

**FAST FOOD IN A CHINESE PROVINCIAL CITY:
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS**

A Thesis

by

HAIYING ZHU

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

May 2005

Major Subject: Anthropology

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ABSTRACT

Fast Food in a Chinese Provincial City:

A Comparative Analysis. (May 2005)

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More than a decade ago American fast food entered the Chinese market. Since then the number of fast food and organized chain restaurants in China has multiplied. Chinese consumers, especially those who live in large urban areas, have accepted Western-style fast food restaurants that serve French fries and other popular dishes as a way of life. Inspired by the success of the symbolism of McDonald's and KFC, many Chinese restaurants have tried to use traditional Chinese culture to lure customers into what is advertised as indigenous, modern fast food outlets. Recently some Chinese fast food entrepreneurs have successfully developed local versions of the Western fast food system. Based on my three months' ethnographic research in Huai'an, I address the competitive situation between American fast food restaurants and local Chinese restaurants by examining service, price, management, food, and customer expectations. Specifically, this case analysis includes one of the largest American fast food chains and one of the largest Chinese fast food restaurant chains. The data are based on participant observation, informal and formal interviews, a sample survey, and historical documents.

The study finds that in Huai'an, one local Chinese fast food restaurant, after improving décor, hygiene and service, has experienced increasing success in the local

market. I show that the globalization process has experienced two types of localization in Huai'an. First, Western chains have striven to adapt to the consumers in Huai'an, by insisting on a high degree of local ownership and by modestly tailoring their products to local taste. Second, the mere presence of these Western chains has encouraged Chinese entrepreneurs to develop decidedly local versions of modern fast food enterprises.

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INTRODUCTION

During the last two decades China has witnessed rapid growth of its economy and population. Associated with this growth have been China's changing lifestyles and eating habits. One result of this has been a boom in the fast food industry. Chinese consumers, especially those who live in large urban areas, have accepted Western-style fast food restaurants that serve french fries and other popular side dishes as a way of life.

Emerson defines fast food as "a customer serving himself at a counter where food that has already been cooked in advance is offered" (1979:34). Lundberg states that "fast food means quick service--the food is already prepared and being held, or fried or grilled quickly, or reheated by microwave. As distinguished from the coffee shop, its near relative, fast food typically offers no table service and few menu choices" (1984:237). Hayes (1993) defines fast food in terms of the establishments that offer minimal levels of in-store service, selling lower priced foods with speedy service in a relatively inexpensive atmosphere designed for fast turnover of customers.

All of the above definitions are incomplete for my thesis since they do not include the recently emerged Chinese-style fast food restaurants. Though the term "fast food" is used in China, the definition is slightly different there than in the U.S. Chinese-style fast food refers more to a style of fast consumption rather than standardized

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production and selling methods. Its menu usually involves a range of options such as dumplings, rice, and a large range of meat and fish preparations.

Noodle and dumpling shops on local street corner are a traditional part of fast foods in China. Modern fast food in the country dates back to 1987, when KFC first entered the Chinese market. Before the 1970's, China deliberately remained cloistered from the outside world, and the mom and pop noodle shops on local street corners met the basic fast service needs. With the current sustained economic growth in China that began in the 1970's, the income level and standard of living among the Chinese people have been increasing rapidly. The state of economic growth has created unprecedented opportunities for both international and local companies.

Western fast food has only become accessible in China relatively recently and is presently attracting considerable consumer interest. In China, as in some other Asian countries, the increasing popularity of international fast food brands, such as McDonald's and KFC, corresponds to the emergence of greater numbers of consumers with disposable income with which to purchase luxurious foreign items. "With 1.2 billion people, China is the biggest market in the world," commented Sam Su, the regional Vice-President for North Asia, PepsiCo Restaurant International (Pizza Hut, KFC). "We're almost doubling our business in China every year, but we still can't keep up with the demand" (Li, 2002:126).

The fast food sector has shown a yearly increase of above 20 percent in the past decade, according to the Chinese National Statistics Bureau. Currently there are more than 1000 KFC and 560 McDonald's outlets in China's four municipalities of Beijing,

Shanghai, Tianjin and Chongqing, and more than 70 provincial cities (Liu, 2004). With a ratio of only about one international-branded fast food restaurant location for one million people, PRC remains very much a pioneer's market. In order to capitalize on the opportunity for growth in the PRC, McDonald's is planning to open nearly 100 new outlets around China this year and has started to promote McKids, a series of children-related products, to the Chinese market since April, 2004. KFC also plans to increase the number of drive-through outlets, currently limited to one in Beijing, as there is sharp growth in private car ownership among urban Chinese. Many other international fast food brands have been attracted to China, including Pizza Hut, Baskin-Robbins, Taco Bell, and Dairy Queen. "We will open at least 10 more Pizza Hut restaurants in Beijing and will step up home deliveries," said Samuel Chen, general manager of Beijing Pizza Hut Co. Ltd. (Zhang, 2004). So far, Yum! operates 22 Pizza Hut restaurants in Beijing (over 120 nationwide) and six Pizza Hut Delivery outlets in Shanghai and Beijing.

Noticing the ever-crowded foreign fast food restaurants, many aspiring Chinese entrepreneurs have entered the fast food industry as well. Chinese restaurants have tried to use traditional Chinese culture to lure customers into what is advertised as modern fast food outlets. At the beginning of this process, however, "almost all local competitors in the fast food sector tend to regard fast food restaurants merely as eating places, and accordingly, they try to compete with the foreign fast food restaurants by offering lower prices and local flavors or by appealing to nationalist sentiments" (Yan, 1997:45). These early local fast food restaurants overlooked the importance of hygiene, food quality, friendly service, and a pleasant physical environment.

In recent years, however, several local fast food restaurants, after improving décor, hygiene and service, have become as crowded as McDonald's and Kentucky Fried Chicken outlets. Although the Western chains have had certain advantages (such as fast service, ample capital, modern technology, stream-lined management), by adopting some of these advantages and combining them with local food preferences, indigenous fast food restaurants have experienced increasing success in the local market. One of the largest of such companies, Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant, now owns over 80 stores mainly in east China's Jiangsu and Anhui Provinces, as well as in Shanghai and Beijing. Many others, however, are still struggling as they try to imitate the Western initiated fast food sector.

On the basis of my ethnographic fieldwork in Huai'an in 2002, this thesis will examine recent changes in the fast food market in the Chinese provincial town. I will do so by conducting a comparative analysis of the Western and Chinese style fast food restaurants.

Theoretical and Literature Review

Anthropologists have long pointed out that for consumers meaning is attached to their own behavior and the goods they obtain. In *Culture and Consumption* McCracken proposes an excellent theoretical perspective for understanding objects and their place in the culture of consumption. McCracken argues that consumer goods embody and communicate significant cultural meaning and that this meaning is constantly changing

(McCracken, 1988:81). The path of meaning is traced from the culturally constituted world to consumer goods, and finally to the individual consumer. McCracken explains how meaning is transferred through different instruments. Advertising, fashion system, and consumer behavior all work to invest goods with meaning that can be transferred to different cultural locations -- the world, the product, and the consumer.

In our everyday life, "the phenomenal world presents itself to the individual's senses fully shaped and constituted by the beliefs and assumptions of his/her culture" (McCracken, 1986:72). Culture is constituted by categories and principles. Various categories make up our phenomenal world (e.g., time, space, environment), but the categories created by our society--social class, status, gender, age, and occupation--are the ones that influence our consumption behavior in the highest degree. This perspective is very useful for my analysis of fast food restaurants since I intend to explore the meanings these restaurants embody for their customers.

Other anthropological work on food and its consumption is relevant as well. Mary Douglas contrasts economists' approaches to consumption with a perspective that treat commodities as a system of cultural categories (Douglas and Isherwood, 1979). In *Culture and Food*, Douglas concentrates on the strong relationship between food preferences or taboos, and symbolic structures in other areas of social life (Douglas, 1982). Mintz is another pioneer in this area with a historical study of sugar production and consumption (Mintz, 1985).

Anthropologists have also explored the interplay between the requirements of capitalists and consumers in Trinidad's sweet drink industry (Miller, 1997), and the

reaction to industrialized consumption patterns among adherents of Italy's "slow food" movement (Leitch, 2000).

In the 1990's, globalization became a major process of change for the urban areas of nations that are experiencing rapid economic growth. McMichael defines globalization as the "worldwide integration of economic process and of space, including a shift of power from communities and nation-states to international institutions such as transnational corporations and multilateral agencies" (1994:78). Globalization, according to Fieldhouse (1995), translates into the increase of socio-economic homogeneity where a dominant market culture is the main player of the game.

Sociologist George Ritzer (1993) sees the thousands of McDonald's restaurants that dot the U.S. landscape -- and increasingly, the world -- as having greater significance than the convenience of fast hamburgers and milk shakes. He coined the term the "McDonaldization" of society, to refer to the increasing rationalization of the routine tasks of everyday life. This viewpoint maintains that great cultural damage can be inflicted by transnational corporations -- more specifically, American transnational corporations -- with McDonald's, KFC and Coca-Cola, being the leading forces of cultural imperialism. In this extreme interpretation, the argument is that the influence of transnational corporations is difficult to resist and has the potential of causing a number of detrimental effects, including materialism, selfishness, and alienation.

By contrast, some other authors believe that the homogenizing of food types and style across the world through fast food revolution is not a generalizable concept. Marshall Sahlins has written that people often use and change foreign goods and ideas to

become more like themselves (Sahlins, 2000). We see in the current anthropological literature a number of case studies which demonstrate this process of local appropriation of foreign elements. For example, anthropologist James Watson rejects the idea that Western food chains are undermining local cuisine and culture (Watson, 1997a). While McDonald's introduced a new way of eating into some East Asian countries, these cultures in turn changed certain things about the fast food experience and adapted them to their way of life. Chase studies the localization of fast food in Istanbul and finds that “the penetration of Western fast food chains has led to an increased, rather than decreased, local culinary complexity through the revival of traditional Turkish snack foods which offer similar contemporary, ‘grazing’ experience at half the price” (1994: 78).

Yunxiang Yan (1997) has also studied fast food in China from an anthropological perspective. He finds that a localization process is underway in Beijing as well. Big Macs sold in Boston and Beijing are nearly identical, but the experiences of eating them and even the meaning of going to McDonald's in these two locales are very different. Big Mac in China is classified as a snack, not a meal, and university students think of McDonald's as a good place to go for a romantic night out, something that not typical in the U.S.

I intend to incorporate these globalization and localization perspectives as represented in these literatures into the analysis of my data.

Methodology

This study is based on information collected during my ethnographic research in Huai'an, China from May to August, 2002 and on documentary data from government publications, newspapers, magazines, and academic journals. Huai'an is a medium-sized city in east-central China, with an urban population of approximately 730,000 and an urban area of over 1,000 km² (Huai'an Statistical Bureau, 2001).

There are two reasons why Huai'an is an appropriate site for this study. First, most previous studies about fast food in China have focused on major metropolitan centers such as Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Nanjing. Studying Huai'an will expand our understanding of changing consumer behavior in one of China's medium-sized urban areas. Huai'an's economic and political situation is quite complex. Due to the lack of natural resources and unstable economic condition, Huai'an is still economically rather backward and socially conservative. Therefore, choosing Huai'an as a case can help us understand the pace and process of China's reform in a region that has been less subject to rapid economic transformation than has been the case in China's capital city and large coastal cities. Second, I was born and raised in Huai'an, and my personal connections there have provided me with reliable contacts to conduct a study of the city's commerce.

My research efforts include participant observation, semi-standardized interviews, questionnaire surveys, and conversations. In order to create an "ethnographic record" (Spradley, 1979), this multiple research-design strategy increased the depth of

my understanding of the local situation. My study includes one American fast food chain and one large Chinese fast food restaurant chain. These enterprises are located in the central business district (CBD) of Huai'an (Appendix A), where they compete with one another. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Texas A&M University has reviewed and approved my research involving human subjects. To avoid the cultural sensitivity that written consent would have entailed, oral consent instead was obtained from all the participants in conversations, interviews, and surveys for my research.

Participant Observation. An observation-based research method is defined as the systematic process of recording the behavior patterns of people, object, and occurrences without questioning and communicating (Berg, 2001). The subjects of the study were observed in the course of their ordinary activities in public places. The lack of privacy in this method of study eliminates the problem of informants playing to the audience--the researcher.

This study utilized direct, unobtrusive observation to obtain general information about the movements of consumers into and out of the fast food restaurants, their consumption patterns of eating fast food, and their general behaviors inside these restaurants. In addition, I was able to obtain direct knowledge about the restaurants and their food when I myself participated as a customer at Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant and McDonald's in Huai'an. I engaged small casual talks with as many customers as possible.

The observations were recorded in the form of field notes. Field notes are helpful in preserving the descriptive account of the activity of subjects, the situation of the interview taking place, and the setting of informal conversations. In this study, field notes of my observations supplemented the information gathered from interviews and questionnaires, and from conversations.

Interviews of Owners/Managers and Employees. In addition to participant observations, other research methods employed include interviews and survey questionnaires. Interviewing is "defined simply as a conversation with a purpose" (Berg, 2001:35). Interviewing is an especially effective tool in order to understand the perceptions of participants, or to learn how these participants have come to attach certain meanings to phenomena or events.

To identify new food consumption trends and learn more about the food consumption environment, intensive formal interviews with 10 individuals who work in the fast food retail industry of Huai'an, either as employees or entrepreneurs, were conducted. For each restaurant I interviewed one or two managers/owners, and several employees. Each interview lasted from 40 minutes to two hours. Questions covered sources of startup capital, background of the managers/owners (including family background and previous business ownership experience), business practices, the individual's ways of evaluating fast food restaurant opportunities, price strategies, and level of satisfactions between the managers and the employees of the restaurants. All of the interviews were conducted by me in Chinese and later translated into English.

Interviews of Customers. Interviews of 10 minutes to 1 hour in length were conducted with 10 customers in each establishment for background information and their interpretation of the fast food experience. To begin with, with the IRB approval oral sent was obtained from customers in my research. This introduction stated that the purpose of the research was to examine consumer experience and opinion toward fast food restaurants. Customers were told that all of their answers would be confidential and were being collected only for university research purpose. The interview began with a preliminary section that provided an overview of the conversation to follow and informed the participants of the general instruction. Customers were asked to consider the eating situation in which they last went to a fast food restaurant. Then some general concept questions were addressed, such as the definition of fast food in their mind and examples of fast food restaurants. After that, the reasons for their eating at fast food restaurants and their selection process were asked. Then the customers were asked to express their frequency of eating at and their own evaluation of various fast food restaurants. Furthermore, the families' or friends' opinions toward the participants' eating behavior and how they would behave based on those opinions were addressed. Finally the researcher wrote down the age, gender, occupation of participants and if they had children or not.

Customer Survey. I also administered a written survey to approximately 100 customers who came to eat in the sample fast food restaurants in Huai'an. The customers for this

survey were selected randomly. A questionnaire (Appendix B) was distributed to every customer who visited the two restaurants until all questionnaires were distributed. Based on previous studies (Brinberg and Durand, 1983; Miller and Ginter, 1979), the attributes of criterion with which consumers differentiate between fast food restaurants are found to include: taste, price, nutrition, cleanliness, environment, speed of service, convenient location, fashion & novelty, friendliness, and variety of menu. Consumers were asked to evaluate the importance of these attributes to them.

The questionnaire was also designed to have respondents compare Western versus Chinese fast food restaurants in terms of service, hygiene, environment, taste, and so on. Furthermore, demographic questions were constructed to determine if there were any differences among age groups, gender, income and/or education with respect to their perceptions on the fast food restaurants.

The questionnaire took the respondents no more than 15 minutes to complete. Both English and Chinese versions of the questionnaire were submitted to restaurant managers though only Chinese version was filled by the participants.

Student Survey. Student surveys were conducted through the help of my father in a number of public schools in Huai'an. The students involved in the survey were from four schools: People's Primary School, Xinming Rd. Primary School, Qingpu High School, and Huaiyin Institute of Technology. A total of 189 students responded to this survey, including 106 male and 83 female students. Their age ranged from 11 to 28.

The survey was constructed for the students to compare American and Chinese-style fast food restaurants in terms of taste, nutrition, price, service, cleanliness, and general appearance. Considering the comprehension skills of students, I included only 15 multiple choice questions, making the questionnaire much shorter than the one I administered to consumers. The questionnaire was designed in English and translated into Chinese by myself.

Hypotheses

My study in Huai'an was designed to reveal consumer behavior and perceptions toward Western style fast food restaurants and Chinese style ones, and to examine the impact of the fast food development in the city. Based on previous publications, I considered four hypotheses with respect to the changes of the fast food market in Huai'an since 2000, the year when the first Western fast food restaurant opened in the city.

1. Based on previous literature on Western fast food elsewhere in China, I predict that the Western fast food restaurants in Huai'an have developed the tendency to absorb local cultural influences and transform themselves into local institutions.

Evidence from other parts of China suggests that both the McDonald's management and staff, on the one hand, and the Chinese customers, on the other, have been an active participant in the localization process. The fast food company has been

adapting to the local taste while local consumers eat Big Macs in their own cultural ways. According to Yan in *Golden Arches East*, "Beijing McDonald's consciously presents itself as a Chinese company, on the grounds that the Chinese partner owns 50 percent of the business" (1997: 55). Among all the 1,400 employees at McDonald's Beijing outlets, there were only three who held foreign passports, and all of them were ethnic Chinese. The company also emphasizes that 95 percent of the food used by Beijing McDonald's, including potatoes and beef, is locally produced.

Another feature of the localization process is that McDonald's represents a Chinese version of Americana. In the United States it is commonplace to equate McDonald's food with low cost and fast service. In Beijing, by contrast, the Big Mac has been transformed into a form of *haute cuisine*, and McDonald's has become a place where people could gain status simply by eating there. "McDonald's highly efficient service and management, its spotless dining environment, and its fresh ingredients have been featured repeatedly by the Chinese media as exemplars of modernity" (Yan, 1997:40). Chinese people eat at McDonald's not necessarily for the food it provides, but for an experience of American culture and modern way of life which they believe are best expressed in the No. 1 fast food giant in the U.S.

Yan indicates that McDonald's, with its climate-controlled environment and soft music, has become a social place for Chinese people (1997). Yet, a gender difference exists. Female customers tend to be more attracted to McDonald's than males because the restaurant provides an atmosphere of gender equality and democracy. This is in great contrast to the traditional Chinese culinary culture where male dominate instead.

2. Chinese style fast food restaurants in Huai'an emphasize their local flavor, nutrition, and low price in order to compete with the Western fast food restaurants. By producing traditional Chinese food they reinforce a local identity.

Nationally Chinese-style fast food restaurants, compared to Western ones, tend to attract more mature customers who are fond of traditional taste of Chinese food instead of trendy and new foods. Zhao and Li state that, "While Western-style quick-service restaurants are still considered somewhat of a novelty by Chinese children, Chinese adults find the food less tasty or varied than Chinese foods" (Zhao and Li, 2001: 160). The Chinese food system puts most emphasis on the taste and nutritional value of the food served. In fact, Western fast food has been challenged by Chinese nutritionists for its lack of a healthy nutritional balance. Critics have warned people "not to forget China's long history of gourmet culture, and its great diversity of food nutrition" (Agriculture and Agri-Food Section, 2002).

Furthermore, the prices offered at Chinese fast food restaurants in Huai'an are likely to be more competitive than those Western restaurants. In developing countries, for the latter, "it is difficult to compete with the pricing strategy of local competitors, partly because local players rarely import ingredients or equipment and their labor costs are often lower than their foreign rivals" (Olsen and Zhao, 2001:20). The price of McDonald in China is low compared to other countries and areas. However, considering the per capita income of Chinese people, the Big Mac is still expensive to most Chinese.

In my analysis below, I will try to determine if successful Chinese fast food restaurants in Huai'an actually emphasize local flavor, nutrition, and low price.

3. The spread of Western fast food has motivated the local competitors in Huai'an to improve their service, eating environment, and hygiene. With this change, the local style fast food restaurants in Huai'an are likely to have been able to increase their market share.

Evidence exists that the success of Western-style quick service restaurants in China has served as a catalyst for developing and improving the modern Chinese fast food. The fast food sector in China grew over 25 percent in 2000 to 115.9 billion *yuan* (one US dollar equals approximately 8.2 *yuan*), 33.1 percent of China's total catering industry. In 2002 strong growth was exhibited again at 32.5 percent accounting for 40 percent of the market (Access Asia Limited, 2003). This reflects the growth in Chinese fast food in recent years as local chains emerge and grow.

Foreign fast food companies have brought new tastes, service, quality, ambience, sanitation, and safety standards that have enhanced many Chinese food operations. They have also influenced Chinese cooking and eating habits. By demonstrating the power of brand names and modern technology, Western companies have stimulated the Chinese entrepreneurs to improve their own operations and management, and to implement new technology in processing and production. According to Yang in *Domestic Fast Food Catches Up*, several Chinese fast food restaurants, after improving their décor, hygiene,

and service, have become as crowded as KFC and McDonald's in Fuzimiao, the busiest district in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province (Yang, 1996).

In this thesis, I will determine whether in Huai'an local fast food restaurants have been able to improve their market share through operational innovations described above.

4. Western fast food restaurants have raised the expectations of Huai'an customers towards all types of restaurants.

Previous research suggests that the quality of Western fast food outlets has raised the expectation of Chinese people towards services provided by domestic restaurants. As Yan (1997:42) points out, "the increasing demand for good hygiene derives from Beijing residents' awareness of the relationship between food preparation and health, an awareness that parallels improved living standards and the rise of consumerism over the past fifteen years." In China, revolutionary changes are taking place in consumption patterns encouraged by the Western examples. After over twenty years of economic reform and improvements in living standards, a large number of people have begun to buy things simply out of the desire to possess goods and the joy of shopping, instead of restricting their purchases to basic needs. People are now interested in different cuisines, and dining out has become a popular form of entertainment among those who have some extra spending money. For these people, cleanliness and novelty have superseded low prices as the main criteria for selecting a restaurant. Health considerations are likely to count as well. I researched in Huai'an whether, due to the presence of Western fast food restaurants, people have raised their expectations towards restaurants as a whole.

TOWN SETTING

Physical Environment

Huai'an is a municipality under the jurisdiction of the Jiangsu Provincial Government (upon the approval of the State Council, the former Huaiyin City changed its name to Huai'an City early in 2001) (Appendix A). Now it has jurisdiction over four districts and four counties, with a total of 117 *Xiangzhen* (towns), 11 urban *Jiedao* (urban subdistricts), and 241 *Juweihui* (urban neighborhood committees).

The city proper is divided into two parts-- Qinghe District in the north and Qingpu District in the south. The two outskirts are Huaiyin District and Chuzhou District. The four counties are Lianshui County, Hongze County, Xuyi County, and Jinhu County. At the end of 2000, the total area had a population of 5.08 million with 0.73 million in the urban area. The municipal jurisdiction covers an area of 10,600 km² while the urban covers 1,351 km² (Huai'an Statistical Bureau, 2001).

The name of Huai'an derives from the fact that the city stands on the southern side of the ancient Huai River. It is the birthplace of the well-known Qingliangang Culture which flourished over 6,000 years ago. In the Ming (1368 A.D. -1644 A.D.) and Qing (1644 A.D. -1911 A.D.) Dynasties it shared with cities of Yangzhou, Shuzhou, and Hangzhou the reputation of the "Four Major Cities" along the Grand Canal. Since the early Qin (221 B.C. -207 B.C.) and Han (206 B.C. - 220 A.D.) Dynasties, Huai'an had

been a key area of water and land transportation in the link between the Yellow River and the Yangtze.

The decline of the city in modern times was due to the change of course of the Yellow River and destructive wars. It became so isolated and underdeveloped that as recently as a decade ago the city was still inaccessible by railway. Since then, however, this situation has changed dramatically. The Beijing-Shanghai, Tongjiang-Sanya and Huai'an-Nanjing (under construction) expressways link Huai'an with more developed areas, such as Beijing, Shanghai and southern Jiangsu Province, and strengthen the cooperation between southern and northern China. The expressways in Huai'an have a total length of 330 km, and the city is also traversed by the railway line linking the coastal areas in eastern China. Huai'an has become a node in water and land transportation once again.

Huai'an is about 200 km from Nanjing, the capital city of Jiangsu Province and 300 kilometers from Shanghai. The Huai River, the main channel of irrigation in north Jiangsu Province, and the ancient Yellow River intersect in the city. The Jinghang Canal and Huaishu New River run from south to north and the lakes of Hongze, Baima, Baoying, and Gaoyou are scattered through the whole area. Hongze Lake, the third largest freshwater lake in China, is one of Huai'an's attractions. Occupying an area of 2,069 km², Hongze Lake has been dubbed "lake of treasure" for its abundant aquatic resources, of which crab is the most famous. Visitors converge in Huai'an in September and October every year for the Hongze Golden Autumn Crab Gourmet Festival.

There are 2271 primary schools, including 229 middle schools and 43 high schools, and 26 vocational schools, enrolling 750,000 in Municipal Huai'an. Advanced education is represented by two colleges and the private Yanhuang University. Together they serve 12,000 students.

Town Economy

Since the establishment of People's Republic of China, Huai'an has made great economic and social progress. Huai'an is an emerging industrial city, which includes metallurgy, machinery, textiles, the manufacture of chemicals and tobacco; bio-engineering, pharmaceuticals, energy-savings industries and the new materials sectors are also thriving. Some major enterprises, such as the Huai'an Steel Group, Huai'an Cigarette Factory and Qingjiang Petrochemical Group, are among the largest in China. In 1999, the city realized GDP of 25.3 billion *yuan* (3.1 billion US dollars).

Most urban employees in Huai'an work in publicly owned (including both state and collective) enterprises -- the number of workers in state enterprises is more than twice the number in collective enterprises. Between 1978 and 1995, the number of state workers has increased, while that of collective enterprises has decreased. Since the end of the 1980s, the number of workers employed in enterprises with other forms of ownership (including private, joint venture, etc.) has been growing, although the absolute number is still very small.

In 2000, there were about 0.6 million urban laborers employed in the whole municipal area of Huai'an (including urban areas in the surrounding counties). Of the total employed urban workers, 71 percent were in the industrial sector, 10 percent in the agricultural, and 19 percent in the service sector. Large and medium sized industrial enterprises employed 45% of the total industrial workers (Huai'an Statistical Bureau, 2001).

Covered by a network of water courses, Great Huai'an is rich in aquatic resources, including prawns, crabs, Chinese perch, turtles, and eels; and in agricultural produce, such as rice, wheat, cotton, oil-bearing crops, and timber. In recent years Huai'an has adjusted its agricultural structure according to market demand, consolidating its predominance in the sectors of vegetables, poultry, and aquatic products.

The cuisine of Huai'an is of the Huaiyang kind, one of the four major food types found in China. Huaiyang – a region covering the lower reaches of Yangtze River, especially around Huai'an and Yangzhou, another city of Jiangsu Province, is a fertile area for fish and rice. The distinguishing feature of Huaiyang food is the wide variety of quality freshwater and saltwater fish and shellfish; crabs from this region are especially famous. Huaiyang cooks often steam or gently simmer their food, rather than using the deep-frying style. This cuisine places emphasis on soups, which come with every meal. Red-cooking (stewing meat in stock with soy sauce, and other flavoring) and the heavy use of peanut oil and lard are characteristic.

People of this region generally prefer meals of bite-size food portions. Rolls and dumplings are small, smaller than those eaten elsewhere in China. Wines are especially

popular and are mostly made from grain, particularly rice, rather than grapes. *Mao-tai* is a particularly popular wine. Duck cured in brine, and salty duck or chicken dishes are also common. A casserole of fish stuffed with lamb, meat-filled mushrooms, pork meatballs, crispy rice, and fish such as mullet, shad, and perch are favorite dishes.

The Mandarin word for fish (*yu*) sounds identical to the word meaning abundance and affluence. Thus, the fish symbolizes wealth and is a popular dish at Lunar New Year. Shrimp (often eaten alive), crabs, rolls stuffed with crab eggs, vegetables fried in chicken fat, and smoked duck tongue are specialties. Generally, food of this area is lighter and milder than of the regions to its west. In fact, salty dishes from inland China generally get sweeter as one moves east along the Yangtze River towards the coast.

Food Retailing in Huai'an: a Historical Perspective

During the Mao era (1946-76), all Chinese citizens were assigned to a *danwei*, or work unit, for life. Full employment for all citizens, male and female, until retirement was assured (and mandated). The *danwei* not only provided its workers with income, but also housing, medical care, and day care and schooling for their children. Most work units in Huai'an had (and still have) their own canteens in order to provide employees with relatively inexpensive food and, more important, to control the time allotted for meals. Because canteens were subsidized by the work units and were considered part of employees' benefits, they were run in a manner similar to a family kitchen, only on an

enlarged scale. Furthermore, because of lack of competition, food provided in canteens tended to be tasteless and service tended to be bad in an uncomfortable environment. Such conditions prevailed for more than three decades and still exist in many work units today.

During the post-1970's period of growth and up to the 1990's, the food and hospitality industry in Huai'an enjoyed tremendous growth, particularly in the urban center. A large number of restaurants began to exist, from tiny to huge and from inexpensive to ostentatious. Generally speaking, the restaurant hierarchy by 1990 consisted of three layers. At the top were luxury restaurants in star-rated hotels, such as the Huai'an Hotel, which served only international guests and privileged domestic ones. At the next level were well-established formal restaurants, many of which specialized in a particular style of cuisine, such as Sichuan Cuisine, and had been in business for many years. Unlike the exclusive hotel restaurants, restaurants in this layer were open to the public and serve two basic functions: (1) serve as social places for newly emerged local elite to socialize and hold meetings; (2) serve as places for ordinary Huai'anese to have traditional family celebrations such as weddings or holiday banquets. At the third layer were small eating places that provided cheap home-style foods. Yet their share of the market is small because of poor sanitary conditions and poor service, and because they were not able to develop large-scale operations.

During the 1990's, restaurants were opening (and closing) all over Huai'an. In the face of increasing competition, restaurants during this decade specialized to a much greater extent than before and had been offering innovative services. For example, a new

service offered by some restaurants was the delivery to business of *hefan* (boxed lunches), which included traditional Chinese fare--rice, a small piece of meat, and several vegetables. Some restaurants began to offer cooks-to-hire, who went directly to consumers' home on a one-time-basis to cook meals for special occasions. In summary, the rapid growth of restaurants was creating a greatly expanded range of food purchase alternatives to meet the lifestyle changes being experienced by Huai'an consumers.

A new type of restaurant that began to appear in Huai'an only in 2000 is the Western style fast food restaurant. KFC entered the city in June, 2000 and is the oldest Western fast food restaurant in Huai'an. The Colonel, with his white goatee and spectacles, can be found today looking out upon the city, and a chicken sandwich, a drink and fries will set you back 19.50 *yuan*. If you are hungry for the more traditional KFC fare -- fried chicken with mashed potatoes, cole slaw, a drink, and one of those astonishingly tasteless white bread rolls, this will cost from 20 to 28 *yuan* depending on how many pieces of chicken you get. McDonald's Huai'an outlet was opened in September 2000. Nowadays one can see Huai'an families eating exotic hamburgers and taking photographs of each other in front of that red-headed clown, Ronald. Both McDonald's and KFC in Huai'an pride themselves on un-Chinese cleanliness, and it is generally impossible to walk up a flight of stairs in these outlets without tripping over an employee with a mop.

Outdoor food stalls, offering snacks to passing pedestrians, are also increasing in number and sales volume as a greater number of entrepreneurs try their hand in the city's emerging market economy. Entrepreneurs with the good fortune to live in ground floor

apartments sell snack foods out of their home, including *jiaozi* (dumpling), fried noodles, and fried rice. These products are frequently purchased as “carry out” to supplement family meals. Finally, there are some coffee lounges (which also serve soft drinks, wine and tea) and discos. Casablanca in downtown charges 10 *yuan* entry. In general, Huai’an night life can be described as staid.

AMERICAN FAST FOOD

Fast food in General

According to *Fast Food Nation*, a recent popular book by Eric Schlosser, 96 percent of American schoolchildren can identify Ronald McDonald. The only fictional character with a higher degree of recognition is Santa Claus. Schlosser says it is nearly impossible to overstate the impact of the fast food industry on the nation's culture, economy and diet. "McDonald's Golden Arches," he writes, "are now more widely recognized than the Christian cross."

Despite its relatively recent popularity, fast food is not new. As Lundberg points out, "Dispensing food on request, fast and hot is nothing new. The ancient Romans did it at Pompeii and Herculaneum, the roadside diner did it, the automats in New York and Philadelphia did it, but it took the franchise, the automobile, and plenty of parking space to move the fast food business to become in the 1960s the phenomenon of the restaurant business" (1984:227).

Emerson studied the historical development of fast food. In his opinion, fast food as an industry did not begin until 1954 (when McDonald's started its first store in Chicago) (Emerson, 1979). Emerson's research found that the period of 1966 to 1970 involved the explosion of chains across the United States with many chains growing in excess of 400 percent (ibid:68). Clark studied the development of American fast food and concluded that after a healthy growth rate of sales reached 21 percent annually in the

early 1970's, the fast food industry had tapered off to about 6 percent annual growth in 1989 and 1990 (Clark, 1991). In spring of 1991, the world's largest restaurant chain, McDonald's, reported a first-quarter drop of 2 percent in operating revenues. It was its worst performance in years. The fast food industry had suffered from high employee turnover which amounted to 140 percent in 1990. The situation caused some analysts (Bremner, 1990; Perlez, 1993; Prewitt, 1992) to argue that fast food had reached a saturation level in the American market. As the result of this undesirable effect, fast food chains were forced to close some domestic outlets and concentrate on new markets, specifically on overseas expansion.

Fast Food in China

By late 1990's, dining out became increasingly popular with consumers in urban China. It had become a big business for Western restaurant chains and local entrepreneurs. For professional urban couples, eating out today provides a welcome break from daily home cooking. Children and teenagers enjoy nights out over the weekend when dining out is often mixed with window-shopping and entertainment as well as a way of finding private space. Increasingly, urban Chinese are sampling new foreign cuisines. The big names have all arrived in China – McDonald's, KFC and Pizza Hut. Fast food restaurants are a flourishing business opportunity and are rapidly becoming a normal part of urban life.

On April 23rd, 1992 the then largest McDonalds in the world opened in Beijing

with 700 seats and 29 cash registers. It served 40 thousand customers on its first day of business. Over the last 10 years the popularity of McDonald's in China has increased at an astonishing rate. As indicated already, so far, the fast food giant has over 560 outlets in China's four municipalities of Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin and Chongqing, and in more than 70 provincial cities.

James Watson states in *Golden Arches East* that in many places the “global” has become “local”. “Who is to say that Mickey Mouse is not Japanese, or that Ronald McDonald is not Chinese?” (1997a:10). In Beijing, however, consumers are more interested in the Western experience of eating at McDonald's than in the food itself. For the Chinese, the golden arch has been a symbol of the United States of America and modernization. Zhao and Li discuss some factors which have influenced the rapid development of the restaurant industry in China. “Factors such as deregulation, liberalized new laws and rules, economic development, socio-cultural changes, technological and ecological considerations have all had an impact” (2001:160).

All of the McDonald's outlets were on a joint-venture basis until August 2003, when the first McDonald's franchise opened in Tianjin. According to Tim Lai, North China Managing Director of McDonald's China Development Company, due to the success of the first McDonald's franchise restaurant in Tianjin, the franchise operation model will be expanded around the nation this year (Liu, 2004). Individuals who have US\$300,000 to invest and over three years' operational experience in the catering sector, may apply for a franchise. “China is expected to be McDonald's largest franchise market worldwide,” McDonald's executive Liu Shisheng said recently. “It takes time before

conditions, such as consumer incomes, market development and relevant laws are mature enough to allow this” (ibid).

McDonald’s as a Symbol of Americanism and Modernity in Huai’an

In *Golden Arches East*, an anthropological look at McDonald's in five different Asian markets, author Yunxiang Yan credits the American burger chain with leading a revolution in restroom cleanliness. "In the eyes of Beijing residents, McDonald's represents Americana and the promise of modernization” (Yan, 1997:42).

This is hardly surprising, as McDonald’s has been noted for being a symbol of the United States of America and indeed globalization in many countries around the world (Watson, 1997b). In China, going for a McDonald's meal may be motivated less by the desire for a convenient, efficient, and inexpensive "fast food" meal (which it may not necessarily be) than by the desire to achieve some prestige or symbolic taste of American culture. So McDonald's often gets equated with American culture.

Many authors have stated that Chinese people enjoy Big Mac not because of its taste but because of the Americana it symbolizes. Tanzer quoted a Hong Kong based McDonald's manager's saying: "For Chinese, an American hamburger is ethnic food" (1992:156). "In China, people are literally lined up out the door", reported John Wendler, KFC's vice president of worldwide marketing (English, 1994). According to Yunxiang Yan, many Chinese are not really fond of the taste of Western snacks. They go to Western chain outlets simply out of curiosity and for a bite of what they have only been

able to see in foreign films or television series before. Of course, other factors exist. Western restaurants are tidy, clean and offer smiling service. Many people consider it a pleasure to go to Western fast food eateries which have exerted their utmost to maintain their image (Yan, 1997).

Modernity was also exhibited in the interpretation of the McDonald's by Chinese. As Yunxiang Yan has stated, "McDonald's highly efficient service and management, its spotless dining environment, and its fresh ingredients have been featured repeatedly by the Chinese media as exemplars of modernity" (Yan, 1997: 45).

Mrs. Wu, an employee in Qingjiang Store in Huai'an, told me she always brought her son to eat McDonald's while she herself ate at Grand Mother Dumpling. She exhibited what Yan (1997) describes as an acceptance of her own traditionalness and at the same time a desire for her child to be modern. Her son, a high school student, who saw himself as the epitome of the modern Chinese consumers, regarded McDonald's as something "fresh" and "new". He wished to attend college in the U.S., where the most modern technology is, after he graduated.

The fact that McDonald's is sanitary, and by proxy modern, is of considerable importance. For Ms. Chen, a secretary in a joint venture, the clean and sanitary conditions are the overriding reasons she will go to McDonald's. She said "noodles and dumplings are not as hygienic" as McDonald's. The primary reason she will go to McDonald's in this situation is due to the sanitary conditions of McDonald's ("cleaner than traditional restaurants"), a theme that has been echoed by many of the older participants in my research.

The standardization that McDonald's represents is quite clear in this situation – it is very important to know what you will get when in unfamiliar surroundings. Mr. Zhao, a primary school teacher, indicates the standardization McDonald's represents becomes important when one is alone--when in an unfamiliar part of town without a way to judge whether a Chinese restaurant is sanitary or what the food will taste like, McDonald's is a "safe" option. For him, the overriding meaning when eating alone is one of standardization and trustworthiness.

McDonald's outlets can embody many different facets of Americanism and modernity. This connotation can be evaluated positively in some situations by some consumers and negatively in other situations, sometimes by the same consumers. Davis (2000) chronicles the ambivalence urban Chinese consumers are feeling about modernity: they want the prosperity, increased standard of living, and respect on a global scale that it can bring; but yet most people are fiercely proud of the old way, and in many circumstances do not want to embrace the changes modernization brings. Some of this is captured in Deng Xiaoping's catchphrase, "Modernization without Sheer Westernization." As we have seen here, some of the paradoxical nature of this is represented in the meanings attached to the McDonald's brand name.

Interpretation of Youth

McDonald's is seen as representing youth in the eyes of Huai'an people. Moreover, different aspects of youth are exhibited in the interpretation of McDonald's in

Huai'an. The connotation with youth comes primarily from its food -- because the food is so different from traditional Chinese food, it is the young people who are the most willing to try it or eat it on a regular basis. Also, McDonald's targets children as its major customers in China by promoting itself as a place for children's birthday parties and having "Uncle Ronald" as an icon for the children.

Until the middle 80's, kids in China seldom ate away from home. When they did, they were usually expected to eat what their parents put in their plates. As Watson pointed out, "for the first time in Chinese history, children nowadays matter not simply as future providers but as full-scale consumers who command respect in today's economy" (1997a). Going to McDonald's has taught Chinese "little" customers to order their favorite foods like their adult counterparts.

McDonald's is also generally credited with introducing the very idea of celebrating children's birthdays into China. "Prior to the arrival of Mickey D's," indicated James Watson, "festivities marking youngsters' specific birth dates were unknown in most of East Asia." Since going into business, McDonald's has held daily birthday parties for children and a group party each Saturday afternoon. Young female staff called "Aunt McDonald's" play games with the children who receive birthday gifts.

McDonald's Huai'an outlet opened in September 2000 at a time when public has a "fever" for all things American -- sports, clothing, films, and food. The time also coincided with changes in family values, which were matched by a sustained economic boom since then. Big Mac has become so popular that parents use visits to their neighborhood outlet as a reward for good behavior or academic achievement. A young

father told me that withholding McDonald's visits was the only threat that registered with his wayward son. "It is my nuclear deterrent," he said.

In Huai'an, requests by kids are a big reason for parents to go to a fast food restaurant. Almost all parents and grandparents among the respondents have brought their kids to fast food restaurants at least once. Quite a few of the participants said they went to McDonald's only when they brought their children along. Some of them even purchase food only for their kids, because the price is high at McDonald's or because they do not like the food taste there. Some parents will buy foods in McDonald's for their kids and dine themselves in the nearby Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant.

Small kids are attracted by the toys and playground in McDonald's: "he [the grandson of the participant] just wanted to collect the series of the toys". School kids go there for a taste style that is different from a home meal or have birthday parties with their friends and classmates. The new food products ads of KFC and McDonald's can often be seen on TV and in the newspaper, while this type of advertising is not employed by Chinese fast food restaurants.

"I love McDonald's. I dream of eating hamburgers and French fries every day," said Xu Ting, 10, standing outside the only outlet of McDonald's in Huai'an. "I don't care if my parents say junk food is not good for my health. It's wonderful." Her father, Xu Zhiyuan commented, "She always asks us to bring her to eat at KFC or McDonald's, especially during the Chinese festivals. If we refuse, she becomes very annoyed."

McDonald's also represents youth by being a romantic place for young people to hang out with friends or date. McDonald's was mentioned as being fashionable places

by some of the participants -- "you can always see many young people at McDonald's. It is a fashionable and busy place" -- while no interviewee ever related Chinese fast food restaurants with being fashionable.

For young lovers (a word the Chinese apply to boyfriend/girlfriend) the meaning of McDonald's also represents youth. Mr. Wu, a sophomore in college, demonstrated the youthful aspects of the fast food outlet as he observed that young people found McDonald's romantic and exciting for a date due to the fact that it is Western and represents American culture. "It is Western, American culture. You know how the Chinese people like everything from abroad. Young people like dating at these Western places. I take my girlfriend to McDonald's almost every time we are on a date." While talking to me, Mr. Wu and his girlfriend shared a small hot tea, which remained capped and unopened, an order of spicy McWings, a fish sandwich, and small fries. He ate little, as the two of them sat knees touching, eyes on each other, oblivious to those who sat just a burger's distance away.

Mr. Li, a young high-school teacher, went to McDonald's on a date because "you can have your own choice" and "choose freely" from the menu. The meaning of free choice is linked in his mind with going on a date, which is understandable as choosing a mate is also an example of this. Notions of romanticism and choosing a mate are ideas only recently introduced into Chinese society, and thus are interpreted as modern and youthful.

The Negative Nature of Social Space

In Of Hamburger and Social Space: Consuming McDonald's in Beijing, Yan (2000) argued that fast food restaurants should be studied both as eating places and as social spaces where social interactions occur.

My research in Huai'an shows how the consumer interpreted "McDonald's as Social Space" varied depending on the context within which the fast food giant was imbedded. In different situations the same space can be interpreted as either symbolic of a break with Chinese eating traditions or as a setting that provides opportunities to meet traditional interpersonal goals, such as gaining or giving prestige.

As we have seen in the above section, McDonald's as a social space was interpreted positively for children's birthday party and dating occasions, as it brings consumers an experience of the American culture and in some circumstances gives the host prestige by eating there. By contrast, in the context of adult birthday parties and other family celebrations, McDonalds is interpreted quite negatively due to its foreignness, the lack of alcohol, the seating, and "not being able to give face". The following illustrates this alternative view.

Most of the consumers considered the restaurant "too foreign" or "non-Chinese", and hence not appropriate for adult birthday parties, weddings, and other Chinese family gatherings. Mr. Liu, a high-school teacher, said, "Maybe it (McDonald's) is okay for foreigners but not for Chinese. Like divorce is okay in foreign countries, but you would not do that in China." In this situation, the exotic and Western nature of McDonald's is

precisely why he would not go there for a family celebration. Chinese generally feel their culture (especially food) is superior to that of the West, and hence it is not surprising to see McDonald's evaluated in this way.

Mr. Liu also indicated that McDonald's represents superficiality, that one cannot achieve anything deep or meaningful in terms of social interactions there. "It's all right to go to McDonald's for a change, but not for a meaningful event." For him, the primary meaning associated with McDonald's is one of it not being traditional, not being Chinese, and hence not appropriate for a Chinese family event. He equates his profession – teaching – with being traditional, and a traditional adult would not go there for a birthday. Thus, the primary meanings for him in this situation are that McDonald's is nontraditional and superficial.

McDonald's lack of alcohol is one reason why Mr. Wang, a 28 year old private business owner, will not go to McDonald's for a family party. He wants a large choice of varied dishes, snacks, and alcohol for a party, as well as elegant surroundings. McDonald's, though it has a good atmosphere, is "too simple" for this situation.

According to Yan (1997), one of the reasons women like McDonald's, and in fact find it empowering, is because there is no alcohol available-- which for the most part is socially unacceptable for them to drink at Chinese restaurants. At traditional celebrations in such restaurants, the women are expected to take care of the men who drink too much. In turn, the tradition of men drinking as much as they please at family gatherings is one that many males want to hold onto. Hence, for males alcohol is something that must be present for a proper celebration. The overall meaning in this

situation for Mr. Wang seems to be one of McDonald's not being capable of upholding traditional gender and hierarchical roles, and is therefore perceived negatively.

Aspects of the physical space inside a McDonald's restaurant are also important to the informants when evaluating this food outlet. Those aspects include the way the food is ordered and delivered, the décor, the noise level, and especially the way in which the tables are arranged. Some informants considered McDonald's a setting too public – all the seating arrangements were the same and the diners are in full view of each other. Traditionally, in Chinese restaurants a section is reserved for the families engaged in celebrations with as many round tables as they need that seat eight to ten persons each. Special food and drinks are ordered to set the group apart from other diners. This is in congruence with the hierarchical nature of Chinese society, in which people display their rank and gain face with important members of their ingroups by being more conspicuous than those around them. In McDonald's, where all the food and the seating are the same for everyone, these hierarchical elements are lost, and make the environment not proper for family celebrations.

For Mr. Zhang, a government official in his early thirties, McDonald's is "too noisy" for family celebrations. Yet, in China parties for adults are typically raucous events. During them the male members of the family drink liquor and the entire affair is an extremely noisy event. When Mrs. Zhang said McDonald's was too noisy, he referred to the fact that this was the wrong kind of noise; that is, it was the noise coming from others rather than from the ingroup members. Chinese society is typically characterized as one in which members of an ingroup (family, work colleagues, or neighbors) are so

close to a person as to be regarded as part of the self (Markus and Kitayama, 1994). Outgroup members (strangers) are largely ignored, and in some cases are considered to be a negative influence on the goals of the ingroup. Thus, noise coming from the outgroup is what makes it undesirable, or inappropriate, in the McDonald's setting and not in the typical Chinese restaurant, as the noise in that setting comes only from the ingroup due to the segregated seating arrangement.

Some informants said that they would not go to McDonald's for a family celebration because it is not fancy or expensive enough for such a significant event. In understanding Chinese interpersonal behavior, the most significant factor is "face". Although this is a human universal tendency, the Chinese have developed a special sensitivity to it and use it as a reference point in behavior in a much more sophisticated and developed way than most other cultural groups (Redding and Ng, 1982). This is a key component in the dynamics of *guanxi* (refers generally to networks of personal relations or connections in Chinese society), as one must have a certain amount of prestige to cultivate and develop a viable network of *guanxi* connections (Luo, 1997).

Chinese restaurant customers, especially those who want to treat special guests, generally have the notion that their face or prestige depends upon how much money they spend on dishes. To Ms. Wei of Huai'an, a businesswoman in her forties, McDonald's is a place where she cannot give face to important members of this ingroup. The concept of Chinese giving and receiving face is one that still has a large impact on many consumption practices of today's China, eating out being no exception. If others in the invited group perceive the restaurant or the food is not prestigious enough, then it will be

evaluated negatively. This is context dependent, however. In the hanging out and dating occasions, as discussed earlier many respondents felt McDonald's was a good place to gain face.

CHINESE-STYLE FAST FOOD

Noodle and *jiaozi* (dumpling) stalls and restaurants are a traditional part of Chinese culture. Traditional fast foods in China have been, and still are, sold by hawkers working from open-air stands and kiosk stalls, sometimes from sidewalk kitchen “window” run by one, two, but rarely more than three individuals. All such operations are located in the vicinity of major public transportation nodes and/or wherever there is a high degree of pedestrian traffic, such as in the large open-air produce market of the capital. In *Hawkers in Hong Kong*, McGee (1973) shows the complexities of street vending in the city, and also discusses the political attempts to repress them. These food stands are small-scale, often making use of semi-permanent facilities cobbled together from a bewildering array of materials. They tend to be sparsely furnished and chaotically decorated. If there is a permanent premise, it is often grubby and lacking in seated tables. More often than not, the patrons make use of one or two closely situated countertops from which they may consume their loosely packaged food. The packaging itself is generally no more than a single paper serviette or a sheet of thicker paper.

Modern Chinese-style fast food restaurants only emerged after Western fast food companies such as KFC and McDonald’s entered China in 1987. Since then, the Chinese fast food sector has copied Western advanced management techniques and developed rapidly. The Chinese government designated the catering industry as a new economic growth point in 1998, urging local chains to start up, expand, and improve their management and operations the better to compete with foreign chains.

Chinese Food and Culture

The central role of food is shown in the Mandarin Chinese, where the word for population, *renkou*, literally translates as "people's mouths," and where a traditional greeting that connotes "how are you?" is "*chi le, mei you?*" or "have you eaten yet?" Anderson and Anderson write, "Surely no culture on earth, not even the French, is so concerned with gastronomy as the Chinese" (Anderson and Anderson, 1977:363). Simoons states, "Food plays such an important role in Chinese life as to lead many to characterize the Chinese as having a food-centered culture" (1991:4). And Lo writes, "in no other country in the world is food such an integral part of the complete way of life" (Lo, 1981:347). Many other China scholars note the reverence of the Chinese to the practices surrounding food consumption, which can be traced back at least 3,000 years (Smith 1991; Terrill 1992; Thubron 1987). Farb and Armelagos write about China's historical veneration of food:

The ancient Chinese would appear to have been more deeply involved with all aspects of eating than any other people in history. It was not only that the Chinese cooked an enormous number of dishes, utilized a great variety, of foodstuffs, devoted much time to their preparation and consumption, and spent enormous amounts of money in the process. In addition, numerous customs, beliefs, and rituals were tied up with eating (1980:192).

In China, eating is not just stuffing one's stomach or preventing starvation but a leisure, an art, and an enjoyment. Long standing traditions have strongly influenced food

preferences among the Chinese people. A group of nutritionists and health professionals, Chau, Lee, Tseng, and Downes, pointed out the important concept of *yin* and *yang* in Chinese food culture (1990). Underlying all Chinese cooking is the ancient food-science theory of *yin* and *yang*, which is closely related to Chinese beliefs about health: balance is the great regulator of life. All foods are divided into three groups: *yin* for cooling foods; *yang* for heating foods; and *yin-yang* for neutral foods. Most Chinese are taught the *yin-yang* principle from an early age, and use it to construct a diet to achieve the right balance or harmony. When treating illnesses, a Chinese physician will frequently advise dietary changes in order to restore a healthy balance between the *yin* and *yang* in the body.

Magical qualities may also be associated with foods. Notably, walnuts are thought to be good brain food because they resemble the shape of the brain, and eating animal hearts, kidney, legs and feet, etc. are believed to strengthen their human counterparts. Some foods are thought to be especially strengthening - the more strengthening, the more aphrodisiac in effect. The most prominent of these foods include bird's nest, shark's fin, sea slug, ginseng, and deer antler.

In addition to medicinal value, foods constitute other aspects of life. For example, "cherry lips" or "cherry mouth" are attributes of female beauty, and the expression "eating cherries" means "having sexual intercourse". Similarly, an apricot symbolizes the wish to have a hundred sons, and an apple is a symbol of peace.

The phonetic similarity of the sound of different words is also important. For example, the word *li* (chestnut) sounds like *li* (propriety), and the word *zao* (dates) is

phonetically close to *zao* (early or soon). Thus, at weddings, chestnuts are served together with dates and the message is "may they soon (*zao*) have a son (*li*)", which would be most proper. A picture including dates and chestnuts might also communicate the same message.

Serving fish and oyster dishes is popular at lunar New Year banquets because their names sound like desirable situations - the words for "fish" and "surplus" sound alike, as do the words for "oysters" and "happy events". The wish is that the New Year ahead will be filled with an overflow of happy occasions.

The Chinese also distinguish between *fan* and *cai*. *Fan* means rice, cereal and starchy dishes such as porridge, bread and noodles. *Cai* refers to side dishes such as vegetables, meat, or fish. A balanced (properly proportioned) meal of both of these foods is desired. Typically, *fan* is most important and more of it is eaten, with *cai* serving as a complement. However, to stress the importance of a meal in a restaurant or on a special occasion, *cai* dishes predominate with rice and noodles served last when one may already be quite full - this ensures that all are well fed on the occasion.

While the shared symbolisms of food help to unify the Chinese culture, certainly there are those individuals who believe these more than others. However, it is common that, while people may say they do not believe or hold to a particular symbolic meaning, they may still be reluctant to behave contrary to the commonly held beliefs. They are also out of fear that the meaning may actually be accurate.

“Fast Food War”

As indicated earlier, by the 1990s in urban China, dining out had become popular with consumers and had become a big business for Western restaurant chains. By then the success of international fast food chains had raised the interest of local restaurant operators. Several local chains appeared in the mid-1990s. At the beginning they served mainly Western fare, such as sandwiches, salads, and ice cream, catering to children and teens who wanted a touch of the "exotic." But in the late 1990s, the authorities started to promote "an indigenous fast food industry based on noodles, barbecued meats, soups and rice pots" (Watson, 1997a:15). They believed that companies such as McDonald's had served their purpose by setting the example and that it was now up to Chinese based firms to take over and cater for the mass market. The modern, yet local commercial variants are dissimilar from the traditional Chinese “convenience” food outlets described above, in terms of the scale, the existence of a formal employee-employer labor structure, sophisticated marketing techniques, and other aspects entrenched in the business culture of an industrial society.

Many of these newly emerged local competitors style themselves on McDonald's, dressing their workforce in similar uniforms or decorating their restaurants in yellow. They even try to imitate the name by calling themselves McDucks, Mordornal, and even Mcdonald's. In Shanghai a local chain called Nancy's Express uses a sign with one leg of the double arches missing, forming an "N." Another popular chain of noodle shops, called Honggaoliang (Red sorghum), advertises itself with a large "H" that bears an

uncanny resemblance to the "Golden Arches." Corporate mascots inspired by Ronald McDonald--clowns, ducks, cowboys, cats, hamburger figures, mythic heroes, and chickens--parade along the sidewalks of Chinese cities. Local fast food chains frequently engage in public exhibitions of cleanliness. The cleaners usually restrict their efforts to the entryway, where their performance can best be seen by passersby.

The most direct challenge to Western competitors was mounted by the Shanghai-based Ronghua Fried Chicken Company, founded in 1989. When Ronghua opened its first restaurant in Beijing in 1992, it was located directly opposite KFC's popular Dongsi restaurant. At the opening ceremony the head of Ronghua stated: "Wherever Kentucky Fried Chicken opens a branch there will be a Ronghua restaurant" (Yang, 1996). The local fried chicken brands explicitly presented themselves as Chinese versions of their American counterpart, asserting that their chicken was "more suitable" for local tastes. Thus Ronghua claimed it was selling "American style fried chicken with Chinese characteristics", in this case marinated in 21 traditional Chinese herbs of medicinal value. Also other Chinese fast food restaurants than Ronghua claimed that their "special ingredients" of their foods restored one's *yin yang* balance or even cured various ailments.

In turn, KFC and other foreign food chains partially localized their products to present themselves as "Chinese" and to downplay their foreign/global connections. "Our principle is to regard ourselves as Chinese since we are in China," KFC declared (Yang, 1996), pointing out that their employees, their local managers and at least some of their ingredients were Chinese, and indicating that they hold special sales promotions during

traditional Chinese festivals. In the intensely nationalistic environment of the late 1990s, KFC attempted to tone down its all-American image. When its flagship Beijing restaurant in Qianmen (still the largest KFC branch in China) reopened after extensive renovations in June 1999, the New China News Agency commented on the “Chinese architectural style” of the new interior: “The layout imitates a typical northern China courtyard residence. The restaurant is also decorated with traditional Chinese handicraft works such as kites and paper-cuts” (Wang and Wang, 2003). Moreover, KFC and McDonald's followed the customary pattern of partially localizing their menus to make them more acceptable to local tastes. As McDonald's states on its website, “If meeting the demands of local culture means adding to our regular menus, we'll do it” (McDonald's, 2002).

Up to the mid 90's, however, none of the Chinese fast food restaurants seriously challenged Western fast food's stronghold in the market. KFC and McDonald's were able to maintain their position, not so much because of their food but because of a combination of cultural symbolism and practical appeal. Yan's ethnographic research on McDonald's in Beijing illustrates that in China, as elsewhere in the world, “‘Americana’ also means ‘modern’, and thus to eat at McDonald's is to experience modernity” (Yan, 2000:60). This is combined with an “exotic, cheerful, and comfortable physical environment” which includes brightly lit and spotless open spaces, climate control, light furniture and neat smiling employees (ibid:65). The contrast with many local restaurants was highlighted in a 1996 Chinese article, published in the “internal” publication *Gaige Neican* and entitled *Foreign Fast Foods Gobble up Chinese-Style Fast Foods*.

According to the author, Chinese fast food restaurants were continuing to lose out to foreign ones, “because of poor sanitary conditions and poor service . . . [and] because of the absence of ‘ambience’ that exists in foreign fast food restaurants . . .” (Yu, 1996).

Improved Domestic Fast Food: Huai’an

In 2000, Shanghai-based Ronghua Chicken withdrew from Beijing, the battleground where the indigenous fast food operator declared war on the US giant Kentucky Fried Chicken nine years ago. The closure of Ronghua’s last restaurant in the capital signaled a retreat in the national campaign by Chinese businessmen to beat foreign fast food operators.

As Yan pointed out, “almost all local competitors in the fast food sector tend to regard fast food restaurants merely as eating places, and accordingly, they try to compete with the foreign fast food restaurants by offering lower prices and local flavors or by appealing to nationalist sentiments” (Yan, 1997:72). These local fast food restaurants of the 1990s overlooked the importance of hygiene, food quality, friendly service, and a pleasant physical environment.

Ling Wang, a management consultant who has lived in Huai’an for most of the past 15 years, described what he called the “McDonald's effect”: “Before McDonald's came to town, no one contemplated clean toilets, or service with a smile. . . . Now, partly because of McDonald's, people no longer tolerate filth or terrible service, and expectations in the society as a whole have been raised.”

Chinese fast food entrepreneurs of the past decade have delivered at least one historical lesson -- pitting the local against the global in simple antagonistic terms was, and remains a losing formula. An interesting recent development is the rise of Chinese fast food companies such as Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant, a local operator emulating Western competitors by devoting greater attention to service and decor. Like Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant many of the more recent local chains started to test the quality production of Chinese cuisine and introduced Chinese food items on their menus. Along with the concepts of quality, service, cleanliness, and value, they learned the mass-production and marketing strategies from their international counterparts.

As one of the largest domestic fast food companies, Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant Co. Ltd now owns 84 stores across the country, mainly in East China's Jiangsu Province and Anhui Province, as well as in Shanghai and Beijing. "The mother company has long set up the plan to get into the international market" (Geng, 2002). Since 2000, the company has been sending "troops" abroad in order to study the market future of Chinese style fast food in the world. Their original plan was to open only one outlet in Indonesia in 2002, however, with the instant success of their business, a second one was opened to meet the demand of the big local market. Afterwards, the restaurant came to have the reputation to have been "the first Chinese fast food restaurant that walked out of China." It's said that "the dawn of Chinese style fast food industry has come" (Geng, 2002)!

Grand Mother Dumpling is at present the largest dumpling franchiser in the Jiangsu-Shanghai area. It was ranked 40 in "Best 100 Foodstuff Enterprises of China"

(Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant, 2002). Every new chain restaurant is successful. Moreover, they have incorporated Western management system into their business. They have their own theory of decision-making: fixed varieties, fixed brand names, fixed price, fixed standard of location, fixed standard of environment and fixed standard of service, with the guidance of which, Grand Mother Dumpling has come to the front stage of Chinese fast food service. Guoqiang Wu, CEO of Grand Mother Dumpling, has managed to apply the strong points of Western fast food restaurants to his own restaurants, and made them very tidy, clean and efficient.

"We are also trying our best to expand our business into American and European market," said Sheng, manager of Grand Mother Dumpling Huai'an outlet, when asked to comment on the restaurant's expansion plans. He added: "We do not have an exact goal of setting up a certain number of outlets per year."

The Local Flavor

International fast food chains came to China with a core product line--hamburger, chicken, or pizza. Since their products are limited, their strategies focus on image building through aggressive marketing. To attract consumers, they try to establish a clear and unique image of their brand. For instance, McDonald's serves the American hamburger and KFC is the expert in American-style chicken.

Chinese style fast food restaurants, on the other hand, nowadays attract customers by means of advertising their local taste. Chinese consumers like the idea of

being served quickly, but they like it even more if the menus look Chinese and offer variety. Local fast food chains therefore are product-oriented: they determine which are the most popular Chinese foods and taste them for quantity production. Most of the local chains have a team of Chinese chefs and food experts for new-product development. Although they seem to lag behind their Western counterparts in market promotion, Chinese entrepreneurs are confident of business success. This is because Chinese fast foods are more to the taste of Chinese customers.

As I have mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, most of the Chinese people are proud of their own cuisine and regard it superior to cuisine from other cultures. A traditional Chinese diet consists mainly of steamed rice, vegetables cooked in different ways, dumplings, steamed stuffed buns, and noodles. Foods often feature various local flavors. Cooking methods of Chinese fast foods are more varied than the mere frying or roasting used for Western fast food, encompassing frying, steaming, and boiling. Dumplings (*jiaozi*) are the major traditional food for the New Year's Eve dinner in Northern China. The Chinese dumplings signify wealth since they have the shape of ancient Chinese gold or silver ingots. Dumplings are easy to make and store, so the dumpling stalls have existed alongside the streets in China for hundreds of years.

As noted before, the Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant is one of the largest companies to specialize in Chinese fast food in China. The bright yellow and red decorations and cartoons painted on the wall of its outlets seem to mimic Western fast food restaurants. While the decor appears Western, the food is completely Chinese, steaming dumplings, beef noodles, wontons, and soybean milk. After the Huai'an outlet

was opened to the public in 2000, it attracted a large number of regular visitors. Many of them work in high-tech firms in the business district. They used to go to the Kentucky Fried Chicken next door but now prefer the tastier Chinese fast food. Moreover, the restaurant offers a wide variety of snacks. For example, there are several dozens of snacks with Sichuan flavors. It is possible to eat there for several months without having the same dish twice. The manager of Huai'an outlet, Mr. Sheng, explained to me, "We have the advantage of meeting the taste of Chinese, since we are offering the traditional Chinese dumplings."

In my research in Huai'an, I found that most customers favored the taste of Chinese style fast food over the Western counterpart. In the customer survey of 98 respondents to the question "Compare American fast food with Chinese style fast food, which is better in terms of taste?" (Figure 1), 67 respondents (69 percent) chose Chinese style fast food, 11 respondents (11 percent) chose Western fast food, and 20 respondents (20 percent) remained neutral.

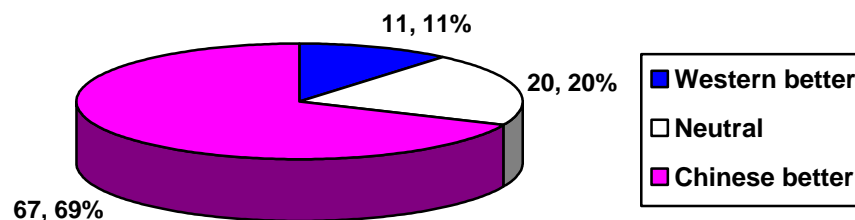


FIGURE 1: Western and Chinese Fast Food Compared in Terms of Taste (n=98)

As one can see from the following chart (Figure 2), no obvious gender difference was found for the taste preference between Western fast food and Chinese fast food. However, choice differences between age groups do exist. Generally, older consumers prefer Chinese taste more than younger consumers. Drawn from my customer survey (Figure 3), 8 percent of the customers aged 30-40 prefer the taste of Western fast food, 11 percent of the customers aged 18-30 prefer Western taste, while none of the people above age 40 prefer the taste of Western fast food.

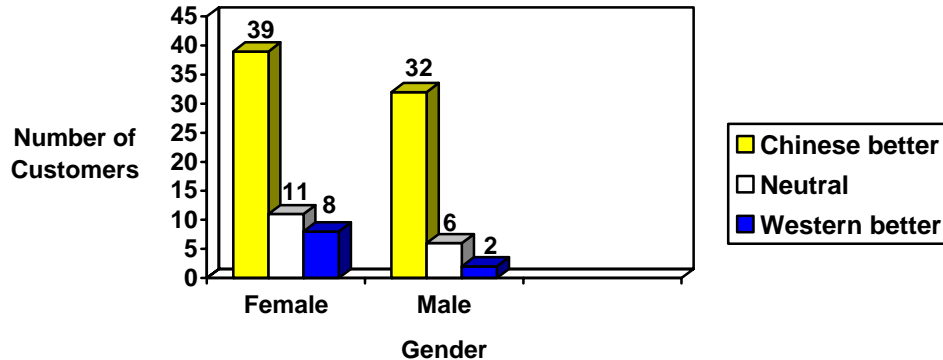


FIGURE 2: Taste Preference by Gender Groups
Female (n=58), Male (n=40)

Most interviewed customers liked the taste of the food at Grand Mother Dumpling. They doubted that Western fast food might have major effect on long-held traditions of food consumption: “We shouldn’t change our traditional food. That’s part of our nation’s character. And it would be impossible to change it quickly. It’s adapted to our environment and culture”, said a middle-aged male customer eating at Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant.

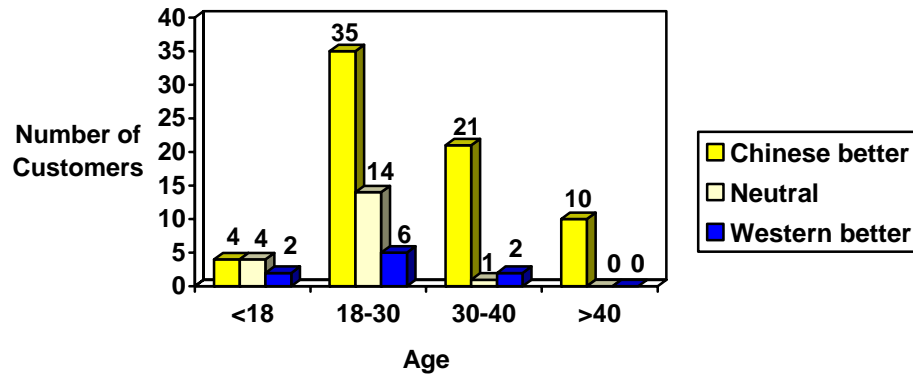


FIGURE 3: Taste Preference by Age Groups (n=98)

Other informants felt that foreign foods might occasionally be acceptable for a change of pace, but will never substitute for traditional dishes. While informants universally admitted that their traditions of shopping or cooking are time-consuming, they also universally felt that food in China is simply better tasting than that of other countries. “Some friends of mine who are in the U.S. complain a lot about American food. They can’t get used to it. But I’ve never heard American people complaining about Chinese food”, said a female customer in her earlier 40’s at the dumpling restaurant.

A couple I met at the dumpling restaurant told me, “We like Grand Mother Dumpling and everything is great here. Much less frequently will we go to dine at the McDonald’s. We just went there once. The dumplings are much more tasty than those made at home. In our hometown, there are a lot of Dumpling restaurants but most of them are very small, not as big as these ones. And the environment [setting] is also much worse.” They ordered 60 dumplings altogether, which are a lot for two persons.

Chinese style fast food restaurants tend to attract customers who are fond of the traditional taste of Chinese food instead of trendy and new foods. Though dumplings are originally from north China, the restaurant has successfully catered to the taste of southerners by combining the advantages of the southern style dumpling, such as the juicy fillings, with those of northern dumplings. In addition, the restaurant offers dumplings with about 200 varieties of fillings with three new varieties added every month. According to the company slogan, “whatever your taste, you’re sure to find something to delight your taste buds.”

Survey participants who wanted to eat various items believed the menu variety of KFC and McDonald’s is too narrow, while no respondents thought Chinese fast food restaurants as too narrow in the variety of food they offer. According to Figure 4, 50 percent of the participants perceived that Chinese fast food has a bigger variety than Western fast food, 25 percent of the participants were neutral on this issue, and 18 percent of the participants felt Western fast food wider in terms of variety.

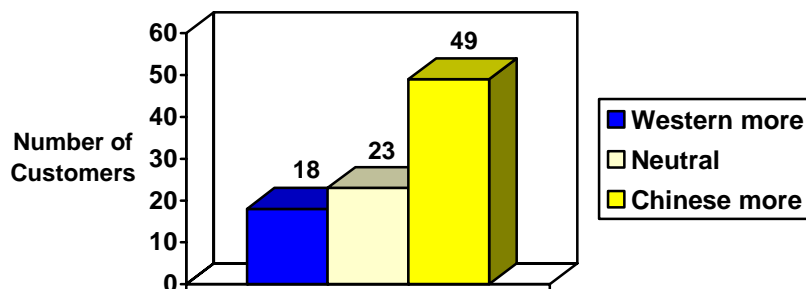


FIGURE 4: Western and Chinese Fast Food Compared in Terms of Variety (n=90)

In addition to their advantages in taste and bigger variety, many customers believe that Chinese fast foods are more nutritious than their Western counterparts. As noted in Chinese culture there is a positive energy and a negative energy in the universe. *Yin* represents negative energy and *yang* represents positive energy. They have to be equally balanced to create a harmonious and healthy state, otherwise conflict and disease will be created. This importance of balancing forces has been a part of Chinese thought for thousands of years. It has become a basic guideline for social, political, medical, and dietary usage.

Foods belonging to the *yin* (also called "cold" food) include bitter melon, winter melon, Chinese green, mustard green, water crest, Napa cabbage, bean sprout, soybean, mung bean, tulip, water chestnut, cilantro, oranges, watermelon, bananas, coconut, cucumber, beer, pop, ice cream, ice chips, grass jelly, clams, and oysters. These foods cannot be eaten excessively and are thought to cause stomachaches, diarrhea, dizziness, weakness, and coldness in the body if done so. Foods belonging to the *yang* (also called "hot" food) include chili pepper, garlic, onion, pineapple, cherry, beef, turkey, shrimp, crab, French fries, fried chicken, and pizza.

The Chinese food system puts most emphasis on the taste and nutritional value. In the past few years, Western fast food was challenged by Chinese nutrition experts for the "lack of a healthy nutrition balance" (though this might not be the case). The critics warned people "not to forget China's long history of gourmet culture, and its great diversity of food nutrition" (Agriculture and Agri-Food Section, 2002). In my customer survey (Figure 5), 64 percent of the participants indicated Chinese fast food is

more nutritious than Western fast food, 16 percent of the participants are neutral on this issue, and only 11 percent of the participants preferred Western fast food in terms of nutrition.

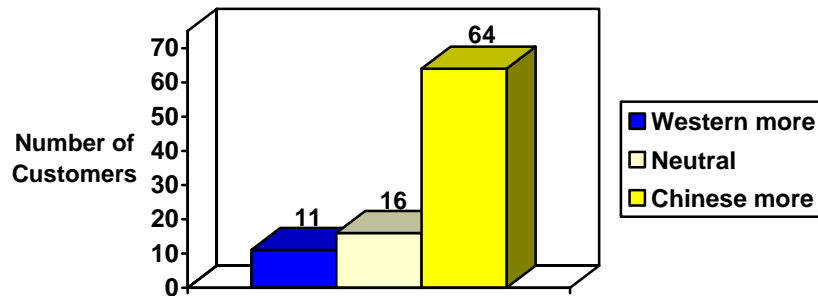


FIGURE 5: Western and Chinese Fast Food Compared in Terms of Nutrition (n=91)

A young woman from Changzhou (birthplace of Grand Mother Dumpling) told me, “I often come to eat here. My job is architecture related. Sometime I only eat once for the whole day at Grand Mother Dumpling. I think dumpling is kind of warm food, which is good for our stomach. My husband is from Huai’an and now we are living together with his parents. I don’t like the food my parents-in-law cooked, so I often go dining outside. Both Grand Mother Dumplings and the McDonald’s are the restaurants I frequent.”

That the nutrition of KFC and McDonald’s food is not assumed to be good was expressed frequently by respondents. Fried food is the major source to make consumers think so. Because the fried chicken in KFC and McDonald’s is not common food eaten in a Chinese daily meal, some consumers focused on this to consider the nutrition

value—according to a number of individuals, “it’s ok to eat occasionally, but not healthy for daily eating.”

"Chinese food is what people can eat everyday without getting disgusted."

Declares Sheng, manager of Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant: "Our strength is in taste and in nutritional value. Western style fast food could lead to obesity."

Eat for Less

The price to be paid for a service determines, in the customer’s mind, the level of quality to be demanded (Teboul, 1991). As dining out and seeking a better value for their money becomes an integral part of consumers’ lifestyles, experienced consumers have raised their expectations with regard to quality, good service and the absence of poorly cooked food and dirty interiors (Klara, 2001). Therefore, offering good food and good service may not any more be sufficient to attract and retain consumers. To gain a competitive advantage in today’s market, restaurants must offer value as well. Price is one of the most frequently mentioned factors by my interviewees. The price paid by customers is determined from two factors. The first is the cost to get the food: "Cola is 5 *yuan* in McDonald's, but only 2 *yuan* in Grand Mother Dumpling." The other factor is the amount of food customers wish to consume.

In the US, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, McDonald’s succeeds because it is fast and cheap. In China, however, its hamburgers are luxury goods. Chinese consumers must be

sold on the quality and image of McDonald's fare if they are to pay three or four times the price local fast food restaurants demand.

By contrast, Chinese-style fast food has the advantage of the low price. Because local players rarely import ingredients or equipment and their labor costs are often lower than their foreign rivals, Chinese fast foods are normally cheaper than Western equivalents and more palatable to ordinary Chinese customers.

"The local fast food restaurants are our rivals," says Ms. Shen, Manager of Huai'an McDonald's. The annual per capita income in Huai'an is 6,531 *yuan* (about US\$796) (Huai'an Statistical Yearbook, 2001). A meal at McDonald's costs about 20 *yuan* (US\$2.41), which is even higher than the average daily income of a Huai'anese resident. Therefore, getting people to eat at McDonald's when they can have a meal at Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant at 5 *yuan* (US\$0.60) is difficult. They are more inclined to save their money for clothes and housing, says Mr. Sheng, Manager of the restaurant. As a result, McDonald's has to convince would-be patrons of the value contained in other elements of "the McDonald's experience", such as the cleanliness of its restaurants and toilets which work.

Since its establishment in Huai'an, the Grand Mother Dumplings has been offering dishes prepared with beans, fresh vegetables, meat, and aquatic products. Mr. Wang, general manager of Grand Mother Dumplings, said that its low prices had won his company more customers, making him confident that the restaurant chain will become the McDonald's of China.

One rule of the restaurant is for customers “to spend only 10 *yuan* to get fed up” [sic]. In practice, the cost is less than 10 *yuan* in small and middle-sized cities. In metropolitan cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, the cost will be a little higher than 10 *yuan*, while in other big cities and developed middle-sized cities it is 10 *yuan*. The company claims that the price of all dumplings should be no higher than 3 *yuan* per dozen dumplings, except the snake dumpling, which is the most luxurious one with the price of 6 *yuan* per dozen dumplings. The lowest price is only 1.5 *yuan*. It is also regulated that at least six types of dumplings with the price of 1.5 *yuan* should be on the daily menu.

Results from my customer survey showed that 73 percent of the participants thought the price of Chinese fast food was more reasonable than that of Western ones. Only 4 percent of the participants regarded Western fast food better than Chinese fast food in terms of price. Twenty three percent of the participants remained neutral or did not give an answer (Figure 6).

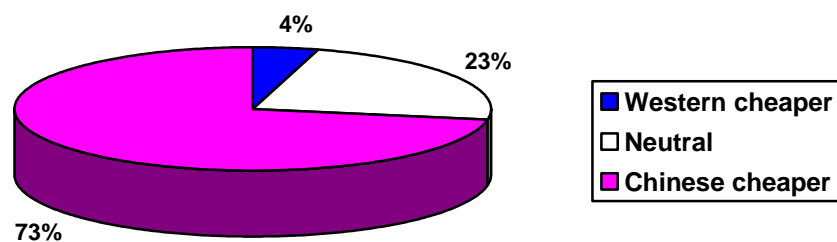


FIGURE 6: Western and Chinese Fast Food Compared in Terms of Price (n=90)

Most participants mentioned McDonald's as an expensive restaurant. A young woman I met at McDonald's said, "The food portion (in McDonald's) is little, just as snack. The decoration and the snack food gave me a feeling of enjoying pleasure rather than just for eating food." Eating fast food could also be viewed as a fast and convenient deal because of the low price and fast service offered by some fast food brands. "The food in those restaurants (Chinese brands) are cheap and fast, so I eat there very often", she continued, "Fast food is fast, convenient and not expensive."

One fourth of the survey participants thought the price of McDonald's was still acceptable due to the exotic nature of the exotic food, nice atmosphere and clean environment. However, price reduces their patronage frequency: "Expensive. Eating (McDonald's) it just as a snack. So I don't often go there." The several Chinese fast food restaurants are seen to be much cheaper than McDonald's and KFC. "It's (McDonald's) a little expensive, but at Grand Mother Dumpling restaurant I can have enough food at not very high price."

No major gender difference regarding price was found in my customer survey. Seventy one percent of the female and 72 percent of the male participants think Chinese food is better in terms of price (Figure 7).

Seventy percent of the people at the age 18-30 think Chinese food is better in terms of price. Seventy-six percent of the people in the age group of 30-40 think Chinese food is better in terms of price. One hundred percent of the people in the age group of above 40 think Chinese food is better in terms of price (Figure 8).

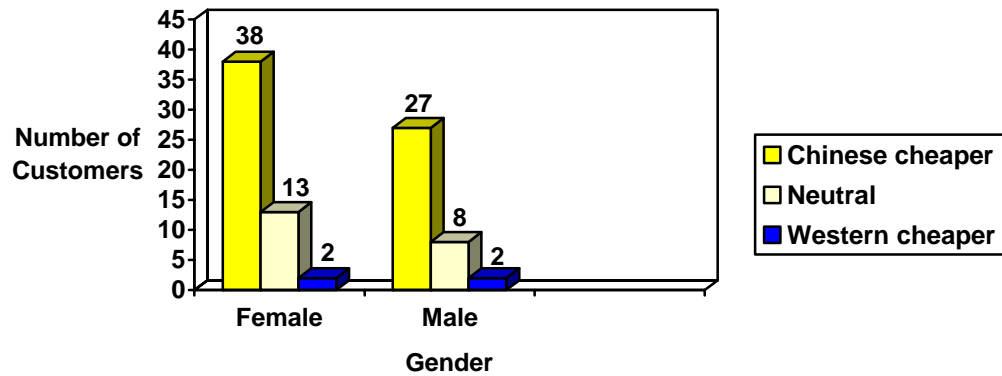


FIGURE 7: Western and Chinese Fast Food Compared in Terms of Price, according to Gender

Female (n=53), Male (n=37)

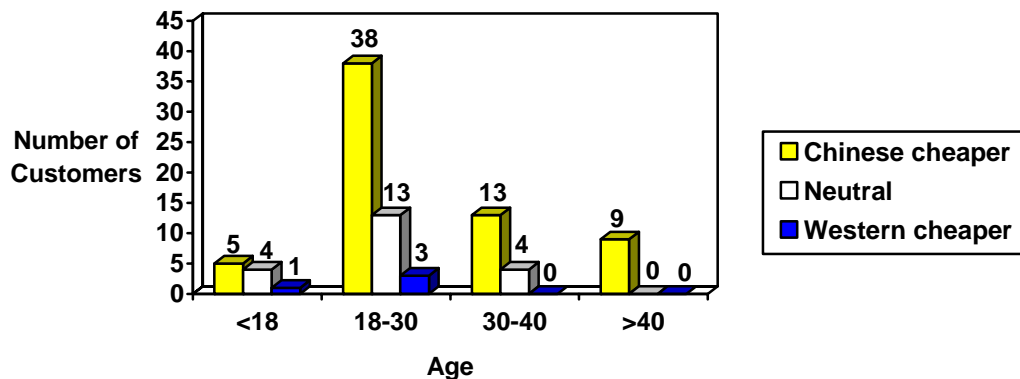


FIGURE 8: Price Preference by Age Groups (n=90)

A lot of customers of McDonald's, especially men complain that the food does not make them feel full. "McDonald's food is expensive, only a little. It's not enough for a meal". According to my student survey (Figure 9), 102 (47 percent) out of the 189

participants thought the biggest disadvantage of McDonald's is that its food is not filling. This is in accordance with Yan's finding in 1997.

By contrast, almost all respondents in Grand Mother Dumpling told me that with very little money they could easily get a good meal. For women like me, 12 dumplings really made me feel full. It cost me only 3.0 *yuan* (approximately US \$0.37) to have bought these dumplings compared to approximately US \$2 for an equally filling meal in McDonald's.

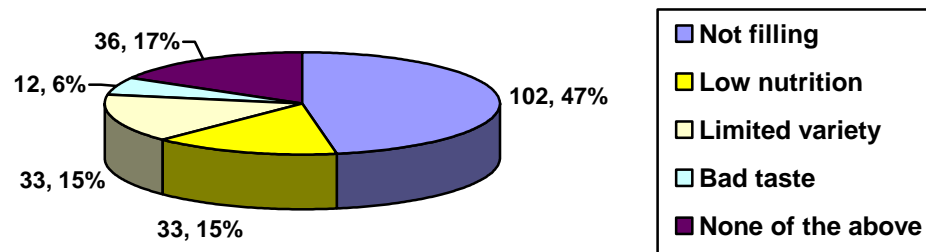


FIGURE 9: Disadvantages of McDonald's (n=189)

Service with a Smile

A number of published studies have been done investigating the criteria used by customers in choosing restaurants. June and Smith (1987) studied what characteristics of Canadian restaurants consumers thought were most desirable under four different usage occasions: an intimate dinner, a birthday celebration, a business lunch, and a family dinner. Five key criteria were used in their study of customer choice among restaurants: price, atmosphere, liquor license, service, and quality. Using a convenience sample with

conjoint analysis, they concluded that different mixes of criteria were used when the respondents were choosing among restaurants for different occasions.

Sweeney et al. (1992) were interested in how consumers use cues to form expectations about service quality. While the use of restaurants was somewhat incidental to their study, they did give some insight as to consumer choice of restaurants. Their list of restaurant related cues reflected the general marketing mix and included ten criteria: price, past experience, reputation, location, advertising, appearance of other customers, employee appearance, employee manner, and premises. As in the case of June and Smith, they found different criteria important for different dining situations (dinner with a friend vs. dinner with a group of friends). In general, reputation, manner of employees, and appearance of premises were viewed consistently as very important. In neither case of June and Smith, and Sweeney, did the authors indicate that the criteria selected have any validity other than face validity (they seem like reasonable criteria).

In the past, Chinese restaurants did not pay much attention to service quality. With the entry of Western fast food into China, the concept of “Service with a Smile” was introduced. Friendliness of service impacted on my study participants. They felt the friendliness from the greeting at the door, the service counter, and the eating process. Friendliness of service strengthened their impressions of a pleasant experience and social nature of fast food restaurants. Western foodservice companies have influenced the Chinese food operations and management in many areas. My respondents in Huai’an generally felt the service of Chinese restaurants had been improved. Nevertheless,

compared with their American counterparts, many people indicated that there was still a long way for Chinese operators to go.

Most respondents in my customer survey thought McDonald's service was very friendly or friendly (Table 1). Among 84 respondents who rated McDonald's in terms of service, 40 (47 percent) rated it as friendly and 20 respondents (24 percent) rated it as very friendly. None of the respondents (0 percent) rated the service as either bad or very bad. When asked to use some words to describe the service quality at McDonald's, most people mentioned "nice" and "friendly".

TABLE 1: Customer Rating on the Friendliness of Service
McDonald's (n=84), Grand Mother Dumpling (n=87)

	Very bad	Bad	Average	Good	Very good
McDonald's	0	0	29%	47%	24%
GM Dumpling	0	6%	38%	41%	15%

No major difference was found though overall McDonald's was considered better than Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant with respect to the perceived friendliness of service (Table 1). Among these 87 respondents who rated Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant, 36 (41 percent) rated its service as friendly and 13 respondents (15 percent) rated it as very friendly. Thirty three respondents (38 percent) rated the service as average, five respondents (6 percent) rated it as bad, and no respondent (0 percent) rated it as very bad. People were generally satisfied with the friendliness of service at Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant.

TABLE 2: Customer Rating on Speed of Service (n=87)

	Very slow	Slow	Average	Fast	Very Fast
McDonald's	0	2%	36%	40%	22%
GM Dumpling	3%	38%	34%	24%	1%

By contrast, considerable difference was found when customers were asked to rate the speed of service at both restaurants (Table 2). Eighty seven respondents rated the service speed of McDonald's and Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant. Of them 19 (22 percent) rated the speed of service at McDonald's as very fast and 35 respondents (40 percent) rated it as fast. Among the respondents, however, only one (1 percent) rated Grand Mother Dumpling's service as very fast. Thirty five respondents (41 percent) rated Grand Mother Dumpling's service as slow or very slow, while only two respondents (2 percent) rated McDonald's service as slow, and none rated the service as very slow.

One reason for this difference is because the cooking style of Chinese food is not as simple as western fast food. Therefore, it is hard to apply the practice of mass production, without which the service speed suffers. Chinese fast food restaurants have been trying to streamline cooking techniques, however, some delicate food types still require a craftsmanship. Another reason why Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant is slower in service is the fact that it still provides some table services to its customers. Though customers order and pay at the cashier before each meal, it is the waitress who will bring the dishes to the individual tables. The dumpling restaurant provides this

semi-traditional service to attract customers, but the negative effect is that their service turns out to be slower.

Environment and Hygiene

Many interviewees considered the environment settings when selecting restaurants. They defined environment as including eating areas, background music, atmosphere, tables and floor, and room temperature. In the ever-changing marketplace, restaurants may need to update their concepts if they want to continue to compete successfully. The importance of a comfortable atmosphere is increasing with time (Dulen, 1998). According to Belman, "Today, the most important thing is design and concept. Consumers still want decent service. Unfortunately, the least important thing is the food. It's all been turned upside-down." (1996) Ambience, a pleasant decor, may give restaurants competitive edge (Soriano, 2002). The restaurateur has to invest money to improve the appearance or place/ambience of the restaurant. One special item that makes a difference in a restaurant is the communal table. It can be an enjoyable option and a fun dinner for sociable people with a spirit of adventure and an openness to new experiences (Goldstein, 1998).

My research showed that in Huai'an the environment of Western fast food chains were judged as better than Chinese ones. McDonald's was considered to be better in terms of environment by most people: "a right place for meeting friends" and "it's very relaxing here." Table 3 shows customers' rating on the environment of McDonald's and

Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant in Huai'an. The question of rating on McDonald's' environment had 88 responses. Most of the people rate McDonald's environment "very good" or "good". Only one respondent (1 percent) rated McDonald's environment as bad while none rated it as very bad.

Table 3: Customer Rating on Environment
McDonald's (n=88), Grand Mother Dumpling (n=85)

	Very bad	Bad	Average	Good	Very good
McDonald's	0	1%	23%	48%	28%
GM Dumpling	0	1%	41%	49%	9%

Though its environment is not felt as "romantic" and "exotic" as McDonald's, most customers still perceived Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant as a good place for eating and had a nice atmosphere. The question of rating on Grand Mother Dumpling's environment had 85 responses. Among all these respondents, most people rated its environment as good and average (90 percent). Eight respondents (9 percent) rated its environment as very good and, one respondent (1 percent) rated it as bad, and none rated it as very bad.

Cleanness was another frequently used attribute among Huai'an people when judging fast food restaurants. According to my student survey, clean environment was considered most important by participants (Figure 10). Other factors include tasty food, pleasure ground for kids, reasonable price, service, etc. Here cleanness involves tableware, tables and floors, food, and kitchen. Its importance can be understood from its functional effect as "Little Wang" (a nickname he preferred others to call himself), a

senior student in college has described: "sanitation is of the first importance. It must not be harmful to our health." Many participants including Mr. Li, a recently retired factory worker, believed that fast food restaurants were clean on average "as long as it has a brand name..." Yet, Chinese fast food restaurants were usually perceived as being less clean than international ones. "The kitchens of Chinese restaurants are always dirty" (Little Wang). The first overall impression of the restaurant is critical for consumers to perceive it as clean or not. In fact, many participants mentioned cleanness together with environment. They considered a place with dirty floors and tables as providing a bad environment, while taking it for granted that a nice environment should be clean and bright.

Data from my customer survey showed that most Huai'an people favored McDonald's in terms of cleanness. Customers were asked to rate McDonald's and Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurants based on their hygiene condition (Table 4). Among the 87 respondents who rated McDonald's hygiene, 39 (45 percent) rated it as good, 34 respondents (39 percent) rated it as very good, 12 respondents (14 percent) rated it as average, two respondents (2 percent) rated it as bad, and none rated the hygiene situation as very bad. The hygienic condition at McDonald's is considered to be better than Grand Mother Dumpling by most of the customers in my survey. People expressed strong confidence towards the cleanness of its food and environment when eating at McDonald's.

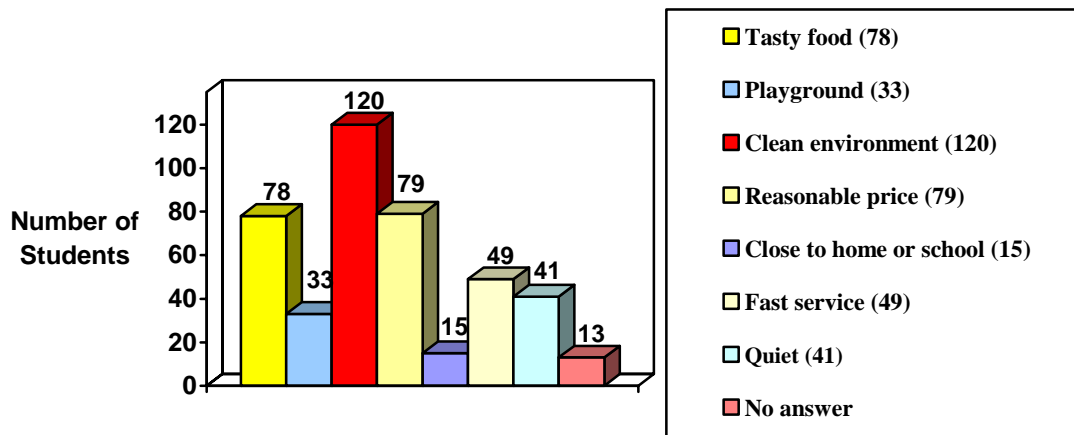


FIGURE 10: Reasons Why People Choose a Restaurant (n=189)

Eighty-eight respondents rated the hygienic condition of Grand Mother Dumpling. Though its environment is not perceived as good as McDonald's, most people regard it as a good place to find a clean environment. Forty-one respondents (46 percent) rated the hygienic situation as good, 28 respondents (32 percent) rated it as average, 15 respondents (17 percent) rated it as very good, and four respondents (5 percent) rated it as bad. None rated the hygienic situation as very bad.

Table 4: Customer Rating on Hygiene
McDonald's (n=87), Grand Mother Dumpling (n=88)

	Very bad	Bad	Average	Good	Very good
McDonald's	0	2%	14%	45%	39%
GM Dumpling	0	5%	32%	46%	17%

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In the decades prior to 1979, the state exercised near total control over the food system of China, from the farms, to the systems of distribution. Even food purchase choices were dictated to a large extent by the state, since the government controlled the agricultural activity and issued food rations to citizens for most staple products, including oil, rice, meat, and bread. In a remarkably speedy turnaround, Chinese citizens today face bountiful choices in food markets.

The Chinese lifestyle has changed greatly since the open-door policy was implemented in the late 1970's. Changes have been especially marked in urban areas. There consumers have much more access to convenience-processed food markets, fast food chains, and restaurants. Additionally, many urban residents live in modern apartments with kitchen areas, wider use of gas and electricity in cooking facilities such as microwaves and ovens, and use of refrigeration in households. All of these mean that their food consumption preferences have shifted towards more food varieties, and resulted in an increase in the demand for local and Western fast food consumption more so than among the rural residents.

According to the latest survey by the State Committee of Family Planning, China had 348 million households at the end of 2001, of which one-child families accounted for 31.45 percent (Lu, 2004). The proportion of one-child families in cities is presumably much higher than that of countryside mainly because of the stricter implementation of the one-child policy in cities. "Little emperors" have played very important roles in directing households' food consumption patterns.

Fast food chains such as McDonald's, Japan's Mos Burger and California Beef Noodle King emerged in big cities in the early 1990s, and have developed rapidly since then. For example, starting in 1990, McDonald's had opened 130 restaurants in China by 1996, intended to open 200 more stores by the end of 1997 (Marr and Hatfield, 1997), and continued to add others ever since. In addition, most promotions appeal to younger people such as "Happy Meal Package" and "Free Movie Pass" in which incentives are directed towards this junior, but significant, group. Thus, Western foods have become very popular, not only attracting children but also teenagers and a wide range of other consumers.

Consumers, particularly urban consumers, have busier lives than in the past and they are willing to pay more for convenience and service. In addition, women in China have a high workforce participation rate compared to other countries. For example, in 1982 Chinese women had the world's highest labor participation rate of 74.1 per cent while the corresponding figure for the United States was 52.6 per cent (Taylor and Hardee, 1986). Hence, urban dietary preferences have been gradually changing away from traditional home cooking and home preparation towards fast food or frozen food.

The recent urban Chinese tendency to eat away from home much more often than in the past has accompanied the general rise in standard of living. Particularly among those so-called 'middle-class' households whose annual income is over US\$5,000, dining out has become a common occurrence. According to my survey in Huai'an, around 80 percent of customers surveyed dined out at least once each month. Twenty-five percent of them claimed to dine out six or more times per month.

The restaurants managers who were interviewed expect eating in restaurants to become increasingly popular in Huai'an in the near future. A McDonald's manager noted that in just a few years since McDonald's opened in Huai'an in 2000, more people are eating out due to rising incomes and a change in the "thinking concerning consumption".

In 2000, there weren't as many consumers as they are today for McDonald's. At that time, the average income of Huai'an citizens was not as high as it is today, the thinking concerning consumption had not changed. But today it is different, our society has become busier and more open, people have become richer, and consequently eating out has become more and more popular. (Manager, McDonald's)

Pointing out that his food was affordable for "most people," the owner of Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant also foresees a promising future for the restaurant business:

The customers can have an inexpensive and substantial meal at my restaurant. Most people can afford it. It is a satisfying business. I enjoy it. Furthermore, I believe my business will improve, because people's living conditions will become better. (Manager, Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant)

Hypotheses Revisited

At the outset of this thesis I predicted that Huai'an would experience the following changes with the recent development of fast food: (1) Western fast food

restaurants in Huai'an have developed the tendency to absorb local cultural influences and transform themselves into local institutions. (2) Chinese style fast food restaurants in Huai'an nowadays emphasize their local flavor, nutrition, and low price in order to compete with the Western fast food restaurants. (3) The spread of Western fast food has motivated the local competitors in Huai'an to improve their service, eating environment, hygiene, etc. (4) Western fast food restaurants have raised the expectations of Huai'an customers towards all types of restaurants. My research in Huai'an supports these hypotheses.

First, localization process was found to have been undergoing in Huai'an. As can be expected, Huai'an McDonald's employs only local staff, and its senior management is localized as well. In addition, most of the food ingredients and materials in the outlets are locally sourced. Watson refers to this mutual learning as a process of "localization," and he points out that localization is a two-way process: it implies modifications in the company's own standard operating procedures as well as changes in the local culture (1997a). To Huai'an customers, McDonald's is not merely a fast food restaurant. It is also a symbol of American culture and modernity. People go to McDonald's outlet not just for a taste of the food, but more for an experience of American way of life.

My second hypothesis predicted that Chinese style fast food restaurants in Huai'an emphasize their local flavor, nutrition, and low price in order to compete with the Western fast food restaurants. In my research, most of the respondents show preference towards Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant, the local competitor of McDonald's, in terms of taste, nutrition, and price. Therefore, although their restaurants

still seem to lag behind their Western counterparts in market promotion, Chinese entrepreneurs are confident of business success by focusing on local flavor, variety, and low price.

I also predicted that Western fast food restaurants have stimulated the Chinese entrepreneurs to improve their own environment, service, and hygiene. According to my two questionnaire surveys, many Huai'an customers considered the environment as the most important element when choosing a restaurant. Traditional Chinese restaurants put much emphasis on food taste and variety, but typically providing a proper environment, service, and hygiene is often deemphasized. Thank to the introduction of Western fast food restaurants, Chinese-style fast food restaurants are trying to catch up in the aspects of environment, service, and hygiene. However, I also found that the service speed of Chinese fast food restaurants is still relatively slow. Due to the complex nature of Chinese food types, mass production of food products is hard to be carried out, and thus high standard of craftsmanship still remains necessary in many domestic fast food restaurants.

My fourth hypothesis predicted that the existence of Western fast food restaurants has raised the expectations of Huai'an customers towards all types of restaurants. This is supported by my research, which shows that in Huai'an revolutionary changes are taking place in consumption patterns. With the development of economy and increase in income, many Huai'an people nowadays are interested in different foods and eating out has become a popular form of entertainment among those who have some extra spending money. My research shows that many people desire cleanliness, a

pleasant environment, and quality food more than low prices. Another expectation from customers is fast service. People in Huai'an have changed such that they do not enjoy spending too long waiting for a meal.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Future Research

In the literature review I have referred to globalization and localization theory in anthropology. I then incorporated these globalization and localization perspectives into the analysis of my data in Huai'an. As seen in the fast food case, the globalization has experienced two types of localization. First, Western chains have striven to adapt to the consumers in Huai'an by insisting on a high degree of local ownership and by modestly tailoring their products to the local taste. In *Golden Arches East*, anthropologist Watson (1997b) and his contributors explore the different ways in which Asian countries engage the Golden Arches, as evidenced by the specificities of consumer practices and the meanings individuals ascribe to their consumption. In this process the researchers were concerned with testing the validity of Ritzer's McDonaldization thesis, especially as it concerns issues of standardization and cultural homogenization. The central message of Watson's book is that the corporation has blended so well into local East Asian cultures that it is no longer an American cultural icon or a wielder of power, a conclusion my study in Huai'an confirms.

Second, the mere presence of these Western chains has encouraged Chinese entrepreneurs to develop decidedly local versions of modern fast food enterprises.

Chinese style fast food restaurants emphasize their local flavor, nutrition, and low price in order to compete with the Western restaurants as shown in Huai'an. By producing traditional Chinese food stuffs they reinforce a local identity. Chinese fast food companies have played the "culture card" in their efforts to compete with global products, alleging that their products are "more suitable" for Chinese and, in some cases, for "Oriental" or "Asian" consumers, because of greater cultural knowledge and affinity.

Therefore, true "assimilation" and "resistance" interactions do not occur within this setting, but rather take shape in the form of mutual interaction. Chinese fast food restaurants not only incorporate the concepts of "learning from the West" into their business, but also create their own system of food delivery service. Similarly, the concept of fast food and the new consumption patterns of eating at fast food places also derived from the West. In order to survive, many Western fast food restaurants have had to modify their foods according to the local taste preference. The appearance of Chinese style fast food helps to improve the local economy as well as to preserve local food identity.

This study also finds that impacts made by globalization vary according to the historical and life cycle experiences that each age group's has had with globalization. Different age groups each have their own food world that is unique to their age-distinct lifestyles, food-related symbols of attraction, ideologies of what fulfills their physical psychological, and emotional needs, and life goals. The Chinese teenagers, working adults, and seniors are active agents in choosing what they want to incorporate into their life, according to what correlates to their age-related food interests or lifestyles, or how

their work and/or health condition may benefit. Thus, each age group has their own way of managing and balancing new changes with their cultural values.

The limitations of this study are related to the respondent characteristics, product category, and theory content. These limitations lead to a number of avenues for future research.

First, while this study involved a close examination of the economic, social, and cultural environment in which the exchange activities occur between retailers and consumers, other factors that have a close relationship with food consumption were omitted. This list includes agricultural production, distribution infrastructure, and food production. In particular, the link between state policy and the consumer is worthy of further exploration, not only in China, but throughout the world. State policy in China is continually in flux and quickly and fundamentally alters consumption patterns in its wake. The state is likely to have many unforeseen effects on food consumption patterns, as well as expected improvement in levels of sanitation. Possible effects include the composition and regulation of retailers, the types of food offerings, the storage of food, food pricing, and frequency of food shopping trips. While the idea that government rulings affect individual consumption choice in a Communist country seems fairly evident, it should be pointed out that state policy, or lack of, is strongly influential, whatever type of government is in charge. For example, in the U.S., government policies affect food consumption options with property laws, price fixing laws, nutrition labeling rules, sanitation codes, credit laws, trade policies, and through many other laws, policies,

and standards. The state-consumer relationship is closely linked to quality of life, and, as such, merits further study.

Another future research direction relates to the use of consumption activities as status markers (Bourdieu, 1984). With the growth of income in China has come increased income stratification. Will this stratification result in consumption practices that define and reinforce distinctive classes? As class differences increase, Chinese might mark these differences via other consumption categories. In addition, food consumption activities outside the realm of this study, particularly food gifts and banquets, might be used to define differences in class status. These issues lie beyond the scope of this research, but they are interesting and would be rewarding avenues for future work.

Finally, this study was conducted in one city of an enormous country. While Huai'an is representative of many medium-sized cities that are experiencing change in China, as always, generalizing the research findings beyond Huai'an without verification should be done only with caution. It should be compared to other regions with rapidly growing economies.

China's leadership in the post-Deng era has confirmed the government's continued commitment to economic reform. Presumably, the result will be greater urban income and an expanding market. Given this scenario, the nation continues to be a fertile area for the study of consumption change. This study of changing tastes underscores the complexity of the many influences aiding and inhibiting the adoption of new choices in this changing nation.

The study also finds that the concepts of quality, service, cleanliness, and value brought by the Western fast food chains have had a dramatic impact on the expectation of Huai'an consumers towards services provided by the restaurants. In China revolutionary changes are taking place in consumption patterns. Before the Western fast food invasion, those concepts applied only to fine-dining operations. McDonald's changed the images of restaurant in China by providing an example of a restaurant where customers could enjoy not only fast service but also a comfortable environment and good quality food.

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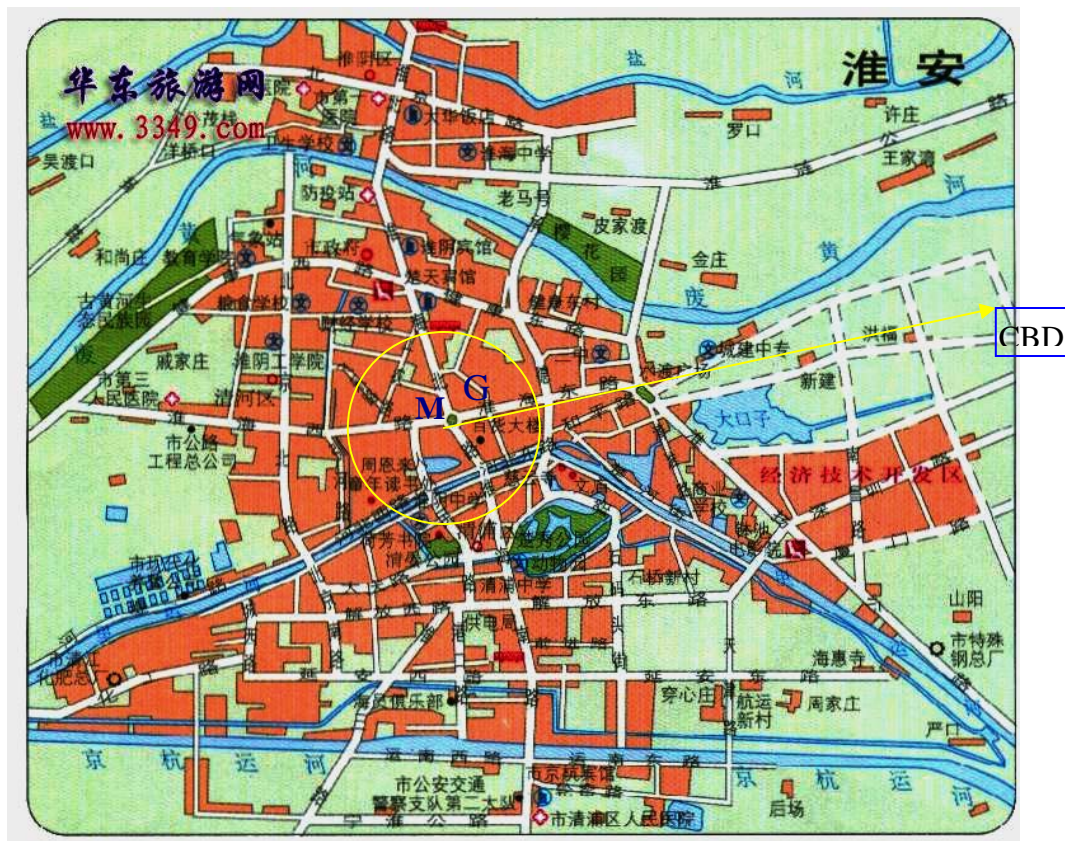
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APPENDIX A



MAP: HUI'AN IN CHINA

Source: China Tour (<http://www.chinatour.com/maps/maps.htm>)



MAP: RESTAURANT LOCATIONS IN HUAI'AN (CBD)

M — McDonald's

G — Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant

CBD — Central Business District of Huai'an

Source: East China Travel Guide (http://www.3349.com/map/map_list.asp)

APPENDIX B

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE (ENGLISH AND CHINESE VERSIONS)

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please fill the blanks:

1. Is this your first visit? ___yes, ___no.
2. You knew this restaurant through: ___friend, ___commercials, ___printed ad.
3. The time you traveled to this restaurant _____ min.
4. The time you waited to be served _____ min, total time _____ min.
5. Your cooking time at home _____ min.
6. Your dining out times per month: _____ times.
7. How much do you usually spend when dining out? _____ yuan.
8. The total people with you this time? _____ people. How much do you spend this time? _____ yuan.

How often do you eat in each of them in an average month?

Ever eaten, once a month, 2 or 3 times a month, once a week, more often
 McDonald's
 Grandmother Dumplings

Please mark the number you feel most appropriate.

1. very poor 2. poor 3. average
 4. good 5. very good

Please grade the environment of the restaurants:

Service, cleanliness, exotic, location, interior décor, exterior décor
 McDonald's
 Grandmother Dumplings

Please grade the food of the restaurants':

Quality, taste, nutrition, price, temperature, smell, texture, packaging, appearance, consistency, variety
 McDonald's
 Grandmother Dumplings

Please rate the employees' service at the restaurants':

Attentiveness, friendliness, helpfulness, efficiency
 McDonald's
 Grandmother Dumplings

Compare with the expectation, your ratings on the restaurants':

1. very disappointed 2. disappointed 3. exactly what I expected 4. better than my expectation 5. much better than my expectation

Food, speed of the service, cleanliness, price

McDonald's

California Fried Chicken

Grandmother Dumplings

Please check the most appropriate number.

1. strongly disagree 2. disagree 3. neutral 4. agree 5. strongly agree

The reasons you would dine at a fast food restaurants':

special occasion, for the children, close to workplace, close to home, no time to cook, partying, heard from others, like the food, change the taste

If you were asked to make choice between American fast food and Chinese traditional food, your preferences among the following would be:

- prefer American fast food
- both will do
- prefer traditional Chinese food

taste a b c

price a b c

variety a b c

service a b c

nutrition a b c

uniqueness a b c

appearance a b c

texture a b c

smell a b c

Please fill the blanks:

- You are _____ years old.
- Your gender is: _ male, _ female.
- Your education: _____
- Your occupation: _____
- Your family monthly income: _____ yuan.
- Your are: _ married, _ single, _ divorced.
- If you have a child with you now, he/she is _____ years old.
- Have you ever traveled outside China before? yes, _ no_.

Thank you very much for your time and have a good day!
See you next time!

QUESTIONNAIRE (CHINESE VERSION)

民意测验单

请在下列划线上填空：

1. 这是您第一次来就餐吗？——是，——不是。
2. 您是如何听说这家麦当劳(大娘水饺，迈香基)的？消息来自——(亲朋好友，广播电视，报刊杂志)。
3. 您用了多少时间到麦当劳？大约——分钟。
4. 您在麦当劳等候就餐的时间约是——。停留的时间呢——。
5. 您在家做饭约用——分钟。(指做中饭、晚饭)
6. 您每月在外面吃几次？大约——次。
7. 您每次在外面吃饭花多少钱？大约——元(人民币)。
8. 同您一起来此就餐一共——人，共花了——元(人民币)。

请在符合您的看法的数字上作记号

您每月在快餐店用餐几次：	很少	每月一次	每月二三次	每周一次	更多
A. 麦当劳.....1		2	3	4	5
B. 大娘水饺.....1		2	3	4	5

您对餐厅卫生情况的看法：	很不好	不好	一般	好	很好
A. 麦当劳.....1		2	3	4	5
B. 大娘水饺.....1		2	3	4	5

您对餐厅服务态度的看法：	很不好	不好	一般	好	很好
A. 麦当劳.....1		2	3	4	5
B. 大娘水饺.....1		2	3	4	5

您对餐厅服务速度的看法：	很慢	比较慢	一般	快	很快
A. 麦当劳.....1		2	3	4	5
B. 大娘水饺.....1		2	3	4	5

您对餐厅食品的价格的看法：	很不合理	不合理	一般	合理	很合理
A. 麦当劳.....1		2	3	4	5
B. 大娘水饺.....1		2	3	4	5

您对餐厅的用餐环境的看法：	很不好	不好	一般	好	很好
A. 麦当劳.....1		2	3	4	5
B. 大娘水饺.....1		2	3	4	5

您对餐厅食品口味的看法：	很不好	不好	一般	好	很好
A. 麦当劳.....1		2	3	4	5
B. 大娘水饺.....1		2	3	4	5

您对餐厅食品种类的看法：	很不好	不好	一般	好	很好
A. 麦当劳.....1		2	3	4	5
B. 大娘水饺.....1		2	3	4	5

您来麦当劳/大娘水饺就餐的主要原因：

	很不同意	不同意	中性	同意	很同意
1. 就餐环境干净.....1		2	3	4	5
2. 价格合理.....1		2	3	4	5
3. 地处市中心.....1		2	3	4	5
4. 离单位近.....1		2	3	4	5
5. 离住处近.....1		2	3	4	5
6. 没时间做饭.....1		2	3	4	5
7. 亲朋聚会.....1		2	3	4	5
8. 喜欢食品口味.....1		2	3	4	5
9. 换换口味.....1		2	3	4	5

若在美国快餐和中式快餐之间作选择, 您认为:

	美国快餐好	不置可否	中式快餐好
1. 味道.....1		2	3
2. 价格.....1		2	3
3. 环境.....1		2	3
4. 品种.....1		2	3
5. 服务.....1		2	3
6. 营养.....1		2	3
7. 特色.....1		2	3
8. 外观.....1		2	3
9. 口感.....1		2	3
10. 气味.....1		2	3

请在下列横线上填空:

1. 您的年龄: _____岁
2. 您的性别: _____男, _____女
3. 您的文化程度:
4. 您的职业: _____。
5. 您全家每月m收入约_____元(人民币)
6. 您的婚姻情况: _____已婚, _____未婚, _____离婚
7. 假若您有孩子, 其年龄是_____岁
8. 您曾否到国外出差, 旅游?

再次对占用您的宝贵时间表示感谢!
 祝您渡过美好的一天。
 再见, 欢迎再来!

APPENDIX C
SELECTED RESEARCH PICTURES



Figure A-1: McDonald's of Huai'an



Figure A-2: My little informants at McDonald's, Huai'an



Figure A-3: Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant at Huai'an (Outside)



Figure A-4: Grand Mother Dumpling Restaurant at Huai'an (Inside)

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