

日・韓・中における食文化の継承と創出

講演者：Selina Ching Chan
(香港樹仁大学)

Chachaanteng : The Invention of Hong Kong-Style Restaurant

Selina Ching Chan
(Hong Kong Shue Yan University)

This talk takes a processual and a relational approach to examine the meanings of *chachaanteng*, a Hong Kong local eatery which sells “local” food. Food is an important symbol for nations to create its “imagined community” and “imagined tradition” (Holtzman 2006 : 368-369 ; Warde 1997 : 63, 66-67). National cuisine is often an invented cuisine with the aims of connecting people living in the same nation to imagine their common national taste in the imagined community (Warde 1997 : 66). In constructing postcolonial nation states, new cookbooks have been created with invented national cuisines to construct national identities (Appadurai 1988). A classic example of an invented national cuisine is the invention of Indian cuisine in new Indian cookbooks (Appadurai 1988). The invented Indian cuisine highlights selected, historical and ethnic cuisine in particular regions while omitting others and carries the features of regional inflection and national standardization (Appadurai 1988 : 5, 18-19). This paper takes the above approach to examine the relationship between decolonization and the invention of Hong Kong foods. It investigates how the representation of *chachaanteng* as the Hong Kong local eatery helps to connect the locals through their imagined local taste. It interrogates what features of *chachaanteng* are considered to be “Hong Kong” and examines the process in which *chachaanteng* has been invented as a Hong Kong style restaurant.

Decolonization and the representation of *chachaantengs* as traditional local Hong Kong eateries

Past research has highlighted that the invention of cuisines is often found to be caused by dramatic socio-economic and political changes in societies, mainly in the context of globalization and nation-building. In view of globalization, people in different places around the world have become aware of cultural homogenization and the decline of local traditions and therefore urge for the invention and revival of local cuisines, as well as a local taste (Caldwell 2002 : 297, Wilk 2006 : 156). Similarly, Hong Kong’s integration into China has been a particularly important political context which drives Hong Kong people to search for food representing themselves and to construct a link between food, memory, and historical consciousness. It is in this decolonization context when *chachaanteng* has become a representation of traditional local eateries which sell Hong Kong food and drink. The downturn of local economy after 97 also leads to the further popularization of *chachaanteng* among the locals as they are affordable to ordinary people. Meanwhile, media and Hong Kong tourism Board also began to promote *chachaanteng* as Hong Kong-style teahouses, as well as food and drinks there. The drastic increase in the number of travelers from China after 1997

has also led to the popularity of *chachaanteng* as sites for tasting local food with affordable prices.

The *chachaanteng* restaurant is a Hong Kong-style teahouse which has existed as early as the 1940s although the exact date of establishment of the first *chachaanteng* is unknown. *Chachaanteng* began as a restaurant which sold “western” food. At that time, it was too expensive for ordinary people to dine at western restaurants. *Chachaanteng* introduced localized “western” drinks and food into the local community with affordable prices and soon became popular. In 2014, four key items in *chachaanteng* have been identified as Hong Kong intangible cultural heritage and have been commemorated as a living intangible cultural heritage. They are *yuanyang* (mixture of milk tea and coffee), Hong Kong style milk tea, pineapple buns and egg tarts. More recently, media also plays an active role in promoting *chachaanteng* and those four specialties as a living heritage.

In addition to the above items, localized versions of “western” food, Chinese food from different ethnicities, Japanese, as well as Southeast Asian food are also found at *chachaanteng*. Localized “western food” has been served, such as luncheon meat and fried egg with rice/spaghetti, sausage and fried egg with rice/spaghetti, pepper steak with rice/spaghetti, pork chop rice/spaghetti. These foods reveal the stereotypical images of ‘western’ food despite its possible replacement of spaghetti with rice. Meanwhile, Chinese food from different ethnic groups is also served. These Chinese food includes Fujian fried rice, Xiamen fried rice vermicelli, Yangzhou fried rice, Shanghainese pork slices with rice vermicelli in soup, Cantonese style fried noodles and rice (such as fried beef noodles, fried pork with rice noodles, fried beef with bitter gourd rice and etc.). Indeed, different ethnic cuisines are also served in *chachaanteng* restaurants, which reveal the awareness of culinary others and the inclusiveness of Hong Kong local eateries. Such complex components reflect the colonial history and the complex migrant background of Hong Kong people.

More importantly, *chachaanteng* is a regular hangout for many Hong Kong people. There is always one in any neighborhood, not to mention that they are now found in tourist districts and even the airport. *Chachaanteng* in neighborhood is a noisy, cosy, and casual. Although the waiters serve the customers, the service is minimal. Many locals enjoy having breakfast or tea at *chachaanteng*. *Chachaanteng* serve comfort food for many Hong Kong people. Many locals have nostalgic memories of communal relationship at *chachaanteng*.

Concluding Remarks

Chachaanteng is a lens to understand Hong Kong as a unique postcolonial society. It has been invented as a representation of the local Hong Kong-style restaurant which serves localized “western”, Japanese, Southeast Asian, and various Chinese ethnic food. Nevertheless, *Chachaanteng* as a local traditional eatery is culturally salient while the boundary between the local and global cultures, the western and Asian cultures is blurred, indeterminate. It is this broken and hybrid content which constructs *chachaanteng*'s postcolonial Hong Kong-ness. Such process of invention reflects the search for a local identity in response to globalization, decolonization, and reintegration with China.

References

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