationalism and gastrodiplomacy that we have proposed here has tried to highlight these aspects. The *shokuiku* campaign and the inscription of *washoku* in the UNESCO ICH list are an example of a political process which, through the use of stereotyped—if not invented—concepts relating to the Japanese culinary tradition (such as the centrality of rice, the *ichijū sansai* structure, the health benefits, the respect of nature) tries to foster national identity and reorient the Japanese towards a major consumption of domestic food. Also, the strategy of promoting Japanese cuisine abroad demonstrates how cuisine has become a strategic instrument of Japan's nation branding and public diplomacy. This strategy has already brought some noticeable results. From 2005 to 2012, Japanese agri-food exports remained steadily at a level of around 400–450 billion yen per year, however, after the approval of the strategy to increase food export and the inclusion of *washoku* on the ICH list, Japan's exports saw a considerable increase, almost reaching the government target of one trillion yen in 2020 (921 billion).[9]

[9] These data were calculated based on White Books of MAFF, from 2004 to 2021.

Despite these relative successes, the Japanese government's strategy does not seem to have the desired effects on the country's dependence on food imports. The food self-sufficiency rate continues to decline, casting some doubt on the actual capability of a strategy based primarily on directing food consumption towards (what is perceived or presented as) a traditional diet and leaving room for future research about the relation among food security, food self-sufficiency and traditional diet.

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CHINESE STUDIES

# Negotiating with the tradition: representations of fish in Alai's fictional writing[1]

Mario De Grandis, Filippo Costantini

**Abstract:** Tibet has long been orientalized in fictional representations. Taking as a case study two texts by Alai, this paper investigates how a traditional Tibetan cultural trait—the fish taboo—is mobilized to complicate the representation of Tibetan culture. By describing the fish taboo Alai points at Tibet's cultural specificity, which in virtue of its exoticism can catch the attention of non-Tibetan readers. At the same time, however, Alai equips his characters with psychological depth, showing their contrasting inner emotions of attraction and repulsion toward fish. In this sense, Alai subtly points at the fallacies of flat representations of Tibet, thus dismantling them from within.

**Keywords**: Chinese ethnic minority literature, Alai, disgust studies.

**摘要**: 在中国小说形象中，西藏长期被“东方化”。本文以阿来的两篇文本为例，检视其中捕鱼食鱼禁忌的运用对藏族文化表征的复杂化。通过对捕鱼食鱼禁忌的描写，阿来指向西藏的这一文化特殊性。其异域情调能够吸引非藏族读者的注意。而与此同时，阿来赋予他的人物以心理情感的深度，揭示他们对鱼既亲近又斥拒的复杂内心感受。从这个意义上来说，阿来巧妙地指出对西藏扁平化描写的谬误，并将其从内部消解。

**关键词**: 中国少数民族文学，阿来，厌恶研究。

Fish is delicious,
I ate it when I was in prison
with lard, scallions,
salt and the fresh ginger.
(Alai 2004, 258)

When I got closer to the fish,
I felt like I was approaching a carrion.
(Alai 2015, 4)

## 1. Introduction

The two quotes above highlight opposing views about fish within a Tibetan context. The first one describes fish as delicious; conversely the second quote

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describes it as repellent. Both quotes are taken from two distinct works by Alai 阿来 (1959–), arguably one of the most well know "Tibetan" authors.[2] Analyzing these two fictional works written by Alai, this essay investigates divergent representations of fish and how such representations counter stereotypes associated with Tibet. To this end, we find it necessary to first provide some background information about representations of Greater Tibet.[3] For long, this area has been idealized as a paradise out of the flow of history, yet also described as a primitive and backward (Lopez 1998). Literary authors have emphasized the beauty of Tibetan sceneries while simultaneously appealing to readers' thirst for the exotic. This dynamic can be traced, for instance, in the oeuvre of the Chinese author Ma Jian 马建 (1953–). Ma's (1987, 112–16) short story *Guan ding* 灌顶 "The Final Initiation" opens with a majestic sunset on a Tibetan mountain ridge, it continues detailing the life of a young Buddhist female apprentice, to eventually culminate in a ritual rape that leads to the apprentice's death. The juxtaposition between breathtaking landscapes with scenes of violence, brutality, and sex is a common orientalizing device (Dickson and Romanets 2014; Meltzer and Williams 2008). Although these types of fictional representation are widespread, alternative and perhaps more veritable portrays of Tibet have also emerged in the last two decades or so.[4] Alai's works fall within this latter type of representation. Literary scholars have praised Alai's *Red Poppies* (*Chen'ai luoding* 尘埃落定) for breaking down the stereotypical representations of Tibet by painting "a picture [...] that is neither a paradise nor a human hell" (Yue 2008).[5] Building on Gang Yue's insight, this essay interrogates how Alai's deploys an element from traditional Tibetan culture—the fish taboo—to counter cliché about Tibet.

In Alai's works, the display of Tibetan cultural elements aims at reaching a Chinese (i.e., Han) audience. This is evident from two literary choices. First, Alai writes in Chinese, not in Tibetan. Second, in his fictional writing Alai ex-

2 Alai's ethnic identity is particularly complex. First, he is of Tibetan and Hui parents (Choy 2008, 230). Second, Alai is originally from Kergu (Matang 马塘, in Chinese), which is part of the Jiarong territory (Leung 2017, 12). The language, culture, and identity of Jiarong people is distinct from that of the Tibetan plateau ecosystem, particularly in terms of landscape and diet. Despite a multifaceted ethnic identity, "Alai's status as a "Tibetan writing in Chinese" has been endorsed by "authorities in Beijing" (Wang 2013, 96). It is in this sense, that we refer to Alai as a "Tibetan" writer.

3 The Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), often abbreviated, as Tibet is only a portion of the larger geographic area inhabited by Tibetan speaking groups. This area is referred as Greater Tibet and it includes, besides the TAR, parts of Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu, and Yunnan (Yeh 2013, 18).

4 For in depth study about literary representations of Tibet, see Kamila Hladíková (2013), especially 236–45; and the essays collected in the volume co-edited by Lauran Hartley and Patricia Schiaffini-Vedani (2008).

5 For a translation of this work in English, see Alai (2002), translated by Li-chun Lin and Howard Goldblatt.

plains to the reader elements of the Tibetan culture.[6] Didactic passages are in fact present—more or less overtly—in both the primary texts analyzed in this essay. These two texts are both titled "fish." Given the confusion that might arise from the homonymous titles, we will refer to the shorter text as the short story (Alai 2015) and to the longer as the novella (Alai 2004). Both texts engage with the popular narrative that Tibetans must avoid anything related to fish. Based on the close reading of these texts corroborated by anthropological scholarship about the fish taboo, this essay argues that Alai's portray of the fish taboo aims at subverting essentializing portrays of Tibet.

To support our argument, we organize this essay in three sections. Section one illustrates how Alai deploys the fish taboo, a staple in the discourse about Tibetaness. Common rationales mobilized in the scholarship explain such taboo calling upon the Buddhist principle of not-killing (*bu sha sheng* 不杀生) and connecting it to the Tibetan practice of water burials (e.g., Wen 2012). Alai's texts explicitly engage with such Tibetan practices putting them at the forefront of the narration to appeal primarily to a Han readership. Nonetheless, as elucidated in the following two sections, this seemingly orientalizing representation moves away from common narratives about Tibetaness by teasing out Tibetan characters' ambivalent relation toward fish. This point is developed in sections two and three, which respectively explore how main characters display disgust and attraction toward fish.

## 2. Fish Taboo

The idea that Tibetan communities must avoid any contact with fish is the leitmotif in the aforementioned two texts by Alai. In the novella, when the protagonist Dukar dreams of fish, his uncle scolds him "How could you dream of fish? This isn't a good omen" (Alai 2004, 253). Similarly, in the short story, the narrating "I" relates that within Tibetan society "People's look at fish as they would look at a beggar with leprosy" (Alai 2015, 227–28). These two examples illustrate that fish is regarded in a negative way within a Tibetan "traditional" worldview.

Alai, an author who writes uniquely in Chinese (Rojas 2013), appears to be aware of this cultural trait. For this reason, he includes elements to contextualize the fish taboo within the Tibetan cultural norms:

> Water burials are popular out on the grasslands. [In this type of burial] water and fish dispel the soul from its mortal body. This is why many Tibetans regard fish as a taboo. (Alai 2015, 2)

[6] The term "Tibetan cultures" might be more accurate in capturing differences that exist within Tibetan communities. Nonetheless, for the purpose of this article we focus on the representation of Tibet vis-à-vis other Chinese cultures, and thus opt for the singular form "Tibetan culture."

> traditional rituals for exorcising ghosts and other unclean entities, it is key to direct the incantations at invisible malevolent objects, driving them off [ … ] straight into water. (Alai 2015, 2)
>
> Fish deserve pity. Being without a zoologist, [the Tibetans] had no idea of what fish ate. So they thought that fish are alive yet without food, and they must therefore be tortured by hunger all the time. They must be animals that have been punished by Heaven, for sins in the previous life such as having accumulated too much wealth, having been too cruel, deceitful, and so forth. (Alai 2015, 227)

These three passages provide elements to explain the fish taboo to a Chinese readership. This specific taboo is connected to Buddhist and Tibetan folk practices.[7] In what follows, we focus on two rationales provided by Alai. The first one, perhaps the most well known in popular discourse, concerns the disposal of bodies through water burials. According to scholarship on the subject, during a water burial "the corpse is dismembered and thrown into the river" (Goss and Klass 1997, 384).[8] Fish then eat the corpse. The eating of a dead body makes fish impure.[9] Fish are thus seen as dangerous because they can act as a vessel to transfer impurity to humans. The fish-taboo comes into play to shield from this potential contamination. Consumption—the ingestion of food—is the main vehicle of contamination because it is essentially the way in which humans incorporate the outside world into the self.[10]

This same idea is also channeled in Alai's novella, when one of the characters—Ngawang Chogyal—remembers having "seen fish eat dead people, and because of hunger, he himself had eaten those fish" (Alai 2004, 258). It is important to notice that these grisly images are only voiced through the omniscient narrator and not verbalized in the novella. When Ngawang Chogyal is about to relate of this eye-witness experience "He cuts himself off abruptly" (258). Alai's does not provide a rationale to explain the character's self-censorship. Nonetheless, from the context of the novella, it is clear that Ngawang Chogyal avoids relating his memories to his Tibetan interlocutors who might find the description of fish-eating corpses disturbing.

A second rationale voiced by Alai to explain the fish taboo relates to the notion of reincarnation.[11] In simple terms, reincarnation is the belief that following biological death, the non-physical essence of a living entity begins a new life

7 For an overview of the fish taboo in Tibetan culture, see Ci Dun (2019).

8 The practice of water burials has been documented in the Western scholarship along with earth burials, cremation, and 'sky burial' (Kolmaš 2003, 24; Goss and Klass 1997, 384). To these practices, Tibetologist Turrell Wylie adds desiccation (1964, 232).

9 Description of water burials is also related in travelers accounts, as for instance MacDonald (1932, 151 and 178).

10 Paul Rozin and April Fallon (1989) have pointed out that this idea derives from the traditional culture's belief called "the magical law of contagion." According to this law, the contact between two entities inevitably leads to cross-contamination.

11 On the subject of reincarnation in Tibetan Buddhism, see Tanya Zivkovic (2014).

in a different body. When good karma has been acquired throughout one's lifetime, a better reincarnation will be achieved in next life. On the contrary, poor karma will result in being reincarnated in an inferior social position. Following this logic, the condition of being a fish is explained according to the principle of poor karma. In Alai's novella fish are believed by the Tibetans to be tormented by hunger, a suffering interpreted as "heaven's punishment" for the sins fish have accumulated in the previous life (Alai 2014, 227).

The two rationales here analyzed tap into othering strategies of Tibet, described as a backward land in which bodies are disposed into rivers and to a mystical land where Buddhist principles pervade one's being in the world. Elements reminiscent of exoticizing representation of Tibet, such as "water burial" and "ritual exorcisms" are coupled with the suggestion that Tibet is a remote land, afar from the modern civilization.[12] With these two examples, we aim to point out that Alai's works indeed include othering elements. Nonetheless, in contrast with purely exoticizing works such as, for example, the aforementioned Ma's "The Final Initiation," the othering element in Alai's fiction serves to establish a middle ground with his intended audience to then debunk stereotypical representations of Tibet.

"Water burial" and "ritual exorcisms"—it needs to be pointed out—are not merely a fictional fabrication. Anthropological and sociological scholarship indeed provides detailed information about these two rationales for fish avoidance (Altner 2009; Chen 2005). Alai himself makes use of this body of knowledge in his fiction. In the short story, in fact, the narrating "I" refers to a specific scholar: "During this trip, I took a manuscript sent me by Danzhu Angben, a professor at Central Minorities Institute, which mainly discussed Tibetan folk taboos and worship of nature. It also discusses the taboos about fishing and eating fish" (Alai 2015, 2). Dangzhu Angben is indeed a scholar at the Central Minorities Institute and he has published extensively on Tibetan culture and traditions (e.g., Dangzhu Angben 2003, 326).[13]

At the narrative level, the use of a factual scholarly work has two related yet divergent implications. On the one hand, referring to a scholarly work by an established academic (instead of creating a fictional character) advances a claim of factuality for the fish taboo. On the other hand, the fact that a self-proclaimed "Tibetan" narrator breaks the fish taboo—eating and catching fish—suggests that the short story aims at complicating widespread popular and academic narratives about the fish taboo and, by extension, about Tibetan culture.

A brief digression in the scholarship about Tibetan folklore, which Alai himself is at least partially familiar with, points at the complexity of fish taboo.

[12] In Alai's short story, Tibet's underdevelopment is particularly pronounced in the claim that as a group, the Tibetan lacked a zoologist (Alai 2014, 227). The lack of specialists in a particular domain of knowledge—zoology—suggest that as a group Tibetan rely on folk (i.e. without scientific basis) beliefs.

[13] For the academic profile of Dangzhu Angben, see www.cuaes.org/scholardetail-47.htm. Accessed 4/13/2021.

First, archeological records indicate that fish was part of the diet of proto-Tibetan communities. The fish taboo was indeed introduced during the Yarlung dynasty, around the seventh century C.E. (Yong 2015). Second, although after the seventh century fish taboo has become widespread across Tibetan communities (eg., Yeh 2013, 189), there are also exceptions. Robert Ekvall (1964), Laurance Waddell (1929), and Fosco Maraini (1998) have reported of occasional consumption of shark's fin soup by Sinified Tibetan nobles in Lhasa. More recently, Kongshao Zhuang (2002, 81) and Diana Lange (2010) have documented that some restaurants branded as "Tibetan" serve fish. These scholarly works point out that the fish taboo has not being consistent throughout history. More broadly, the scholarship also documents important variations related to water burials, a funerary practice intimately interconnected with the fish taboo. In comparison to other types of traditional Tibetan burials, water burials appear to have a negative stigma. Water burials had normally been reserved to lower strata of the society and ill-fated deaths (Li and Jiang 2003, 119; Waddell and Lamers 1963, 81–2). A notable exception is the case of Tibetan communities situated along the shore of the Yar-'brog lake, communities where water burial was considered more honorable than sky burial (Das and Rockhill 1902, 139–40). The cited scholarly sources allow to conclude that the fish taboo and connected practices are not homogenous across Tibetan groups, rather they vary diachronically, across space, and across social classes.

The question we raise is, how does Alai represent such complexity and to what ends? Rather than providing counter examples to debunk widespread representations of the fish taboo, Alai's characters display an ambivalent positionality in respect to activities involving fish. These activities provide the barebones to unfold the main narrative of the novella and of the short story. Dukar, the novella's protagonist, is obsessed with fish: he spends most of his time staring at fish in the river to the point that he knows their habits. Similarly, the protagonist of the short story describes his first experience as a fisherman. Characters in these two texts are both disgusted and attracted by fish. The tension between the emotions of disgust and attraction is mobilized in Alai's fiction to complicate the representation of the fish taboo, which is emblematic of Tibetan culture. Tibetans' relation with fish, at least as portrayed in Alai's texts, oscillates between these two contrasting emotions. The following two sections highlight respectively the repulsion and the attraction displayed by Tibetan characters vis-à-vis fish. The ambivalence created by the wavering between these two opposite emotional responses, we argue, serves to counter stereotypical representations of Tibet.

## 3. Hooking the Reader

In Alai's text, most of the Tibetan characters perceive anything related to fish as dangerous. At the emotional level, their response to fish is feeling disgusted. Anthropologists and sociologists have shown that the feeling of disgust has emerged as a protective mechanism against pathogens, poisons, and other contaminating elements (e.g., Rozin and Fallon 1987; Miller 1997; Haidt 2006).

More specifically, Paul Rozin and his colleagues (1999) have pointed out that the feeling of disgust involves simultaneously the sensory and the cognitive spheres. The physical proximity with contaminating elements elicits disgust. Similarly, the thinking about contaminating elements also elicits a sense of disgust in the individual. From an evolutionary perspective, disgust prevents contaminating substances from entering the body. Although the feeling of disgust has a biological origin, typical disgust elicitors are mainly culturally specific (Rozin 1997). Fish constitutes a disgust elicitor within the Tibetan traditional culture for reasons that, based on available archeological records, cannot be fully explained. Plausible hypotheses, as already suggested in the previous section, hinge on the Buddhist connected practices. What is interesting to notice, however, is that Alai draws from explanations—such as water burials, exorcisms, and more loosely to the notion of karma—that well resonate with the perceived mystical and arcane aura common in representations of Tibet. It is equally important to notice that Alai forgoes other explanations of the fish taboo that would lessen the reader's curiosity. In the scholarship about the fish taboo, this practice is almost ubiquitously related to the Buddhist principle of not killing (*bu sha sheng*; e.g., Wen 2012; Chen 2005). This explanation is not convincing, especially given that Tibetan Buddhism does not require to practice vegetarianism.[14] In any case, Alai avoids touching on this point: debunking the widespread idea of Tibetans as primarily living off a vegetarian diet would make the avoidance of fish meat less curious from the standpoint of a Chinese reader. Moreover, avoidance of fish is a distinguishing cultural trait, especially when one considers that within Chinese cultures fish is normally an auspicious symbol (Laing 2017). The word for "fish"—yú 鱼—has the same pronunciation of the word for "abundance/surplus" (Sullivan and Sullivan 2021, 192).[15] In addition, it is not a coincidence that fish is normally served at Spring Festival banquets.[16] From a Chinese worldview perspective, the fish taboo is thus a striking cultural difference. Because of Alai's intended Chinese audience, repulsion for anything related to fish serves as a narrative device to "hook" the reader's attention.

In the texts analyzed, fish elicits two types of negative responses: somatic disgust and psychological disgust.[17] In the novella and in the short story, interacting

[14] On consumption of meat consumption by Tibetan Buddhists, see Johan Elverskog (2020), especially chapter 3.

[15] The Chinese character for "fish" is 鱼; the character for "abundance/surplus" is 余.

[16] On the consumption of fish during Spring Festival banquets see, for example, Mary Fong (2000, 227) and Huang Yusheng (2015).

[17] Within the field of what could be termed "disgust studies," scholars have mapped disgust elicitors proposing different taxonomies (e.g, Rozin *et al.* 2010; Strohminger 2014, 481). Even though there is not a general consensus, the most accepted taxonomy recognizes four macro-categories: core disgust (food, body wastes, animals); animal reminder disgust (sex, hygiene, mortality); interpersonal disgust; and moral disgust. A recent synthesis and modification of this taxonomy has been proposed by Tybur *et al.* (2009) who recognizes three categories of disgust, respectively related to pathogens, sex and moral.

with and thinking about fish are both disgust elicitors. Regarding contaminated object, William Miller has observed that: "What the idiom of disgust demands is reference to the senses. It is about what it feels like to touch, see, taste, smell, even on occasion hear, certain things. Disgust cannot dispense with direct reference to the sensory processing of its elicitors" (Kolnai 2003, 14). Somatic and psychological disgust are thus inextricably interwoven and mutually reinforce each other. While acknowledging the overlap between somatic and psychological disgust, for analytical purposes we consider them as two distinct categories.

Somatic disgust manifests as a physical reaction through sensory engagements. In the short story, the catching of a fish by the narrating "I" is described in these terms: "This time the fish [...] flew through the air and landed in the grass. By the time I reached it, the fish was lying there without moving. Looking at the glare in its bulging eyes, I felt chills down my spine" (Alai 2015, 6). In the same story, the narrating "I" recalls the rancid taste of the fish in his mouth (Alai 2015, 2), and the lament of dying fish described as similar to the sound made by "walking on a corpse" (Alai 2015, 8). These three examples illustrate how proximity and contact with the fish elicits in the protagonist intense body reactions. Similarly, in the novella, aversive body reactions emerge when characters come in proximity to or in physical contact with fish. To provide two examples: touching a fish induces terror in the narrator (Alai 2004, 223), and fish are said to be nauseating creatures (Alai 2004, 227). All these body reactions appear to be involuntary, as if repulsion for fish was coded in Tibetan genes.

Beyond doubt, the most prominent disgust elicitor in Alai's texts is the smell of fish.[18] For instance, in the novella, the narrator describes the stench of fish in a detailed manner: "The stench of fish came from the stream. This stench is like rotten green grass in the water" (Alai 2004, 221). Likewise, fish smell is associated with images of "corpses of fish" covered with buzzing flies (Alai 2004, 262). Moreover, the stench of fish is also a premonition of death: by the end of the story, all the members of Dukar family die destitute.

Physiological disgust hinges instead on the cognitive/imaginary spheres. This type of disgust is represented in the novella primarily through analogies. In the novella, Alai compares fish with typical disgusting creatures such as mollusk (snail, leeches, toads), snake (Alai 2004, 227), earthworms (Alai 2004, 256);[19] with illnesses such as leprosy (Alai 2004, 228); and with unpleasant items such as mucus (Alai 2004, 226) and mud (Alai 2004, 221). Alai also widely depicts fish as defiled creatures who eat insects such as mosquitos (Alai 2004, 257), earthworms, and even corpses. In addition, the author shows that just the mention of fish (Alai 2004, 239), or even the word for fish, leads to feeling disgust-

[18] Olfactory experiences are one of the strongest disgust elicitors. On the primary role of smell in disgust see Aurel Kolnai (2003).

[19] These are all elements that elicit core disgust. For a list of such disgust elicitors see McGinn (2011, 27).

ed. When Dukar asks one of the adults in the village where the fish went, he notices that the adult "as all the other people he had asked to, looked disgusted at him" (Alai 2004, 239). Similarly, also in the short story the word "fish" provokes a series of negative emotions in the narrator: "Fish! This word carries the slimy dark gray of fish. Without any apparent reason, it gives people a sense of decay" (Alai 2004, 4). Simply hearing the word for fish terrifies the narrator, to the point that he feels a "sense of decay".[20]

The representation of repulsions toward fish—both at the somatic and at the phycological levels—needs to be understood in relation to the specificity of Tibetan culture, a context in which fish is considered taboo. Breaking the taboo elicits what Jonathan Haidt (2006) defined as moral disgust, the emotion that arises when one witnesses moral transgression. In this sense, breaking the taboo is perceived by Alai's fictional characters as a moral violation that mines the integrity of the Tibetan-self and, by extension, of the entire Tibetan community. The disgust that emerges from interaction—physical or imaginary—with fish serves as a protective mechanism: it shields the individual from transgressing the taboo. By protecting the individual, the taboo preserves the order and the integrity within the community.[21]

At the narrative level, the emotion of disgust aims at catching the envisioned Chinese reader's attention. In this sense, Alai deploys othering strategies in a way that aligns the aforementioned widespread representations of Tibet. Nonetheless, we claim Alai's works ultimately challenge such othering strategies through descriptions of Tibetan main characters' attraction for fish. By focusing uniquely on characters that deviate from the fish taboo, as illustrated in the next section, Alai emphasizes the inherent diversity within Tibetan communities, thus unsettling reader's expectations.

## 4. Unsettling the Reader

In Alai's texts, the attraction to fish is what sets main characters apart from their travel companions (in the short story) and from their fellow villagers (in the novella). In the short story, the narrating "I" is part of a religious survey team composited of two Tibetans and two Han. During the expedition, the four men decide to take a leisure break. The Han, who appear to take the lead, go hunting marmots, assigning the two Tibetans the task of fishing. One of the Tibetans—with a pretext—refuses to go fishing and joins his Han companions; the

20 Here Alai emphasizes the sense of decay elicited by fish with a reference to the practice of the True Word Buddhist doctrine. This practice consists in visualizing a gleaming image or word during meditation (Yasuda 2011, 248). In Alai's short story, while fishing the narrator has a sort of enlightenment experience that, however, degenerates into a feeling of decay.

21 In her seminal work—*Purity and Danger*—Mary Douglas (2002) interprets taboos as devices for protecting the order of the universe and the local consensus on how the world is organized. The transgression of this order provokes a sense of disgust within a certain community.

narrating "I"—although reluctantly—goes fishing. In this sense, the short story protagonist stands out challenged the perceived normative "Tibetan culture" (*zangzu wenhua* 藏族文化).

A similar dynamic can be traced in the novella. In this case, the setting is a Tibetan village. Unlike their fellow villagers who all appear to be disgusted by fish, three family members (all of whom occupy central roles in the development of the narration) have direct contact to fish. These three characters can be mapped along a spectrum in which their position depends on the level of attraction to fish. The far more conservative character in the novella is Shaja, the uncle of Dukar. Shajia often thinks about fish. For instance, Alai recounts that "That night, Shaja dreamed of his uncle. In the dream, the uncle became a fish. He kept moving his mouth, but couldn't speak." (Alai 2004, 227). What stands out is that Shaja is not fully aware of his own desires. Evidence of this unconscious desire appears most prominently in the passage when "Shajia went to look at the dead fish that died in the wheat field. For the remaining part of his life, he could not understand why he had made the effort to overcome his fear and go look at that fish" (Alai 2004, 228). As other villagers, Shajia considers fish disgusting creatures, yet—without understanding his own actions—he also goes to look at a fish that had been dopped in the fields by an eagle. Shaja's character exemplifies a controversial relationship between local traditions and outside influences brought in by a community of Han tree fellers.

Such tension between attraction and disgust reaches its climax in the story's protagonist, Dukar. Dukar is obsessed by fish: he spends his days at the riverbank watching fish, he dreams about fish (Alai 2004, 245), and he talks about fish with villagers and family members (Alai 2004, 239). However, Dukar is aware that his attraction for fish is cause of suffering in his own life. This is particularly pronounced in the passage in which Dukar realizes that when he talks about fish, people are "disgusted" with him (Alai 2004, 239). Dukar's relation to fish is—to put it in Aurel Kolnai's terms (2003, 21)—that of a "macabre attraction" in which a revolting element—fish in this case—exerts over the individual a magnetic seduction.

The third Tibetan character that explicitly engages with fish is Ngawang Chogyal. Ngawang Chogyal is, in some respects, an archetypal Tibetan character who consumes *tsampa* (Alai 2004, 250), is a skilled hunter (Alai 2004, 259), and successful with women (Alai 2004, 260). In other words, Ngawang Chogyal is described with hypermasculine traits, a representation that echoes the those of Tibetan characters in popular discourse (Hillman and Henfry 2006). In addition, he conforms to local Tibetan tradition, as for instance informally taking a widow as his wife "in a way that everyone [in the village] could approve" (Alai 2004, 263). Part of Ngawang Chogyal's charisma derives from the unique experiences he had gained while serving under the army. Through this set of experiences, Ngawang Chogyal has embraced some traits of Han cultures, including that of regarding fish as a delicacy (Alai 2004, 258). By considering fish meat as any other type of meat, Ngawang Chogyal shatters the fish taboo.

These four characters—the narrating "I" in the short story, and the three men in the novella—illustrate how Alai decides to filter his narration through the eyes of those who do not conform with stereotypical representations of Tibet, thus providing an alternative view of Tibet. In fact, within the two texts analyzed, actions related to the fish taboo—such as talking about, eating, and catching fish—occupy a central point in the narration. In the short story, it is worth restating it, the narrating "I" defines himself as a "one of those fish-eating Tibetans" (Alai 2015, 2). Despite admitting that he occasionally eats fish, the narrating "I" appears initially reluctant to catch fish. Having no viable alternative, however, he eventually decides to take this opportunity to break his own taboos: "I was fishing to master myself. In this world, we are often given incitements of many kinds, including mastering oneself. Mastering one's temperament, one's shyness or a fear of the unknown, mastering cultural or individual taboos" (Alai 2015, 2). The act of catching fish is presented as a necessary step in the process of transforming the self, by completely abandoning what the narrator regards as "superstitions" beliefs. After an initial hesitation characterized by emotions of physical and moral disgust, the narrator begins enjoying fishing and wants to share his success with his Han companions and with the other Tibetan in the group: "I wanted my companions to know about this victory, so I began waving my arms and shouting" (Alai 2015, 6). The protagonist's eagerness to share of his success can metaphorically be read as an attempt to self-assert one's emancipation from the taboo.

In the novella, all the three main characters eat, at some point, fish. The relation with fish is completely normalized only in Ngawang Chogyal, who finds laughable his fellow villagers disgust for fish. In a conversation with Dukar, in fact, Ngawang Chogyal explains: "Child, in lots of place people catch and eat fish. There are very few places where people don't" (Alai 2004, 257). It is key to notice that, in virtue of his de facto relationship with Chuchu, the mother of Dukar—Ngawang Chogyal takes the role of a stepfather. His words are thus imbued with paternal authority and can be interpreted as directed, by extension, to the entire village. In Ngawang Chogyal's vision, one informed by life experience outside of Tibetan inhabited regions, eating fish is the norm.

For Dukar and Shajia, the ingestion of fish happens by accident as they are offered fish soup by a group of Han people. The two men enjoy the soup, describing it as "delicious" (Alai 2004, 261). When they find out what they ate, however, they have opposite reactions. Shaja walks home by himself and on route falls, most likely intentionally, in the river where he drowns (Alai 2004, 272). This act of self-annihilation points at the tension underscoring traditional modes of life with external influxes. On the contrary, Dukar appears to be indifferent to the fact that he has eaten fish. In the days following the event, Dukar's attraction for fish escalates to the point that he builds a worm farm, steals a fishing rod, and goes to catch fishes at the river. In this sense, Dukar appears to incarnate the openness toward non-local modes of life. Shajia and Dukar's opposing reactions show two divergent attitudes toward fish ingestion, which lead either to accepting the new-self or repudiating it in toto.

If by ingesting and catching fish the two texts' protagonists—the narrating "I" and Dukar—break away from the fish taboo, the resolution of the taboo itself is, however, incomplete. In the short story, the narrating "I" reacts to the catching of fish by crying:

> When the sleet turned into a rainfall, I lay on the ground and happily, let it pour over me. It felt to me that I was having a good cry, one that no one else would witness, and that I did not fully understand myself. To this day, I wouldn't be able to say whether those tears meant that I had mastered myself or whether I had cried for things I should ever cried over but hadn't. (Alai 2015, 8)

In this passage, Alai describes the main character's flow of emotions, emphasizing how he ultimately fails to understand what motivates his own reaction. Similarly, in the conclusion of the novella, Dukar has a nervous breakdown while at the riverbank. He "cries soundlessly," then takes a wooden club and starts clubbing at fish, which die instantly. The killing of fish thrills him to the point of feeling "crazy" (Alai 2015, 270). On his way home, however, Dukar sobs saying repeatedly "I don't won't fish anymore" (Alai 2015, 271). As these excerpts highlight, Alai leaves to the reader uncertain deliberately not stating whether the protagonist was eventually able to master his own taboo. By juxtaposing disgust with attraction, Alai's texts highlight the complexity of the Tibetans relationship with their tradition, beliefs, and taboos, thus shattering simple representations of Tibet.

## 5. Conclusion

The texts analyzed center around Tibetan's relation vis-à-vis the fish taboo. This taboo marks the Tibetans in contrast to those groups who do eat fish, Han above all. Considering that Alai addresses primarily an envisioned Chinese audience—the texts are in fact written in Chinese (not in Tibetan) and include didactic passages that fill knowledge gaps for a non-Tibetan audience—this type of representation resonates with popular narratives of Tibet as a mysterious yet underdeveloped area. Some of the themes treated in the novella and in the short story—as for instance references to water burials and ritual exorcism—cast indeed a magic aura around Tibet. However, the use of such themes cannot be simply dismissed as an opportunistic form of self-orientalism mobilized to gain a readership. In fact, Alai's representation of the fish taboo and of related practices sets the stage to complicate stereotypical representations of Tibet.

Alai's texts show a way in which an ethnic author can appeal to a national readership without passively perpetuating dominant stereotypes. On the contrary, it is precisely by engaging with stereotypes about Tibet that Alai is able to debunk them from within, shedding light on the heterogeneity of Tibetan culture and thus providing readers with alternative representations of Tibet.

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# Eat to remember. Gastronomical reconfigurations of hunger and imprisonment in contemporary Chinese literature

Serena De Marchi

**Abstract:** During the famine that befell China following the disaster of the Great Leap Forward, hunger was a major affliction for the people undergoing reform in the labor camps. Food—in terms of procurement, consumption, or just discursive recollection—was a central issue in the prisoners' lives and, as a consequence, descriptions of meals and eating practices are a recurring presence in Chinese literary texts that revolve around those carceral experiences. This contribution investigates three literary works that reconstruct personal experiences of imprisonment by way of eating: Wang Ruowang's *Hunger Trilogy* (1980), Zhang Xianliang's *Mimosa* (1984), and Yang Xianhui's *Chronicles of Jiabiangou* (2003). In these texts, food becomes a privileged perspective through which to look at how personal and collective memories are re-appropriated and re-elaborated, as well as to analyze how narratives of the past are consumed and produced.

**Keywords**: food, memory, prison, *laogai*, prison writing, hunger, contemporary Chinese literature.

**摘要**：中国六十年代的大饥荒很深刻地影响到当时正在接受劳动改造和劳动教养的政治犯。在囚犯经验中，食物的收取、摄入及想象是一个很关键的问题，所以在聚焦个人监狱经验的中国当代文本里出现许多不同食物及饮食习惯的描述。本文的目标为分析王若望、张贤亮和杨显惠编写的关于劳动改造和劳动教养经验的三本文本。在《饥饿三部曲》、《绿化树》及《夹边沟记事》中，藉由食物做为特权视角，可以去看个人及集体回忆如何重新描写。透过这些特殊又有饮食性的监狱回忆去分析过去的叙述如何摄入及生产，历史如何被咀嚼、吞咽和吐出。

**关键**：食物，记忆，劳动改造，监狱文学，饥饿，中国当代文学。

## 1. A History of Hunger

From the late 1950s to the mid-1960s, Chinese history has been characterized by what can be framed as a national experience of hunger, brought about by a widespread famine that affected the whole country. Historian Kenneth Lieberthal has defined it as "the most devastating famine of the twentieth century in China (and probably in the world)" (Lieberthal [1987] 2008, 318). National starvation was the consequence of disastrous economic policies implemented as part of the Great Leap Forward plan by a political leadership essentially unable to foresee or assess the effects of their choices. The plan was aimed at boosting both the agricultural and the industrial sectors, by establishing a set of unre-

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alistic goals in relation to production quotas of grain and steel, to be reached within the next five years. Workers throughout the country were mobilized and pushed to produce. Farmers, for instance, were compelled to sell the surplus of their grain production to the state, but the quotas set by the local cadres—who in turn received pressure from the central government—were too high, leaving the farmers in a very difficult position, since they were already barely producing enough for their own sustenance. As reconstructed by Frank Dikötter, who conducted extensive research on local and national archives in China, by the end of April 1958 "hunger and want had spread across the country" (Dikötter 2010, 443), and people started to die from starvation. Many resorted to scavenging, and when even wild edibles were gone, they turned to tree bark, tree leaves, mud, and even toxic mushrooms (Dikötter 2010, 282). Cannibalism was a recorded occurrence too. Even though officials were engaged in systematic cover-ups, some documents have managed to survive. Yang Jisheng 杨继绳, who in 2008 published a highly influential study on China's famine based on archival sources and interviews with survivors, reports 63 registered cases of cannibalism in Feiyang county (Anhui province) between 1959 and 1962 (J. Yang 2008, 271), and Dikötter mentions a 1961 report from Lanxia, a city south of Lanzhou (Gansu province), that registered some 50 cases (Dikötter 2010, 321–2). Usually, these incidents involved the exhumation and consumption of cadavers, whereas murders for cannibalistic purposes were much rarer (Dikötter 2010, 323).

According to Yang's reconstruction, the death toll was reportedly higher in Sichuan, Gansu, Anhui, Shandong, Qinghai, Henan and Hunan (J. Yang 2008, 593). All in all, the total number of population loss directly or indirectly related to the famine is indeed difficult to assess, though according to estimates built on the 1984 Statistical Yearbook and on the 1953, 1964, and 1982 censuses, the toll could be a number between 23 and 38 million (Dikötter 2010, 324–33).

In the labor camps—*laogai* 劳改 and *laojiao* 劳教[1]—which were usually located in the country's most remote areas, the famine hit particularly hard, with varying degrees of intensity depending on the camp location but also on food rationing policies. As noted by Harry Wu in his prison memoir, "three criteria determined the allocation of portions: your political attitude, your adherence to camp regulations, and your age, size and labor potential" (H. Wu 1995, 90). In the camps, hunger was effectively used as a strategy for control, as it kept the inmates weak and less prone to insubordination. Engaging with Judith Herman's study of trauma, Yenna Wu (2011, 56) poignantly points out the systematized withholding of food as a crucial traumatizing factor in the inmates' experience of the labor camps. In Wu's words: "The camps' policies were designed to assert the party-state's supreme power and to remold inmates into obedient masses by controlling their stomachs" (Y. Wu 2011, 56). Wu here does not necessarily refer to the circumstances related to

[1] Short for, respectively, *laodong gaizao* 劳动改造 (lit. "reform through labor") and *laodong jiaoyang* 劳动教养 ("re-education through labor").

the 1960s famine, but points at how, in the prison camps of the Mao era, food has generally been used as a disciplining strategy. In other words, starvation is configured as a traumatic experience, being an expression of what Herman frames as "organized techniques of disempowerment and disconnection," executed with the purpose to "instill terror and helplessness and to destroy the victim's sense of self in relation to others" (Herman 1992, 77. As quoted in Y. Wu 2011, 55).

With the death of Mao and the end of the Cultural Revolution, many political prisoners were eventually rehabilitated and released from the camps, and some of them started to write about their experiences of incarceration. Among them was Wang Ruowang 王若望, who in 1980 published *Hunger Trilogy* (*Ji'e sanbuqu* 饥饿三部曲), a novelized memoir of his incarceration experiences, which, as the title suggests, are tightly connected to the experience of hunger. Writer and poet Zhang Xianliang 张贤亮 was released from the camp in 1979, and *Mimosa* (*Lühuashu* 绿化树, lit. The green tree), published in 1984, was among his earlier literary texts dealing with his more than twenty-year incarceration experience in *laogai* and *laojiao* camps. *Mimosa*'s protagonist, Zhang Yonglin 章永麟, is an intellectual who has just been released from a labor camp and is sent to work as a retained laborer on a state farm. The novella follows Zhang's everyday life on the farm and probes the moral dilemma of a man struggling to reconcile his material needs to his spiritual aspirations. Finally, Yang Xianhui 杨显惠—the only writer included in this selection not to have experienced prison directly—in 2003 published a collection of stories titled *Chronicles of Jiabiangou* (*Jiabiangou jishi* 夹边沟记事) based on fieldwork and interviews with survivors of the homonymous labor camp located in the middle of the Gobi Desert, in Gansu province, which became sadly known for the high number of deaths related to starvation that occurred between 1958 and 1961.

Though belonging to different literary genres, respectively memoir, novel, and reportage, all the three texts are crucially set in the years of the great famine that befell China following the disaster of the Great Leap Forward—with the partial exception of Wang's novel, that is distributed on a longer timeframe, and includes the author's previous experiences of hunger. In these works, the recurrence of food—in terms of descriptions of meals and eating practices (real and imagined), the recounting of the everyday ordeals of food procurement and rationing, the harrowing descriptions of hunger's effects on the bodies of starved prisoners—is absolutely pervasive.

The three texts included in this analysis are but three examples of a bigger corpus of fictional and non-fictional works that emerged from the Chinese experience of the prison camp. As a matter of fact, some of these works that were published after the end of the Cultural Revolution were assigned the label "Big Wall Literature" (*Da qiang wenxue* 大墙文学) with reference to the high walls that delimited the camps (Li 1988).[2] The period of relative political relaxation

[2] From 1988 to 1990, the Shanghai Reform-Through-Labor Bureau published a monthly magazine dedicated to this literary category. See Kinkley 1991, 83.

that followed the death of Mao made it possible for writers to publish on such topics, though they still had to pay attention to political sensitivities and commit to a certain degree of self-censorship, which, according to Perry Link, constitutes a foundational part of "the socialist Chinese literary system" (Link 2000, 4).

Chinese prison camp literature has been the focus of Philip Williams and Yenna Wu's study, where they take fiction and reportage—including Zhang's and Wang's works mentioned here—as entry points to analyze a carceral system based on the concepts of "remolding" and "re-education" through labor (Williams and Wu 2004). Conceptually, they take issue with Michel Foucault's highly theoretical and rather totalizing vision of the prison (Foucault [1975] 1995), which in fact overlooks the actual complexities and ambiguities of lived carceral experiences (Williams and Wu 2004, 10; 53). From a literary perspective, Williams and Wu acknowledge both the mimetic as well as the symbolic function of literary texts, in that they do not merely offer a "mirror" or a "reflection" of the reality of the camps, but a narrative that "*filters* reality during the process of thought and representation" (Williams and Wu 2004, 14. Emphasis in the original). A similar approach is employed by Sebastian Veg in his analysis of Yang's *Chronicles of Jiabiangou*, a text that is generally ascribed to the tradition of reportage literature (*baogao wenxue* 报告文学), although the author himself labels it as fiction (*xiaoshuo* 小说), in an effort to strategically blur the lines between reality and representation, so as to virtually be allowed more narrative space to discuss politically and/or historically sensitive topics (Veg 2014, 517).

Taking these texts as case studies, this paper investigates the modes of remembering a traumatic past in which personal and collective are intertwined, and in which the national experience of hunger is connected to that of incarceration. As I am going to illustrate in the next section, food memories are the privileged *loci* of this investigation, because eating—and by contrast hunger—are highly symbolic, foundational experiences in the context of modern Chinese history, and therefore, looking at how they have been reconstructed in literary texts might open up new perspectives through which approach an otherwise virtually inaccessible mainstream narrative of the past.

## 2. Eating Words, Eating History

In the Chinese language, the concept of eating is rendered with the character *chi* 吃,[3] which is graphically represented by a mouth (*kou* 口) on the left and the verb "to beg" (*qi* 乞) on the right. This curious etymology was noted by novelist Mo Yan 莫言 who, in a short story titled "Can't forget about eating" (*Wang bu liao chi* 忘不了吃), writes: "The begging of the mouth, a mouth that begs; together they make the word 'eat.' It includes the meaning of craving, starving, and the humbleness [associated with those who beg for food]" (Mo Yan 1997,

[3] A variant of this character exists, 喫, which shares with 吃 the radical for "mouth" on the left.

92).[4] This passage was in turn quoted by scholar Gang Yue, who used this powerful metaphor to introduce his own study of the politics of eating and its literary representations in modern China, aptly titled *The Mouth that Begs* (Yue 1999).

From an etymological perspective, *chi* is, in a sense, illustrative of how social, cultural, and historical experiences can add meaning to the way words can come to be in the Chinese language. As a matter of fact, *chi* appears in several two- or multi-character words in which "eating" is used in a metaphorical sense, such as: *chicu* 吃醋, be jealous (lit. "eat vinegar"), or *chiku* 吃苦, bear hardships (lit. "eat bitterness"), or *chili* 吃力, strenuous, difficult (lit. "eat strength"). The semiotic richness associated to the word *chi* illuminates the multilayered cultural and symbolic relation that China has with food, so much so that Yue, in his above-mentioned book, defines China's modern history as a "saga of eating" (Yue 1999, 1), pointing out how all the major historical events that have shaped the country's modern history have been brought into discourse or can be analyzed through literal or symbolic gastronomic imaginations: from Lu Xun's depictions of China as a cannibalistic society to Mao Zedong's communist rhetoric built on "iron rice bowls" and "eating bitterness" (because "revolution is not a dinner party") and finally, to Deng Xiaoping's opening-up policies that promoted voracious consumerism.

In every culture, eating is never only about physical sustenance but also, and most importantly, an expression of social and cultural values and identities, which are usually performed in highly codified manners. This, as suggested by John Allen, explains why we as humans have so many memories related to eating experiences. In most cases, food memories are not only evocative of the eating practice in itself, but they can also trigger deeper (sometimes unexpected) emotions (Allen 2012, 150). Perhaps the most famous literary example of this proposition is Marcel Proust's episode of the madeleines, recounted in the first volume of *In Search of Lost Time*: the taste of the shell-shaped cake dipped in tea is the involuntary trigger of fond memories of the narrator's childhood. That is to say, when food-related memories arise, most of the times it is not only our experience with food that we are remembering, but all other social, cultural, and historical experiences that somehow we associate to that food item or alimentary practice.

That remembering is an essentially social construct had already been famously observed by Maurice Halbwachs, whose concept of "collective memory" has been very influential in figuring out that the way we make sense of things past has an influence on how those things are remembered socially and publicly (Halbwachs [1925] 1992). The concept was further elaborated by Jan and Aleida Assmann who pointed out the difference between a collective memory they call "communicative," that is, limited to the transmission of recent (autobiographical) past mainly through informal media (living memory, communication in vernac-

[4] Lit. "口的乞求，口在乞求，一个 '吃' 字，馋的意思有了，饿的意思有了，下贱的意思也有了."

ular language), and a "cultural" memory, that is concerned with a longer time frame and is mediated through institutionalized, highly symbolic forms, such as monuments, texts, rituals, and so on (A. Assmann 2008; J. Assmann 2008).

Literature, in particular, is a privileged medium of memory making, because, as pointed out by Astrid Erll (2011, 159), it "simultaneously builds and observes memory". On the one hand, texts construct versions of the past—that can be subversive, traditional, innovative—but on the other hand, they make this process of construction observable (Erll 2011, 151). From a historical perspective, this resonates with Foucault's attention to the "document" as no longer "the fortunate tool of a history that is primarily and fundamentally *memory*" (Foucault [1972] 1989, 7. Emphasis in the original) but as an object that participates in the constitution of history by way of its manipulation—i.e. by way of the meaning a certain culture attributes to that document. In other words, by looking at the ways in which personal memories have publicly been re-elaborated in textual form, we can analyze how past events have been re-appropriated, negotiated, and manipulated. This operation is particularly interesting considering the context of modern and contemporary China, in which history has officially been passed down as a one-sided, virtually incontestable narrative. In this sense, one can look at literature, as David Der-wei Wang points out, as a "complementing *and* contesting discourse" to history (D. Wang 2004, 2. Emphasis in the original).

This paper takes the alimentary discourse as the lens through which to access and analyze literary texts as complementing and contesting narratives to the official communist hagiography of hunger as a symbol of revolutionary endurance in the context of the labor camp. The aim is to examine and discuss how the works of Wang Ruowang, Zhang Xianliang, and Yang Xianhui problematize certain orthodox practices of remembering and forgetting, while in turn offering alternative narrative memoryscapes for an affective reconfiguration of traumatic histories.

## 3. Gustatory Nostalgias: Wang Ruowang's *Hunger Trilogy*

Wang Ruowang's *Hunger Trilogy* is a novelized memoir in which the author retells his threefold experience with hunger that has accompanied him throughout his life. The first time was in the 1930s, when Wang, then a teenager, was detained in Caohejing prison in Shanghai, sentenced by the Guomindang (GMD) for his communist activism. His second experience of hunger was during the Sino-Japanese war, when the protagonist and his team were trapped in a forest for a few days while chasing Japanese soldiers. Finally, the third encounter with hunger happened once again in prison; in the 1960s Wang was labeled a counterrevolutionary and detained in the same Caohejing prison, now under control of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). The first-person narration is that of the protagonist Wang Shouhua 王寿华, which is the author's actual birth name. The text was first published in 1980 in the Chinese magazine *Shouhuo* 收获 (Harvest), and reprinted in a somewhat docked version in 1983 as part of the collection *Yanbuzhu de guangmang* 掩不住的光芒 (The Indistinguishable Light).[5]

Food narratives are a central element in the story, which in fact begins with an introductory note in which the author recalls a ritualized social practice centered on eating.

> I don't know who it was to invent a type of religious-like ceremony called "eat to recall bitterness" [*chi yi ku fan* 吃忆苦饭]. They say it's to teach you not to forget class bitterness. On a given day, members of institutional organizations or military regiments gather at the same time to eat together. They eat a kind of steamed bun that is made of carrot peelings and leaves; if there are no carrots, they use sweet potato seedlings. Each person will eat one or two of these buns, even those who have stomach ulcers are obliged to eat them. They say that eating a couple of these buns will give you a proletarian consciousness, preventing you from becoming a revisionist. (R. Wang [1980] 1989, 78)[6]

The "eat to recall bitterness" ceremony that Wang mentions above is part of an indoctrination movement the CCP implemented in the 1960s, aimed at educating the younger generation to the suffering of the people before the liberation (G. Wu 2014). As part of the "recall bitterness" (*yiku* 忆苦) campaign, the party mobilized families and communities to share their memories of how harsh life was before the communist takeover. These stories circulated through a number of media, including film screenings, publications in literary magazines, as well as in the form of staged performance (a person would be selected to speak in front of an audience with the purpose of creating emotional engagement). Generally speaking, as Guo Wu points out, the campaign was "aimed at reenacting class struggle and reinforcing class awareness by invoking collective memory" (G. Wu 2014, 247). As Wang proceeds with the description, he recounts that a meal made of low quality ingredients—including tree leaves, potherb, bran, white mud—would be prepared and consumed together; the coarseness of the meal was a reminder of the hard life people had before the arrival of the communists. The way the meal was consumed also mattered, as the narrator explains:

> When eating, you are not allowed to frown, you have to look as if you have completely accepted to be reformed. But if you do frown, then it's not a big deal, you can go with the flow and say: "I'm thinking about the suffering of the past and cherishing the present; I'm thinking about how oppressed I was in the old society, how sad." (R. Wang [1980] 1989, 78)

Food is a very meaningful site for the exploration of memory, because, as pointed out by David Sutton, unlike, for example, public monuments, it actively intercepts the intimate and the public dimension of eating, bringing togeth-

[5] My analysis was based on this latter version of the text.

[6] Unless otherwise specified, the translations of the Chinese texts are mine.

er individual bodies and collective institutions (Sutton 2008, 160).[7] However, Wang's text adds an element of disturbance to this ideal convergence of intimate and collective memories, because the author's personal recollection of the ceremony is very different from the institutional version. This contradiction is enacted through the semantic double-entendre implicit in the expression *chiku*. The "bitterness" that the participants in the eating ceremony are forced to eat is prepared on purpose (the coarse bun made with food scraps) whereas the protagonist of the story had to swallow a "bitterness" of a different kind.

> As for me, when I swallow these two chaff buns, I think about something else; the hardships I have endured in the past were not about eating coarse food, because even that coarse food was very difficult to scrounge. I have experienced an extraordinary kind of hunger, the kind that leaves you wishing for death.
> And now I want to tell you about the three times in my life in which I have experienced this sort of hunger, though it is not for the purpose of reinforcing any type of proletarian consciousness, but only to express a hope. Twice is bad, three times is too much; I hope I will not have to experience this hunger for a fourth time! (R. Wang [1980] 1989, 78)

The "eating bitterness" reenactment triggers the protagonist's traumatic memory of the hunger he had to endure, and the performance of ingesting scraps appears grotesque to a person who actually had to rely on food waste in order to survive. This brief introductory note is very telling of the author's intention, that is to renegotiate the way some memories have been institutionally sanctioned (and that he himself has been forced to swallow), and to propose, instead, an alternative version, one that is based on a lived experience.

As mentioned above, Wang's memoir actually compares three different experiences of hunger, and connects them to different parts of Chinese history. The first part of *Hunger Trilogy* focuses on the protagonist's imprisonment as a 16-year-old communist activist during GMD rule. While in prison, young Wang Shouhua participates in a hunger strike organized by his fellow inmates, who demanded better and more food from the prison administration. On the fifth day of the strike, our protagonist is exhausted, and about to give in to the enticing proposals of the guards, who had offered pieces of meat in exchange of their surrender. He starts hallucinating, to the point that "a piece of sweet-smelling, glistening, glowing pork" (R. Wang [1980] 1989, 99) appeared before his eyes. He feels like he himself is turning into that piece of pork, as he tells us: "when I pressed my fingers together they felt greasy and slippery" (R. Wang [1980] 1989, 99). The body of the prisoner becomes food, and not a random item, but pork, China's favorite. This hallucinatory metamorphosis, as Yue puts it, is a "powerful sign of the struggle between the political body and the physical body," between actual and symbolic hunger: for food and for justice (Yue 1999, 171).

7 Sutton's study was focused on an ethnographic analysis of a community's alimentary practices in the Greek Island of Kalymnos.

Hunger strike is a rather powerful and direct practice of resistance to prison logic. But it is not the only one. Another, more subtle, strategy that Wang presents us is storytelling. When the protagonist is jailed for his counterrevolutionary crimes in the 1960s, in the midst of an epidemic famine, he recounts that "the prisoners had come up with a method to alleviate hunger, it was called 'spiritual dining' [*jingshen jucan* 精神聚餐]" (R. Wang [1980] 1989, 155). Taking turns, prisoners in the same cell would share descriptions of their favorite dishes or snacks.

> All the great food from Yangzhou, Sichuan, Guangdong, and Shanghai were divided by type and described in detail. Even the sound of roasting in the cooking pot, the color, the fragrance and the flavor of the dish just prepared were vividly described, and in the end the narrator and the listeners were both copiously drooling. (R. Wang [1980] 1989, 155)

When they were done with food descriptions, prisoners would start recollecting all the food stalls in certain popular areas of Shanghai, and listed the prices of all the items as well. This recollection game is soothing at first, a way to "pass the time" (R. Wang [1980] 1989, 155). However, at one point, it becomes unbearable; our protagonist is feeling hungrier and hungrier, and eventually he begs his friends to stop.

*Jingshen jucan* figures as another kind of ritualized memory practice, although not officially institutionalized as the eating bitterness ceremony analyzed above. On the diegetic level, the narratively performed gustatory nostalgia fulfills an almost therapeutic function—the oral recall of their favorite foods makes the prisoners forget, even just for a moment, about their actual hunger. On the other hand, this verbal recounting is an exercise of memory-making, an affective recalling of a traumatic history that through literature can be narratively articulated and passed down to generations to come.

## 4. Devouring Words: Metaphorical Bibliophagy in Zhang Xianliang's *Mimosa*

Set in the early 1960s, Zhang Xianliang's *Mimosa* is the story of Zhang Yonglin, a young intellectual—and sentenced rightist—who has just been released from *laogai* and sent to work to a state farm as a retained worker (*liuchang jiuye* 留长就业). At the farm, Yonglin meets a peasant woman, Ma Yinghua 马樱花, who will soon become to him a motherly figure and an object of desire at the same time. Looking at the simple yet honest life Ma Yinghua and the other peasants lead at the farm, Yonglin is caught in an existential crisis and starts to question his own identity as "intellectual." The man is exhausted from the hard labor and starved to the point that: "hunger had become a heavy and bulky substance that rampaged in my stomach. It had even gained a voice that shouted to every nerve in my body: Eat! Eat! Eat!" (Zhang [1984] 1989, 52). Yonglin's physical debilitation leads him to seek for a solace of the spirit, which does not refer to metaphysical or religious experiences, but rather, it exemplifies the protagonist's commitment to his intellectual education, as he constantly finds himself turning to the only book he owns in the camp: Karl Marx's *Das Kapital.* Yonglin received it as a gift from a fellow prisoner while still in *laogai,* a philosophy lecturer who suggested that in the book he might find out "how we have become what we have become" (Zhang [1984] 1989, 29). Our protagonist doesn't understand what his friend means by "we," whether it is the two of them, or perhaps he means "our country"? To which the friend answers: "Remember! [...] Our fate and the fate of our country are closely intertwined!" (Zhang [1984] 1989, 29), suggesting that Yonglin's quest to find meaning to his re-education experience is in fact in a way representative of the experience of a whole country.

As Sheldon Lu points out, in *Mimosa,* Zhang Xianliang reveals the mechanisms of deformation of the subject under socialism (Lu 2007, 45). Reading *Das Kapital* is supposed to rekindle Yonglin's political consciousness and help him transcend his individualistic, bourgeois tendencies, and yet, he is constantly confronted with the sense of estrangement he feels toward the uneducated peasants in the farm, and especially Ma Yinghua. In the camp, as pointed out by Han Shaoting, the man is scared of succumbing to the mundane necessity of food at the cost of his spiritual fulfillment (Han 2011, 81), and therefore, in order to state his hunger for intellectual nourishment, he turns to *Das Kapital.*

> I secretly reached for *Das Kapital,* that I had put under my pillow. [ ... ]. Now, this book has become my only link to the rational world; only this book can let me access again my once familiar cultural life, that can make me rise from buns, carrots, pickled vegetable soup and gruel, and demarcate the difference between myself and a starving beast. (Zhang [1984] 1989, 51)

The book is the symbol of Zhang's long lost intellectual life, a cultural marker that makes him remember his existence is more than a constant battle for survival, and serves him to recognize himself as something more than a mere "starving beast." Even though *Das Kapital* is the only book the protagonist owns—and also one of the very few allowed texts in the camp—Zhang's inner world is made up of a rich intertextual fabric that abounds with unorthodox literary references (such as Dante, Byron, Chinese classic poetry, Pushkin, and more), as if the author of the novel were ironically contesting the authority of Marx's text, implying that the protagonist's obsession with it was in fact only dictated by the material and cultural famine he finds himself into, as suggested by Daniele Beltrame (2017, 193).

The parallel between Zhang's need for actual and spiritual nourishment is constantly played out in the novel, and eventually these two dimensions converge, as images of food materialize in his mind when he reads key passages from *Das Kapital*:

> When I read [in *Das Kapital*] "Commodities come into the world in the shape of use values, articles, or goods, such as iron, linen, wheat, etc.," I savored the word "wheat" instead of concentrating on the meaning. I had a mental picture of bread, steamed buns, flapjacks, even cream cakes which made my mouth water. Then came

> the equation [describing the exchange of commodities]. A "coat," "tea," "coffee," "wheat," what a feast! Imagine wearing a spotless white coat (instead of huddling in a torn quilt), with some Keemum tea or Brazilian coffee in front of you (rather than an empty tin), cutting up a cream cake (not a carrot)—that would be a feast fit for the gods! My imagination enabled me to blend all the banquets I'd ever attended, seen or heard about. But all those delicacies distracted me from "The Fetishism of Commodities and the Secret Thereof." And on that cold silent winter day there wafted over that appetizing smell of the food I'd been imagining. I started to have stomach spasms. (Zhang [1984] 1989, 76–7. Translation by Yue 1999, 190–1)

Marx's words transform into food in the imagination of the avid reader, but they fail to bring him any kind of physical or spiritual fulfillment. On the contrary, the more Zhang gorges on Marx's words, the more hungry he feels. Words cannot compensate for his real hunger, and therefore, as Yue contends, the boundary between food and words, between physical and spiritual, is distorted in a wicked playfulness, and actually leaves nothing but pains in the body, in the form of stomach spasms (Yue 1999, 191). The scene is infused with religious undertones—the whole image of words literally turning into food is vaguely reminiscent of a crooked transubstantiation, in the sense that the word has not become flesh as it should have, and on the contrary, the flesh remains hungry and weak. This religious posture, as once again underlined by Yue (1999, 186-7), is not self-contradictory if read in the light of the religious-like devotion Chinese intellectuals ascribed to Marx and his thought.

In other words, the imaginary feast Zhang Yonglin summons from the reading of Marx's words is crucial in the development of his subjectivity. In the novel, hunger ironically does not function as the ideological catalyst to fulfill his socialist re-education, but on the contrary, it constantly confronts him with the conflict between his material and spiritual desires.

## 5. Binge Eating as Traumatic Haunting: Yang Xianhui's *Chronicles of Jiabiangou*

*Chronicles of Jiabiangou* is a collection of stories detailing life and death in the infamous Jiabiangou labor camp located in the middle of the Gobi Desert, between the late 1950s and the early 1960s. The book is based on interviews that the author, Yang Xianhui, a Gansu-based writer, conducted with the survivors of the camp. Yang then re-arranged the stories in his own fashion, though the narration is generally constructed from the point of view of the interviewee, who recounts his/her own experience.[8] The text explores the tragedy of hunger and reconstructs the incarceration experiences of sentenced rightists that underwent reform in Jiabiangou labor farm. In the stories that make up the book, the alimentary element is very strong. Indeed, the portrayal of food-related ep-

[8] The stories of Jiabiangou were adapted into a documentary film called *Jiabiangou* 夹边沟 (*The Ditch* in English) directed by Wang Bing 王兵 and presented at the Venice Film Festival in 2010.

isodes often appeals to a grotesque aesthetics that is aimed at evoking disgust in the reader. For instance, the story "Eating one's fill" (*Baoshi yi dun* 饱食一顿) features a man eating the vomit of his fellow prisoner who the previous day had gorged on potatoes. Another story, "Woman from Shanghai" (*Shanghai nüren* 上海女人), contains scenes of cannibalism: a prisoner finds out that some of his fellows have been secretly harvesting and eating organs from dead people's corpses. In other words, in his exploration of hunger and its effects on the human body and psyche, Yang really takes the concept of "food" to extreme ends, using disgusting food memories to convey the trauma of the past.[9]

One characteristic of trauma, as observed by Cathy Caruth, is the experience of constant returning, an inevitable going back to the place and time of the traumatic event. Caruth (1996, 4) calls it the "double wound"; the fact that trauma lies not only in the violent original event, but in how its "unassimilated nature," i.e. the impossibility of integrating it within the frameworks of everyday life, "returns to haunt the survivor later on".

This attention to trauma, food, and memory is present throughout the book, but it is particularly compelling in the story titled "The thief" (*Zei gutou* 贼骨头). The protagonist, Yu Zhaoyuan 俞兆远, has spent three years in Jiabiangou as a sentenced rightist. He was eventually released and, in 1979, sent back to his home in Jinta county (Gansu). When one day a neighbor asks him how he managed to survive the camp, Yu replies: "I was an irredeemable thief" (X. Yang [2003] 2008, 100). During his captivity in Jiabiangou, Yu had become very good at stealing food, which is what eventually kept him alive. He had not always been a thief though; as a kid, he received some Confucian education from his father, and he had always considered the idea of stealing shameful. Only after witnessing the death from starvation of two of his fellow prisoners, Yu finally decided he had to do something if he wanted to survive. That is how he began stealing: grain from the farm's warehouse, dough from the communal kitchen, corn ears, peanut leaves, even pesticide-covered wheat seeds that he and the other inmates were supposed to plant in the fields. When the camp was evacuated, in 1961, the prisoners were finally allowed to leave and Yu returned home. But his hunger never went away.

> Three months after I returned home, my legs had already gained their strength back, but my stomach was still unbearably hungry. I thought about food day and night, and especially craved raw grain. It didn't matter how much actual food I would eat, my stomach always felt empty. (X. Yang [2003] 2008, 177)

The trauma of starvation has modified Yu's cognitive framework, so that even when he has eaten his fill, he still feels hungry. Like a lurking presence, hunger comes back to haunt the man, to the point that he develops an obsessive-compulsive disorder, which eventually manages to disrupt his marital relationship.

9 For a more detailed analysis of the disgust aesthetics in *Chronicles of Jiabiangou*, see: De Marchi 2021.

> One day, while my wife was at work, I opened a wooden box where she had stored the corn flour, filled a teacup and hid it in my bookshelf. Every night before going to bed I would eat a spoonful or two. The raw flour was so fragrant and sweet! If I didn't have my spoonful I couldn't sleep, my stomach growling in hunger. I didn't overcome this eating habit until the winter of 1962, when my wife filed for divorce. In the courthouse, she admitted that the cause of the divorce was my habit of stealing and eating the raw flour. She said she couldn't bear the humiliation any longer; the neighbors all knew it, they thought she was purposefully withholding food from me, and this had forced me into the habit of stealing grain. (X. Yang [2003] 2008, 127)

Yu's wife does not understand her husband's obsession with food, and cannot bear the thought of her neighbors believing she is withholding it from him. On the other hand, Yu cannot get rid of the habit of stealing food he developed in the camp; the story of his trauma cannot find a suitable language to be expressed into, and therefore it keeps repeating itself in an endless loop.

The idea of the past as a lurking presence in the narrative entanglement of our present has famously been addressed by Jacques Derrida, who elaborated on the concept of "hauntology," prompted by Francis Fukuyama's reflections on "the end of history." In registering the collapse of communism and the rise of capitalism, Fukuyama (1989) recognized the existence of a clear boundary between the past and the present, whereas Derrida, who rejected this idea, envisioned history as a temporal disjoining, and the present as an ontological illusion; if we want to navigate it, we need to "learn to live *with* ghosts" (Derrida 1994, xvii–xviii. Emphasis in the original). In *Chronicles of Jiabiangou,* Yang Xianhui displays perverse gastronomies and maniacal incorporations as a way to examine how the remnants of Chinese modern history constantly come back to haunt the people who have survived it. A specter lurking in the darker corners of collective consciousness, the trauma of imprisonment and starvation is brought back to light thanks to literature, which, far from being able to provide consolation or retribution, nonetheless offers the possibility for reconfiguration and narrativization.

## 6. The Gut Remembers: Concluding Remarks

From the perspective of embodiment, eating is an utterly sensuous experience—it requires our engagement on a multisensorial level, which makes it a very interesting medium for the study of memory, both as cognitive as well as affective recollection (Sutton 2001; Holtzman 2006). Furthermore, because of the context in which food is prepared and consumed, which involves meaningful social contact, gastronomic memories are not only concerned with the gustatory experience *per se* but they are always symbolic of something else. Socially structured alimentary practices can indeed be vehicles of collective memories, both in a communicative as well as cultural sense (J. Assmann 2008). In other words, food is a "form of historical consciousness" (Sutton 2001, 26), and looking at how, in the context of modern China, that consciousness has been reconfigured through a medium like literature—which traditionally stands as a challenging discourse to official historiography—opens up new and perhaps unexpected sensuous memoryscapes.

In the literary texts that reconfigure the experience of the Mao-period labor camps, food is a key element around which the narration is developed. In *Hunger Trilogy*, Wang Ruowang unveils the hypocrisy of institutionalized forms of memory by playing with the metaphorical and literal meaning of the "eat to recall bitterness" campaign. Through food and eating rituals, the memory of hunger and incarceration is re-appropriated and reconfigured in an affective dimension. Zhang Xianliang, instead, plays with the apparent contradiction between the literal and metaphorical sense of eating that is so eloquently embodied in *Mimosa*'s protagonist, Zhang Yonglin, whose ordeal with physical and metaphysical nourishment represents the inner struggle of the whole Chinese intellectual class caught between personal desires and ideological righteousness. Finally, Yang Xianhui's *Chronicles of Jiabiangou* configures compulsive eating as the manifestation of the ways in which repressed historical trauma can come back to haunt collective memory.

As pointed out by David Wang (2004, 123), in Communist rhetoric, hunger is not only meant as bodily deprivation, but represents the actual driving force toward class awareness, the realization of one's own self-indulgent ways of thinking, which at the same time brings about the possibility of redemption. The ability of the individual to bear hunger testifies to his or her commitment to the revolutionary cause. To borrow Wang's words: "From bodily destitution to political institution, hunger, as a spiritual state, has been reified, so to speak, in the discourse of revolution" (D. Wang 2004, 123). The texts analyzed above take issue with hunger as an expression of a collective traumatic experience; they expose the hypocrisy behind the way it has been appropriated by mainstream ideology to suit a political agenda and subvert its meaning by reconfiguring it in its corporal dimension.

Because, as Caruth suggests, trauma enters our consciousness only belatedly, as a haunting presence, then, as argued by Anne Whitehead, we need to rethink our engagement with the past (Caruth 1996; Whitehead 2004, 13). If historical narratives—no longer available as infallible knowledge—must be reconceived as something that "perpetually escapes or eludes our understanding" (Whitehead 2004, 13), then, literary narratives can figure as ideal vehicles to convey the ways in which the non-referentiality of history expresses itself. To this end, gastronomic imaginations and food discourses figure as particularly fruitful explorational perspectives through which to address personal and collective experiences of history, in that they help us access these experiences as part of an embodied, intimate, and sensory narrative configuration that can possibly facilitate our emotional—gustatory—participation and recollection.

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# The languages of wine: negotiating intercultural exchanges through translation

Chiara Bertulessi, Emma Lupano, Bettina Mottura,
Natalia Riva, Yunqi Zhou

**Abstract**: This paper discusses the cultural and linguistic mediation strategies involved in the compilation of a terminological tool aimed at facilitating the intercultural exchanges between Italy and China in the field of oenology, by taking the *Dictionary of Italian wines and grape varieties (Italian-Chinese)* (Bosc *et al*. 2019) as a case study. The main objectives of the dictionary compilation were the popularization of specialized wine language, the standardization of the names of Italian wines and grape varieties, and the translation of the Italian lexicographical definitions in Chinese. For this process to be effective in terms of intercultural communication and mediation, the negotiation of standardization and translation strategies needed to take into account the differences between the two cultures and languages involved as well as the constraints of the lexicographical genre. After delineating the historical background and presenting the purpose of the dictionary from the lexicographical perspective, the paper delves into the choices made in the compilation of the Chinese text.

**Keywords**: Italian wine, wine dictionary, Italian-Chinese lexicography, translation, intercultural mediation.

**摘要**：本文以《意大利葡萄酒和葡萄品种词典》（意大利文—中文）（Bosc et al., 2019）为例，探讨了在编译一个旨在促进意大利和中国在酿酒学领域中跨文化交流的术语工具过程中所涉及的文化和语言调解策略。编译该词典的主要目的是葡萄酒专业用语的普及、意大利葡萄酒和葡萄品种名称的标准化以及意大利文词典定义的中文翻译。为了使这一过程在跨文化交流和调解方面有效，标准化和翻译策略的协商需要考虑到所涉及的两种文化和语言之间的差异以及词典类型的限制。在从词典编纂的角度描述历史背景并呈现该词典的用途之后，本文深入探讨了在中文文本编译中所做的选择。

**关键词**：意大利葡萄酒，葡萄酒词典，意汉辞书，翻译，跨文化交际。

## 1. Introduction

With the popularization of grape wine culture in China, in recent years, consumers have shown growing interest in the European wine tradition, making wine a promising ground for the economic and cultural encounter between Europe—with Italy at the fore—and China. The developing exchanges in this sector fostered the

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need for discursive tools to facilitate the intercultural communication between Italian and Chinese speakers (Romagnoli 2019). The bilingual *Dictionary of Italian wines and grape varieties (Italian-Chinese)*, hereafter the *Dictionary*, is one such example.[1]

The publication of the *Dictionary* in 2019 was the end result of an international lexicographical project which aimed to contribute to the promotion of Italian wine culture in China by systematizing the transmission in Chinese of the Italian wine language. The interdisciplinary research project, that the authors of this contribution participated in, focused on the popularization of scientific language, the standardization of terms, and the translation of the Italian definitions in Chinese. The process required constant negotiation between the two cultures and languages, as well as with the constraints of the lexicographic genre.

The work drew on the expertise of Italian oenologists and linguists, whose knowledge and specialized language had to be translated in Chinese. Yet, this translation could not be successfully carried out only at linguistic level. Instead, it required an ongoing dialogue between Chinese oenologists and Chinese linguists. Thus, in compiling the *Dictionary*, the mediation work was performed at three intertwined levels: 1) the popularization of the specialized language of wine in general, and of Italian wines in particular; 2) the inter-linguistic translation, which cannot be separated from an intercultural mediation of culture-specific concepts and expressions; 3) and the constant negotiation between the needs to properly translate the original meaning and efficiently introduce that meaning into a different cultural environment, where a specialized language of wine, however young and unstable, has been in use for some time.

The contribution is organized in four parts.[2] The first part briefly discusses the historical development of wine culture in China, from its origins to the most recent years, highlighting the fundamental role of the specialized language of wine in the popularization, marketization, and consumption of grape wine. The second briefly presents the nature and purpose of the *Dictionary* from the lexicographical perspective, based on the notions of user's needs and intercultural lexicographical communication in dictionary making. The third discusses the criteria applied in the translation of the names of Italian wines and grape varieties in order to translate the headwords of the *Dictionary*. The fourth analyzes the translation process in the *Dictionary*, highlighting the negotiation strategies applied. This section focuses on the overall structure of the definitions, syntax, and punctuation, leading then to the concluding remarks.

[1] The original title is *Dizionario dei vini e dei vitigni d'Italia (italiano-cinese)*, published by Gambero Rosso in 2019. It was an editorial project involving the Confucius Institute at the University of Milan, as well as the Department of Studies in Language Mediation and Intercultural Communication, the Department of Food, Environmental and Nutritional Sciences, the Department of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences - Production, Landscape, Agroenergy, the Contemporary Asia Research Centre at the University of Milan, and Liaoning Normal University.

[2] In this paper, Lupano is the author of paragraph 2, Bertulessi of paragraph 3, Mottura of paragraph 4, Riva of paragraph 5, except sub-paragraph 5.3 written by Zhou.

The study aims to highlight how, in a bilingual lexicographical work, sociolinguistic negotiation was performed in order to contribute to the diffusion of Italian culture in a context where the consumption of imported wine is perceived as a symbolic resource to achieve distinction (Yang and Paladino 2015) and as a sign of national modernity (Kjellgren 2004).

## 2. Mediating wine language and culture

The production of grape wine seems to have been a worldwide phenomenon since prehistoric times, with experts generally agreeing that the cradle of viniculture should be placed somewhere between Eastern Turkey, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Western and Central China. Such are the connections in terms of timing, techniques, and even languages regarding wine and wine production in this vast area, that scholars have drawn the hypothesis of the existence of a Wine Road in the Eurasian continent well before the establishment of a Silk Road (Kupfer 2010, 7–12).

In particular, wine archaeologist Patrick McGovern's discovery, between 2004 and 2005, of the earliest traces (7000 BC) of grape wine production in the central areas of the later Chinese Empire (Henan province) questioned previous knowledge that viniculture started around 5000 BC in Northern Iran (Kupfer 2010, 10). Whichever conclusions will be reached in the future with further archaeological findings, the history of winemaking appears in essence, and to date, the result of ongoing blending, exchange, and mediation between different civilizations and cultures. Nonetheless, grape wine was—and still is—perceived as the expression of a territory in geographical, material, and anthropological terms; it embodies the traditions and culture of a place and a people, and their ability to create and innovate.

In China, while hints at vine cultivation can already be traced in Zhou dynasty records (*Shijing* 诗经 and *Liji* 礼记), the earliest written evidence of grape wine production in the Western regions of today's China and of contacts with Eurasian vines can be found in the Han dynasty *Shiji* 史记, dating around 100 BC (Kjeller 2004, 15). From then to the Tang dynasty to Kublai Khan, grape wine in China has been traditionally associated to luxury, elite consumption, and foreign (Western) origins, even though in recent years an increasing number of Chinese scholars have argued that grape wine is actually an indigenous product (Wu 2001, 264–307).

The motivations to place the "birth" of grape wine within the national boundaries are in a wide sense political, being in line with an official discourse that, over the last decade, has strived to reaffirm China's leading position on the world stage at economic, geopolitical, and cultural levels, after the so-called "century of humiliation" (*bainian guochi* 百年国耻). As Kjeller puts it:

> Wine is a product that in China is strongly linked to the project of modernization. This project [...] is carried out against the historical background of China's international humiliation in the late nineteenth century and the introspective debate on the merits and perils of Chinese tradition that followed. (Kjeller 2004, 25)

Therefore, wine is commercially presented as a desirable, leisure, and healthy product that has become part of the refined and worldly lifestyle of the modern Chinese; yet, local labels often refer to indigenous roots by recalling Xinjiang or Shandong vineyards in their marketing tools.

The fact that most of China's wine is made with imported grape varieties, know-how, and machinery is not seen as a contradiction. Instead, it links well to the century-old idea of "Chinese knowledge as substance, Western knowledge as instrument" (*Zhongxue wei ti Xixue wei yong* 中学为体西学为用) formulated by intellectual Zhang Zhidong at the end of the 19th century to call for a selective adoption of Western concepts and technologies in the Chinese realm. Even Changyu Wine Company, the pioneer of China's modern wine industry and one of the top producers, was initiated in Yantai, Shandong, by Zhang Bishi, a Chinese businessman returned from Indonesia who planted vines imported from Austria (Kupfer 2010, 17; Kjeller 2004, 18).

In 2020, China produced around 660 million liters of wine, but the Chinese population consumed more than 1.2 billion liters, making China the sixth leading wine consumer in the world. Red wine is the most popular, covering 80 per cent of the national consumption, a dominance that many explain with the positive meaning of its color, traditionally a symbol of luck, happiness and celebrations (Tang *et al.* 2015). Chinese consumers have started to spend more for better quality wine, among which imported wines hold an important position. International bottles make up 40 per cent of the market, with China being the fifth largest global wine importer in 2020, worth 1.6 billion euros (Ma 2021a, 2021b; Cellar Asia 2019).

After a decade of continuous growth, the Chinese market has started to mature. Domestic consumption hit a record in 2017 and has since been followed by yearly decreases. The trend could be explained with the decline of purchase for special occasions and for gift giving, and with the emergence of wine as a "norm" among a part of the younger population. Drinking and knowing wines, especially foreign wines, is a trait of distinction for the increasingly selective urban and cultured Chinese (Yang and Paladino 2015), who now mostly buy wine (preferably online) for everyday consumption at home (Cellar Asia 2019).

The Chinese cultural industry has prepared and accompanied this trend, as the success of social media celebrities such as Lady Penguin (*Zui'e niang* 醉鹅娘) shows. With 3.8 million followers on Douyin 抖音[3] and 1.5 million on Weibo 微博,[4] a program of offline wine courses throughout the country, and a number of other initiatives and commercial activities,[5] the influencer has estab-

[3] See Zui'e niang xiao jiuguan 醉鹅娘小酒馆 (@zuieniang), Douyin 抖音 profile, <https://www.douyin.com/user/MS4wLjABAAAAsDER3ZorAvonLig3FM1PmuQ8v5-0NGHpibj1d4Y8k1o>.

[4] See Zui'e niang 醉鹅娘 (@醉鹅娘), Weibo 微博 profile, <https://weibo.com/zuieniang?page=2&is_all=1#_loginLayer_1626103427577>.

[5] Such as her commercial website, see <http://www.ladypenguin.com>.

lished herself as the main authority on wine (and spirits) in China. Lady Penguin, whose real name is Wang Shenghan 王胜寒, is a proper cultural mediator. She not only leads novices into the secrets of wine tasting, wine pouring, and good drinking manners but also introduces national and international wine regions, wine producers, and bottles, and light-heartedly teaches her audience of non-specialists that each wine is representative of a specific place, history, culture, and civilization. Her use of relatively simple terms, while covering a wide range of wine-related topics, makes Lady Penguin also a language mediator, catering to the national wine industry as a whole.

More than with any other commercial product, the marketing and selling of wine is in fact strictly dependent on the consumers' knowledge of the jargon. As Tiefenbacher and Townsend (2019) have noted, wine drinkers have to be educated before they can be targeted as buyers: they have to know the universal "wine speak", meaning the lexicon and syntax used to transfer the "ideological, sociological and technological components of wine culture". This language for specific purposes (Trace *et al.* 2015), that despite specific vernacular contexts remains relatively intact while being transmitted beyond countries and cultures, "conveys the important concepts, qualities, and explanations for the empirical and subjective elements of wines, including how they were grown, how they were crafted, and why they seem to satisfy or dissatisfy the consumer" (Tiefenbacher and Townsend 2019, 3).

Wine consumers have to master the jargon if they want to not only understand what they drink and what they like to drink, but also verbalize their sensations and translate them into meaningful descriptions:

> To advance beyond the recognition of white, red, rosé, or bubbly wine, and to find the wines that they enjoy, [the wine consumer] must develop an understanding of what is communicated in advertising and retail settings, and learn the language that effectively and accurately communicates their preferences, relates their experiences, and enables their leisure, their pleasure, their satisfaction, or their meal. (Tiefenbacher and Townsend 2019, 27)

In this perspective, wine language is the very foundation for the production, trade, and consumption of wine. In the context of a growingly important Chinese wine market, language and discursive tools to facilitate intercultural communication between wine producers and Chinese speakers are therefore increasingly needed. The bilingual Italian-Chinese *Dictionary* is one such tool, aiming at the promotion of Italian wine culture.

## 3. A lexicographical tool for intercultural communication

The *Dictionary* is an Italian-Chinese specialized and bilingual lexicographical work that collects names of Italian wines and grape varieties, which represent an instance of specialized language, i.e. the language of Italian wine. Specialized language is defined as a variety of language used within the framework of certain sectors of the linguistic community and characterized by the use of somewhat specialized terminology in relation to the common lexicon and the presence of specific morphosyntactic structures (Cortelazzo 1994). The *Dictionary* can be considered the product of a terminographic activity as it collects terminological units which allow for the transfer of specialized knowledge (Cabré 2000).

More specifically, the wordlist[6] of the *Dictionary* is composed of Italian wine names (DOCG, DOC, IGT)[7] and grape varieties, which are organized in alphabetical order based on Italian, the source language (SL).[8] Each entry comprises the headword (the wine name or the name of the grape variety) and its lexicographical definition, both provided in Italian and translated into Chinese (the target language, TL). Moreover, with the aim to facilitate the consultation of the *Dictionary* by its prospective users, a short bilingual glossary (Italian-Chinese) with definitions is included in the front matter. The short glossary collects the basic terminology of wine employed in the Italian and Chinese definitions of the entries (Bosc *et al.* 2019).

Bergenholtz and Tarp (2010)—who consider specialized lexicography and terminography basically as synonyms—believe that the making and the nature of any lexicographical work should be related to the user's needs. These needs, in turn,

> [should be] related not only to a specific type of users, but also to the specific type of social situation where this type of user may have a specific type of lexicographically relevant needs that may lead to dictionary consultation. (Bergenholtz and Tarp 2010, 29)

Similarly, drawing from the Communicative Theory of Terminology defined by Cabré (1999), Edo Marzá (2009, 45–6) reminds us that terminographical (or specialized lexicographical) activities should be oriented towards the satisfaction of the communicative needs arising in specialized areas of knowledge and language use. Therefore, in the making of a specialized lexicographical tool—as is the *Dictionary*—the compilers should be well aware of the nature of its prospective users, their specific needs and the specific communicative context in which this tool may be used (Bergenholtz and Tarp 2010, 46).

From the perspective of the user's needs, the *Dictionary* constitutes a bilingual tool that was designed to facilitate and enhance communication between Italian and Chinese experts operating in the wine industry, but it is also accessible to Italian and Chinese non-specialized users who may have an interest in wine. As a specialized lexicographical tool, it addresses experts and laypeople alike and can also serve encoding and decoding needs on the part of the users (Bergenholtz and Tarp 2010, 11). Moreover, one of the main objectives of the

6 A description of the research project and the editorial process of the *Dictionary* is included in Bosc and Mottura (2022).

7 Controlled and Guaranteed Designation of Origin, Controlled Designation of Origin, Typical Geographical Indication.

8 An alphabetical index based on Chinese *pinyin* of the headwords of the *Dictionary* is also included as an appendix.

*Dictionary* is to define a norm for the names of Italian wines and grape varieties in Chinese providing a standardized translation, thus benefiting its users and the marketization of Italian wine in China. Therefore, the *Dictionary* also poses itself as a tool of communication and mediation between two languages and two cultures. Specifically, it collects and presents in Chinese the language of Italian wine and, consequently, also the culture that this language embeds.

According to the communicative model of lexicography put forward by Yong and Peng, lexicography constitutes:

> the theory and practice of encoding and transmitting, intra-culturally or interculturally, information and knowledge concerning socialized linguistic forms of a given speech community and/or extralinguistic reality from the compiler to the user so as to affect the user's knowledge structure and perception of the world. (Yong and Peng 2007, 11)

From this perspective, the difference between monolingual and bilingual lexicography not only lies in the number of languages represented, but also in the fact that when two languages are involved, two cultures are also inevitably involved. For this reason, the bilingual dictionary can also be described in terms of intercultural communication (Yong and Peng 2007, 11).

Food is inextricably related to culture, and it also constitutes an interdisciplinary field that embraces, among others, history, and geography. Consequently, food terminology, a category to which wine terminology belongs, is "imbued with cultural meanings" (Faber and Claramonte 2017, 156; Counihan and Van Esterik 2013; Garzone 2016). This inevitably poses a number of issues also when food terminology constitutes the object of definition of a bilingual lexicographical tool, which is intended to provide lexical equivalents in the TL (Chinese in the case of the *Dictionary*). However, finding lexical equivalence is generally acknowledged as being a very difficult task, and this is especially true when pairs of languages with different cultures are involved in the process (Hartmann and James 2001, 14). It is seen as the compilers' duty to contribute to the development of the user's awareness "of the foreign culture and create lexical associations and images that are as close as possible to those existing in the mind of the native speakers" (Yong and Peng 2007, 128).

Wine language is not only the language of a specific subject field but is also deeply culture-bound: the names of Italian wines and grape varieties are an expression of culture and territory, of social practices and cultural models. As a result, to ensure the effectiveness of the process of lexicographical and intercultural communication, the making of the *Dictionary* and the process of standardization and translation of wine terminology required that not only linguistic elements, but also existing cultural differences between the Italian and Chinese cultures be taken into account (Bosc and Mottura 2022).

Based on these premises, the following paragraphs describe the translation processes of the *Dictionary* in order to highlight the commitment to ensuring the effectiveness of the process of intercultural communication and mediation between Italian and Chinese speakers, through the language of Italian wine.

## 4. The standardization process: sources and method

Against the background of the sociolinguistic context discussed above, the compilation process of the *Dictionary* developed in two phases: the elaboration of the Italian text; and the translation into Chinese.

The process started with the identification in Italian of a list of dictionary entries selected from oenology specialized discourse and the compilation of the Italian definitions. Useful linguistic data and content information were collected from oenological academic catalogues and from local regulations and documents on wine production. This work required a strong interaction between Italian linguists, oenologists, viticulture experts, and wine specialists. It led to a final draft of the *Dictionary* which contained 793 wine entries and 666 grape varieties entries in Italian.

Subsequently, two further processes began, namely the search for Chinese equivalents of the Italian headwords (i.e., names of wines or grape varieties) and the translation into Chinese of the lexicographical definition. Both aspects involved deep synergies and constant interaction between Chinese and Italian sinologists and wine specialists. This paragraph and next one highlight selected aspects of the translation process, all greatly characterized by cultural mediation and linguistic negotiation efforts (Liddicoat 2016).

Aware of a pre-existing wine-related linguistic context in China, the translators first looked for specialized sources to build lists of wine and grape names, terminology, and lexicon of wine language in Chinese, and draw from them when translating the headwords and the dictionary entries. The literary review led to a sample of books on Italian oenology and wines for the general public and a selected number of official Chinese documents aimed at the standardization of terminology in international trade.

Three documents emerged as authoritative primary sources to draw upon for our translation work. Two standards published by the People's Republic of China (Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Shangwubu, 2015; Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Zhiliang Jiandu Jianyan Jianyi Zongju and Zhongguo Guojia Biaozhunhua Guanli Weiyuanhui 2005)[9] and a specialized online dictionary (Yi Xiang Guoji Putaojiu Yu Liejiu Jiaoyu 2004–2012), sponsored by several international organizations involved in wine commerce and marketing, such as the Italian Institute of Foreign Trade. Moreover, Chinese equivalents of toponyms and anthroponyms included in the names of wines or grape varieties, were found—when possible—either on a geographical map of Italy published by Sinomaps Press in 2016, or in a dictionary of proper names (Xinhua Tongxunshe Yiming Shi 2012).

A close reflection on these Chinese sources highlighted that the official language representing the Italian wine sector in China mainly depends on translations. Besides, most wine and grape names translations were based on phonetic

[9] On the importance of national standards in wine production and commercialization in China see Yang *et al*. (2015).

calques, often based on the English language as SL. Consequently, the terminology and lexicon attested in the field of oenology in China did not draw from a direct translation of the Italian linguistic and cultural heritage. In addition, the length of linguistic data collected from the existing sources seemed relatively poor compared to the number and complexity of the entries of the *Dictionary*. Therefore, the existing linguistic background testified to the interest and originality of the lexicographic project and highlighted several cultural and linguistic difficulties to be overcome throughout the compilation process.

### 4.1. Standardizing grape varieties and wine names in Chinese

The translators first collected all the existing forms of names of Italian wines and of grape varieties in Chinese primary sources. Among the data extracted, the selection of the forms to be concretely inserted as headwords in the *Dictionary* was based on the principle of consistency between different sources, interpreted as a demonstration of the acquisition of the name in the specialized language of wine in China. All recurring names were therefore adopted, regardless of their form or their relationship to the original phonetics of the Italian name. 'Barbera', for example, is a grape name whose transcription was consistent in our sources, which proposed: *babeila* 巴贝拉. On the other hand, in the case of partial coherence between different sources, for example because of the choice of different sinograms to note the same sound, the translators favored the phonetic transcription that best mirrored the Italian pronunciation of the name. Accepting established translations in the *Dictionary* aimed at embedding the book in the target linguistic context and, hopefully, enhance its future dissemination in China.

Despite this process, the data collected still left significant translation gaps: most of the headwords in Italian were missing a Chinese equivalent. As the analysis highlighted phonetic transcription as the main source of lexical borrowings in the Chinese wine specialized language (Alleton 2001), missing headwords were created through the same technique. This led to the selection of the most appropriate sinograms to reproduce the pronunciation of Italian names, while respecting the graphic and symbolic significance of the characters in the Chinese cultural context.

During this phonetic transcription process, the main difficulties were the difference in phonetic structure between the two languages and the cultural density of the wine and oenological Italian tradition. The synergy between the Italian and Chinese language experts and their constant dialogue helped to mediate between cultures and languages. Throughout the translation, several strategies were systematically adopted, and general principles were applied to ensure consistency between dictionary entries.

In the absence of existing translations, as was the case for 'Valpantena', the phonetic transcription from the Italian name of the wine led to: *wa'erpantena* 瓦尔潘特纳. As showed in this example, the process often produced names of more than three sinograms, a length that does not characterize standard language words in China (Packard 2004). This shortcoming was even worse when the wine name in Italian contained several words, resulting in a translated name difficult to read for a native Chinese speaker. Hence, where the character strings translating a wine name became too long compared to the standard in the TL, the name in Chinese characters was segmented by adding a hyphen to make the dictionary headword more readable. This is the case with 'Delia Nivolelli' wine: *dailiya – niwoleili* 戴利亚—尼沃勒利.

In some cases, hybrids were created. For example, when the names of wines contained toponyms or adjectives derived from them, these elements were anticipated to the left of the translated name. 'Cerasuolo d'Abruzzo' became: *abuluzuo – qielasuoluo* 阿布鲁佐—切拉索罗, where *abuluzuo* is the toponym and *qielasuoluo* a phonetic calque. Additionally, when the wine name contained a color, it was translated by its Chinese equivalent, placed on the left-hand side, in the position of determinant. However, each headword had to be examined with care, as colors in the *Dictionary* may refer to different characteristics. In the following examples, both the wines' names contain 'bianco' (white), but the word has different meanings. 'Greco di Bianco' is a wine from Calabria, and here 'Bianco' is a toponym, hence the transcription had to be: *bi'anke – gelaike* 比安科—格莱克; in 'Bianco Capena', 'bianco' means white wine, for this reason, it has been translated in Chinese as *kapeina – baiputaojiu* 卡佩纳—白葡萄酒. Likewise, geographically related words inserted in wine names have been translated by their Chinese equivalents, such as *qiulin* 丘陵 for 'hills' or *hupan* 湖畔 for 'the coast of a lake', etc.

This creative effort resulted in the standardization in Chinese of the names of the grape varieties and of DOCG, DOC, and IGT wines of the Italian local tradition. Most of the choices made aimed to reduce as much as possible the roughness resulting from the distance between the SL and the TL, in search for a mediation that would make the *Dictionary* easy to use for the reader. The text would guarantee a sort of linguistic and cultural integration when possible or, at least, a dialogue. In this perspective, having selected a method of producing equivalents centered on phonetic calques, which above all favors the preservation of the sound of the original names, the use of the *Dictionary* headwords by native Chinese speakers would probably be driven by the charm of the exoticism of the product, of its cultural and linguistic 'otherness'.

## 5. DOCG, DOC, and IGT definitions: translation as negotiation

The compilers of the *Dictionary*, a group of professionals constituted by both "professors and disseminators" and "communication mediators" (Cabré 2000), aimed at disseminating knowledge on Italian wine by tackling cognitive differences between the writer and the recipient of the message and overcoming linguistic differences in this process. Because of the terminological nature of the *Dictionary*, careful consideration of the Italian text was necessary in terms of elements such as the form, structure, and length of the lexicographical definitions. Given the diversity and complexity of the language varieties involved, as described in the previous paragraphs, the translators acted as "a bridge… in a situation of disparity" (Cabré 2000) negotiating strategies to tackle difficulties at various levels.

As Eco (2003, 16) suggests, translation is a negotiation process in itself: the parties involved—the original text and the destination text, each with its own cultural framework—renounce something for the sake of overall satisfaction. The elaboration of the *Dictionary*'s Chinese text embraced this approach applying it to both the formal and content schemata (Pellat and Liu 2010, 11–5). When reading the source text, the translator acts in a bicultural and bilingual frame: the syntactic, semantic, lexical, and orthographic elements—the formal schema—are interpreted as a basis upon which to form the content schema—an understanding of the text in terms of information and implications (Pellat and Liu 2010, 11–5). The translator uses the content schema "to re-create the text into the framework of a new formal schema in the target language" (Pellat and Liu 2010, 11–5). In addition, in the field of terminology, terms are themselves "units of form and content" (Cabré 2000). Thus, as the *Dictionary* shows, finding the correct equivalent terms and adapting grammar were important aspects in the translation process, but working on the formal schema, focusing on the syntactic structure of the target text before applying the content schema, was equally fundamental. This approach ensured "functional equivalence", while at the same time, formal correspondence was also respected as much as possible. The process, in brief, shows continuous negotiation between the two long-debated concepts of form and content in translation (Ye and Shi 2009, 6–8).

Drawing on these notions, this paragraph focuses on the strategies adopted by the translators of the *Dictionary* to reach the end goal of transmitting specialized knowledge (Cabré 2000) by successfully mediating between the two cultural and linguistic systems involved. This required solving problems posed both by the nature of the specialized language of Italian wine and the specificity of the editorial product. Specifically, the paragraph describes the adaptation of the form of the DOCG, DOC, and IGT definitions from the SL to the TL by identifying three areas as crucial: the overall structure of the definitions; syntax; and punctuation.

### 5.1 Overall structure of DOCG, DOC, and IGT definitions

Layout and structure of the text are part of the formal schema (Pellat and Liu 2010, 12). As such, they needed to be taken into as much consideration as lexicon in the elaboration of the *Dictionary*. The length of the definitions, their immediacy and compactness, and most importantly coherence both between the target and source texts, as well as throughout the target text, were all aspects considered by the translators. Matters related to layout and structure were also negotiated with the editors based on the requirements of the physical print. The definitions appear as blocks headed by the name of the wine or grape variety in Italian. The transcription in Chinese characters and their transliteration in *pinyin* follow below. The indication of the region of production in Italian and

Chinese (without *pinyin*) is also added. Each lexicographical definition in Italian consists of invariable parts as well as parts that vary according to the wine or grape variety being defined. In the case of a wine, the characteristics used are: typology, that is sensorial qualities such as color (white, pink, red), residual sugar (semi-sweet, sweet, concentrated sweet, fortified), and presence of bubbles (lightly sparkling, sparkling); version, that is vinification and oenological techniques (classic, selection, reserve, superior, late harvest, traditional method, young, Vin Santo, Occhio di Pernice); and specification, denoting more limited geographical indications.

The elaboration of a standard model for the Italian DOCG, DOC, and IGT definitions was systematic, allowing for the identification of recurring substructures: wine typology and version, production area, wine composition, and other specific characteristics. The same approach was maintained in the translation process. As a result, the definitions are specular in Italian and Chinese but vary in length and content in relation to the specific characteristics of the categories they belong to. These efforts were made to ensure that the *Dictionary* is visually well-organized, and its consultation easy in both the source and target languages, thus enhancing the efficiency of the definitions in fulfilling their communicative function.

### 5.2 Syntax

In the *Dictionary*, the syntax of the Italian text and that of its Chinese translation differ. From a syntactic point of view, Italian is a hypotactic language, while Chinese is a paratactic language, with propositions which are all on the same level and linked through punctuation or coordinating conjunctions. In the definitions, based on the characteristics of the Chinese syntax, single complex sentences in the source text are broken into simple or complex sentences in the target text. This process was carried out by identifying "blocks of information" in the Italian definitions—the aforementioned recurring substructures—and taking these units as a basis for the Chinese translation. Thus, the first simple sentence in the Chinese definitions translates only part of the complex sentence in Italian—the segment which could be called the "typology block"—as shown in Figures 1 and 2 depicting the entries Vermentino di Gallura (DOGC) and Montecarlo (DOC). When needed, the indication of the version(s) pertaining to every typology is also included in this block. While the SL uses a single complex sentence including both the unit indicating wine typology and version and that indicating the production area, these are kept separate in Chinese.

In all DOGC, DOC, and IGT definitions, the second sentence of the Chinese translation contains the indication of the Italian province and region of production. Because of the syntactic rules of the Chinese language, the order of province and region is reversed in comparison to Italian, with region (*daqu* 大区) appearing before the province (*sheng* 省). Moreover, in the Chinese text, the "production area block" can either end with a full stop or appear in a complex sentence together with the "wine composition block". The two blocks are included in the same sentence when the wine is produced in only one typology or in various typologies sharing the same ampelographic base (see Figure 1).


**Vermentino di Gallura**
加卢拉—维蒙蒂诺
jiālúlā—wéiméngdìnuò
DOCG

**SARDEGNA 撒丁岛大区**
Vino prodotto nelle tipologie bianco, anche nelle versioni superiore e vendemmia tardiva / frizzante bianco / spumante bianco / passito bianco, in provincia di Sassari (regione Sardegna), ottenuto da uve provenienti dal vitigno Vermentino (min. 95%).
此款酒有白葡萄酒（也有超级、晚收款）、微起泡白葡萄酒、起泡白葡萄酒和风干甜白葡萄酒四种类型。该酒产于撒丁岛大区萨萨里省，由维蒙蒂诺（至少95%）葡萄品种酿造而成。

Figure 1 – In Bosc *et al.* 2019, 238.

Conversely, when the definition lists various wine typologies with their corresponding lists of grapes, as is the case for Montecarlo (see Figure 2), a third sentence—the "wine composition block"—is added to include the indication of the specific wine typology or typologies as the subject followed by the ampelographic base.

### 5.3 Punctuation

Part of the formal schema, punctuation is "perhaps the 'minutest' part of a text" (Pellat and Liu 2010, 12). As every language uses it differently, punctuation "needs to be mined for its meaning, so that the text and its component sentences can be appropriately restructured" when needed (Pellat and Liu 2010, 13). It can be argued that punctuation marks play a more important role in Chinese than Italian.

First of all, it is significant that in the People's Republic of China the use of punctuation marks is regulated by an official document: the National Standard of the People's Republic of China: General rules for punctuation (*Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Guojia Biaozhun: Biaodian fuhao yongfa* 中华人民共和国国家标准：标点符号用法). Secondly, punctuation is much more visible in Chinese, with every mark taking up a full typographical character space (Pellat and Liu 2010, 29). Its importance, however, lies in the fact that in a language that does not rely on morphological inflection, it expresses meaning (Pellat and Liu 2010, 29).

When translating the *Dictionary*, punctuation was perhaps the level that required the most complex attempt at negotiating between marks looking approximately the same in Italian and Chinese but conveying different meanings. For instance, in the "wine typology block", in order to systematically deal with wines presenting multiple typologies and versions, an *ad hoc* punctuation and conjunction scheme was developed. For five or more typologies, the scheme combines inverted commas and the conjunctions *he* 和 and *yiji* 以及: *ci kuan jiu you* 此款就有 type 1 (version), type 2 (version), type 3 (version) *he* type 4 (version)，*yiji* type 5 (version) *wu zhong leixing* 五种类型. Generally speaking, the inverted comma, a "mid-sentence delimiter" that separates elements within a list (AQSIQ and SAC 2011), is used in the TL as a basic punctuation mark for elements in a list. Also called "sequence comma", it is a punctuation mark unique to Chinese; the parallel items in the list (including a sequence of two) are noun phrases or verb phrases (Pellat and Liu 2010, 31).

**Montecarlo**
蒙特卡洛
méngtèkǎluò

DOC

**TOSCANA 托斯卡纳大区**

Vino prodotto nelle tipologie bianco / passito bianco, nella versione Vin Santo / passito rosato, nella versione Occhio di Pernice / rosso, anche nella versione riserva, in provincia di Lucca (regione Toscana), ottenuto da uve provenienti dai vitigni Trebbiano Toscano (dal 30% al 60%), Pinot Bianco e/o Pinot Grigio e/o Roussanne e/o Sauvignon e/o Sémillon e/o Vermentino (dal 40% al 70%) per le tipologie bianco e passito bianco; dai vitigni Sangiovese (dal 50% al 75%), Canaiolo Nero e/o Merlot e/o Syrah (dal 15% al 40%), Cabernet Sauvignon e/o Cabernet Franc e/o Ciliegiolo e/o Colorino e/o Malvasia Nera di Lecce e/o Malvasia Nera di Brindisi (dal 10% al 30%) per le tipologie passito rosato e rosso. Il disciplinare prevede anche la produzione di vini monovarietali a base di Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Sauvignon, Syrah, Vermentino.

此款酒有白葡萄酒、风干甜白葡萄酒（圣酒款）、风干甜桃红葡萄酒（鹧鸪之眼款）和红葡萄酒（也有珍藏款）四种类型。该酒产于托斯卡纳大区卢卡省。白葡萄酒、风干甜白葡萄酒由托斯卡纳一塔比安诺（30%至60%），白皮诺、灰皮诺、瑚珊、长相思、赛美蓉、维蒙蒂诺（可选择任意品种或搭配，40%至70%）葡萄品种酿造而成；风干甜桃红葡萄酒、红葡萄酒由桑娇维赛（50%至75%），黑卡纳奥罗、美乐、西拉（可选择任意品种或搭配，15%至40%），赤霞珠、品丽珠、绮丽叶骄罗、科罗里诺、莱切一黑玛尔维萨、布林迪西一黑玛尔维萨（可选择任意品种或搭配，10%至30%）葡萄品种酿造而成。根据葡萄酒法定条例，该酒也可由赤霞珠、美乐、长相思、西拉、维蒙蒂诺等单一葡萄品种酿造而成。

Figure 2 – In Bosc *et al.* 2019, 144.

One case was perhaps the most critical in terms of finding a suitable strategy to tackle the lack of an equivalent structure in the TL. In the SL, in the "wine composition block", a comma appears between single grape varieties but there are also grape groups within which the Italian structure "e/o" (and/or) is used to combine grapes. Single grape varieties and grape groups combine and each base component has its own percentage of use. The inverted comma is used to separate single grapes and within the grape group to separate its components, but the grape group is integrated with the use of the comma in its function as a marker of a pause inside a proposition (AQSIQ and SAC 2011). Thus, there is a visual and structural separation between the grape group and the list of juxtaposed grapes. In the grape group, the phrase, in round brackets, "*ke xuanze renyi pinzhong huo dapei* 可选择任意品种或搭配" substitutes the Italian structure "e/o", making it clear that those grape varieties can be used together or exclusively. Similarly to Italian, round brackets are a punctuation mark used in Chinese to indicate the addition of a comment or a complementary explanation (AQSIQ and SAC 2011). The percentages of use for each grape variety or group of grape varieties also appear in round brackets in both languages.

Finally, in this block, the semicolon is used to create divisions in sub-units, on the basis of the wine typologies to which lists of grape varieties correspond. The semicolon is used because it is a "mid-sentence delimiter" marking two parallel phrases, especially if these contain commas (AQSIQ and SAC 2011).

## 6. Concluding remarks

This contribution has discussed, in an interdisciplinary perspective, different aspects of the negotiation of intercultural exchanges through translation, based on the experience of the *Dictionary*.

Starting from a historical approach, the popularization of Italian wine in the Chinese market has been linked to the consumption of grape wine.

In today's China, locally-produced and imported grape wines are part of daily life, a trend that has changed social habits and cultural values. From a discursive perspective, the role of the specialized language of wine has become fundamental in the popularization, marketization, and consumption of national and international labels.

The *Dictionary* responds to the need to make available to experts and other consumers a tool intended to facilitate intercultural communication and exchanges between Italian and Chinese speakers in the field of oenology. Therefore, the compilation process paid particular attention to the needs of its prospective users and the goals of intercultural communication to be reached through a bilingual and specialized lexicographical product.

The standardization and translation choices discussed are representative of the set of strategies that needed to be implemented in the various linguistic areas in which the translators had to negotiate between the SL and the TL in order to successfully transmit specialized knowledge from one culture to another. Working within the structural limits posed by the SL, the translators were often faced with the necessity of elaborating Chinese translations which would result in being both in line with the Italian definitions and as clear and natural as possible in the TL.

Therefore, the Chinese text of the *Dictionary* constitutes the result of an experimental process of mediation and negotiation on different levels, such as language, culture, and compilation choices driven by the lexicographical genre. At times, the process proved to be challenging. Although some of the solutions adopted and models proposed may benefit from further refinement, the interest the *Dictionary* arose proves the need to broaden the study of food and wine terminology translation as a fundamental aspect of communication across cultures and languages.

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# The “dining table revolution” in China: the question read through the lens of newspapers

Elena Morandi

**Abstract:** Food is not only the source of nutrition for humans but also plays various roles in our daily lives, beliefs, and relationship. In China, one of the fundamental cultural elements is the sharing of food. Typically, the courses are served in the center of the table from which guests serve themselves on their plates or serve guests using their chopsticks. With the COVID-19 outbreak, people were advised to separate dining or at least use *gongshao* 公勺 ‘serving spoon’ or *gongkuai*公筷 ‘serving chopsticks’ instead of picking food directly from serving plates with their own chopsticks. The “table revolution” is a crucial issue: if it succeeds, it will change China’s face. Public advertisements, as giant billboards on Shanghai’s streets talking of serving chopsticks as a way to set the heart at ease, showed slogans like: “The distance between you and civilized dining is just one pair of serving chopsticks.” Nevertheless, serving chopsticks have not quite caught on yet in China as they have done in Taiwan and Japan. According to the survey from Ma Lihua *et al*. (2020) resistance is strong. In a declaration from China Hotel Association, we find out: “Some restaurants in China have provided individual meals and public chopsticks and spoons for decades, but not everyone chooses to use them due to traditional eating habits.” According to the *Global Times*, “if they eat with close friends and relatives, they would feel too embarrassed to use serving chopsticks as it seems like they dislike sharing with others, which often makes people uncomfortable” (Li Lei, Zhang Hu 2020). *The New York Times* adds: “Many see sharing food with one’s own chopsticks as among the most authentic expressions of China’s communal culture and emphasis on family, no less integral than hugging is to Americans or the cheek kiss is to the French.” The “dining table revolution”, through the lens of newspapers, is going to be an uphill battle.

**Keywords**: Chopsticks, Table Revolution, Covid-19, Food culture.

**摘要**: 物不仅是人类的营养来源，而且在我们的日常生活、信仰和人际关系中扮演着各种角色。在中国，分享食物是基本的文化元素之一。通常，课程是在桌子中央供应的，客人可以从桌子上自己端上餐盘或用筷子为客人服务。随着 COVID-19 的爆发，人们被建议分开用餐或至少使用公勺或公筷，而不是用自己的筷子直接从盘子里挑食物。“餐桌革命”是一个关键问题：如果成功，它将改变中国的面貌。像上海街头的巨型广告牌一样，用筷子来安抚人心，广告上的标语是：“你与文明用餐的距离，只有一双筷子”。然而，公筷在中国还没有像在台湾和日本那样流行起来。根据 Ma Lihua的调查 (2020) 阻力很强。在中国饭店协会的一份声明中，我们发现：“几十年来，中国一些餐馆提供个人餐， 公筷和公勺，但由于传统的饮食习惯，并不是每个人都选择使用它们”。据《环球时报》报道，“如果和亲朋好友一起吃饭，他们会觉得用筷子太尴尬了，因为他们似乎不喜欢与人分享，这往往让人不舒服”（Li Lei, Zhang Hu, Global Times 2020)。《纽约时报》补充说：“许多人认为，用自己的筷子分享食物是中国社区文化和重视家庭的最真实表达之一，就像拥抱对美国人或对法国人来说脸颊亲吻一样不可或缺”。 从报纸的角度来看，“餐桌革命”将是一场艰苦的战斗。

**关键词**: 筷子，“餐桌革命”，新冠肺炎，饮食文化。

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Elena Morandi, *The “dining table revolution” in China: the question read through the lens of newspapers*, pp. 161-176, © 2021 Author(s), CC BY 4.0 International, DOI 10.36253/978-88-5518-506-6.14, in Miriam Castorina, Diego Cucinelli (edited by), *Food issues* 食事*. Interdisciplinary Studies on Food in Modern and Contemporary East Asia*, © 2021 Author(s), content CC BY 4.0 International, metadata CC0 1.0 Universal, published by Firenze University Press (www.fupress.com), ISSN 2704-5919 (online), ISBN 978-88-5518-506-6 (PDF), DOI 10.36253/978-88-5518-506-6

## 1. Introduction

On January 18th, 2020, forty thousand families in Wuhan's Baibuting District gathered for a banquet before the Lunar New Year. Photographs from the event, proudly published by local state media, showed residents wearing red and yellow bibs, reaching out to hundreds of plates on banquet tables with their chopsticks. Five days later, the city was placed in solitary confinement, and several Coronavirus infections occurred in the neighbourhood within a few weeks. That banquet would be cited as an example of how little local officials had done to prevent the virus from spreading to their city for months to come.

In the aftermath of the Coronavirus epidemic, Chinese authorities are pushing for the 'dining table revolution' to change the centuries-old traditions of sharing eating, such as those of the Baibuting banquet, where diners serve themselves from dishes shared with their own chopsticks.

The government has pointed the finger at the ubiquitous tool on the table and in the kitchen: chopsticks. Authorities have launched an aggressive campaign to persuade diners to use designated serving utensils such as *gongkuai* 公筷 "public chopsticks" or *gongshao* 公勺"public spoon". Officials are also encouraging the adoption of separate portions instead of the 'family-friendly' style with which the group usually shares different dishes. Across the country, celebrities, tycoons, public health experts and propaganda teams have been deployed to educate the public. "Divide meals, not love," the state media slogan. Dr Zhong Nanshan and Dr Zhang Wenhong, infectious disease specialists who have become celebrities since the outbreak began, have explicitly expressed their support. In addition to them, one hundred Chinese academics have joined the 'table revolution', encouraging the public to have meals with individual portions, use serving spoons and chopsticks, or even better, bring their own cutlery from home.

In Ningxia, northwest China, a video tutorial was launched by local state media to educate residents about a 'new trend in civilian catering' in the local dialect.

Gigantographs have appeared on the streets of Shanghai describing service chopsticks as a way to feel more comfortable, displaying slogans such as: "The distance between you and the civil dinner is only in a pair of serving chopsticks". In Beijing, billboards ask citizens to join the campaign with the slogan: "Love is another pair of chopsticks".

Some restaurants answered the call. Since the outbreak of Covid-19, a campaign on chopsticks and serving spoons has been promoted in many Chinese restaurants. As of June 2020, restaurants have begun to provide serving utensils and, when possible, separate portions. Several provinces and cities have joined the initiative. For example, four Shanghai departments jointly issued the "proposal for the use of chopsticks and serving spoons", and a group of one hundred Shanghai restaurateurs pledged to provide chopsticks and serving spoons for each dish. Also, in Hangzhou, over one hundred leading restaurants have formed a 'Serving Chopsticks Alliance'; others offer discounts to diners who use service chopsticks. "Dividing meals and chopsticks does not mean dividing love", they assure.

However, what do chopsticks and food sharing really represent in China? Is it likely that China will abandon traditional chopsticks in favour of serving chopsticks, and the Chinese people will renounce the conviviality of food in favour of individual meals? Let us see how the “Chinese Table Revolution” has been presented by international newspapers.

## 2. Methods and relevance

My research aims to understand what chopsticks really represent for the Chinese to fully understand the true meaning behind the habits of sharing food in China. Moreover, I tried to analyze how the ‘Table Revolution’ has been tackled by the international press, decoding the message it conveys.

For the first part, to understand the significance of Chinese food habits, I used monographs, essays, research, and other material both printed and in digital format.

For the second part, to see how the table revolution was presented, I mainly used articles in newspapers and magazines and blogs and forums to a lesser extent.

I choose to focus in particular on the international press to have an “external” point of view on the issue, hopefully, more objective, less ideologically and politically marked, because my goal was not so much to understand how China presented its citizens the table revolution, but to know how the rest of the world interpreted this effort to overturn such an established tradition radically. I have consulted exclusively online sources for many reasons: for the difficulty of getting international newspapers and the impossibility of travelling in this period of restrictions.

The method I used was press-clipping, that is, research and interpretation of the main articles published online on the subject. Finally, I have deliberately excluded from the press review all the articles somehow connected to the consumption of wild meat in China, because despite this custom has often been pointed out as the triggering cause of the pandemic, the exact origins and zoonotic transmission pathway of the virus remain uncertain. Scientists suggest that SARS-CoV-2 probably jumped from horseshoe bats to an unknown intermediate animal vector, from which it spread to humans, but exactly how, where, and when this happened is still unknown. In any case, it falls outside my investigation objectives, whose focus is to understand the way of eating of Chinese people, and not what the Chinese people eat.

The relevance of my research lies in the fact that if the table revolution really takes hold in China, it will mark a turning point of epochal significance, not so much as regards the food and culinary fields, and not even for the hygienic-sanitary field, as for the enormous social and political implications that it will bring with it.

## 3. Chopsticks’ history

Over one and a half billion people eat food with chopsticks every day. The peculiarity of the chopsticks lies in the fact that, although they are mainly a tool for food use, they also satisfy many other uses. A rich and profound cultural history is embedded in the chopsticks. For many centuries, chopsticks have distinguished their users in Asia from those in the rest of the world. For many, it is not just about continuing a tradition; their use is believed to bring a myriad of benefits that transcend the mere function of transporting food. Kimiko Barber in 'The Chopsticks Diet' (2009) writes: "Eating with chopsticks slows down the ingestion of food and therefore you eat less". Furthermore, since chopsticks eat more slowly, "they also have the psychological advantage of making you think about food and the pleasure you get from it". Isshiki Hachiro (1991) argues that since the use of chopsticks requires good hand-brain coordination, it improves not only one's dexterity but also one's brain development, especially among children.

The use of chopsticks goes back a long way. Archaeological finds have unearthed samples of bone sticks at various Neolithic cultural sites in China, suggesting that a chopsticks prototype already existed 5,000 years ago. Thicker and square in shape at the top and thinner and rounded at the bottom, these sticks were very similar to those in current use (Liu 2006).

Historical texts and researches have shown that from the 4th century BC feeding with utensils rather than with fingers gradually became the favourite culinary custom among the Chinese (Ōta 2001). Thus, those proto-chopsticks probably served a dual function: as a kitchen utensil and as a dining utensil. This, curiously, is what still happens today in many Asian families, where chopsticks represent a convenient kitchen tool for mixing, tasting, adding ingredients, etc. (Wang 2015).

Some of the Han tombs contain stone reliefs and frescoes depicting scenes of cooking and convivial meals. For example, the stone relief found in Xindu, Sichuan depicts a party scene: three men seated on the floor with the man in the centre holding a pair of chopsticks pointed at the food presented by the person on the left. Two additional pairs of chopsticks are placed on the large mat in the centre of the floor. The famous Wuliang Shrine in Jiangxiang, Shandong Province, also features a food scene painted on the wall. Named "Xingqu Bu Fu 邢渠哺父", which means Xing Qu feeding his father, the mural depicts Xing Qu holding the food with a pair of chopsticks in his left hand and a ladle in his right as he presents the food to his father.

In the *Shiji* 史记, Sima Qian 司马迁 (c. 145–86 BC) recounts many fascinating episodes during the Han dynasty (206–220 AD), some of which concern the chopsticks themselves. For example, in the biographical account of Liu Bang 刘邦 (256–195 BC), Sima Qian reports that, while Liu was preparing to be empowered, a councillor submitted a strategic plan to him over a dinner party; Zhang Liang 张良 (256 BC–186 BC), his chief and most trusted advisor, opposed that plan. To persuade Liu, Zhang took several chopsticks and used them to build his strong counter-argument. He succeeded, and Liu felt ill during dinner, having heard what dire consequences his wrong decision would lead to. The story went down in history to the present day. It confirms that Liu and his entourage, among other things, used chopsticks to eat food.

In Song China, the use of chopsticks also expanded because Chinese cuisine entered a new phase of development in addition to the increase in rice consumption. In fact, as Michael Freeman (1978) argues, during the Song period, cooking in China became an authentic cuisine characterized by the adoption of new ingredients and new cooking techniques. Meng Yuanlao (1996) details these new culinary developments in his account of Kaifeng’s city life. In fact, of all the businesses in the city Meng recorded, more than half were public restaurants. The food was cooked in a wide variety of ways, from various types of stews, traditionally prepared but with new ingredients, to new and innovative stir-fried dishes. To eat all these foods, one can easily imagine that people naturally turned to chopsticks as a practical and inexpensive kitchen utensil.

## 4. Different uses and different meanings of chopsticks

However, the chopsticks did not satisfy the dietary needs alone. Some fortune-tellers of traditional China used them as a tool of prediction. Starting in the 10th century, this practise has continued to gain popularity, fueling the belief in magic and the mystical power of chopsticks. By the end of the 19th century, it had become a religious cult (Liu 2006).

It can be said that chopsticks symbolically and spiritually represent life itself, of which they express the metaphor or perhaps even the metonymy. Although this perception may vary from person to person, in general, throughout Asia, it is considered a bad omen if an accident occurs with the tool, including someone not holding the chopsticks correctly or carefully causing them to fall to the ground, which is generally considered unfortunate.

There is an interesting description of chopsticks in the book *L’Empire des signes* by Roland Barthes (1970). Looking closely at how chopsticks were used to transport food, Barthes provides his own cultural interpretation that contrasts with the use of fork and knife, cutlery he was most accustomed to:

> By chopsticks, food becomes no longer a pray to which one does violence, but a substance harmoniously transferred; they transform the previously divided substance into bird food and rice into a flow of milk; maternal, they tirelessly perform the gesture which creates the mouthful, leaving to our alimentary manners, armed with pikes and knives, that of predation. Another function of the two chopsticks together is that of pinching the fragment of food; to pinch, moreover, is too strong a word, too aggressive; for the foodstuff never undergoes a pressure greater than is precisely necessary to raise and carry it; in the gesture of chopsticks, further softened by their substance—wood or lacquer—there is something maternal, the same precisely measured care taken in moving a child: a force no longer a pulsion; here we have a whole demeanour concerning food: the instrument never pierces, cuts, or slits, never wounds but only selects, turns, shifts (Barthes 1970, 15).

Barthes is not the only one to have advanced this interpretation. After seeing chopsticks during their travels to Asia in the 16th century, many Westerners have developed a similar impression, praising the use of the tool by Asians as a more civilized gastronomic custom, to the point that, among Chinese people, this belief has become a boast. This belief is not only of the Chinese but shared by other Asian peoples belonging to the cultural sphere of chopsticks; following the words of Confucius, they prefer to leave the knife in the kitchen rather than bring it to the table.

Furthermore, it is also thanks to these interpretations that chopsticks have transcended their very essence to become a cultural symbol throughout Asia.

Whether used skillfully or not, chopsticks must be used in pairs. Because of their inseparability, together with their design, colour and material, they have become, over time, a popular gift, throughout Asia, on the occasion of weddings, to indicate the exchange of affection between lovers, and to express good wishes for couples.

Even among Chinese minority groups, chopsticks are a popular and widespread wedding gift and a symbolic item during wedding ceremonies. In fact, in his book, Lan Xiang (2005) describes several wedding customs, many of which involve chopsticks. In Shanxi province, for example, when the groom and his entourage go to the bride's house, the father often prepares a couple of bottles containing grain which he then binds together using red thread and a pair of chopsticks, thus expressing the wish for inseparability and lasting love for marriage. Elsewhere, to ensure the inseparability of the couple, the two sticks must be as identical as possible and have a smooth surface in the hope that the couple will lead a quiet life.

Finally, among some Chinese minorities, when the bride arrives in her new home, she grabs a new pair of chopsticks, a symbolic gesture that represents her willingness to embrace her new life. Chopsticks are also used as a symbolic tool for proposing marriage and announcing new relationships; often, it is not even necessary to utter a word because the chopsticks are already sufficient to clarify the purpose.

In short, since they were born as a daily tool in ancient China, chopsticks have been loved by everyone, even becoming a literary metaphor used by writers, poets and philosophers. While sages and scholars philosophize about their characteristics to offer political wisdom about good governance, writers use them as an effective metaphor to describe sadness, anxiety, and awe.

Love stories mentioning chopsticks abound in Asian folklore and legends. From ancient times to today, Chinese poets have made endless references to chopsticks, commenting on their usefulness and characteristics, exploring their hidden cultural meanings, real and imaginary at the same time, explicitly coining specific expressions for the way they are used, and providing us with vivid and imaginative illustrations.

Similarly, even today, we find frequent references to chopsticks in the literature. For example, a poem—translated in English and quoted in Wang (2015, 143)—was written by a contemporary Chinese poet, which appeared in an online blog, recalls almost all the characteristics that can be thought associated with the use of chopsticks to represent the love of a couple:

Our lengths are the same,
Just as the sameness of our hearts;
Bitter or sweet,
We spend our life together.
Having tasted it all,
We always live side by side.
One knows the other;
Our intimacy is so seamless,
No space even for a single word

As an ancient tool with a long history, chopsticks have evolved over time to become multifaceted and indispensable tools.

In real life, whether and how chopsticks should be handled over food is a grave matter. When eating a meal in China, people are required to behave civilly and pay attention to good table manners. For example, it is customary to wait for the guest or an elder first to put their hand on the chopsticks. To demonstrate hospitality, on the contrary, a guest will raise his chopsticks, effectively starting the meal, making symbolic gestures and repeatedly inciting diners to eat.

Even in less formal settings, it is equally customary to let an elder grab his chopsticks and start eating before anyone else.

According to a Ming text, wielding chopsticks without an invitation was considered disrespectful social behaviour even at that time (Wang 2015). Likewise, in modern times, focusing on your plate and accessories, watching TV, using the phone, or doing something else while having your meal is considered a bad habit.

## 5. The sharing food’s habit

Food embodies many symbolic meanings: it establishes and expresses the relationship between people, between them and their environment, as well as between people and what they believe in. Therefore, food is an essential component of a society. When consumed by a group of people together or during a religious ceremony, the sociability of food is identified. Sharing food is an effective way to improve human relationships. It is expected that when a person wishes to pursue or prolong a friendship with another person, they often suggest they eat together. When the friendship reaches a certain level, or when the two become lovers, sharing food and drink becomes an integral part of the relationship, an act of affection. In other words, intimacy often overrides other concerns, such as health or otherwise.

The distribution and exchange of food reflect human beings’ social characteristics and cultural presentation; food and the way to consume it are both cornerstones of the Chinese lifestyle and a component of the Chinese ethos (Chang 2003). Feng Yen Hung Doreen wrote:

> The joy of eating is given great importance in China; and cooking, through the decades has been dreamed and fussed over, in terms of want as well as in terms of plenty, until it has ceased to be plain cooking, but has grown and developed into

> an art. Food has been represented trough other mediums of art, especially poetry, literature and folklore; and these tales and food beliefs have been handed down, from generation to generation, with even increased glamor. (Feng 2006, 3)

The Chinese food culture has the characteristics of inheritability and development, and throughout history, it has maintained its momentum of development since its primitive society. Neither the change of dynasty nor the change of social system has had a profound influence on it, and the philosophy of supplying enough food to people and food being the top priority was very popular. Because of the attention to diet, Chinese people would work out a variety of food when they had leisure time or abundant raw materials. In the event of a disaster, they tried to develop all sorts of wild vegetables and weeds for survival. Therefore, the number of food breeds and designs continued to rise, which caused many Westerners to have the illusion that the Chinese dare to eat all the edible items. According to Zhou (2007) there are ways but not rules in Chinese cooking, making Chinese dishes have infinite names, designs and colours.

What is most striking in China are the banquets, with their ostentation of wealth, so much so that in food anthropology, the Chinese one is classified precisely as a banquet culture, as they do not represent only combinations of food, staging the exchange and distribution of food, but also a demonstration of culinary arts, table arrangement, and feeding models. Furthermore, they show the status, rank, authority and interactions that take place in the banquet. In a sense, the banquet is the most frequently performed human ritual.

Traditionally, the Chinese government was based on rites. Thus, banquets became an integral part of the ritual and personalized system. The banquet ritual and custom were incorporated into customs and festivals, revealing the life, social interactions and other activities of royal families and government officials on the one hand and citizens on the other. They embodied all kinds of implications related to power, friendship, respect, exchange, symbol, etc. Over the centuries, the banquet has formed a cluster of Chinese banquet culture, which has not substantially changed since it was codified in the Zhou era, some 3,000 years ago. Especially today, in central or suburban cities, restaurants of all kinds and orders are extremely popular, with lights on and people drinking generously in extremely noisy circumstances. Offering a meal to others is a way of life for some people. Sometimes it is a burden and a luxury beyond expectations for others.

In this meal-ritual relationship, the protagonists want everything to go smoothly to feel at ease. Business people usually earn respect. As a result, banquet fashion has evolved as the hottest way to manage a business, although in some cases, the banquet has been partially converted or replaced by new forms such as the cash bribe or the sexual offer (Wilson 2010). Not restricted only to the sphere of business, dinners and banquets have become, due to their emblematic in rituals and relationships, also customary in important life events, such as marriage, baptism or other religious ceremonies, redefining the relationship between man and divinity, and between people (Ma 2015).

Many social and political factors have had a significant impact on the development and transformation of Chinese food culture. Influenced and transformed by political ideology, eating gradually moved away from the physical and physiological meaning of appeasing hunger and feeding, even overcoming the hedonistic pleasure of eating, eventually becoming not only the bearer of ritual and order in a series of relationships. Policies and ethics such as those between the nobility and the popular classes, dignitaries and subordinates, elderly and young people, and so on, represent privilege and honour but also become a tool in the political arena to build trust and secure personal favours. Through rewards in food resources or food offerings as a tribute to the emperor, food has become a political means of obtaining the support of others or for officialdom; many acute social contradictions have arisen from significant disparities in food consumption and ownership of food resources among people (Lin 1997).

In Chinese culture, foods are used, on many occasions, with a particular symbolic meaning: Chinese dates indicate that couples can soon have children; peanuts are also known as the fruit of longevity; oranges and chestnuts mean good luck; rice cakes, promotion; seaweed is synonymous with wealth; long pasta indicates health and longevity; glutinous rice balls indicate that the family will stick together. Thus, different foods convey different meanings and are often indicators of the closeness of the relationship.

In Chinese culture, the offering of expensive and rare foods usually indicates respect for guests; such foods often represent wealth and high social-economic status. Furthermore, food can indicate not only social status but can also be used as a unique and identifying characteristic of a group (e.g. region, family, ethnicity or religion).

It is not clear when the practice of sharing food began. In the *Classic of Rites*, we find: “When you eat with others from the same dishes, you should not try to eat (in a hurry) to your fill” (*Liji* 礼记, “Quli 曲禮”, I). It is known that during the post-Tang period, along with the rise of chopsticks as a tool for eating, this new habit emerged in China: diners began to sit on chairs around a table, on which plates were placed for all tastes (*heshizhi* 和食制, “sharing of food”, as opposed to *fenshizhi* 分食制 “individual eating style” of the previous period) (Wang 2015, 187).

In the famous 10th century painting *The Night Revels of Han Xizai* (*Han Xizai yeyan tu* 韩熙载夜宴图), we see how Han Xizai 韩熙载 (902–970), a respected scholar of the time who refused to serve the government, entertained his guests, offering them different dishes, arranging them on the rectangular table of in front of them, which was not much taller than the chair they were sitting on. The seat was high enough for legs to be extended and equipped with a backrest. Han and his friends shared the meal with chopsticks and wine cups in plain sight on the table.

Scholars believe that communal consumption of food in China took root in the Song era due to the marked culinary progress of the period. Zhao Rongguang states: “Community eating began to be widely adopted in Song society as the dishes on the table multiplied and diversified. People wanted to taste and share these dishes throughout the meal, making joint dinner a logical choice. The individual eating style thus became obsolete" (Zhao 2003, 219).

People sharing food during meals is also described in some novels, such as the famous *Shuihu Zhuan* 水浒传 (*Water Margin*). Song Jiang 宋江, the hero of the novel who organized the revolt against the Song dynasty in the 12th century, is often depicted eating and drinking with his friends sitting together at a large table.

The sharing of food, as well as the exclusive use of chopsticks as a tool for eating, ideally associated with an informal context, took hold in China and in the areas of Chinese cultural influence, probably starting from the lower social classes and then extending to the higher social levels. For this reason, in China, the sharing of meals is deeply rooted in informal situations or between family members and extended to other more formal occasions.

Liu Yun *et al.* argue that the emergence of the common eating style had also encouraged the Chinese to turn to more use of chopsticks rather than spooning, citing evidence that Ming dynasty chopsticks tended to be somewhat longer—on average over 25 cm—compared to their previous counterparts. The longer length, Liu notes, was used by diners to pinch and collect the food contents in the centre of the table. Therefore, there is a cause-effect relationship between sharing food and chopsticks, a natural and essential bond (Liu Yun *et al.*, 2006).

According to some theories, given the close relationship between food tools and social culture, it is possible to identify the most macroscopic differences between Western and Chinese food culture: on the one hand, the use of a knife and fork combined with the divided and individual eating system, the basis of Western attention for independence and individuality; on the other hand, the chopsticks linked to conviviality and sharing, to sit together at the table, highlighting the family unity and cohesion between individuals, allowing the Orientals to express quite strong family values and the concept of harmony (Yin and Han 2007).

Sharing food is a distinctive feature of the way Chinese people convey affection. Parents collect selected treats and place them in their children's bowls as an expression of love; children serve grandparents to show their respect, and the bosses do it as a gesture of magnanimity towards their employees.

## 6. Press-clipping: the table revolution on the newspapers

To support the government effort to abandon the traditional habits, state media and Chinese historians have scoured history to find cases where serving chopsticks or the individual dish was the norm. Newspapers reported that the Chinese have been eating individually for 3,000 years. During the Zhou dynasty, the emperor had his own table, set with much more food, as opposed to the ministers sitting across from him at a single table with fewer plates. In 1910, when the plague hit China's northeastern regions, health and hygiene experts called for dinner separately to prevent the deadly virus from spreading. In China's modern history, Beijing's Dongxinglou restaurant was the first to launch meals served in individual portions, course by course. This system has since spread to other hotels and restaurants in Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin. On China Global Television Network (CGTN), we read: “in the Chinese tradition, sharing dishes is a way to show hospitality to friends, guests or relatives; and, although habits are really hard to die, changes are underway as more and more people are developing a greater awareness of the importance of hygiene and health due to Covid-19”.

The situation is presented in a more varied way in international magazines. According to the article by Lily Kuo in *The Guardian*, the campaign promoted by the Chinese government seems to be working. In the interview, a manager of “Tianzhu Chopstick Factory” in Zhejiang province said: “the company has seen an increase of up to 30% on orders for *gongkuai*’ serving chopsticks’, which are longer, and decorated differently, than to the usual chopsticks”. Further on, we can read: “at Huajia Yiyuan, a chain known for its special Peking roast duck, there are two pairs of chopsticks and two spoons for each place setting. In a famous hotpot restaurant on Beijing’s Ghost Street, all tables are equipped with a set of serving utensils”. Lan Luoshi, a young employee, says: “Customers are very willing to use them, and I myself use *gongkuai* when I go out with friends to eat”.

Journalist Meng Dandan reports on the e-magazine *ThinkChina*:

> Professor Wang Xiaohua of Shenzhen University School of Humanities strongly encouraged people to dine with individual portions. Sharing dishes in common is an obsolete lifestyle and has already been abandoned by most countries of the world [ … ] serving dishes individually guarantees reasonable distances between individuals, as well as representing a more modern way of dining.

On the online English version of *People’s Daily*, we read that the F&B industry is working hard across the country to formulate standards for personalized catering; Beijing, Shanghai, Shandong and some other regions have released guidelines for the industry, while some prefectural cities such as Taizhou in Jiangsu have even provided concrete suggestions on the colour and type of serving spoons and chopsticks to use, as well as the length of the chopsticks from scope to use.

In the *Legacy Times* (*Chuanchen shidai* 传城时代), we find an interview released by Xing Ying, executive Vice President of the World Federation of the Chinese Catering Industry, who rather optimistically states: “I believe that the COVID-19 epidemic will change people’s eating habits; this is a good time to promote separate meals”.

In the *Global Times*, the authors of the article advance some perplexities: “the crucial point that leads us to think that it will be a difficult undertaking to complete, is that *gongkuai t*end to be accepted and used in high-end restaurants in China and rarely used at home”. In support of this thesis, in a statement from the China Hotel Association, we find: “Some restaurants in China have been providing public chopsticks and spoons for decades, but not all choose to use them because of traditional eating habits”.

With family or friends, it seems that asking for service chopsticks can be embarrassing or perceived as rude. Again in *Global Times*: “Eating with close friends and relatives, people would feel too embarrassed to use service chopsticks, because it can seem to dislike sharing with others, which makes everyone uncomfortable".

Also, on *ThinkChina*, we discover that already after the Sars epidemic in 2002–2003, a similar initiative had been undertaken, but it soon ran out:

> Sharing food is a fundamental part of Chinese social life and a sign of intimacy. Changing habits at home and among the older generations seems to be more difficult. A common scene at family dinners sees relatives using their chopsticks to put food on the plates of younger; younger family members serve food to older relatives as a sign of respect while couples exchange food with each other as a sign of affection.

Many do not consider the use of serving utensils necessary at home. In a recent online survey by Sina Shanghai, over half of the 650 respondents said they do not and would not use *gongkuai* or *gongshao* at home, agreeing with the traditional line of thinking: "I won't. We are all family".

*The Guardian* puts forward a hypothesis: "Chinese food culture could change in other ways, away from crowded restaurants, for quieter areas. Many restaurants are already limiting the size of dinners to two and setting the tables at least one meter apart".

However, the resistance is strong. A study conducted by Ma Lihua (2020), based on a questionnaire submitted via WeChat to the rural population, aimed at investigating the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours related to the prevention and control of COVID-19 among rural residents, concludes: "the weak awareness of the importance of prevention and control measures is the greatest difficulty and challenge encountered among the rural population during the epidemic".

*The New York Times* informs us:

> Many see sharing food, with their chopsticks, as one of the most authentic expressions of China's community culture and emphasis on family, no less than hugging for Americans or kissing on the cheek for the French. Serving chopsticks are associated with formal settings, such as banquets and meals with strangers. Sharing food with family and friends is so ingrained that chopsticks are seen as a threat to that expression of closeness. Even just asking for extra utensils can be embarrassing because it could imply the doubt that your diners might not be well.

In support of these statements, we find in *The New York Times* an interview with Liu Peng, 32, an education consultant, who declares: "although I have become accustomed to wearing a mask in recent months, my friends and I have not changed our eating habits. Maybe using chopsticks to serve is more hygienic, but eating for all of us is the time to relax and we don't want to be bothered by all these little rules".

Even though, on the one hand, people in large cities have deeper public health awareness, full implementation of individualized dining still has a long way to go. *ThinkChina* reports the forecast of Zhang Shuanglin, Vice President of the Society of History and Folklore in Beijing, about the situation after the end of the pandemic: “the meetings to dine together will return to normal and there will not be a great change”.

In *The Washington Post,* we read some interviews of ordinary Chinese citizens: “It’s a bit difficult for people to use serving chopsticks when you’re eating with friends, you’re so happy that you just forget”, and also: “I don’t think it’s necessary, using serving chopsticks would seem excessively polite [...], you know the Chinese word ‘jianwai’? It means’ not willing to be close to each other”.

To confirm this, we find on *Statista*, edited by Ma Yihan, a survey among 747 Chinese consumers revealing that the impact of COVID-19 on eating habits is not as significant as expected. More than eight out of ten respondents reported no changes, whereas only around one in ten respondents practised healthier eating habits.

A survey by the state-run Jiangsu News found that more people in the province (64,000) answered that using serving chopsticks was annoying than said they would try it (57,000).

Also, in *The Washington Post*: “It’s a Chinese tradition and a custom that has been around for thousands of years, so it’s difficult to change it”, said Li Yibing, a food blogger in Chengdu who is involved in the public chopsticks campaign.

## 7. Conclusions

Extremely relevant to fully understand the importance of conviviality and food sharing in China is the study conducted by Wang, Huang, Liao and Wan (2020) that examines the influence of food sharing on people’s social evaluation. The study results suggest that Chinese young adults associate food sharing with assessing people’s prosociality. Taken together, the study results suggest that food sharing is closely linked to cooperation and trust (Kaplan and Gurven, 2005; Woolley and Fishbach, 2019).

Focusing on newspaper articles, based on the sources examined, it seems that the articles in Chinese newspapers, although published in English, are all in favour of a change, confident and proactive in supporting the cause of the table revolution. International sources, on the contrary, reveal a more cautious and more dubious attitude towards the so-called “Civilized Dining”, suggesting that we can legitimately expect that in China, in a post-pandemic scenario, many of the new habits against the spread of the new Coronavirus will remain, in the name of a healthier lifestyle, thanks to a deeper awareness of health and safety. However, traditional eating habits are unlikely to disappear. Most Chinese will still use personal chopsticks to choose food from shared plates, little or not at all inclined to consider the individual meal. This, therefore, leads us to hypothesize that the table revolution, despite Covid-19, will still be very long.

Perhaps what the Western observer lacks is the confidence in the capacity for change of Chinese society and in the innate ability to adapt to the needs of the times that the Chinese population possesses; for this reason, we have to pay attention non to fall victim to far too easy stereotypes, which refer to the collective imagination of a millenary and immutable China.

As far back as 1984, Hu Yaobang 胡耀邦 (1915–1989), then general secretary of the Communist Party and passionate liberalizer, suggested that his compatriots abandon chopsticks and common eating in favour of individual Western-style cooking practices to avoid contagious diseases. The idea was quickly ignored and forgotten. It may be that this time Xi Jinping, with his way to "The Chinese Dream" to "achieve the prosperity of the country, the revitalization of the nation and the happiness of the people", will succeed where his predecessors failed. The table revolution could be a much more political issue than it seems, worthy of further and more in-depth investigation.

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# Looking at China’s cultural complexity. Food, colours and ritual: sensuous epistemology and the construction of identity in the “other” China

Cristiana Turini

**Abstract:** Studies on ethnic and cultural diversity within China have progressively eroded the far too simplistic and widespread idea of the Chinese nation as a monolith. In the resulting multicultural internal context, food is definitely more than a necessity for survival and can signify the desire of a community to stabilize a fluid and multiple identity. At the same time, it can be seen also as an indication of the multitude of relationships that the individual forms not only with others as individuals, but even as spirits, gods, and demons. The aim of this contribution is to explore some of the complexity of foodways involving consumption and religion and to understand the extent to which religious uses of foods contribute to the forging and transmission of cultural identity. I will do this by referring to the Naxi people of the Lijiang area as my case-study. My analysis will also take into account how, through the exploration of the Naxi religious foodways and cosmology, it is possible to gain an insight into their culturally different balances of the senses and their sensuous epistemology. This study will be based mainly on Naxi ritual manuscripts and videos of ceremonies, respectively collected and made during my fieldwork in Yunnan.

**Keywords***:* Hybridization, Tibetan-Yi corridor, Naxi, epistemology, food practices.

摘要： 对中国民族和文化多样性的研究已经逐渐取代了将中国只视为一个整体的过于简单而普泛的观念。在由此产生的多元文化的内部环境中，食物已绝不仅是生存必需品，它还可以表现一个群体建立流动及多元身份的愿望。同时，食物不仅可以被看作个体与其他个体之间的，而且是个人与灵魂、神及魔鬼之间的多种关系的标志。本文的主要目的在于探索包括消费与宗教在内的饮食方式的复杂性以及了解食物的宗教用途在多大程度上有助于塑造和传播文化身份。我将以丽江纳西族作为研究案例。我的研究还将通过纳西宗教饮食及宇宙观的探索来深入了解纳西人在不同文化中的感官平衡及他们的感性认识论。本研究主要基于我在云南实地考察期间收集的纳西仪式手稿和仪式视频。

关键词： 文化杂交，藏彝 走廊， 纳西族，认识论，饮食方式。

## 1. Introduction

The Hengduan system connecting the southeast portions of the Tibetan Plateau with the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau consists of large North-South mountain ranges separated by deep valleys that channel the waters of six great rivers: Min, Dadu, Yalong, Jinsha, Mekong, and Salween. One of the main component subsections of the Hengduan is the range running between the Mekong and the Jinsha rivers which includes at its southern end the Yulong mountains and

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the Jade dragon Snow Mountain. This is the area inhabited by the Naxi people, whose population[1] is today mainly distributed in a well-defined region extending along the border between Tibet, north-eastern Yunnan and south-western Sichuan provinces.[2]

The "six river basin" (*liu jiang liuyu* 六江流域) (Sun 1983) forms a geographically natural passage that was characterized throughout history by frequent migrations and complex flows of ethnic activities which have earned it the name of "ethnic corridor" (*minzu zoulang* 民族走廊) by Fei Xiaotong (Fei 1982, 4; Fei 1990, 207). Some migratory flows alternatively followed the East-West direction along a section of the corridor that from Yunnan headed towards Tibet through the ancient Tea Horse Road or *chama gudao* 茶马古道 (Sun and Previato 2016, 301). Since this corridor was the bordering area of contact between the Han and the Tibetans to the West and the Tibetans and the Yi to the East, it is also known as the "Tibetan-Yi corridor", *Zang Yi zoulang* 藏彝走廊 (Fei 1980, 157–8). Further North is the region of the upper reaches of the Yellow River, corresponding to present-day Qinghai and Gansu provinces, from which the Tibeto-Burman languages spread southwards and across the Himalayas (Sun and Previato 2016, 296, 299). The Tibetan-Yi Corridor consequently became the site where, throughout the migration process, the cultural features of the Tibeto-Burman peoples gradually differentiated giving rise to the sixteen ethnic groups that are currently mainly distributed in Tibet, Yunnan and Sichuan, namely the Tibetans, Yi, Qiang, Bai, Lisu, Pumi, Dulong, Nu, Achang, Jingpo, Lahu, Hani, Jinuo, Menba, Luoba, and the Naxi.[3]

Traces of this common origin and of the history of the southward migration are preserved in the legends and myths as well as in the ritual life of some of these groups. For example, after somebody dies, the Naxi invite a *dongba*[4] to celebrate the ceremony to escort the soul of the deceased to the realm of the ancestor. A Gods' Road Map is laid out in the courtyard of the deceased's house and the *dongba* lists in the reverse order the place names—and the relevant mountain gods—the soul has to pass through to reach the ancestors. Although toponyms and routes may be very different, the Yi, Hani, Jinuo, Lahu, Pumi and Jingpo all have similar paths, directed northward (Shi 2018). The common origin char-

1 According to the China Population 2010 Census, they count a population of 326,925 (https://guides.lib.unc.edu/china_ethnic/statistics, accessed 26.06.2021). At the time of writing, the 2020 census data about the Naxi total population had not been officially released yet.

2 Unless otherwise specified, my analysis will mainly take into account the Naxi people living in the area of Lijiang county.

3 For a discussion of Naxi ethnonyms in ancient Chinese sources see, for example, Turini (2020).

4 The *dongba* (东巴) is the Naxi ritual specialist mainly involved in the celebration of ceremonies whose actions include particular slow rhythmic chanting and dancing, the latter signifying mock battles against the demons. He is the only one who is able to chant the sacred books necessary to ritual performances. These manuscripts are compiled in what Rock (1937, 5), as early as 1937, defined as the only pictographic script still existing in the world.

acterizing these Tibeto-Burman ethnic groups also emerges from the reading of the Naxi "Creation Myth", according to which the ancestors of the Tibetans, the Bai and the Naxi were brothers who spoke different languages. The Tibetan was the elder brother, the Bai was the younger one and the Naxi was the middle brother (He Limin 1985, 225).

The rise on the Tibetan Plateau of the Tubo 吐蕃 dynasty between the 7th and 9th century, and its subsequent expansion towards the Tibetan-Yi corridor up to the upper reaches of the Min and Dadu rivers entailed that many originally scattered local tribes became part of a political and military entity whose rule would last over two hundred years.[5] This facilitated a strong process of political integration and cultural contamination, causing the gradual trend of "Tibetanisation" to occur in the northern part of the Tibetan-Yi corridor, a trend that was fostered by the dissemination of Tibetan Buddhism in the Qinghai-Tibetan plateau after the 10th century (Shi 2018).

The northward expansion of the Naxi Mu chieftains[6] during the Yuan and Ming dynasties led to an even closer mixing between the Tibetan and Naxi peoples since Lijiang consolidated its role of a major station of the tea trade to Tibet. The roads created by merchants connected communities in neighboring valleys and villages and became the communication links for southwest China while the Naxi gradually turned into an important bridge between the Tibetans and the peoples living in western Yunnan. Given this long history of interactions, the Naxi have a system of religious practices clearly showing the hybridization of traits pertaining to different traditions: elements of Bönist, Buddhist, and later even Daoist, ritual and symbolism were integrated into an indigenous system involving shamanic practices, the worship of ancestral spirits and deities mainly representing natural forces, legacy from their original nomadic culture.

The large-scale contacts and interactions occurring in the area transformed the Hengduan system from a migration flow corridor into a channel for ethnic exchanges and cultural blending, characterized by fluidity and continuity, where borders were blurred, boundaries became places of multi-dimensional transition, and processes of mutually shaping identities took place.

Today, the region inhabited by the Naxi people is still a multicultural context, maintaining a great internal variety. Our travelling across the borders in history has set the stage for understanding some of the steps in the making of Naxi identity and for investigating to what extent traces of cross-cultural ethnic identity dynamics and adaptations can be preserved in food practices. The multidimensionality of food will be questioned to explore the extent to which Naxi consumption and religious uses of foods can contribute to the forging and transmission of their cultural identity. I will also consider wherein foodways can make clues available for detecting group-level traits that are maintained

5 Buddhism was officially introduced into Tibet in the VIII century; Bön had been the State religion untill Songtsen Gampo's death in 649 (Chögyal Namkhai Norbu 1996, 22).

6 For a historical analysis of the Mu *tusi* in Ming China see also Turini (2012).

and transmitted within the group, thus making it possible to preserve individual ethnic cultures, alongside cross-group traits that make it possible for ethnic minorities of the area the preservation of the aggregate of their cultures. Finally, the exploration of the Naxi religious foodways and cosmology will be employed to gain an insight into their culturally different balances of the senses and their sensuous epistemology. This study will be based mainly on Naxi ritual manuscripts and videos of ceremonies, respectively collected and made during my fieldwork in Yunnan.[7]

## 2. Food and Naxi identity

The human relationship to food is a complex one as food is central to the sense of identity, which is itself marked by fluidness. This notwithstanding, any culinary system can be considered as part of a world-view (Douglas 1966). This means that man eats within a culture and this culture orders the world in a way that is specific to itself. Thanks to the intimate links between food practices and the embodiment of identity we may say that nutrition is transformed from a mere biological activity into a cultural phenomenon and food into "embodied material culture" (Dietler 2007, 222). Therefore, eating and drinking are never simply biological acts. Rather, "they are learned, culturally patterned techniques of bodily comportment [...] that are expressive in a fundamental way of identity and difference" (Dietler 2007, 223). The food choices made by people, also as groups, can thus reveal views, background knowledge, assumptions; they can tell stories of resistance, integration, migrations, changes over times, and personal as well as group identity.

Kittler, Sucher, and Nelms (2012, 39) addressed the influence of food habits by stating that "eating is a daily reaffirmation of [one's] cultural identity". As identities are by nature negotiable and situational, the adoption of blurred cultural boundaries between neighbouring peoples can sometimes be disclosed by the sharing of cross-cultural food practices by different ethnic groups. We should likewise also bear in mind that culture and ethnicity are intricately connected and that food culture can otherwise be made up of concrete ways by which ethnic identities are preserved before becoming available for cultural contamination. When encounters between groups from different cultures take place, they do not lead to a simple adaptation of a diet, but usually give rise to intercultural acts of crossing identity boundaries. It is against this background that I would like to consider the Naxi case-study. My point is that data from the analysis of Naxi foodways reflect their position of Himalayan people standing between the rice, soybean and alcohol consuming culture of the Han majority to the North-East and the milk, butter, and barley eating Tibetan culture to the North-West,

[7] All unreferenced discussions of Naxi practices are derived from ethnographic fieldwork carried out by me in Yunnan province at various time between 2002 and 2013 (e.g. see Turini 2015, 2016).

and show they meanwhile hold original declension patterns for the distinctive expression of their own "peculiar Tibeto-Burman identity".

In the area where the Naxi are resident, the Ancient Tea Horse Road is likely to have been in use long before it turned into the well-known route for the tea and horse trading during the Tang dynasty (618–907 CE) for it had served as a very important corridor for migration stretching across present-day Tibet, Yunnan and Sichuan while concurrently fostering cultural communication among local ancient cultures in Southwest China (Yang 2004, 29–30). As we saw, the northwestern borders of present-day Yunnan province have always demarcated a very complex area, not only because this region was and is home to many peripheral peoples, but also because it lies at the juncture of both Chinese and Tibetan political (and cultural) expansion.

In the Tibetan cultural area of the eastern Himalayas, barley (*damai* 大麦) has a wide geographical distribution due to its adaptability to rough climates and local different habitats. Not only is barley the main crop of Tibetan agriculture and is flour prepared from its roasted grains (*tsampa*) a typical local staple food, but it has also an important role in many cultural and religious activities, *tsampa* being regarded as a special food for entertaining different kinds of guest. Whereas I will consider the ritual use of barley later in more detail, I will now focus on food practices unrelated to religious tradition.

The most common way Tibetans eat *tsampa* (*zanba* 糌粑) is to mix it in a bowl with yak butter tea (*suyoucha* 酥油茶) and form into little balls that they consume almost daily. Barley flour, together with water and baking powder, is used also to prepare *balep korkun*, a type of round, flat bread typical of central Tibet, where it is eaten nearly every morning and is the primary breakfast staple in local monasteries. Other kinds of bread can be deep fried, steamed or pan-cooked. Although *tsampa* is at the core of Tibetan identity, it is not unknown to Naxi daily lives either: the cultivation, processing and ritual uses of the barley among the Naxi in northwestern Yunnan reflect of the strong Tibetan influences in the area.[8] Besides processing barley into alcoholic beverages,[9] which are used as gifts and for serving guests, the Naxi also produce their own *tsampa*, occasionally from wheat (*xiaomai* 小麦). They consume it with butter tea and, in contrast to other Tibetan areas, they add crumbled walnuts to make it tastier (Yang 2017, 29). They too make daily use of bread, which they call *baba* 粑粑. It is a kind of soft, fluffy flatbread, made of barley or wheat flour that can be either fried or roasted and to which crumbled peanuts, walnuts and black sesame seeds can sometimes be added for the sweet version. The cultural importance attached by the Naxi to *baba* and butter tea for entertaining guests is reflected in references to these foods contained in some of their ritual manuscripts. For

8 Similar influences can be found among the Shuhi in southwest Sichuan, see Weckerle *et al.* (2005).

9 The most widespread is "barley yellow wine" (*damai huangjiu* 大麦黄酒).

example, in the manuscript *To Search for the Books of Divination*,[10] when the goddess who distributed the books of divination to the Naxi welcomed the White Bat who had reached her heavenly home, we read:

> The goddess asked him: "White Bat, what do you drink? And what food do you eat?" He replied: "I can eat a *bābā* the size of a mountain and butter tea the size of a lake". [Then] the goddess prepared a *bābā* as big as a mountain and melted as much butter as a lake could contain and offered them to the White Bat. He flew to the top of the *bābā* mountain but, while trying to sit on it, he slipped and fell into the lake of butter tea. The goddess laughed and covered her mouth with the right sleeve of her dress, she then held out her left arm towards the bat to help him get out of the lake. She asked him what he was up to and the White Bat answered: "Oh, I just wanted to see how high the mountain was, and how deep the lake". (Turini 2016, 66)[11]

The Naxi people are familiar with dairy products other than yak butter, such as cheese. Interestingly, the cheese they make is less close to Tibetan crumbly, hard-textured yak cheese than to the typical artisanal foods from milk processing the Bai ancestors passed down to their descendants. Actually, *rushan* 乳扇 and *rubing* 乳饼 that can be easily found among Naxi snacks and dishes traditionally come from Dali Bai Autonomous Prefecture, further South than Lijiang, and are produced by the Yi people as well. Moreover, unlike the Tibetans, the Naxi neither like to put cheese in butter tea nor enjoy it with *tsampa*. They often eat *rubing*—a firm white goat or cow cheese with a chewy texture that does not melt—grilled or pan-fried instead and, before serving, they can sweeten or salt it. They usually deep-fry *rushan*, so that the puffed-up cheese becomes light and fluffy, with a crispy texture. This dairy product can only be made out of cow milk and, before being cooked, it is hung to dry for about a day until it dehydrates to a thin sheet.

Although these "food customs" characterize Naxi lifestyle, they simultaneously seem to be clear markers of a broader "Himalayan/Tibetan identity". This means that they are not the expression of the Naxi people's own specific identity. This latter could possibly be better conveyed through foodways which, being deeply rooted in their own traditions, history and environment, do not show to have such a generalized external sharing with neighboring ethnic groups, and therefore might represent the original core of ways of being Naxi. The fact that it is only served in Naxi areas around Lijiang and that this area is widely acknowledged as being the heart of Naxi culture, would suggest *jidou liangfen* 鸡豆凉粉be regarded as a typical Naxi dish. *Jidou* is usually translated as "chickpeas", the Naxi however prepare this bean jelly dish with a mix of chickpeas and lentils powdery starch, which gives it the characteristic gray color, and consume

[10] This manuscript is chanted by the *dongba* during the Great Ceremony for Purification. For the analysis and translation of this manuscript, see Turini (2016).

[11] Translation into English by the author.

it sliced into long noodles or into cubes and topped with peanuts, cilantro, garlic and ground chilly.

Naxi traditional food culture has developed from nomadic lifestyle into an agricultural and pastoral context. Cultivated species play a crucial role in the local diet,[12] but they also have a long history of wild edibles gathering and a rich knowledge on using them owing to the fact that northwestern Yunnan has always had a great biodiversity. Collection and use of wild edibles are not only part of the cultural history of the region but also of the Naxi local identity. Many wild vegetables were traditionally collected either while grazing cattle and horses during the spring and summer seasons or after farm work—if they grew wild in cropland. Among these, there are bracken and the lichens known as *Lobaria retigera* Trevis. and *Lobaria yunnanensis* Yoshim., having an antioxidant activity (Geng Yangfei *et al*. 2016, Diversity of Wild Edibles). Mushrooms, mostly gathered during spring and fall by women and children, are still significant in the local diet. They are consumed as vegetables, after drying or while fresh.[13]

Today we are witnessing a trend of decreasing knowledge of wild food plants among the Naxi if compared to that of the last decades. This is mainly due to the fact that migration of young people to cities in search for employment and education has severely disrupted the transfer of local knowledge between generations (Geng Yangfei *et al*. 2016, Age, Gender, and Traditional Knowledge). For similar reasons, traditional knowledge of wild plants related to Naxi ethnomedicine and religion is disappearing,[14] though herbal medicinal plants and their uses are partly recorded and described in a few *dongba* manuscripts (Li Guowen 2000).

The connotation of food as culture implies issues related to identity and ethnicity that cannot fail to consider the notion of "border" and its processual nature. As discussed earlier, the Naxi are an example of the way in which cultural borders in the Tibetan-Yi corridor can be revisited, redefined, negotiated or blurred. We showed that the analysis of some aspects of Naxi foodways can help understanding meaningful patterns of boundary drawing/blurring within and across ethnic groups, even in a diachronic perspective. The Naxi have their own ways of being Tibeto-Burman, some of them are embedded in the knowledge of wild edibles growing in the local environment, while others are expressed through exclusive food practices. Alongside with their own peculiar identity, it has been suggested that they partake of a broader Himalayan/Tibetan identity, the sense of belonging to which is expressed through foodways showing a more generalized external sharing with neighboring peoples, especially the Tibetans.

[12] Besides rice, crops of strong adaptability are planted, such as turnip, potatoes, maize (*yumi* 玉米), buckwheat (*qiaomai* 荞麦) and Tartary buckwheat (*ku qiaomai* 苦荞麦).

[13] Geng Yanfei *et al*. (2016) have elaborated a deep understanding of the Naxi people's traditional knowledge regarding wild edibles, including wild fruit, beverage and honey source plants, with a special focus on Baidi village. For an ethnobotanical investigation of the Naxi shifting food habits during droughts caused by global climate change, see Zhang Lingling at al. (2016),

[14] On Naxi ethnomedicine see Yang Lixin *et al*. (2014).

One identity feeds on the other and on overlaps, intersections, contiguity, and both can be explored through Naxi food culture.

Shared food classifications and the associated practices "incorporate the individual into the group, situate the whole group in relation to the universe and in turn incorporate it into the universe. They thus have a fundamentally religious dimension" (Fischler 1988, 279). Consequently, culinary systems play a role "in giving a meaning to man and the universe, by situating them in relation to each other in an overall continuity [...]" (Fischler 1988, 279).

## 3. Some ritual uses of food and dongba religion

For the sake of space, I will not conduct a ritual-by-ritual analysis here and my discussion will mainly focus on the general use of meatless food in Naxi religious life, in full awareness that this only gives a partial picture of the complexities of foodways in the *dongba* tradition.

Food is an inherently performative reality "that moves the scholar from the mundane to the cosmological and back again" (Arnold 2000, 5), and that involve the eater in an intertwining of relationships with a wider universe of beings, including supernatural beings. The Naxi live in a reality that is inhabited by infinite supernatural beings, which it would be impossible to describe in detail as the Naxi themselves are unable to identify them all. Their already highly structured cosmology is made still more complicated by the local nature of many forces. Every mountain, hill, forest has its guardian spirit or local deity, of the knowledge of which individual officiants are the custodians. The ritual manuscripts certainly contain the most significant descriptions, though the lack of standardization and the complexity of the situation cause the *dongbas* themselves usually to find it hard to explain them clearly, even with explicit use of the texts. The main classes of deities include high gods, local deities, and apotheosized *dongba*, like Dongbashiluo, the legendary founder of *dongba* religion. To these must be added the Shu serpent kings, who are spirits mainly associated with water sources, and myriads of demons.[15] All this variety, often accompanied by indeterminacy and a lack of coherence in the descriptions collected from one valley to the next, does not reflect visions of the world that are substantially different. On the contrary, seemingly divergent representations continually point to conceptions that are essentially very similar of an individual person's position inside a web of relations where material forces, the supernatural and the cosmological sweep into a person's life.

*Dongbas* are generally able to confront any supernatural being and to officiate most of the ritual activities. To confront offending demons, they seek the help of the gods. While exorcising demons, *dongbas* are paired and fight sham battles brandishing their weapons in magical movements, accompanied by the music of

[15] Joseph Rock (1963, 39), who lived 25 years among the Naxi people at the beginning of the XX century reported the presence of more than 500 demons.

drums, cymbals, gongs and conch shell trumpets, at an increasing tempo. Depending on the function of the particular ritual, some combination of gods, ancestors, spirits and demons is invited at the ritual site and these beings are entertained in different ways according to their *status*. In the manuscript *To Search for the Books of Divination*, these entities are likened to guests who must be correctly entertained:

> The celestial Gebaruoji became ill and so did his wife, the terrestrial Kamemiji. This was because of the presence of demons. But they did not know what demons they were and what ceremony to perform to expel them. It was just like having some guests and not knowing how to entertain them. (Turini 2016, 49)[16]

Many Naxi rituals are then shaped by a language of hospitality and feeding, each class of beings having its own "food code". When the study embraces religious uses of food, including food practices that pertain to the otherworld(s) in addition to foodways dealing with transitioning between worlds, the description becomes "thicker" since food for the demons, for the deities, and food for the spirits must all be taken into account. In general terms, the choice of the offerings cannot elude considerations regarding their colors. The first great distinction to be made is between food to be offered to deities and the Shu spirits, for whom the white color is prevailing, and that for demons, which is preferably black or dark colored. Consequently, oat, rice, and popped maize grains are frequently employed to feed deities, while buckwheat and Tartary buckwheat grains are meant for malicious beings. It is worth mentioning here that some demons particularly feared by the Naxi are very well entertained by *dongbas* during ceremonies. This is the case of the "wind demons". They are the spirits of persons who have committed suicide and who have turned to malicious beings. To placate them, they are offered steamed bread made from wheat flour, deep-fried *baba*, walnuts and are invited to drink as much strong liquor distilled from red wheat as they wish.

In order to appease the Shu spirits, who can cause illness when offended, cow milk and popped maize grains are offered near mountains springs where they love to dwell. Each grain of cereal symbolically represents an animal illegitimately killed by humans for food that has to be ritually given back to its owner. According to Naxi mythology, there appear to be strong blood ties between the Shu spirits and humankind, as while they were born of different mothers, they shared the same father as the post-flood ancestor of the Naxi. A formal division of property was therefore needed from the very beginning: man was made responsible for all domestic animals, cultivated fields, rice paddies and houses, while these spirits were entrusted with wild animals, forests, mountains, springs, lakes, and rivers. So the former would be masters of "social space" and the latter of unpolluted "natural space".

For this reason, they do not like animal sacrifices and the offerings intended for them essentially have to come from the plant world. To this end, bread rolls, small frogs and snakes are usually prepared with a mixture of flour and water

16 Translation into English by the author.

and then fried. The Shu are especially close to these animals as it is shown by the pictogram portraying them with a frog's head and serpent's tail.

Except for the case of the "wind demons", which is probably explained by the fact that they are human souls having subsequently undergone a transformation, we may say that different aliments operate in different realms of existence, for deities and demons have distinctive ritualized food. In the Naxi sacred space, food becomes a means to mark integration or separation between these realms through guests' entertainment. Communion can be sought with deities through consumption, while separation between demons and humans/deities is much needed for restoring/maintaining the balance in the cosmos. As pointed out by Yang Fuquan (2017, 28), the Naxi regard those foods which they commonly consume as pleasing also to deities, while all those aliments which customarily are not part of their diet are considered foodstuff for the demons.

As discussed earlier, when encounters between groups from different cultures take place, they usually give rise to intercultural acts of crossing identity boundaries. At a closer look, cross-cultural contamination processes occurring between religious contexts can also be fertile grounds for sacred foodways cross-pollination. If we return to consider the Tibetan-Yi corridor in this light, ethnic territorial borders come to be conceived as areas that produce liminality and dissolve to produce hybridity. We can observe the permeability of boundaries between Naxi and Tibetans highlighted by the ritual uses of butter they share, for example. According to Yang Fuquan (2017, 29), the presence of yak butter and dough figures in many Naxi ceremonies actually comes from long-lasting contacts with Tibetans. *Dongbas* consider butter a powerful protective agent having strong purifying properties. It conveys good luck, fertility, and purity. For these reasons, infants' bodies are entirely rubbed with it shortly after birth and the same happens to the deceased's corpse during funerary rituals. Wedding ceremonies are special occasions on which blessings and fertility are ensured for the new couple by the *dongba* rubbing the bride's and the groom's foreheads with butter. This aliment is also applied to secure prosperity to Naxi boys and girls on the day when they receive their first pair of trousers and their first skirt, respectively, as a "rite of passage" from childhood to adulthood.

Not only do barley and *tsampa* play a very important role as food offerings among the Naxi, but the use of dough figures prepared from *tsampa* as *paraphernalia* also is widely distributed in the Tibetan-Yi corridor.[17] The *dongbas* form[18] and use them as effigies of demons, animals, deities, Shu spirits, and particular objects, such as the sacred mountain Junaruolo (the *axis mundi*). The features that these figures should have described in detail in the ritual manuscript containing indications on the *paraphernalia* and the other manuscripts to be chanted while performing a given ceremony. In some cases, distinctive elements suggesting the identity of these

[17] Besides being widespread among the Naxi, it is documented also for the Shuhi (Weckerle *et al.* 2005) and the Mosuo peoples in southwestern Sichuan (Mathieu 1998).

[18] They can also be made from wheat and from buckwheat, depending on the ritual use.

supernatural beings are clearly depicted by the *dongba*, in others he pays particular attention to their facial expressions, instead. At funerary ceremonies, he often makes use of small dough figures representing the deceased's soul, demons and gods and place them on the corresponding section of the Gods' Road Map. He will then progressively move the deceased's figure along the Road Map in order for him/her to finally reach the ancestors' realm. Depending on their ritual function, in the Naxi context dough figures can be thrown away, offered to deities or spirits to repay the debts incurred by humans or to offended demons as a substitute for a sick person.

The general argument I am making here is far from being sensational for my intent is merely to suggest that also Naxi ritual use of food manifests forms of cultural fusion which can be seen as aspects of their historical legacy and cultural positioning in the Tibetan-Yi corridor. Many traits of *dongba* foodways, like the use of the dough figures, can be easily linked both with a broader Tibetan tradition and with some other Tibeto-Burman peoples' ritual food practices in the area. One of the issues that beckon further investigation is the extent to which Naxi religious uses of food are rooted either in the Tibetan "folk religion" (Tucci 1995, 205), often glossed as "nameless religion" (Stein [1996] 1998, 173), and old Bön (Namkhai Norbu 1996, 19), or in Tibetan Buddhism and how such food uses found their way into Naxi religious life.

Forms of Naxi *dongba* rituals and the old Bön may derive from a common origin which can be identified in a shamanic tradition developed among pastoralists living in the area corresponding to present-day Qinghai province (Rock 1935, 66), whence the Naxi ancestors are thought to have emigrated southwards, to their present location. Accordingly, some Buddhist symbolism and elements in *dongba* rituals (e.g. the use of butter lamps, conch shells, *tangka,* cymbals) are supposed to be a later appropriation, introduced into an original core of beliefs. In Lijiang basin the "Bon cult held undisputed sway for no Yellow lama church was permitted in the territory, and it was only during the Ming Dynasty about 1627 that the Karma-pa church, more tolerant than the Yellow Sect, became settled. They were however never strong and influential" (Rock 1952, 4).

Though Rock (1952, 15) himself was convinced that Naxi religious manuscripts were in the greater part Bon, we should not underestimate the great diversity of localized characteristics of religious practices in Tibet and its surrounding areas. To this end, it might be desirable a comparative study between Naxi religion and early Tibetan sources, including the Dunhuang manuscripts. The varieties of *dongba* food practices can in fact be given sense by understanding Naxi religion and ethnicity within the Tibeto-Burman context, and thanks to the porousness of its boundaries.

## 4. Food, taste and Naxi sensuous epistemology

In this last paragraph I would like to briefly outline a possible research perspective in which food and taste can be revisited in the light of the theoretical framework of an "anthropology of the senses" that implies a "fundamental epistemological shift towards others" (Stoller 1989, 156), and to present some preliminary data addressing Naxi culture as a way of *sensing the world* (Howes 1991), to which taste can offer its contribution. Many ongoing disembodied and disengaged approaches to the human sciences have depersonalised the body and sanitised the senses. The aim of my investigation is to refine a sensibility for the body as existential ground for culture and to propose a preliminary exploration of what the ethnographic record has to offer when analysed from data on the senses. I will try to give some insight into the Naxi sensory construction of reality and to make sense of their sensibilities. This can be done by taking into account their cosmology, cosmogony, and ritual life. I am persuaded that my exploration is at this stage merely suggestive and preparatory to future in-depth-analysis.

The senses do not simply gather information about the world, but are also imbued with cultural values, they represent a tool for societies to define the world and a model to interact with it. This means that different cultures develop different ways of "making sense of the world" (Classen 1993, 1), each teaching the individual a kind of sensory specialisation which brings him to "organise his sensorium by attending to some types of perception more than others" (Ong 1991, 28).

The method of creation expressed in the cosmogony of a particular culture is often revealing both of the way in which that culture shapes perception and the relative importance it attaches to the various senses. In the Naxi cosmogony, sight ranks supreme, but it is tinged with sound, which renders Naxi visual bias altogether different from that of Western culture:

> [ … ] Before Heaven and Earth appeared, there first appeared the three good kinds of shadow of each. [ … ] The true and the real united, and a brilliant white orb appeared. The white orb produced a change, and a beautiful voice that could sing appeared. The beautiful sounding breath changed, and a brilliant turquoise coloured orb appeared. The turquoise coloured orb changed, and the great god Iggvq-ogeq appeared. [ … ] The false and the unreal caused a change. First there appeared a black orb. The black orb changed, and a black gemstone as black as a crow appeared. The black gemstone changed, and a bad sounding voice appeared. The bad sounding voice changed and [the evil demon] Lggvq-dinaq appeared. (McKhann 1992, 84–8)

It seems quite clear from the above that sound arises from light, and that disorder is introduced in an originally light and coloured world by the creation of darkness, that, in turn, gives rise to unpleasant noises. The emphasis on light and colour manifested in Naxi cosmogony is further elaborated in their cosmology. They believe that the human world is a square. Each side of the square is associated with a cardinal point and a particular colour. The Seven Sisters God supported Mt. Junaruolo's east side with a white conch prop, the south side with a green turquoise prop, the west side with a black cornelian prop, the north side with a yellow golden prop; in the middle between heaven and earth they erected a white iron prop (McKhann 1992, 89).

A visual bias is also shown in the various ceremonial articles prepared by the *dongba,* in which supernatural beings are made readily recognisable by their vivid physical characteristic, rather than, say, by their smells or food preferences: pictorial representations of the gods in the form of painted scrolls, wooden slats, and dough figures made with parched barley when representing the gods, and with parched buckwheat when they refer to demons (He and He 1998). The importance of sight is manifested also in the fact that in order to reach the ancestors, the deceased's soul needs to *see* the itinerary to be followed, and to this end an everlasting lamp is put in front of the deathbed during funerals (Xu 1998).

The stress on sight is accompanied by the importance attached to sound, hearing, and speaking as social functions. The Naxi are a highly verbal people. A very high premium is placed on those with the ability to say the correct things at the right time (Jackson 1979), for without proper talking, communication among men, and between men and gods, falters, and the whole social system creaks as it lacks effective intermediaries to mediate between the poles. In ritual life, this is highlighted by the fact that the possibility of getting in touch with the essence of things resides in the recitation of their origin by the *dongba* (Jackson 1979). Touch can be conversely understood as the most anticultural of the senses for the Naxi, because pollution is mainly spread by contact. I could not find any reference to touch in the Naxi cosmology and ritual life, except the application of butter, discussed earlier. Sight and touch would thus seem to be at opposite ends of the Naxi *sensorium*.

In the ethnographic *corpus* of the Naxi, there is frequent mention of various woods and resins that are burnt as incense. But other substances, which do not necessarily have pleasant odours, are also employed. For example, in the "Greet the Gods with Burning Incense" rite, juniper boughs are burnt in a large incense burner to attract the gods, while the ritual setting is being cleared of pollution with smoke from a torch made of nine twigs from nine different kinds of tree. In the same rite, the demons of pollution are invited by burning chicken feathers and a few small pieces of sheep bone over a tile covered with hot coals. Therefore, while the foul odour of the burning feathers and bone is thought to attract the demons, the gods are thought to prefer the fragrant smell of juniper incense. Odoriferous substances are not merely pleasing or displeasing to the nose: they are first of all channels of communication, they carry messages. It is also significant that what is burnt to establish contact with the spirits' world can be categorised visually. The incense sticks prepared for the "Sacrifice to Heaven", for example, are meaningfully decorated with paper flowers (McKhann 1992).

Although we could not find frequent mention to the sense of taste, this is not sufficient grounds for dismissing it from the Naxi hierarchy of the senses. We run across a multitude of ritual visual perceptions that are mingled with food and taste. During the "Ceremony for the Demons of Suicide" (He and He 1998), for example, two bowls of sacrificial food are prepared. The one containing what is called "white food", is filled with meat and white rice; the bowl containing "black food", is filled with meat, buckwheat, and maize mixed with rice.[19] In-

[19] The bowl of "white food" is offered for those who died unnatural death, "but whose location of death is known and who have received release into the afterlife", while the bowl of "black food" is offered for the "deceased persons whose location of death is not known and who have not been released into the afterlife" (He and He 1998, 159).

stances of this kind point at the multisensory dimension of Naxi culture and to the interplay of the senses that can eventually occur. Sensory perceptions are often so closely related that it is scarcely possible to completely separate one from another, and to deny this sensory interdependence would be non-sense, as Classen (1993) has shown.

The principal offering in the "Sacrifice to Heaven" has two stages (McKhann 1992): the first involves objects of sacrifice which are whole and raw, the second those that are cut up and cooked, some of which are divided among the participants at the end of the rite, while feasting together on the sacrificial ground. The raw/cooked[20] distinction is emphasised by the Naxi themselves, but it is something which requires further investigation on the basis of fieldwork just so does the rudimentary Naxi hierarchy of the senses we can establish at this stage and consisting of the visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, and tactile modalities, in order of importance.

## 5. Conclusions

In this paper attention has been paid to understanding some of the steps in the making of Naxi identity and to investigating the extent to which traces of cross-cultural ethnic identity dynamics and adaptations can be preserved in food practices. The multidimensionality of food has been questioned to explore in what ways Naxi consumption and religious uses of aliments can contribute to the forging and transmission of their cultural identity. My point has been that data from the analysis of Naxi foodways reflect their position of Himalayan people standing between the rice, soybean and alcohol consuming culture of the Han majority to the North-East and the milk, butter, and barley eating Tibetan culture to the North-West. Clues have been detected that show they meanwhile hold distinctive food patterns for the expression of their own "peculiar Tibeto-Burman identity".

Culture and ethnicity are indeed intricately connected, and it has been pointed out that Naxi food culture is also made up of concrete ways by which ethnic identity is preserved before becoming available for cultural contamination. The Naxi people are an example of the way in which cross-cultural food practices disclose cultural borders in the Tibetan-Yi corridor that have been revisited, redefined, negotiated and, eventually, blurred. One of the issues that beckon further investigation is the extent to which Naxi religious uses of food are rooted either in Tibetan old Bön or in Tibetan Buddhism.

[20] Interestingly enough, the Ming and Qing empires classified tribal groups either as "cooked" (*shu* 熟 ) or "raw" (*sheng* 生) according to their degree of sinicization. The first, recognized the native chief's (*tusi* 土司) authority and submitted to the imperial labor tax, while the latter, more barbarous, refused to submit to any kind of political control and authority (Chao 2008, 106), the consumption of raw food being regarded as an unequivocal sign of savagery since it had not gone through "the transforming power of fire [...], symbol of culture" (Dikötter 1992, 9).

Finally, some Naxi food practices and cosmology have been taken into account to gain an insight into their culturally different balances of the senses and their sensuous epistemology, in full awareness that at this stage my exploration has been merely suggestive and preparatory to future in-depth-analysis. I have indeed endeavoured to begin clearing the ground by sketching some possible developments for a multidisciplinary study of ethnicity and identity in Southwest China that is made up of various methodologies and extends across a number of disciplines including the study of religions, the anthropology of the senses, and food studies.

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