

CONTINUATION AND ACCULTURATION:  
A STUDY OF FOODWAYS OF THREE CHINESE IMMIGRANT FAMILIES  
IN ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND

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**CONTINUATION AND ACCULTURATION:  
A STUDY OF FOODWAYS OF THREE CHINESE IMMIGRANT FAMILIES  
IN ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND**

**BY**

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**B.A. (Wuhan, China)**

**A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate  
Studies in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements of the degree of  
Master of Arts**

**Department of Folklore  
Memorial University of Newfoundland**

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**St. John's**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis is a study of the foodways of three Chinese immigrant families in St. John's, Newfoundland. The focus is on two forces, continuation of Old World food habits and acculturation of New World practices, in the current foodways complex of these three families. My findings are that two tendencies, the tendency to acculturate and the tendency to keep separate from the host culture, exist in juxtaposition in the three immigrant Chinese families. Both forces assume their own place in the resultant foodways complex for the Chinese families, specifically, with regard to the procurement of foodstuffs, meals, and food in relation to custom and belief. However, differences in the degree of foodways acculturation is evident among all three families. A consideration of such factors as the length of time spent in the New World, the age of immigrants upon arrival, the cultural backgrounds of immigrants' spouses, the occupation and social role of the family heads, and the inclination either to acculturate or to keep separate, led to my conclusion that this inclination plays a most important and influential role in determining the degree of acculturation of each family -- also reinforced by the occupation and social role of the family heads. While other factors can play a role in determining the degree of acculturation, they are certainly not as crucial as these last two factors: the occupation and social role of the family heads and their inclination either to acculturate or to keep separate. It is argued that these conclusions are especially applicable to the foodways of immigrant families whose heads have lived in both the Old World and the New.

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## Introduction

Implicit in the study of ethnic foodways is the existence of an ethnic minority within a larger cultural matrix. Ethnic foodways scholarship has generally focused on the nature and process of acculturation of the minority group to the dominant society, usually without paying attention to the concept of "continuation"<sup>1</sup> in the ethnic foodways complex. The purpose of this study is to focus on one small sampling of an ethnic community -- the Chinese -- in St. John's, Newfoundland, with specific attention to the group's foodways. However, rather than concentrate solely on readily discernible elements of acculturation, this study proposes, in addition, to consider aspects of continuation in the foodways tradition of the Newfoundland Chinese.

To this end, this thesis begins with an overview of foodways scholarship (Chapter One), then moves more specifically and in more detail to issues concerning Chinese foodways. The second chapter examines the role of food in Chinese culture, folklore about food in China, past and present research on Chinese foodways carried out both in China and abroad, concluding with a brief discussion of stereotypes of Chinese foodways. With this general background in mind, I then move to the Chinese in Newfoundland. Chapter Three considers the history and present status of the Chinese in Newfoundland. Chapters Four, Five, and Six each examine specific aspects of the foodways of the three families. Chapter Four looks at the procurement of foodstuffs, noting ways of obtaining food and how it is selected. Chapter Five examines, in some detail, meal patterns for each family, and in addition, examines the elements which constitute three selected meals from each family. Chapter Six examines food in relation to custom and belief, an important element in Chinese foodways. Chapter Seven is a summary of my conclusions.

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<sup>1</sup>For the two countervailing forces in ethnic folklore, scholars have described them in different ways: Richard M. Dorson refers them as "accommodation and intrusion" (1959: 135-6); Rikoon, "retention and change" (1982: 13); and Gordon, "maintenance and assimilation" (1964: 84). I choose the two terms, continuation and acculturation, to emphasize the ongoing process of both words. for the suffix *-ation* "shows the active act of the action of the stated word" (Longman, 54), which confirms the current term "dynamic folklore", rather than something static as the words "continuity" and "change" indicate.

The thesis is largely based on my fieldwork with the three informant families, Mr. William Ping and Mrs. Ethel Ping; Mr. Sing Lang Au and Mrs. Judy Au; and Dr. Kim Hong and Mrs. Mely Hong. The major part of fieldwork was conducted from November 1989 to March 1990, with some supplementary work done during the time I wrote this thesis (from April 1990 to March 1991). Data were collected through personal interviews, participant observations, and correspondence. Whenever possible, interviews have been tape-recorded. Seven hours of tape recording was conducted based on questionnaires, plus seven hours tape recording that took place during meal observation; these interviews will be deposited in the Folklore and Language Archive of Memorial University of Newfoundland. Pictures have been taken and keyed into the text within the thesis.

I chose these three families because of two distinct features. In the first place, the heads of the three families have common origins as far as place of birth, dialect and their bi-cultural experiences are concerned. Hence I assumed that their old world foodways were similar, specifically since they had similar childhood food habits. However, in the new world, they differ in age, occupation, and their spouses have different cultural backgrounds. If any variation in the degree of acculturation in foodways existed among the three families, the causes could be traced to those in the new world, as they started almost from the same point. By examining various factors leading the resultant foodways complex of the three families, one might be able to arrive at some significant conclusions about the process of foodways enculturation for immigrants.

A detailed description of the three family heads is as follows. The heads of the three families, William Ping, Kim Hong and Sing Lang Au, came from the same province of mainland China, Guangdong, and more specifically, from two adjacent counties, Kaiping and Taishan (Hoiping and Toisan in Cantonese) (their locations are indicated in Figure 1). Their forefathers were among the first Chinese in St. John's, Newfoundland, and were exclusively involved with either restaurant or laundry businesses. Ping's uncle was a laundry owner, as was Hong's father. Au's father was a restaurant owner. However, three of them were born in China. Ping came here in 1931, at the age of 22, in answer to



Figure 1: Locations of the Home Villages of the  
Heads of the Three Informant Families



his uncle's call for help in St. John's. Hong and Au both arrived here in their teens (Hong in 1951, at the age of 15; and Au, in 1953, at the age of 13). Ping is currently the owner of the Snow White laundry, the only remaining Chinese laundry in St. John's.<sup>2</sup> Au is manager of two enterprises, a bar and a gas station. Hong is a radiologist working at the General Hospital and the Health Sciences Centre in St. John's. Though differing in occupations, the three have much in common. Firstly, all of them have lived both in China and in St. John's. Secondly, they share the same dialect. Thirdly, for almost the whole time since they left China they have lived in Newfoundland (the exception is Hong who spent several years doing his post-graduate studies in Ontario). Fourthly, they are the backbone of the Chinese Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, the only officially registered Chinese organization in Newfoundland. Hong was the founding Chairman of the association, Au was its Vice President for three terms, and Ping has been one of the key persons in the Chinese community ever since his arrival in Newfoundland. He has been much concerned with the welfare of the Chinese in St. John's and has made significant contributions to the development and growth of the local Chinese community.

All three families are large in size. Ping has five grown-up children, and three grandchildren. He and his wife live alone; his children, fully grown, have their own homes. Au has six children living under the same roof. Hong has five unmarried children and a seventy-year-old mother staying in the same home.

Ping's wife is a native Newfoundlander and has been married to Mr. Ping for over thirty-five years. Even before her marriage she had been involved with the Chinese in St. John's, for she had once worked at a Chinese restaurant. Since her marriage, she has been a full time homemaker. Au's wife is assistant manager to her husband. She came from Hongkong and arrived in St. John's in the 1960s. Hong's wife is from the Philippines; she once worked as a nurse in Ontario, and has been a homemaker ever since her marriage.

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<sup>2</sup>A revealing history of the Chinese laundry in Newfoundland can be found in the movie *The Last Chinese Laundry*, dir. Charlie Callanan and Fred Hollingshurst, 1988 (available from Memorial University's Division of Educational Technology).

This family information is summarized in the following table with regard to the age, education and occupation of the three heads, the size of their families, and the status of their spouses with regard to the time devoted to homemaking.<sup>3</sup>

Table 1

### Information About the Three Informant Families

	age		education	occupation	size of household	wife
	now	arrival				
Ping	81	22	junior high (in China)	laundry owner	2	full time
Au	50	13	training school	manager	8	part time
Hong	54	15	post gra- duate	medical doctor	8	full time

As the three families are of Cantonese origin, I would like to provide a brief description of Cantonese cuisine as well as Chinese food in the West. Among the four major regions of Chinese cooking (Beijing and North China, Guangzhou (Canton) and South China, Shanghai and East China, Sichuan and West China) Cantonese cooking is considered the finest, acclaimed in China and abroad. Cantonese cooks are considered creative and resourceful, and are vividly described by Eileen Lo in the following sentence: "A Cantonese cook's head is a computer that never stops processing; it never rests; it always creates" (1988:7). The essence of Cantonese cuisine has been described by E. Lo as requiring fresh food, which should be prepared to retain its character and taste for consumption; the cooking is simple, straightforward, and brief, with no heavy sauces (5). Typical spices are fermented black beans, fermented soybeans, touches of

<sup>3</sup>A fulltime homemaker is one who does not hold outside occupations. A homemaker who has some outside occupation is considered as part time.

chilies' dishes are more often "subtly scented by wrapping them in lotus leaves, perhaps bamboos leaves, touching them with sesame oil, or dropping flower buds into them" (6).

Chinese food abroad, especially Chinese food in America and Canada, as K. Lo pointed out, has often been represented by *chopsuey* (1972:69). It is very difficult to provide a full description of Chinese food abroad. However, I would like to cite K. Lo's list of some of the basic dishes of Chinese restaurants in the West, in order to give some sense of Chinese cuisine in Canada. The list includes the following: chopsuey, chow mein, fried rice, sweet and sour pork, cha shao pork (Cantonese roast pork), spare ribs, chicken and almond, chicken with mushrooms, pancake roll, egg fu-yung, fried Pacific prawns in batter, shrimp in tomato sauce, duck with pineapple, crispy meat balls, shredded beef with onion, sliced pork with vegetables, shrimp and abalone and peas, sliced meat and vegetable soup, egg drop soup, wuntun soup, crab and sweet corn soup, fried mixed vegetables, chow chow, and lichees (1972: 71).

The theoretical approach I have adopted for this thesis has been influenced by Glazier's theory of syncretism and separation in ethnic studies. Acculturation is one of the key issues in this kind of research. In 1923, anthropologist A. L. Kroeber provided an early definition:

Acculturation comprises those changes produced in a culture by the influence of another culture which result in an increased similarity of the two. The resultant assimilation may proceed so far as the extinction of one culture by absorption in the other, other factors may intervene to counterbalance the assimilation and keep the cultures separate. When we consider two cultures bombarding each other with hundreds or thousands of diffusing traits, and appraise the results of such interaction we commonly call it acculturation . . . (cited by Stern 1977: 12-3)

Here, two opposing forces in the process of acculturation are pointed out by Kroeber, namely, the force to assimilate and the force to counterbalance the assimilation. However, these two key forces have not received equal attention from researchers. As late as in 1969, Fredrik Barth complained that "the problem of ethnic groups and their persistence" was "a theme of great, but neglected, importance to social anthropology . . ." (9). His observation was: "The differences between cultures, and their historic boundaries

and connections, have been given much attention; the constitution of ethnic groups, and the nature of the boundaries between them, have not been correspondingly investigated (9)". With a collection of seven essays by his fellow researchers, Barth stressed the persisting aspect of cultural differences in the acculturation process for ethnic groups. He proposed that "boundaries persist despite a flow of personnel across them" (9), and secondly, "the stable persisting, and often vitally important social relations are maintained across such boundaries, and are frequently based precisely on the dichotomized ethnic statuses" (10). The publication of his compiled work was an important readjustment of the research orientation in ethnic group studies.

In 1973, Robert Klymasz applied Kroeber's acculturation theory to ethnic folklore studies, exemplifying its process in the Ukrainian folklore heritage in western Canada. His conclusion was:

... the transformation of the tradition from an immigrant to an ethnic folklore is marked primarily by its discovery of ethnicity as a new and dynamic *raison d'être* in the New World. The result is the emergence of a new and uniquely comprehensive dimension for continuity that is inextricably attuned to the demands and pressures of a swiftly-moving, modern civilization ... (1973: 139).

What Klymasz emphasizes is the resultant new form of a folklore complex. He was endeavoring to delineate the nature of the transformation that has been produced through the influence of the mainstream culture. Obviously, the issue of assimilation became the focus, which was an explicit reflection of the then overall emphasis on assimilation in ethnic studies.

It was in 1985 that Stephen D. Glazier drew equal attention to both forces in the acculturative process of ethnic folklore -- to use his own terms -- those of syncretism and separation. His equal emphasis on both factors in the acculturative process is explicitly stated in the opening comments of his study of Afro-American religious groups in Trinidad: "Whenever two or more religious traditions exist in proximity, there is a tendency for these traditions to merge. There is also a countervailing tendency for each religious tradition to remain separate (49-50)". To illustrate his point, he uses his fieldwork findings to show that there is considerable evidence for a blending of religious



traditions but also considerable evidence for religious separation. He introduces the term "juxtaposition" to describe the above phenomenon. The significance of Glazier's exploration lies in the fact that he has attempted to turn scholars' attention from a previously one-sided emphasis in ethnic studies, namely, that of syncretism, to two primary issues -- syncretism and separation -- and their interactive forces in the dynamic acculturation process.

Based on Glazier's findings, I assume that there are two countervailing forces in the foodways complex of any immigrant ethnic group, namely, the force to retain the Old World foodways heritage, and the force to submit to the host culture, respectively termed as "continuation" and "acculturation". With regard to my fieldwork, continuation refers to all those factors that manifest the traditional nature of Chinese foodways, and acculturation, to those New World adjustments made by the three families.

The purpose of my research is to isolate elements illustrating the dynamic processes of continuation and acculturation in foodways among the three informant families, so as to arrive at some conclusions about characteristics of the resultant foodways complex in this specific cultural context, St. John's, Newfoundland. To achieve my goal, I will adopt a holistic approach, namely, an integration of historical/comparative, ethnographic, functional and symbolic data, as summarized by Rikoon (1982: 12); in order to present such a complex of foodways as that of these three families, no single approach can achieve the desired goal.

## **Part I**

### **A Survey of the Literature**

## Chapter I: Foodways Scholarship

As the first necessity of life, food has been the subject of research for centuries. There is an abundance of available literature on foodways research, with many diverse treatments. The standard approaches have been nutritional, medical and home economic. Recently, a growing interest in foodways research from anthropological and folkloric perspectives has arisen, shifting the focus from the physical aspects of food to social aspects of the whole complex of foodways, exploring roles of food in the larger framework of society.

Only social scientific approaches to foods are of interest here, or, to put it more specifically, the literature closely related to folkloristics. Anthropological theories have made a major contribution to the academic study of folklore (Dorson 1968: 202; Zumwalt 1988: 98), and foodways study of folklore owes its initial impetus to anthropological foodways scholars, specifically scholars from Europe. As such, before the scholarship from other disciplines is discussed, I will first consider anthropological studies. To make materials manageable, I will survey foodways scholarship by beginning with works done by scholars in Europe, followed by those conducted in North America, with scholarship on Chinese food habits discussed in the next chapter.

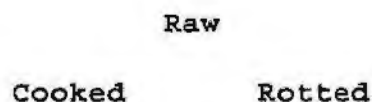
### A. Europe

Don Yoder, one of the key scholars in foodways study in the United States, has stated that before 1972, the most valuable work on folk cookery was produced by European scholars (1972: 326). The first scholarly and successful study of food undertaken from a perspective of social and cultural functionalism was done by Audrey Richard, a student of the world famous anthropologist, Bronislaw Malinowski, with the publication of her pioneering work, *Hunger and Work in a Savage Tribe*, in 1932. Through the data collected during her one year stay with an African Bantu tribe, she was the first to illustrate convincingly her point that "nutrition as a biological process is more fundamental than sex" (1948: 1). Many points of view are advanced and new ideas suggested. Malinowski has listed two of her discoveries in his preface:

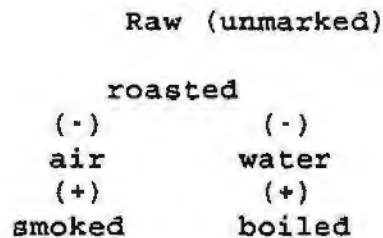
... a synthesis of facts concerning nutrition can give a correct idea of the economic organization of a people, of their domestic life, of their religious ideas and ethical values (xiii) ... the traditional tribal or cultural attitudes towards food are among the most important cohesive forces in the community which unite its members to each other and differentiate them from the surrounding tribes (xv).

Richard's position demonstrates clearly that an understanding of the entire realm of foodways is key to the understanding of a whole cultural complex. Her sociological theory laid the foundations for a new line of foodways research for younger food scholars, who helped, in turn, to develop her theory.

The most influential writing on food habits, however, came from two French social scientists, Claude Lévi-Strauss and Roland Barthes, the former a noted anthropologist, the latter, a semiologist. In his seminal work, "The Culinary Triangle", Lévi-Strauss transposes Roman Jakobson's linguistic triangle to the domain of cooking, presenting it as follows:



Here he assigns "raw" as unmarked, "cooked" as a cultural transformation of the "raw", and the "rotted" as the natural transformation of the "raw". He then considers two principal modes of cooking at the time, namely, "roasted" and "boiled" from the viewpoint of natural and cultural opposition. He holds that "roasted" is on the side of nature, and "boiled" on that of culture, because "boiling" requires the use of a receptacle, which is a cultural object. This is so because the use of a certain receptacle is often looked upon with pride and as a proof of civilization (1966: 588). To illustrate his point, he examines the case of the two oppositions, "boiling" and "roasting" in different cultures, both primitive (e.g. Guayaki of Paraguay), and civilized (e.g. America, Czechoslovakia). He then relates the adoption of the two cooking methods to social attitudes, a marker of the degree of democracy of a certain society (590). A third term -- "smoking" -- is added, representing a concrete form of cooking. He aptly relates "smoking" to "roasting" and "boiling", examining their similarities and differences. He then elaborates the afore-mentioned culinary triangle into the following form:



Cooked

Rotted

He holds that the triangle is universal for other categories of cooking, which can be elaborated so as to integrate all the characteristics of a given culinary system. His purpose is explicitly revealed in his final sentence: "Thus we can hope to discover for each specific case how the cooking of a society is a language in which it unconsciously translates its structure--or else resigns itself, still unconsciously, to revealing its contradictions" (595).<sup>1</sup>

In 1957, Roland Barthes conducted foodways research from a new perspective, that of semiological analysis. In "ornamental cookery" (1972: 78-80), he offers a semiological analysis of a fine color photograph of a prepared dish carried in the weekly magazine *Elle*. He focuses on the eye-pleasing coating of the dish, indicating "cooking here is meant for the eye". And "since eye sight is a genteel sense, coating prepares and supports one of the major developments of genteel cooking: ornamentation" (79). Ornamental cookery is a mask for the extreme realism of the magazine, to advertise the dish, and prompt the sale of it. Hence, to use his own words, ". . . this ornamental cookery is supported by wholly mythical economics" (79).

Another of Barthes' articles in a similar vein is "Toward a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption" (1979). Here he insists that certain preferred items of food substances in a given nation are also institutions (e.g. sugar for America, and wine for France) which "necessarily imply a set of images, dreams, tastes, choices, and values". And food is not only a collection of products but "a system of communication, a

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<sup>1</sup> Apart from the above theoretical framework, Lévi-Strauss has other works devoted to foodways study, such as *The Raw and Cooked* (1969), and *The Origin of Table Manners* (1978).

body of images, a protocol of usages, situations, and behaviour" (167). Hence, in order to find out the constituent units of a food system, Barthes proposes a "transformational analysis" (168) of a complete inventory in a given society, observing that "the passage from one fact to another produces a difference in signification" and constructs a "veritable grammar of foods" (168). With examples from contemporary French food consumption, Barthes reveals that "food serves not only for themes" (i.e. anthropological situation of the French consumer, and ambiguous values of a somatic as well as psychic nature centering around the concept of health), but also for situations (i.e. activity, work, sports, effort, leisure, celebration). Hence, he concludes: "food is an organic system, organically integrated into its specific type of civilization" (173).

Obviously, both Lévi-Strauss and Barthes were searching for a fixed code or deep structure underlying foods people eat. But here I share Mennell's view that their structural approach to food preferences and avoidances is limited in its function of understanding "their origins, formation and processes of change over time" (1987: 15).

Nils-Arvid Bringéus, a Swedish professor of food studies at Lund University, has made a seminal contribution to international foodways studies. His books and articles on foodways between 1966 and 1988 total seventy-four entries (Klein 4). His article, "Man, Food, and Milieu", was carried in *Folklife* in 1970, and left an important influence on folkloric foodways research. Currently, he heads the Center for Ethnological Food Studies in Lund University, supervising several students on foodways research. However, Swedish foodways ethnologists concentrate largely on the peasant past. While their contribution provides important knowledge of peasant life, and insights into the relationship between the peasant past and the present, their research has its limitations, which have been pointed out by Klein:

It has limited the ethnological conception of what constitutes proper topics of inquiry. The foodways of aristocrats of urban working classes, of industrial bourgeoisie, of the same immigrant groups and of many others have not been studied with remotely the same energy as those of Southern Swedish peasants (1984: 4).

Bringéus' approach can be primarily defined as historical, which is the dominant emphasis in Europe. In Yoder's work, "Folk Cookery" (1972), are listed some of the best samples of works from the above perspective from Germany, Switzerland, Poland, the Netherlands and Britain (327). Their researches are diachronic, examining food issues from ancient times to the present. Bringéus is a pioneer in this regard. Apart from his various articles on detailed cultural histories, connecting contemporary dishes and customs with those of the peasant past, Bringéus was credited with holding the first successful international ethnological food conference at Lund University in 1971. The conference has had a far-reaching impact on international foodways research using social scientific approaches.

The translation of Barthes' work from French to English in 1972 served as a stimulus for foodways research, especially in the English speaking world. There was an increased interest in foodways research, treating food consumption as a cultural phenomenon. In 1972, an important work on foodways research appeared in Britain, "Deciphering a Meal" by Mary Douglas. Her article starts with Barthes' theoretical framework that food categories encode social events, and goes a step further by taking up a particular series of social events to see how they are coded (61). She concludes that a meal is an ordered system, with rules governing the menu which -- as it represents all the ordered systems associated with it -- arouses strong emotions when that category is threatened (80).

A more recent significant contribution made by Douglas to foodways research is the 1987 publication she edited, *Constructive Drinking: Perspectives on Drink from Anthropology*. The book, consisting of fifteen essays written mostly by anthropologists, is significant for social science research. Its significance is clear from the following comment:

It is so not only because it provides a valuable corrective to the view of drinking as problematic but also a fine analysis of drinking as part of a whole culture complex, its incorporation into systems of social control, its use for special occasions and relationship maintaining, its function of creating a bearable, intelligible world, and its role in the political economy. (From the book's back cover)



Bringéus' effort to bring about a world-wide interest in foodways research was successfully furthered by an important figure in Britain, Alexander Fenton, Director of the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland. He is credited with three books: *Food in Perspective: Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Ethnological Food Research* (1981); *Food in Change: Eating Habits from the Middle Ages to the Present Day* (1986); and *Food and Drink and Travelling Accessories: Essays in Honour of Gosta Berg* (1988).<sup>2</sup> Though Fenton did not contribute to the first anthology, *Food in Perspective* was the first substantial book on ethnological food research in Britain. With thirty-three contributions from different countries, the book has shed light on a wide spectrum of foodways research concerns. It served both as a reflection of the rising scholarly interest in foodways, and a stimulus for the subsequent research on foodways world-wide.

In 1986, Fenton co-edited with Eszter Kisban another book, *Food in Change: Eating Habits From the Middle Ages to the Present Day*. Twenty four essays were based on contributions to the Fifth International Conference on Ethnological Food Research, organized by the Institute of Ethnology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, at Matrafured in the Matra Mountain area of Hungary, and held in October 1983. They cover food research from diverse geographic areas such as the United States, Austria, Bulgaria, East Germany, Greece, Ireland, Poland, Rumania, Scotland, Slovakia and Moravia; the essays deal with issues on food change from a historical viewpoint.

Fenton's *Food and Drink and Travelling Accessories: Essays in Honour of Gosta Berg* includes thirteen essays on foodways research, with a number focusing on specific accessories for food and drink consumption. Many pictures of material objects discussed are included in the book, providing a wide range of foodways research from a material culture perspective.

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<sup>2</sup>Berg was president of the Royal Gustav Adolf Academy from 1969-1974, and chairman of the Royal Patriotic Society of Sweden since 1973.

## B. North America

Foodways research in North America has assumed a more diversified number of theoretical approaches than that in Europe. There are quite a few significant foodways studies conducted by scholars other than folklorists. A pioneering work from a historical perspective was produced by Richard Osborn Cummings, *The American and His Food* (1940). Don Yoder regarded it as the only book in America that "can rank in thoroughness and authoritativeness" with European foodways scholarships before 1972 (1972: 328). Another important contribution made by Americans was from the Southern Illinois Foodways project undertaken in 1940, under the leadership of Dr. M. L. Wilson, Director of the Department of Agriculture's Extension Services. The most important result was the seminal report, *Manual for the Study of Food Habits* (1945), written by Margaret Mead, which contains an extensive bibliography of almost 700 scholarly articles in the field of American foodways, in both alphabetical and categorical arrangement. It provides easy access to United States foodways studies. Soon another important work appeared, *'Twixt the Cup and the Lip'*, by Margaret Cussler and Mary Louise De Give in 1952. It was subtitled *Psychological and Socio-cultural Factors Affecting Food Habits*, and was regarded by Jay Anderson as a model ethnographic study, which "combined with their numerous articles and reports and unpublished dissertations adds up to one of the most complete portraits of folk foodways available" (1971a: 60).

Folkloric treatment of foodways in the United States dates its beginning, according to W. K. McNeil (1989: 11-20), to Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904), a late nineteenth century folklorist. He was credited with having stimulated the initial interest of folklorists in the study of American foodways with the folklore of Japanese groups, specifically with his book, *La Cuisine Creole* (1885). Significant researches conducted by N. D. Humphrey, and by the Texas Folklore Society with Mexican-American foodways in the mid-twentieth century are examined by McNeil in his introduction to *American Foodways*. However, McNeil considers that America's foodways research in its first seventy years in the twentieth century is characterized primarily by a huge number of recipe collections and the lore of specific groups.

The boom in American foodways research did not come about until the late 1970s, and developed under the influence of British anthropologists such as Audrey Richard and Mary Douglas. Don Yoder's "Folk Cookery" (1972) also prompted great interest within the discipline of folklife studies in America. He called for a contextual study of foodways research, proposing: "The study of folk cookery includes the study of the foods themselves, their morphology, their preparation, their preservation, their social and psychological functions, and their ramification into all other aspects of folk culture (325)". He also made an attempt to explore the relationship of folk cookery and material culture. He is one of the pioneers who established the foodways research newsletter, *The Digest*, in 1977, published twice a year, under the auspices of the American Folklore Society. A review of the interdisciplinary study of food, *The Digest* has played an active role in promoting foodways research. Its original aims were to facilitate the exchange of ideas among those who are interested in food-related subjects, and inform readers about ongoing research, conferences, publications and funding, as well as any investigations of food, dietary habits, nutrition, medicine, agriculture, home economics, cross-cultural food research, feast and festival foods, food and history, methodology of food research, and attitudes (Yoder 1977 in his brief note in the first issue of the newsletter).

American scholars have made valuable contributions in folk foodways research. Roland Barthes' mythological approach to cookery studies was stressed by American scholar Eliot A. Singer in his guest editorial to *Digest* (1978). There Singer examined the four orientations of the then contemporary interest of foodways studies: a) folklife studies, for a historical reconstruction of what people eat, and identification of regional and temporal patterns and influences in an attempt to develop a history of every day life to supplement elite political histories; b) concern for problems of world hunger; c) cultural ecology; d) semiotics, in which food has been studied not for itself, but as a medium for social and for cognitive expression. Singer placed great emphasis on the last approach. His viewpoint is:

It is taking these semiotic insights to model eating as a cultural system which, in my view, is the first task of future research . . . the various treatments of food as symbol-

food categorization, food grammar, food signification, and food performance-must be analyzed together as they interrelate and feed back on one another. Thus eating is to be seen not primarily as an instrumental behaviour, but as an expressive art, which, in a conventionally organized way, is trying to say something about something. Ethnography then becomes a procedure for the deciphering and interpretation of meaning (3).

Singer's call for a semiotic treatment of foodways subjects was echoed by several American folklorists in the 1980s. The first attempt was made by Charles Camp, State folklorist at the Maryland Arts Council, with his presentation of a paper at the 1980 American Folklore Society Annual meeting in Pittsburgh. The paper was entitled "The Funeral Baked Meats Did Coldly Furnish Forth the Marriage Table: A Semiotic Analysis of Food Events". It attempted to probe social occasions as cultural statements and offer an alternative definition of traditional foodways based upon what the occasions convey (1981: 33).

Though claimed as a semiotic analysis of food events, Camp's approach falls more or less into Yoder's contextual approach, for in the above article Camp situates the preparation and consumption of food in contextual matters. Camp's stance on the contextual treatment of foodways subjects was reiterated in 1984 in his presentation, "Significant Units in the Description and Analysis of American Foodways" at the conference organized by the Community Documentation Workshop of St. Mark's Church-in-the-Bowery and The New York Folklore Society during September 28-30, 1984. While examining the methodological problems in foodways studies, he insists "food should not be the only type of unit used in describing and analyzing a foodways event. Rather . . . there should be a detailed description of the community in which the food event is taking place. A food event is a social act that is framed by larger material and social context" (1985: 3).

Camp's holistic ideas about foodways research are fully illustrated in his most recently published book, *American Foodways: What, When, Why and How We Eat in America* (1989). By answering questions such as "Why does a waiter put the check face down on the table?" "How can you predict whether a given meal is more likely to be

cooked by a man or a woman?", Camp endeavors to explain that a food event is a social act in the framework of the larger material and social context.

In the same vein are two articles, one by Susan Kalčik, and the other by Kathy Neustadt. Kalčik's article, "Food as Icon: The Artosand St. Nicholas Cookie in a Byzantine Catholic Church", illustrates the point that in the parish the manipulation of food-icons is a significant aspect of the performance of group identity (1987: 6). Neustadt's article, "The Menu Is Just the Same, Just the Same: The Semiotics of the Allen's Neck Clam-Bake", saw, through a clambake, a summer harvest feast, a reunion, summer's end and a chance to overeat (1987: 6-7).

The 1980s witnessed the publication of four anthologies by folklife researchers dealing with foodways from interdisciplinary approaches. The first one is *Foodways and Eating Habits: Directions for Research* (1983) edited by Michael Owen Jones et al. Thirteen articles were included by scholars from various disciplines, covering a wide range of topics, classified into three parts: the sensory domain, the social dimension, and resources and methods.

The papers in this volume emphasizes aesthetic considerations and the uniqueness of individuals' behaviour" (xi-xi). Aesthetic values of foodways and eating habits are explored in the section on sensory domain, where eating along with preparation and presentation of food, is viewed as a "consciously practiced art", for "ritual, challenge, control, aesthetic, intellect, creativity, risk, play, destruction, construction, chaos, order - all may be present in manipulating eating" (E. M. Adler, 10). In the discussion of the social dimension of eating habits, the role of a male cook in family tradition has been related to such aspects as identification and innovation with meal preparation. Effects of behavioural similarities and diversities of a single household with people assembled from diverse backgrounds are considered as contributing to the success or dissolution of such an enterprise. Another social aspect of eating is the sense of common identity generated from each person's interactions with others in a food gathering. On such occasions, the imitation of public food behaviour is viewed as beneficial, especially with housewives, for it can enhance their sense of self-worth and well-being (Adler, Thomas: 44).

Social consequences of food apportionment, specifically, portions of food assigned by hosts or hostesses to guests, are also discussed. Food apportionment is viewed as a communicative act which can discriminate categories of guests. This act, however, can be interpreted from different angles by the participants. Its effect can be either positive or negative, depending on the degree of the covert cooperation of all parties present at a food gathering.

After the exploration of both the sensory domain and social dimension of food habits, this anthology also explores resources and research methods. Sidney J. Levy's article, "Personal Narratives: A Key to Interpreting Consumer Behaviour", offers a valuable research method for folklorists in the field of consumer behaviour research, for the personal narratives reveal much about human nature and the experience of consumption.

Another research method suggested is the use of cookbooks from a different perspective, namely, as a "source of defensible inferences about food preferences, patterns of consumption, conceptions of meals, social identities and relationships and attitudes towards food" (Jones et al, *Foodways* 92). Lastly, Richard M. Mirsky's article in *Foodways* provides a critical survey of research interests and problems in the literature. In conclusion, Mirsky proposes new directions for research. These include looking at the learning process from childhood through adult life as well as exposure to new subsistence options through interpersonal interaction and communication in both the past and present; the relationship between the exposure to and interaction upon food choice expressed as either preference or avoidance; and finally, the role of continued or changing symbolic association in individual subsistence behaviour (132-3). With the above proposals, Mirsky has brought to foodways scholars' attention the dynamic processes of food-related behaviours.

Another anthology, *Foodways in the Northeast*, edited by Peter Benes, appeared in 1984. The nine articles included are concerned with food-related practices in New England and New York from the late seventeenth century to the early nineteenth century.

It is both a regional and historical study with English, French, Dutch, and Algonquin traditions discussed. Largely historical in approach, these studies are based on archaeological and documentary studies as well as faunal remains. The book, however, seems to have focused on static factors. Dynamic aspects of foodways are hardly touched upon with little emphasis given to the social dimensions.

In the same year, another anthology appeared, *Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States: The Performance of Group Identity*, edited by Linda Keller Brown and Kay Mussell. The publication of the book marked a new era in foodways research. Firstly, by focusing on the "internal and external meanings of symbolic group interaction" (1984: 5), the anthology posited group identity as a dynamic process, emphasizing "the sense of both the mutability of ethnicity and its metaphorical power" (5), instead of the previous issue as the decline of ethnicity. In this way, the issue of persistence and change has been more fruitfully addressed.

This anthology demonstrated four new directions in foodways research. The first direction concerns the nature and meaning of intra-group variation. This theory recognizes on the one hand the weakening of ethnic patterns with each subsequent generation, and on the other, a continuing presence of the old system. Hence, the researchers taking this approach explore the structural factors that determine the intra-group variation, endeavouring to explain the cultural dynamic of persistence and change in ethnic communities. A second new direction for research is the expansion of the definition of group affinity. This direction proposes that research goes beyond the traditional basis for how groups are constructed (ethnic or regional) to groups based on other affinity factors (such as age, occupation, socio-economic status, neighbourhood proximity) for analysis within food systems. As such, the study of food habits can focus on a wider spectrum of people. A third research direction involves applying structural theory to foodways study. By identifying food categories and food grammar, and analysing and relating their structure, this direction explores the symbolic nature of food in establishing group identity and the meaning of foodways in the performance of American ethnic identity. A fourth direction is described by Linda Keller Brown and Kay



Mussell as "interdisciplinary interpretation" (13). Researchers pursuing this direction view food as a "nexus for the convergence of traditional disciplinary methods and insights" (13). Thus, either from the focus on the dynamic process which uses food in the performance of group identity, or from the wide spectrum of foodways issues covered, Brown's anthology is significant for foodways research. The collection demonstrates that foodways research is moving in a more systematic and academic direction.

The most recent volume dealing with foodways research is *"We Gather Together": Food and Festival in American Life*, edited by the Humphreys. Fourteen essays make significant attempts to explore American foodways from interdisciplinary perspectives, focusing on three aspects of food: 1) family, and friends, ritual and renewal; 2) regional specialities: work and play; and 3) "boosterism". Like the previous volume, *We Gather Together* treats foodways as a dynamic process. The phrase "food events" proposed by Charles Camp is adopted and the research is event-oriented, with stress on revealing the "relationships in which these foods participate and the socially-derived meanings they take on as the event develops from an impulse through performance to conclusion" (Camp cited in Humphrey 1988: 7). Such food events centering around family and related family concerns are examined, emphasizing "their own forms for marking thresholds, for celebrating religious and secular holidays, and their own creative power" as well as the symbolic nature of food (17). The second kind of food events that are discussed centers around community festivals. The message of "how social meaning is created in the nexus of home coming, shared work, and traditional foods" (72) is explored. The third category of food events revolves around aspects of "boosterism" in food-centered festive gatherings organized by promoters catering to wide-range commercial interests. The fourth class of festive performances deals with events such as a bluegrass music festival, in which foods create a new "social identity through complex and cooperative foodways patterns" (193), as well as a "food-centered constructed festival, in which food creates a degree of understanding among diverse ethnic groups thrown together in modern city" (193-4).

The state of Canadian foodways research is evident in a special issue on foodways published by *Canadian Folklore canadien* 12.1 (1990). The six articles examine a broad spectrum of subjects: Bertrand Hell's study of beer drinking in Alsace; Michèle Paradis' examination of local people's attitudes toward domestic vegetable gardens in two Quebec communities; Gillis and Reddin's exploration of the importance of a particular food item -- tapioca -- in a specific region (Prince Edward Island) at a certain period (the early decades of this century); an ambitious discussion of Chinese foodways in China, South East Asia, the United States, and Canada by Ban Seng Hoe; Cathy Rickey's study of the impact of rationing and propaganda on American foodways in World War Two; a study of nineteenth century French table manners by Linda Davey. Though the above essays are mainly preliminary studies of foodways, they serve as a signal that Canadian folklorists are turning their attention to this neglected area.

In the Folklore and Language Archive at Memorial University of Newfoundland there are quite a number of works on foodways by folklore students. There are some seventy manuscripts relevant to the subject of food. The only monograph produced on foodways at Memorial University, however, was Pamela J. Gray's 1977 MA thesis, entitled "Traditional Newfoundland Foodways: Origin, Adaptation and Change." She examined the foodways of a sample of Newfoundland's population -- English, Irish, and Scottish -- and looked at questions of origin, adaptation and change, mainly from historical/comparative viewpoint.

### **C. Concluding Remarks**

European social science scholars have produced theoretical guidelines for foodways research. Audrey Richard's findings not only proved that "nutrition" is more fundamental than sex, but also demonstrated the crucial importance of understanding the entire realm of foodways in the understanding of a whole cultural complex. Her discovery encouraged serious studies on foodways in relation to human behaviours. Two other European social scientists, Claude Lévi-Strauss and Roland Barthes, were also pioneers in academic research on foodways, while Swedish professor, Nils-Arvid

Bringéus, was a leading force. He has not only dedicated himself to foodways research, but also tried to draw international attention to his own undertaking by developing research programs and holding international conferences. The first international conference on the ethnological study of food held in Lund in 1971 gave an impetus to foodways research world wide.

The first significant response to the conference came from England with Mary Douglas' seminal article "Deciphering a Meal" in 1972. Some British scholars around Douglas advanced foodways scholarship from various perspectives, among whom Alexander Fenton has made remarkable contributions by editing and publishing substantial works on foodways.

However, the most enthusiastic reaction to European research came from North American scholars, especially by folklorists from the United States. Led by Don Yoder, American folklore scholars established a newsletter on interdisciplinary foodways research in 1977, providing a forum for scholars interested in foodways to present their research findings and voice their concerns. Works on foodways were produced from various perspectives: historical, anthropological, ethnological, functional and semiological. Research has covered various ethnic groups from diversified geographic areas. This brought about the boom of foodways research in America in the late 1970s, with foodways scholars such as Charles Camp, Richard M. Mirsky, Susan Kalčík, to name but a few.

The most fruitful time for foodways research in the United States was the 1980s, during which time four anthologies on food appeared. They are: *Foodways and Eating Habits: Directions for Research* by Jones et al (1983), *Foodways in the Northeast* by Benes (1984), *Ethnic and Regional Foodways in the United States: The Performance of Group Identity* by Brown et al (1984), and *"We Gather Together": Food and Festival in American Life* by Humphrey (1988). The appearance of these four anthologies on foodways is the result of the continuing advance of foodways research in the United States.

The Jones et al anthology was the first successful collective effort made by American scholars on foodways research with pioneering analysis of foodways in relation to social dimensions. More significant, however, this first anthology provided theoretical orientations for subsequent American foodways research. The second anthology, *Foodways in the Northeast*, demonstrates the interdisciplinary scholarly attention to foodways study in America. The research, however, with most of the data based on secondary sources, was conducted in a traditional way, with more of a historical rather than ethnological treatment. The third anthology, *Ethnic & Regional Foodways in the United States: The Performance of Group Identity*, marked the beginning of a revolution with regard to approaches towards foodways research. Here foodways is treated as a dynamic process, specifically, in its performance of group identity. Because of this dynamic orientation, foodways research became more significant in terms of social issues. "*We Gather Together*" was another solid step forward after the third anthology. Its significance lies in the fact that its research was grounded in the current daily life of America and centers around food events at various levels. What is more, it is the only volume with articles contributed solely by scholars with a folklore background.

Compared with other parts of the world, foodways study in North America is currently witnessing a certain momentum. In 1972, Don Yoder insisted on looking at Europe for guidance in foodways research. In less than twenty years, however, American scholars, especially those from the United States, have brought foodways study to an entirely new stage, and have the potential to enrich foodways scholarship from interdisciplinary perspectives.

## **Chapter II: Chinese Foodways**

### **A. Food in Chinese Culture**

When we talk about food in a culture, we emphasize the social functions of that food. In 1970, Madeleine Leininger noted nine universal and non-universal functions of food. They are: to provide the biological need for survival; to initiate and maintain interpersonal relationships; to determine the nature and extent of interpersonal distance between people; to express socio-religious ideas; to validate social status, create social prestige, and mark special individual and group achievements; to help cope with man's psychological needs and stresses; to reward, punish, or influence the behavior of others; to influence the political and economic status of a group; to detect, treat, and prevent social, physical and cultural behavior deviations and illness manifestations (Leininger, 153-179). Distinctively, "Chinese use food to mark ethnicity, culture change, calendric and family events, and social transactions. No business deal is complete without a dinner. No family visit is complete without sharing a meal. No major religious event is correctly done without offering up special foods proper to the ritual context" (Anderson 1988: 199). Obviously, food has been used for various purposes by any culture. In this section, however, I will limit my discussion to the following aspects: to maintain bodily harmony; to initiate and maintain interpersonal relationships; to validate social status and social prestige; to reward or punish the behaviours of others; to protest or support; and to express religious ideas. I should make it clear at the outset that these six aspects are not exhaustive in terms of the functions of food in Chinese culture. The three other aspects listed by Leininger (to determine the nature and extent of interpersonal distance between people, to influence the political and economic status of a group, and help cope with man's psychological needs and stresses), can be well illustrated by other facets of Chinese society. However, I choose to omit discussion of these three aspects because they are either outside of my interest or expertise. I have no interest in politics, and concepts such as interpersonal distance between people and psychological needs and stresses are too vague for me to explore at this stage. Further, I will draw largely upon my own experience to illustrate the above six points, and my discussion will be no longer than is sufficient to illustrate the point.

## 1. Functions of Food

Before I discuss the functions of food, I would like to briefly touch upon an important aspect of food in Chinese culture, namely, the attitude of Chinese towards food, which, in my view, contributes to the distinctive nature of this culture. This attitude involves a great value attached to food, treasuring it to such a degree as to give it an almost sacred dimension. The Chinese have a deep awareness of the hardships involved in obtaining food, clearly reflected in the popular saying: *One grain of rice is at the cost of one drop of sweat*. Hence children are raised with the idea that the waste of food is strictly forbidden. This belief is ingrained in children not only through the direct teaching of parents, but also through indirect means, such as folktales and nursery rhymes. An illustration of this is that if one were to ask a Chinese child about the place of food in society, he or she might well recite the following poem about the hardships of growing food and its relation to the cooked rice on the table: "A hot day at noon, a peasant is digging in the field under the sun, drops of sweat falling onto the ground. Do you know that every grain of cooked rice in your bowl is earned by peasants' toil?" (My translation). Folktales with a similar message are also easy to find. There are quite a few tales aimed at teaching children to treasure food in Eberhard's *Folktales of China* (more detailed information will be furnished in the section on folklore about food, pages 31-32).

The first function of food in Chinese culture to be discussed here is the maintenance of bodily harmony. To provide body energy and to satisfy man's biophysiological hunger is the first universal function of food classified by Leininger (154). Chinese, however, have gone one step further in this regard. They not only use food to satisfy hunger, but also to maintain bodily harmony. In talking about bodily harmony, one needs to be familiar with the Chinese binary concept of *yin-yang*, which is considered to be the basic principle of life in Chinese culture.

*Yin* refers to all things feminine and negative, and *yang*, all things masculine and positive. In Chinese culture, worldly harmony depends on the balance of these two

opposing principles. Likewise, the human body is also governed by the *yin-yang* principle. It is believed that when *yin-yang* forces are not balanced in the body, problems result. Many foods in Chinese culture are believed to possess either *yin* or *yang* qualities. An excess of one kind of food over another may result in the imbalance of the two forces.<sup>1</sup> A more popular phrase referring to foods of *yin-yang* qualities is cold-hot, or *liang-re* in Chinese. To illustrate the concept Chang offers the following details: "within the Chinese tradition, oily and fried food, pepper, hot flavoring, fatty meat and oily plant food (such as peanuts) are 'hot', whereas most water plants, most crustaceans (especially crabs), and certain beans (such as mung beans) are 'cold'" (1977: 10). Anderson has classified another category of foods, namely, foods that provide strength, which help the vital functions of the body (1988: 369). Ginseng and ginger are among the best known food tonics in the Chinese belief system.

An excess of either kind of food may result in disease. For instance, the overeating of "hot" foods may result in soreness in the body, such as a sore throat or an inexplicable fever. An excess of "cold" foods may lead to low blood pressure, or shortness of breath. To combat the disease one may use "hot" foods to treat a "cold" disease, and vice versa, so that a balance may be achieved, and the body becomes normal again. Therefore, food used to maintain bodily harmony is, in effect, concerned with the notion of food as medicine.

Food as medicine is a long standing concept in Chinese culture, dating as far back as four thousand years ago. To the Chinese, dietetics and herb medication are important curative methods and are in constant use. They appeal to both the elite and the common classes. The importance attached to this aspect by the elite can be clearly seen by the large number of kitchen personnel in the king's palace during the Chou period. More than seven percent of the kitchen staff (162 out of 2,271; Chang 1977: 11) were dieticians in charge of the correct preparation of balanced dishes for the king, his queen, and the

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<sup>1</sup>The belief is documented in the Chou period (12th cent. BC - 221 BC) (Chang 1977: 10), and is still viewed as a dominant concept in Chinese culture.



crown prince. However, their practices were aimed more at lengthening the life of the imperial family than as curative procedures. For the common people, dietetics and herbal medication are important curative methods. An item on popular sayings about food for curative purposes, which was recently carried in the *People's Daily* (5 May, 1990: 6), can be used to illustrate this point (for the original Chinese version, see Figure 2) . My translation follows:

*Salt and vinegar are good for diminishing inflammation.*  
*Chinese chives are good for the kidney and for warming the waist and knees.*  
*Turnips can be used to reduce phlegm and help digestion.*  
*Celery can be used to lower blood pressure.*  
*Peppers can expel coldness and dampness.*  
*Soup with onions, peppers, and ginger roots can cure a cold.*  
*Garlic can prevent a recurrence of enteritis.*  
*Mung beans are the best for expelling heat.*  
*Bananas enable free movement of the bowels and the expelling*  
*of stomach heat.*  
*Dates are good for the stomach and spleen.*  
*Tomatoes can enrich the blood and beautify looks.*  
*Fowls are good for the brain and of high nutritional value.*  
*Peanuts can reduce cholesterol.*  
*Fruits and melons can be used for detumescence and for diuresis.*  
*Fish and shrimps can enrich a mother's milk.*  
*Animal livers can brighten the eyes.*  
*Dark plums can promote the secretion of saliva and relieve*  
*uneasiness of the body and mind.*  
*Walnuts can moisten the lungs and blacken hair.*  
*Honey can both moisten the lungs and lengthen one's life span.*  
*And grapes can beautify one's looks and make one look younger*  
*than one's age.*

With a history of thousands of years, such practices can be found everywhere in China, and they deserve a lengthy study. However, what I am concerned with here is to show that food used to maintain bodily harmony is an important aspect of Chinese culture.

The second function of food is to initiate and maintain interpersonal relationships, a universally recognized feature. Leininger has stated that "probably no other object or substance is so important as food in fostering social relationships and in maintaining contacts with others" (155). The Chinese are known to be most concerned with personal relationships. The popular saying, *Personal relationships are above the law*, reflects this view to a certain degree. The Chinese have made full use of food and drink to initiate

Figure 2: The Original Chinese Version of Some  
Popular Sayings About Food Used for  
Curative Purposes

# 飲食諺語

鹽醋防毒消炎好，  
韭菜補腎暖腰。  
蘿蔔化痰消脹氣，  
芹菜能降血壓高。  
胡椒驅寒又除濕，  
蔥辣薑湯治感冒。  
大蒜抑制腸炎發，  
綠豆解暑最為妙。  
香蕉通便解胃熱，  
健胃補脾食紅棗。  
番茄補血美容顏，  
禽類益智營養高。  
花生能降膽固醇，  
瓜果消腫又利尿。  
魚蝦能乳汁補，  
動物肝臟明目好。  
生津安神數烏梅，  
潤肺黑髮食核桃。  
蜂蜜潤肺又益壽，  
葡萄悅色會年少。

(民粹)

人民日報，1990.5.5 才1版

and maintain interpersonal relationships with friends, relatives, and others. If coffee is said to be of unique importance to Americans, tea is certainly of equal importance to the Chinese. Yutang Lin, a well known Taiwan writer, has pointed out: "smoking, drinking wine, and tea, are the three greatest innovations, from the viewpoint of socialization and entertainment, for enjoying space, friendship, social interaction and chatting" (1966: 233, my translation).

Tea drinking has been an appropriate setting for many types of occasions. In old China, it was well known as an occasion for men of letters to compose poems and antithetical couplets, for the common people to gossip and chat. Nowadays, tea drinking has been related to other events besides friendly get-togethers. A term currently in vogue in China is *tea party*. Perhaps it is better to cite the Chinese phrase word for word, *Cha-hua-hui*, which means "tea-talk-meeting", or "to talk over tea". This term is now frequently used in mainland China to refer to some business, official, or intellectual events. In the mass media, one can often come across phrases such as the Spring Festival Tea Party, with top government officials attending, or parties to discuss intellectual or business issues. Daily tea drinking in China, however, has always had one or more of the following functions listed by Leininger:

. . . to meet new people; to express emotional frustrations and tensions; to gossip about and with others; to boast about one's social and occupational achievements; to explore personal and work problems with others; to enhance feelings of self-esteem and identity; to nurture group cohesion and social belongingness; to communicate common or dissimilar life experiences; and to work toward the solution of personal life problems (155-6).

In Chinese culture, food giving and receiving is of considerable importance in initiating and maintaining interpersonal relationships, or determining the nature or the extent of interpersonal distance between people. Whenever food giving or receiving is successfully carried out, it means both parties are on friendly or agreeable terms, a sign of relatedness. When it fails, it indicates the contrary -- distance or unfriendliness.

A third function of food is to validate social status and prestige. Food has often been considered as an index to one's economic status. But food can be manipulated consciously to validate one's social status. People of status may prepare feasts on certain occasions just to satisfy their vanity. One illustrative example is the wedding feast in contemporary China. People have long thought that the bigger a wedding feast is, the more respect the family earns. Therefore, in a given neighbourhood, the next wedding feast tends to be better than a previous one. This practice has gone so far that some young couples, in order to keep up with the Joneses, manage to offer a feast for their wedding ceremony even by borrowing huge amounts of money from others. One major reason is that they do not want to be looked down upon by their neighbours. The above example, though negative, demonstrates that the use of food can validate social status and prestige.

A fourth function is to use food to reward or punish other's behaviours. This aspect of food has been very common in Chinese culture. A notable example from Ancient China was that whenever someone succeeded in a government examination, a feast would normally be arranged to honour the person on his return home. In contemporary China, when senior high school graduates have been successful in an entrance examination to a university, the parents will almost certainly prepare a special meal or delicacy for the child. Food is used as a reward with almost every success in a career, be it a promotion in one's job or an excellent grade in school.

To use food to punish is also a common practice. In Chinese culture, there is always a family reunion dinner on the eve of the Chinese New Year, often held at the eldest grown-up son's home. It is a time when every member of the family is supposed to be present, and the perfect reunion symbolizes the perfect coming year for the whole family, especially the host. Literature has mentioned how elderly parents have refused to be present at a dinner, which was considered a very serious punishment for the son. A most common practice is with young children, when they have not done something to the satisfaction of their parents. In this case, they are often denied eating something they want or they like.

A fifth function is to use food as a means of protest or support; it is closely related to the above point. A most interesting example of the use of food for protest came from the years when Mao Zedong was still in power, during the time of Cultural Revolution.<sup>2</sup> At that time, Mao called upon government officials at various levels to go to the common people, specifically to eat, live, and work with the peasants or workers; these activities were referred to, in short, as "the three similarities". It was a good opportunity for these government officials to observe the real life of the common people. Most of them worked together with the masses on good terms, striving for a better future for the whole country. But there were exceptions. Some government officials knew nothing about farming in the countryside or working in a factory, yet they tried to give orders with bureaucratic airs. To this situation, the common people had their own way of expressing their resentment. I personally knew one incident. There was one government official who had stayed in a town office all the time before he was required to work in the countryside with the peasants. At that time the peasants lived a hard life, some even had difficulty feeding the family. Naturally, they were not satisfied. However, during that period, anyone who voiced views against the government was at risk of being imprisoned. That official working in the countryside was very stupid, in my view, because he posed as a leader of the peasants there, while knowing nothing about farming. He was totally ignorant about farming, yet he was criticizing the peasants for this and for that. The villagers could not stand it, and wanted to force him to leave the village. As the person was sent by the government, the peasants were cautious with their plan. It was a regulation that these government officials take turns eating with each family in a village. The peasants took the chance to carry out their plan. Whenever the disliked official came to eat with a certain family, he was only treated to three meals of rice porridge, with preserved or salted pickles. It was hot summer, and he was supposed to work long days in the fields. So their plan worked. Within days, that official felt unable to continue working there any more. As he had been warned of the hard life in the countryside before he went to work

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<sup>2</sup>The Cultural Revolution refers to the movement started by Mao in 1966, ending in 1976, when he passed away. People have many opinions about this movement. It is harshly criticized by the current Chinese government headed by Deng Xiaoping, who was one of the two national targets of the movement.

there, that official could complain about anything but not the living conditions to his supervisor. Hence he had to suffer in silence. Finally, he claimed poor health as an excuse, and, having got the permission from his supervisor, he left the village, to the heart's content of the peasants there.<sup>3</sup> It was the local peasants' purposive use of food that helped them to protest that government official's behaviour.

I am sure that similar examples could easily be mentioned by other Chinese. I will turn now, however, to the other side of the coin, food used as moral support. A ready example is from the Tian An Men event of 1989. When, in June 1989, thousands of students demonstrated at the Tien An Men Square for days on end, one way that the workers showed their support was to send them food and drink in large quantities, so that the students could have enough energy for the struggle. The above are only two examples which illustrate the point. I am sure that food used for protest or support is a quite common practice in any society. In China, however, research into this aspect of foodways is politically risky, and foodways researchers have deliberately avoided it.

A sixth function is to use food to express socio-religious ideas, which is directly related to the symbolic usage of food, an especially rich part of Chinese culture. I will briefly touch upon this point by presenting some examples drawn from various rites and celebrations in Chinese culture. An interesting example is the custom concerned with childbearing. There is the belief that if a woman has been married for some time and remains childless, her relatives must go and steal a gourd from a neighbour's gourd patch, and have it sent to the woman's bed to accompany her in sleep for one night. The next day, the woman cooks the gourd and eats it; it is expected she will conceive a child soon after (Zheng 1985: 5). In this custom, the gourd symbolizes the child.

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<sup>3</sup>The above is an incident I witnessed when I was working as a high school graduate in the countryside during the cultural revolution. Sending high school graduates to the countryside was part of Mao's policy to let young graduates do manual labour for sometime so as to transform them into successors of the proletarian cause.

At wedding ceremonies in some localities(e.g. Zhejian), the bride and bridegroom must take out a big pot of soup that has been prepared earlier, and let the ceremony's attendants drink in turns. The soup is made from lotus seeds and longan pulp. Because of roundness of the ingredients, the soup symbolizes perfection and harmony for the newly-weds (Zheng 1985: 59). Another food found at the wedding ceremony is peanuts. It symbolizes 'many children', for its Chinese pronunciation, *Huasheng*, is homonymic with a phrase meaning to give birth to many children of either sex.

For birthday celebrations, the two most common kinds of food dedicated to an elderly person are peaches and noodles. Both symbolize long life in Chinese tradition. A story circulates about peaches in China. In the Han dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 220), the emperor received four peaches from the West Mother in the heaven. The emperor kept the four pits with the intention of planting them on the earth. The West Mother said, "the peach tree cannot grow on earth, even in heaven it produces only one peach every three thousand years" (Zheng 1985: 24) (my translation). The peach has therefore long been in Chinese culture a symbol of longevity; noodles are as well, because of their seemingly unending length.

The greatest celebration in China is the Spring Festival (or the Chinese New Year). The biggest dinner for the family is that held on New Year's Eve, for which many dishes are expected to be prepared. Among all the dishes, fish is a must. As its Chinese pronunciation is homonymic with another Chinese character meaning "surplus", it symbolizes the wish that there always be much more than can be consumed every year, which means that the family will never experience hunger or a shortage of food in the coming year. Another interesting aspect of the New Year's Eve feast is that there should always be left-overs from the dinner. Otherwise, it might indicate that a family has nothing left for the coming year, which would be an unlucky portent.

Food used for religious purposes is another practice in China, though many folk practices have been prohibited by the current Chinese government. The offering of food to the kitchen god at harvest time is one way for the common people to express gratitude



to supernatural and natural forces. The use of food as a sacrifice to deceased ancestors is another means through which Chinese cherish memories of their ancestors.

The above functions of food in Chinese culture are not exhaustive. But they are the ones that can be easily categorized. Some other functions of food can be identified in Chinese culture. A notable one is food used to meet psychic needs. An obvious example is to drink wine until one is completely intoxicated, so as to escape reality, and be temporarily free from frustrations. The well known Chinese verse, "To get rid of worries by drinking is only to wake up to face more worries" is a vivid description of one of the most common functions of drinking. Another function of drinking is of a more manipulative nature, namely, to reveal one's heart, or say something straight forward under the mask of drunkenness. The person might pretend to be drunk, and, having then explicitly expressed his views, can find a ready excuse for his offence.

In a word, functions of food in Chinese culture are multifarious. Food can be manipulated for many purposes with regard to physical harmony, social interactions, and for psychological relief of stress. Among the various functions discussed, food used to maintain bodily harmony has been identified as the most characteristic function that food has in Chinese culture, though, it is more often referred to as popular medical science in organizing foods.

## 2. Folklore About Food And Drink

There is a rich folklore about food in Chinese culture, which is hardly surprising, giving China's long history. Apart from the diversified usage of food at the folk custom level (traditional festivals), a rich store of oral tradition is also to be found about food enshrined in folktales and folk sayings.

Folktales about food can be found in the two major collections of Chinese folk tales, one by Louise Kuo and Yuan-hsi, the other by Wolfram Eberhard. They include many stories involving food: from Eberhard, the kitchen god (234-5); where rice comes from (251-2); the dog and the rice(252); why crops no longer come flying into the house(252);

the discovery of salt (255-7); why the carrot is red inside (257-8); the origin of snow (258);<sup>4</sup> and from Kuo, the smell of food and the jingle of coins (90-1). These stories are chiefly explanations of the origin of food items (e.g. rice, salt, carrots). The mythic dimension of the stories in this category fully suggests they were told to satisfy our ancestors' curiosity about the origin of food, so vital for their survival. Two stories are about human weakness, and punishment by supernatural forces. They were told apparently to warn future generations against the improper use of food allegedly done by ancient ancestors. They transmit the message that food is something which should always be treasured, not wasted. Kuo's story is about the humorous manipulation of food, revealing how rich people use food to extort money from the poor, and how a wise peasant succeeds in countering the manipulation.

Some stories are made up to teach children to treasure every grain of rice. One such story was noted by Chao (1963: 13). In order to scare children into emptying their rice bowls, the children are told that if any grains are left in a bowl after a meal, the child will marry someone with pockmarks on his/her face, and the more grains that are left, the more pockmarks he/she will have.

Folk sayings about food or drink are abundant in China. They take the form of rhymed verses mostly expressing beliefs about food. Again, they often convey medical wisdom. Some obvious examples are: "Turnips before bedtime and ginger root after getting up, the simple way to keep healthy"; "More vinegar, less sugar, and you can be healthy all around the year"; "Eat a good breakfast, a big lunch, and a small supper"; "A hundred steps of walking after meals will enable a person to live up to ninety years old"; "Seventy percent full is enough, and a hundred percent full is hurting". One more example of rhymed sentences about rice is from the *People's Daily*, a newspaper run by a mainland China media press (see Figure 3 for the original newspaper clipping of November 7th, 1989). My translation follows:

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<sup>4</sup>This tale is included because it tells how snow on the ground today was once flour long ago. It turned to snow because of a human mistreatment of food.

Figure 3: The Original Chinese Version of Some Rhymed Sentences About Rice

民間粥療諺語

- ▲若要不失眠，煮粥加白蓮。
- ▲若治便秘補中氣，煮粥加藕可生肌。
- ▲防治胸氣病復發，米糠煮粥頂呱呱。
- ▲血壓高時頭發昏，蔬筍煮粥降壓靈。
- ▲清退高熱症，煮粥加蘆根。
- ▲若要明其目，常吃薺菜粥。
- ▲氣短體虛弱，煮粥加白果。
- ▲治理腸胃緩瀉症，胡桃煮粥見三分。

(張錫民輯)

- 1) If you don't want to suffer from insomnia, cook porridge with lotus seeds.
- 2) If you want to be rid of constipation, and build up energy, cook porridge with lotus roots.
- 3) If you don't want a recurrence of beriberi or athlete's foot, cook porridge with rice bran.
- 4) If you are dizzy with high blood pressure, porridge cooked with turnips will lower the blood pressure.
- 5) If you want to beat a high fever, eat porridge cooked with the reed rhizome.
- 6) If you want to keep your eyes bright, frequently eat porridge cooked with shepherd's purse (a plant).
- 7) If you are weak and short of breath, porridge with walnuts may ease it to a certain degree.

The Chinese also have many proverbs with food or drink as the theme. I offer a few examples that come to mind connected with wine drinking.

*Medicine may heal imagined sickness, but wine cannot dispel real frustrations.*

*With a dear friend, a thousand cups of wine are too few; when opinions disagree, even half a sentence is too much.*

*Over the wine cup, conversation is light.*

Another interesting aspect of foodways is the figurative use of flavours: sweet, sour, bitter and pungent. The Chinese frequently use these four flavours in the expression, "the sweetness, sourness, bitterness and pungency of life", indicating the joys and sorrows of life. To describe someone who is apparently kind but inwardly cruel, there is the phrase, "the mouth is sweet, but the heart is bitter". Its contrary phrase is "bitter of mouth but with the heart of a kind old lady". Other phrases with food as a descriptive vehicle can also be found. Some examples are: "A beauty fit to be a feast", "Friendship based on wine and feasting", which is used to describe some persons' practice of making friends for the sake of power or profit: "mouth of honey, heart of gall" means the same as "sweet mouth and cruel heart". "To eat vinegar" means to "be jealous".

Food in Chinese culture has been used for various purposes. Aside from the basic function of survival, food has been fully manipulated for political, social and religious

purposes. The six functions discussed in this section are some of the most easily identified ones in Chinese culture. Other functions can be further identified. However, the most distinctive function of food in Chinese culture is the popular medical belief in organizing food so as to maintain bodily harmony. With a history of thousands of years, there is a rich store of folklore about food in China. Among the two aspects examined here -- folktales about food, and folk sayings about food and drink -- the former group mainly expresses the message that grains should be treasured. Folk sayings are used to express philosophical ideas in daily life.

### **B. Scholarship on Chinese Foodways**

Being one of the world's four ancient civilizations, China has a long, documented history. For the sake of convenience, its history has always been divided into various periods. For a better understanding of the time span, I have cited the list of Chinese Dynasties given by K. C. Chang in his work, *Food in Chinese Culture*:

Hsia	21st - 18th century B.C.
Shang	18th - 12th century B.C.
Chou	12th - 221 B.C.
Chin	221 - 207 B.C.
Han	206 B.C. - A.D. 220
Three Kingdoms	220 - 265
Chin	265 - 420
Six dynasties	420 - 589
Sui	581 - 618
Tang	618 - 907
Five Dynasties	907 - 960
Sung	960 - 1279
Yuan	1279 - 1368
Ming	1368 - 1644
Ching	1644 - 1911
Modern China	1911 -

Some explanations are needed here. Not all scholars agree on dynastic divisions. A comparison of Chang's list with that in *A Chinese English Dictionary*, compiled by mainland scholars, shows some differences in their time divisions (see Figure 4). However, for convenience I will adopt the time division offered by Chang in all

Figure 4: Chinese Historical Chronology Provided  
by Chinese Mainland Scholar, Wu Jingrong  
(from A Chinese-English Dictionary  
1980: 972)

# 中国历史年代简表

## A Brief Chinese Chronology

夏 Xia Dynasty		约前 21 世纪— 约前 16 世纪		北 Northern Qi	550—577
商 Shang Dynasty		约前 16 世纪— 约前 11 世纪		西 Western Wei	535—556
周 Zhou Dynasty	西 Western Zhou Dynasty	约前 11 世纪— 前 771		北 Northern Zhou	557—581
	东 Eastern Zhou Dynasty Spring and Autumn Period Warring States	前 770—前 256 前 475—前 221		南 Southern Zhou	501—556
秦 Qin Dynasty		前 221—前 207	汉 Han Dynasty	西 Western Han	206—前 207
西汉 Western Han		前 206—前 207		东 Eastern Han	25—125
东汉 Eastern Han		25—125		魏 Wei	220—265
三国 Three Kingdoms		220—280		蜀 Shu Han	221—263
西 Western Jin Dynasty		265—316		晋 Jin	265—316
东 Eastern Jin Dynasty		317—420	隋 Sui Dynasty	北 Northern Sui Dynasty	581—618
南北朝 Northern and Southern Dynasties		420—479		南 Southern Sui Dynasty	581—618
北 Northern Dynasties		439—534		北 Northern Qi	550—577
南 Southern Dynasties		420—479		南 Southern Qi	479—502
梁 Liang		502—557	唐 Tang Dynasty	西 Western Tang	618—907
陈 Chen		557—589		东 Eastern Tang	684—755
隋 Sui		581—618		南 Southern Tang	937—975
五代 Five Dynasties		907—960		北 Northern Tang	907—923
宋 Song Dynasty		960—1127	元 Yuan Dynasty	西 Western Yuan	1271—1368
辽 Liao		907—923		东 Eastern Yuan	1368—1644
金 Jin		1115—1234		南 Southern Yuan	1271—1368
明 Ming		1368—1644		北 Northern Yuan	1271—1368
清 Qing		1644—1911	民国 People's Republic of China	西 Western Qing	1644—1911
北 Northern Dynasties		439—534		东 Eastern Qing	1644—1911
南 Southern Dynasties		420—479		南 Southern Qing	1644—1911
西 Western Dynasties		206—207		北 Northern Qing	1644—1911



references in the remainder of this study. For convenience of analysis, I will divide the history of China into two periods only, namely, the period before 1911, and the time after that. The former period I will call old China, and the latter, modern China. My survey of scholarship will be conducted both according to this time division and in terms of regional divisions.

Scholarship on Chinese foodways dates back to China's earliest civilization. Moreover, Chinese foodways scholarship has been conducted not only within China but also all over the world. This section will offer a brief overview of scholarship on Chinese foodways conducted both inside and outside China. To mark regional areas, I will make use of two terms, namely, homeland and overseas. By "homeland", I mean three parts: mainland China, Taiwan and Hongkong. All the works produced from these three places are classified as research from within homeland. All works produced from places other than the above three are termed research from overseas, regardless of the authors' cultural origins. The survey is in two sections, homeland and overseas. In each section, two aspects will be examined, cookbooks and research. Cookbooks refer to popular publications, which are largely in the form of recipes, whereas research means academic scholarship on foodways. The information will be placed in a historical framework, namely, old China and modern China.

### 1. Homeland

Foodways scholarship in the Chinese homeland started and developed with the evolution of ancient Chinese civilization. Its scholarship has focused on a wide range of topics, from agricultural to economic and physiological to literary treatments. In this section, however, I will only deal with two of these areas, namely, cookbooks and general scholarship. I choose cookbooks because they have been a great concern for folklorists in foodways research (Sackett 1972: 77-81). As for general scholarship, I will focus on those works relating to traditional Chinese culture, specifically, food as medicine. For modern China, some recent accessible research will be discussed.

Cookbooks in China stress different features at different stages of Chinese history. Those in early times are concerned more with diet, while modern ones stress cooking instructions nature. An examination of cookbooks in the two periods, old China and modern China, will illustrate this point. The best source for ancient Chinese foodways studies is the work compiled by K. C. Chang. Early Chinese foodways studies were more in the nature of recipes. The first written record that can be found is in *Li Chi*, a book by the disciples of Confucius, the world renowned ancient Chinese philosopher. *Li Chi*, a book claimed by Legge (1967: 12) as "being the most exact and complete monography which the Chinese nation has been able to give of itself to the rest of the human race", contains some of the earliest recipes for Chinese dishes. The most famous ones are those called the Eight Delicacies, specifically prepared for the aged. They are: the Rich Fry, the Similar Fry, the Bake, the Pounded Delicacy, the Steeped Delicacy, the Grill, the Soup Balls, the Liver and the Fat (Legge 1967: 468-70).

During the Tang dynasty (618-907) interest in the study of food and cooking began to develop. A considerable number of books called *Shih Ching*, "Food Canons" (definitive texts on food) are listed in the bibliographic section of the official Tang history. Unfortunately, much of that literature has been lost. As a result, only a few scattered quotations can be found in later compilations.

In the Ching Dynasty (1644-1911), scholarly attention was directed to Chinese foodways. Two scholars, Li Yu (Li-weng 1611-1680) and Yuan Mei(?-?), made notable contributions. Li Yu had his own cookbook, in which he expressed his likes and dislikes in matters of food, his reasons for eating or not eating certain kinds of meat as well as his strictly patterned dinners.

Yuan Mei was much better as far as his depth of discussion is concerned. In his recipe book, *Shi-ran* (1824), he demonstrated his interest not only in food but also in the principles governing the preparation of food. He wrote a preface of some dozen pages, in which he stated his own views on these principles. He emphasized an understanding of the natural properties of given foods, expressed his opinions on the best ways of savoring

certain meats (e.g. pork thin-skinned and fragrant, chicken in its prime, the carp white of stomach and slender in shape), on the choice of condiments, even on the washing and cleaning of foodstuffs. He also dealt with questions of balance in a given meal, and the balance of foods in dishes in terms of blandness, clarity and richness. Yuan also attached considerable importance to the manner of serving a meal, e.g. the proper time for issuing the invitation to guests (three days in advance), utensils for the meal (preferring those made of Ching pottery to those of Ming porcelain), the use of ingredients (as many expensive ingredients as possible), and the cooking and eating of dishes (cooked and eaten one by one) (Schafer 1977: 96-100). Drink was also discussed. A heavy drinker himself, Yuan informed his readers both of the best and of inferior wines, as well as the appropriate foods to accompany such wines (e.g. pig's head or lamb's tail) (Yu 1977: 78). In Yuan's view, an excessive intake of wine would spoil one's appreciation of food (78). With literary embellishment Yuan, strongly promoting the art of cooking, stated:

Good cooking . . . does not depend on whether the dish is large or small, expensive or economical. If one has the art, then a piece of celery or salted cabbage can be made into a marvellous delicacy; whereas if one has not the art, not all the greatest delicacies and rarities of land, sea or sky are of any avail (trans. Waley 1956: 52-3) (cited by Spence 1977: 293).

Yuan's study dealt with a broad spectrum of the foodways complex. Yuan also initiated criticism in foodways research by explicitly expressing his objection to Li Yu's recipes, calling them "profoundly artificial"(9). However, much scholarly treatment of foodways more accurately reflects the usages of the gentry and concerns of gourmet living.

Schafer regarded the ancient books on food before Yuan's not as cookbooks, but as dietary guides, especially designed to contribute to the longevity of the upper classes (1977: 87). Real Chinese cookbooks in the modern sense have only begun to appear since the beginning of Modern China. With a shift from their previous focus on the elite classes to the general public, cookbooks have proliferated in China. In mainland China, one can find cookbooks in every region, and in the majority of ordinary households. As cookbooks are numerous in mainland China, I shall not name any of them here. I assume,

with a fair degree of certainty, that the same is true for Taiwan and Hongkong as well; even here in St. John's I have encountered Chinese cookbooks in immigrant Chinese households.

As far as foodways research is concerned, early monographs on foodways from China cannot be found at MUN's Queen Elizabeth II Library. However, one aspect of food research in old China which cannot be ignored by any Chinese foodways scholar in the world is the perception of food as medicine. "Food as medicine" denotes food that is prepared and consumed for the purpose of enhancing health, harmonizing the human body, preventing disease, or facilitating recovery from a specific ailment. A more detailed description of the characteristics of "food as medicine" has been offered by Yuzhi Bao (1989). The three characteristics listed are:

Firstly, the base for the prescription of medicine and choice of food comes from theories of traditional Chinese medicine, namely to make use of the properties of medicine and food to harmonize the process of aging, and beautify one's appearance. Secondly, food used as medicine is made of medicine, food and condiments. The properties of the medicine and flavor of food supplement each other. Therefore, it is different from both traditional Chinese medicine, and normal food and drink. It is a unique food characterized with food flavour and endowed with the capability of protecting health. Thirdly, it is specially prepared . . . A person needs to have the necessary skill for cooking as well as some knowledge of traditional Chinese medicine, and of the way to process the medicine (my translation) ( 7 Oct. 1989: 6).

When our ancestors relied on hunting for a living, they accumulated, through trial and error, a large amount of knowledge about edible plants, and their medicinal effects in securing the harmony of the human body. "Food and medicine are of the same source" is a popular Chinese saying from time immemorial. Food used for this purpose is an important part of traditional Chinese medicine. Its origin dates back to primeval times. *Chou Li* has classified four kinds of medical doctors, namely, practitioners using food as medicine; physicians; surgeons; and veterinarians. The first category refers to those in charge of issuing directions for the preparation of balanced dishes for the emperors, dishes which were served as food and as medicine (e.g. dates, sesame, lotus seeds and lily buds). The most significant work in this regard was the *Internal Classic of the Yellow Emperor*, which appeared during the Han dynasty (221 B.C. - 220 A.D.). The work

expounds upon the relationship between the five flavours (sour, sweet, bitter, pungent, and salty) and the five internal organs (heart, liver, spleen, lungs and kidneys). It maintains that the five flavours have an effect on the five organs. People are therefore advised to consume only those flavours beneficial to their own health. The work presents the principle that "to cure a disease, use medicine as the major force, food as a supplement, choose the appropriate food so as to build up health" (my translation) (Bao: 6). This book laid the foundations for the development of "food as medicine".

During the Jin, Sui and Tang periods (220-618), works on food used as medicine proliferated. One work worth mentioning is the *National Prescriptions for Emergency* by Simiao Sun in the Tang period. It had a separate section on food as medicine, in which were recorded more than 162 foods, accompanied by descriptions of their effects on the five organs. Sun held the view that a doctor should know exactly where the disease comes from and should first try using food as a medicine substitute before treating the disease with medicines (my translation) (Han 1990: 8). Sun's ideas gave great impetus to the "food as medicine" movement in Chinese history. However, the first monograph on food as medicine appeared only in the Yuan Dynasty, with the publication of the work *The Gist of Food and Drink* by Fu Sihui, a doctor of the then imperial families. It was a major work for research on food as medicine.

*Medical Herbs* by Li Shizheng, a milestone in the history of traditional Chinese medicine, produced during the Ming dynasty, noted over three hundred types of fruits, grains, and vegetables, and some four hundred animals. It contained many recipes with medical functions, contributing significantly to the development of this specific field. By this time, the study of food used for medical purposes had become a separate branch of learning in China. As time went by, the content of this learning was greatly enriched and advanced, resulting in a unique contribution to the world.

Foodways as a subject of folklore research in China began in the Ching Dynasty. Wengbao Wang, while tracing the development of the folklore movement in China (1987), stated that the late Ching scholar Huang Zuengxian (1850 - 1905) treated food as

a part of folklore's study. Liangcai Zhang, author of *China's Customs and Beliefs* (1912), also touched upon foodways (Wang 1987: 4). It is strange to note that the abundance of cookbooks in China has not led to serious research on its foodways. I have checked the whole list of major events in the history of China's folkloric movement starting in 1910 up to the present, described by Wengbao Wang (1987). Surprisingly, not a single book on Chinese foodways can be found.

While little has been done in terms of foodways research in China, some foodways research materials are still to be found. The two most recently published dictionaries dealing with the customs and beliefs of the Chinese nation (Zheng 1985, Tang 1988) devote considerable space to foodways. In the former dictionary (with 459 pages), over 500 out of 3,500 entries concern foodways. Three hundred and one entries deal with the food and drink of the majority Han people (pp. 91-123); 127 entries with those of other minority nationalities (pp. 125-37); and 82 entries deal with ways of entertaining guests with food and drink (pp. 199-209). The sections on food and drink are quite informative. They not only detail the preparation and cooking of foods, they also give interesting information on legends and sayings associated with certain famous dishes, their origin and their history.

In Tang's dictionary, only 39 pages containing 238 entries, are devoted to food and its cooking. However, more detailed information is offered under each entry than in Zheng's work. In fact, these two dictionaries supplement each other in that Zheng's work deals more with the Han nationality (the overwhelming majority), while Tang's concentrates on minority nationalities. Thus, in Zheng's work, over 300 entries on food and drink refer to the Han nationality, whereas only 127 entries are devoted to minority nationalities. Tang's work barely touches upon customs of the Han nationality in this regard. The publication of the two dictionaries has been a significant event for folkloristics in China, where the much neglected area of foodways has finally been recognized.

In 1987, Lipan Tao, in *A Survey of Folklore*, devoted thirteen pages to foodways research, discussing three aspects of Chinese foodways in the chapter on material culture. The three topics described are: the formation of food customs and beliefs; the social structure of food and drink; and customs and inheritance of foodways. However, the information in this section tends to be overly brief and generalized.

Jitang Qiao, in his *A Complete Work of Chinese Rites of Passage* (1990), offers much information on the role of food at various stages of the life cycle, although no specific chapter is devoted to the subject of food per se. Many functional and symbolic dimensions of food are discussed in his work, but foodways information itself is more descriptive than analytical.

Apart from such publications, some material on food appears in newspapers or magazines. Recipes accompanied by color photos frequently appear on the back covers of *China Reconstructs*, a monthly international magazine published by the People's Republic of China. Essays on foodways are frequently carried in *China Daily*, an international newspaper issued by the Chinese government. In short, Chinese foodways research is becoming a subject of popular interest. Another sign of this popularity in mainland China is the appearance of a series of video recordings on famous Chinese recipes.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, Chinese scholars still largely ignore the need for serious research on foodways, as indicated by an absence of scholarly monographs on foodways in mainland China.

Foodways research in Hongkong and Taiwan is not much better than that in mainland China. From Hongkong one can expect exposure to various kinds of exotic foods from cookbooks as well as video tapes. But no scholarly work has appeared so far. It is the same in Taiwan. One clue to this is in the bibliography to Chang's work: only one cookbook from Taipei, namely, *Pei-Mei's Chinese Cook Book* (Fu 1969), was listed. Nowhere else in his bibliography is any research work mentioned.

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<sup>5</sup>An advertisement for three 120 min. video tapes appeared in *People's Daily* on Nov. 19, 1989.

## 2. Overseas

While large numbers of cookbooks have been produced in the homeland, cookbooks on Chinese foods are also abundant overseas. They are produced in every part of the world, wherever there are Chinese. In E. N. Anderson's monograph (1988), seven Chinese cookbooks are mentioned, among which three are published in New York (Chao 1972, Lo 1971, Miller 1967), one in Prague (Sis, V., and Kalvodova, Dana 1966), one in London (Cheng 1962), one in Singapore (Handy 1960), and one in Taipei by Fu Peimei.

Surrounded by Western culture, Chinese cookbooks produced overseas cannot be expected to be "pure" Chinese. It is not surprising that the majority of Chinese cookbooks produced outside China are a product of both old world cuisine and that of the new. I divide research conducted by overseas scholars into two sections, namely, research dealing with foodways of the Chinese homeland, and that dealing with the overseas Chinese. The work of two major scholars will be examined in the first part, and several articles and related materials will be dealt with in the second.

Overseas research on the homeland Chinese is quite recent, going back only to the late 1960s (Chang 1977: 5). Shinoda Osamu, a Japanese scholar, was the pioneer in this area. His contribution has been duly recognized by K.C. Chang and his colleagues in his *Food in Chinese Culture*. Chang praises him as the person who "has almost singlehandedly carved out the field of Chinese food studies" (5). Freeman calls him "the great specialist on early Chinese food" (176), and Mote refers to him as "the Japanese specialist in the history of Chinese food and eating" (240). His pioneering efforts resulted in two publications. One was *Food Canons* (1970), co-edited with Tanaka, and the other, a monograph on the history of food in China (1974). The former was a collection of his learned articles, and both of them were in Japanese, designed for the Japanese general reader. Hayford (1978: 738), in reviewing Chang's work, comments:

The Shinoda book is a more focused survey, the summary of a life time's experience and study, complete with extensive references and quotations. The strength of the volume, even made from the occasional personal descriptions and photographs, lies in the systematic listing and summary of several dozen Chinese works from the earlier written records through the Ching.



It is clear, then, that Shinoda launched research into Chinese foodways outside of China. Fortunately, his efforts stimulated a later work edited by K. C. Chang, *Food in Chinese Culture*, published in 1977. This book is a collection of eight chapters contributed by ten foodways scholars. All the materials are arranged in chronological order, which is clear from its adoption of dynasty names for each chapter. It begins with Ancient China, through to Han, Tang, Sung, Yuan, Ming, Ching dynasties, and finally to Modern China.

In his introduction, Chang emphasizes that the "importance of food in understanding human culture lies precisely in its infinite variability" (3).<sup>6</sup> His definition of an anthropological approach to the study of food is as follows: "to isolate and identify the food variables, arrange these variables systemically, and explain why some of these variables go together or do not go together" (3). Further, Chang has summarized five common themes that run through the whole body of the data presented in the book, namely, natural resources available for use determining the food style of a culture; the division between *Fan* (grains and other starch foods), and *tsai* (vegetable and meat dishes), the basis of the Chinese food complex; flexibility and adaptability, two notable characteristics of the Chinese way and eating; beliefs and ideas actively affecting the ways and manners in which food is prepared and taken; importance of food itself in Chinese culture.

Chang also proposed four criteria to measure the degree of a people's preoccupation with food compared to other peoples, in terms of quantity (absolute number of dishes capable of being prepared), structure, symbolic implications, and psychology. Then he goes on to discuss issues of anthropological concern, which are summarized in three points: "the characterization of a Chinese food culture tradition; the segmentation of this food culture within the Chinese tradition; and the minute study of food variables that could eventually lead to food semantics as an approach to Chinese systems of social

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<sup>6</sup>In his view "food variables" are concerned with such things as the basic stuffs from which food is prepared; the ways food is preserved, cut up, cooked; the amount and variety at each meal; preferences in tastes; customs of serving food; utensils, the beliefs about the properties of food (3).

interaction" (19). This idea fully demonstrates his point that "one of the best ways of getting to a culture's heart is through its stomach". His conclusion after the study is, as far as foodways are concerned, that "continuity vastly outweighs change" (20) in Chinese history.

Much public attention was brought to bear on *Food in Chinese Culture* following its appearance in 1977. As usual, both positive and negative criticisms can be found on Chang's work. In the main, however, the work has been positively accepted. There is uniform recognition of the work's successful achievements in regard to its presentation of data from a historical perspective (even the most critical commentator, Tudit Katona-Apte, concedes this point, 347). Its style also receives warm comments, such as "mouth watering descriptions of dishes" and succulent details of dish preparation and eating styles (Lawless 1978: 446). Fisher notes it as "the best" of the publications produced between the year 1977 and 1978 in the field of physiological history. He calls it "a delightful book for the general reader, and an important monograph for sinologists and social historians" (1978: 34). Cowen makes an even more daring comparison by saying: "This book is a milestone in cultural history, one as important as Lévi-Strauss' earlier structuralist studies of food" (1978: 74).

In contrast to these views, criticisms on the shortcomings of the book are also voiced. Chang's claim to focus on analysis and interpretation led to criticism from various scholars. Lawless says the "book contains precious little analysis or interpretation" (1978: 446). Tudit Katona-Apte also points out that the work "is most disappointing" (343) from the anthropological perspective. It was Katona-Apte who was most critical of the book; his attitude is explicitly expressed in the title of his article, "Chinese Food: Academic Mishmash" (1977: 338-48). Apart from his aforementioned complaint about the study's failure to take an anthropological perspective, Kotona-Apte has listed other weaknesses: incoherence of the book, its description of ideal rather than common everyday situations, too much repetition of food items consumed by the Chinese and descriptions of preparation methods, too much factual information irrelevant to anthropological and historical perspectives on Chinese food, poor organization, lack of

methodology, either discussed or used in the book, and absence of meaningful conclusions.

I cannot wholly agree with Katona-Apte's views. Firstly, in my view the book holds together thematically. Apart from the obvious topics explored in all eight chapters, the book is cohesive chronologically, beginning with a description of Chinese food in the earliest possible times and ending in the contemporary period. This chronological coherence alone can justify its existence. Secondly, the consistency in approaches dealing with data in every chapter contributes to a cohesiveness among all eight chapters, for each chapter begins with concrete food items, and ends in abstract issues about food.

My comments also lead to another aspect of evaluating this book, its anthropological perspective. In contrast to the complaint of some reviewers, my view is that the book has devoted due attention to this question. It is an excellent anthropological and historical consideration of the place of food in Chinese history, for in it one can find information not only about Chinese food habits, but also about folk medicine. The study is most significant in its broad scope with regard to food in Chinese culture, both historically (a time span of over 3,000 years), and geographically (north, south, east and west). In this sense, Chang's work can hardly find its equal.

However, the book is not perfect. While I argue for the significance of the consistency of its approach as a whole, each of the various approaches became monotonous in their discussion. Essay contributors also fail to analyze and interpret their data in enough depth. What is more, the book is largely an outsider's views on Chinese food. This is so because of the scholars' distance from Chinese culture in terms of geography, time, and cultural background. A concluding chapter is necessary. What is more, except for two chapters (those of Hsu and Anderson), the rest have no concluding remarks, which gives readers the impression of using a reference book, rather than one of scholarly study. Taking into consideration the pioneering nature of the book, however, and the cooperative efforts of the scholars, the compilation of Chang's work is, in itself, a

daring venture, and certainly a successful one.<sup>7</sup>

Another outstanding scholar in this area is E. N. Anderson. An anthropologist specializing in Chinese foodways, Anderson has conducted systematic and wide-ranging research, from China's agriculture to Chinese foodways in history, beginning as early as the Chou Dynasty (12 B.C. to 221 B.C.) and moving to the present day. He addresses issues of Chinese foodways in ancient and modern China, as well as the foodways of the Chinese in Hongkong, Taiwan, and the United States. A list of his publications and papers relating to the subject illustrates the point: (1974) "Folk Dietetics in Two Chinese Communities, and Its Implications for the Study of Chinese Medicine";<sup>8</sup> (1980) "Heating and Cooling Foods in Hongkong and Taiwan"; (1982) "Ecology and Ideology in Chinese Folk Nutritional Therapy"; (1984) "Heating and Cooling Foods Re-Examined"; (1984) "Changing Foodways of Chinese Immigrants in Southern California".<sup>9</sup> In addition to his contribution to *Food in Chinese Culture* edited by Chang (1977), his years of research culminated in his most recent book, *Food of China* (1988). It is a valuable endeavor after Chang's work of 1977. Anderson's substantial study covers a period from prehistoric times to the present, addressing issues on Chinese food production, food consumption, foodstuffs, cooking techniques, regional variations, social uses, and medical and nutritional ideology. He includes in an appendix a study of food and foodways in one Hongkong family, which considerably enhances the work. The appearance of Anderson's publication marks another significant step forward in the academic study of Chinese foodways research.

Foodways research on overseas Chinese is not extensive, and is confined largely to articles or chapters in certain books. The first one of these is Chapter 12 of Barer-Stein's

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<sup>7</sup>As for research on homeland Chinese foodways, there is another source about food used for sacrificial purposes. It is Emily Ahern's studies of the varying uses of food for hall and grave worship, findings from her fieldwork in a Taiwan Chinese village. Since it is not a monograph on Chinese food, I will omit it from the discussion; the relevant information can be found in pages 166-74 (1973).

<sup>8</sup>This item is selected from the bibliography of *Food in Chinese Culture*, p. 395.

<sup>9</sup>The above are selected from the bibliography of *Food of China*, p. 231.

*You Eat What You Are* (1979), in which Barer-Stein offered valuable information on characteristics of foods consumed by Chinese. She presents the Chinese as a people confined almost entirely to foods of plant origin. Details concerning milk and milk products, fruits and vegetables, meats and alternates, breads and cereals, seasonings, beverages, cooking methods, regional specialities, meal patterns, eating customs and special occasions are offered. However, rather than examining the current food traditions among Chinese immigrants in Canada, it is more a stereotype of old world Chinese foodways. This chapter is a good reference resource especially for those who have little knowledge about Chinese food.

Some scattered information on Chinese food among immigrants can be gathered from B. S. Hoe's publications dealing with Chinese ethnic groups across Canada (1976, 1985). He has two articles devoted to Chinese food: "Fortune Cookies and Bean Sprouts: Chinese Food in a Multicultural Society" (1981), "Contemporary Chinese Cuisine in Canada Together With Some Culinary Aetiological Legends" (1990). The former is a study of two food items, and the latter, a survey of Chinese food in Canada. However, Hoe's latter study also provides an overview of Chinese food in old world China, Southeast Asia and North America.

One may also note three other articles on Chinese food: "Moon Cakes in Chinatown, New York City: Continuity and Change" by Janet Langlois (1972); "The Hot and Cold Food Concept in Chinese Culture and Its Application in a Canadian-Chinese Community" by David L. Yeung et al (1973); and "Some Dietary Beliefs in Chinese Folk Culture" by Betty Chang (1974). The three articles have one thing in common, namely, these essays are the result of first hand fieldwork. Each is based on a case study with Chinese immigrants in specific geographic areas (Langlois, Chinatown, NY; Yeung, Chinatown, Toronto; and Chang, her Chinese patients in the San Francisco area). Each article has a narrow focus. Langlois' article deals with the dynamic process of the moon cake in a New York Chinatown, specifically, its evolutionary development in various environments. Many dimensions of moon cake have been explored, its history and tradition (the festive nature in its original sense), current secular function (gifts to friends

and relatives as a means of conveying good-wishes and warm regards), and commercial food from some business enterprises. Her finding is that, in New York, all "three moon cakes travel the same road together" (96). Her article contains research of considerable depth and value.

The other two essays, "The Hot and Cold Food Concept in Chinese Culture and Its Application in a Canadian-Chinese Community" by Yeung et al, and "some Dietary Beliefs in Chinese Folk Culture" by Betty Chang, investigate the area of beliefs about food. Yeung and her colleagues surveyed fifty households, "seeking information on the respondents' awareness of the hot-cold concept and the extent to which it influenced the food pattern of the household" (199). Their findings are that "the hot-cold concept remains popular in the Chinese community in Toronto. And its awareness was shown by Chinese-Canadians of all ages, irrespective of length of residency in Canada" (201). This awareness also influences their food patterns. The article confirms that the hot-cold concept is an established cultural and dietary habit among Chinese Canadians, hence it contributes to the understanding of certain Chinese beliefs about food, especially concerning the fundamental issue of the hot-cold concept. Betty Chang's article is a reinforcement of Yeung's work in the sense that her investigation also centers around the hot-cold concept. The difference lies in that Chang's investigation is more detailed and focused. It is a case study, addressing hot-cold practices among women in a hospital in San Francisco, specifically those during pregnancy and postpartum.

### 3. Concluding Remarks

I have discussed research on Chinese food from a geographic perspective, using the framework of "homeland" and "overseas" as governing concepts. Foodways research in Homeland China has a long history, though relatively little of it has been of a scholarly nature, specifically from a food-in-culture perspective. Scholarship on food as medicine has, however, been the focus of significant research. Food-in-culture research is currently being undertaken in China, though no scholarly works are presently available. The current situation in China is not encouraging, but since food has become a popular

concern among the masses, it is likely that scholarly works will soon appear on food-in-culture.

Overseas research in this field began in the late 1960s, and it has been conducted all over the world. Research is limited to two chief aspects, research on the Chinese homeland, and research on emigrant Chinese. The former class of research so far is characterized by an increasing number of scholarly works, among which those of Shinoda, K. C. Chang and the Andersons are the most valuable. Their findings, in the main, however, are derivative, and reflect outsiders' viewpoints. The latter class of research is notable for its firsthand material, and adoption of more up-to-date research approaches. More serious scholarly study in this regard, however, is still to be expected.

### C. The Stereotype of Traditional Chinese Foodways

"A Chinese by definition ate grain and cooked his meat" is a characteristic stereotype of Chinese food culture offered by Chang (1977: 42). To support this view, Chang also noted two points which, he thinks, have long been firmly established in Chinese foodways, firstly, that "there was a grain-dishes contrast", and "secondly, grain was superior to or more basic than the dishes" (42). The above contrast is referred to in Chinese as the *fan-tsai* contrast. *Fan* means literally in Chinese "cooked rice". It has a much wider coverage, however. It refers to both grains and other starch foods, such as wheat, millet, or corn flour. For *tsai*, reference is mainly to vegetables and meats.

Barer-Stein made a more specific statement about the traditional Chinese diet. In *You Eat What You Are*, she stated: "the traditional Chinese diet is confined almost entirely to foods of plant origin . . . Traditionally, 98 percent of the diet is of plant origin, while only 2 percent is of animal or fish origin" (107).

Latourette has also recorded in his work:

. . . the Chinese have been noted for their slight dependence upon meat and animal products for food . . . never to have cared for butter or cheese, made almost no use of cow's or goat's milk. Most of it (meat), has been derived from fish, and from pigs and

chickens . . . Proteins not acquired through meat have been supplied by vegetable products, such as bean curd. Fats have been obtained in the form of vegetable oils . . . To obtain the requisite amount of protein, the Chinese must often eat a large quantity of grain (1964: 491).

This image of Chinese food has been well established among Westerners, as is illustrated by Headland's description of his experience with his fellow white population after his return from China. ". . . folks talk to us as though we had nothing but rice to live on, and as though the Chinese existed on this one kind of food alone . . ." (1966: 172).

For meal systems, Chao's description may well serve as the stereotype. For breakfast (in the lower Yangtze River region), "the rice is soup-like, called *congee* in English . . . The dishes eaten at breakfast are known as 'small dishes', being mostly salty and very savory things" (1963: 4). A typical family meal consists of "dry boiled rice accompanied by several dishes" (3). For the serving, Chao has also noted: "Each person just eats a chopsticksful of this, then a morsel of rice (the rice bowls are always individual), a chopsticksful of that, then a morsel of rice from his own particular bowl, a spoonful of the common soup, and so on, quite casual-like" (4-5).<sup>10</sup>

The ancient stereotype of table manners finds its most typical expression in *Li Chi*<sup>11</sup>, in which thirteen rules were among the most important. A detailed citation has been made by Chang (1977: 38-9). But a more modern expression of Chinese table manners is offered again by Chao. Table manners are often stereotyped, especially on the occasion of a formal dinner:

Table manners begin with a fight over yielding precedence on entering the dining room. Among familiar friends, it may come to actual pushing, though never to blows. After a properly long deadlock, some elder guest will yield and say: "*Kung-ching pu-ju ts'ung ming*," "Better obedience than deference" . . . After you all enter the dining room, the fight has to be repeated all over again, this time over yielding precedence in seating.

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<sup>10</sup>Chao also offered a description of a typical Chinese banquet in her work, but since I do not examine this topic, I will not cite it here. Relevant information can be found on pages 222-3.

<sup>11</sup>*Li Chi* consists of the "records composed by the pupils of the seventy (Confucian) disciples," representing an encyclopedia of Confucian teachings of late Chou, Chin, and Han times (first century B.C., edited and compiled by *Li* experts, particularly two members of the Tai family, Tai Te, and Tai Sheng (Legge's introduction: 1967: iii).



The seating system varies too much from place to place to describe fully here. But in general the higher seats are either at the north or at the inner side of the room, while the southern seats or the seats nearest the serving door are the lowest and reserved for the host or hostess. The guest of honor is, therefore, always seated farthest from the host instead of nearest to him. No guest ventures to take the host's seat, as he may finally have to come out on top<sup>12</sup> . . . the mechanics of eating . . . Because of the community form of eating, you often have to reach quite far if there are several dishes on the table. You do not have to excuse yourself for reaching in front of others, although you should not be too obtrusively in another's way. The passing of dishes around the table is strange practice to most Chinese. When you want to be very demure, you simply limit yourself to eating from the dishes nearest to you. This is especially true of womenfolk. On the other hand, hostesses do more offering of food to guests to save their reaching than hosts do. (9-10).

Cooking techniques are diversified in Chinese cooking; it is difficult to provide an exhaustive list. Chao has listed twenty methods. They are: boil, steam, roast, red-cook, clear-simmer, pot-stew, stir-fry, deep-fry, shallow fry, meat, splash, plunge, rinse, cold-mix, sizzle, salt, pickle, steep, dry, and smoke (39).<sup>13</sup> A more recent publication, *Eating* (Luo 1987), has classified Chinese cooking methods into eight categories, listing as many as sixty one methods (427-87).

Food utensils may be used for four purposes: preparing food, cooking, serving, and drinking. For preparing dishes, a chopping board and a knife are needed for cutting, as well as a wok -- usually made of raw iron -- and a slice for the preparation of dishes. For cooking rice, popular utensils are the pressure cooker, or electric cookers or steamers. For serving food, bowls are for cooked rice, with chopsticks to retrieve from dishes. For serving drinks, especially tea, a tea pot and tea cups with saucers are usual. However, the best known Chinese food utensils are the wok, the knife, chopsticks and tea sets. For drinks, the Chinese are again stereotyped as tea drinkers, although rice wines are also consumed.

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<sup>12</sup>Three examples of seating arrangements are also offered by Chao: Figure 35.

<sup>13</sup>Underlined methods are explained by Chao as being the most important cooking methods among Chinese.

In short, the stereotype of Chinese foodways is something like this: the *Fan-Tsai* contrast with much dependence on foods of plant origin, no cheese or butter, and little use of milk, a wok used for preparing dishes, bowls and chopsticks for rice serving, and tea as the major beverage. A formal dinner is always around a table, with diners observing special patterns of seat arrangements and table manners.

As Chinese have immigrated to other parts of the world, they have brought their traditional food habits along with them. With the passing of time and change in the environment, the foodways of these immigrants are subject to the influence of the host culture. Hence, these food habits can hardly remain the same as those in their Old World. What do their food habits look like in the New World? In the coming section, I will deal with foodways of Chinese immigrants in St. John's, specifically the foodways of the immigrants described in the previous pages who brought Old World food habits with them.

**Part II: Foodways**  
**Of Three Chinese Immigrant Families**  
**In St. John's, Newfoundland**

### Chapter III: The Chinese in Newfoundland

Having discussed in the previous section European and North American foodways scholarship as well as specifically examined Chinese foodways, I now move to the focus of my thesis, foodways of three immigrant Chinese families in St. John's, Newfoundland. However, before I examine specific details of foodways among these three families, I will first look at the historical backgrounds of Chinese communities in Newfoundland and Labrador. This will be followed in the next chapters by a study of the entire process of the foodways of these three families, beginning with food procurement and food preparation in the kitchen, food consumption at the table, as well as selected social dimensions of food use.

#### A. History of Newfoundland Chinese Immigrants

Emigration from China to Canada began around 1858 (Wickberg 1982: 5). The motivation for migration has been attributed to forces both internal and external to China. The country in the 1800s experienced a wide range of disasters, summarized by Wickberg as "population pressure, political weakness and disruption, foreign intervention, and a series of natural catastrophes" (6). The resultant dire poverty prompted peasants to seek opportunities in the outside world. North America became the most desirable goal for the Chinese. As is depicted by the Chinese popular saying, "the other side of the mountain is always greener", North America on the other side of the Pacific Ocean was the land of opportunity, finding its expression in symbolic reference to this land as the *Gold Mountain*, and to the immigrant Chinese as *Gold Seekers* (Chan 1983).

However, having reached this *Gold Mountain*, early Chinese immigrants underwent great ordeals and hardships. The once poverty-stricken peasants in China became coolies, railroad builders or miners in the New World. On top of that, they encountered hostility from the white world; Djao succinctly summarized this situation:

Between 1885 and 1947, institutional racism against the Chinese Canadians and Chinese nationals in Canada was enforced by law: the Head Tax, the Chinese immigration Act of 1923, disfranchisement of Chinese Canadians in British Columbia, and stringent barriers on competition in wide range of occupations were just a few of the most flagrant discriminatory practices (1980: 89).

These factors exerted a great influence on the development of Chinese communities across Canada. Even with the final repeal of the 1923 Act in 1947, the Chinese are often still racially discriminated in one way or another (Djao 89, Chan 1983: 14).

Chinese arrivals in Newfoundland did not take place until the 1890s (Pitt 1967: 425), three decades later than on the west coast of Canada. As is the case with the overwhelming majority of Chinese immigrants overseas, Chinese immigrants in Newfoundland came from the Southern coastal province of Guangdong, the place most accessible to the sea and with a history of centuries of migration to southeast Asia (Figure 5). An entire century has passed since the first arrival, and the Chinese in Newfoundland have experienced what their fellow countrymen did in other parts of Canada, a history described as one of "blood and tears" by William Ping, the oldest living member of the Chinese immigrant community in St. John's.

The history of the Newfoundland Chinese has been studied by Jane Hong et al (1975), Marion Pitt (1977), Margaret Chang (1978, 1981), Miriam Yu (1986) and Robert Hong (1988), providing detailed descriptions of their arrival, business, life, religion, social interaction, population and current status. I shall not therefore repeat their findings here. All I want to emphasize is that the majority of the earliest Chinese settlers in Newfoundland came from two adjacent counties, Kaiping and Taishan (Hoiping and Toisan in Cantonese) in Guangdong Province (see Figure 1). Their initial occupations were confined to laundries and the restaurant business. They were of close kinship, with only a few common family names: Au, Hong, Tom, and Jim.

## **B. Current Status of Newfoundland Chinese**

Previous research on Newfoundland Chinese emphasizes the relationship of recent immigrants to earlier immigrants before Confederation. In this section, I will discuss

Figure 5: A Map of China Locating Quangdong Province



several aspects of the current status of Newfoundland Chinese in regard to their population and distribution, the different groups of Chinese in St. John's, and their associations.

The Chinese population in Newfoundland, according to Statistics Canada from 1986, is 610 (62), distributed in seven divisions across Newfoundland. The following is a detailed description of the number of Chinese in each division, with Figure 6 locating their geographic areas.

#### Distribution of the Chinese Population in Newfoundland

Newfoundland Province                      610

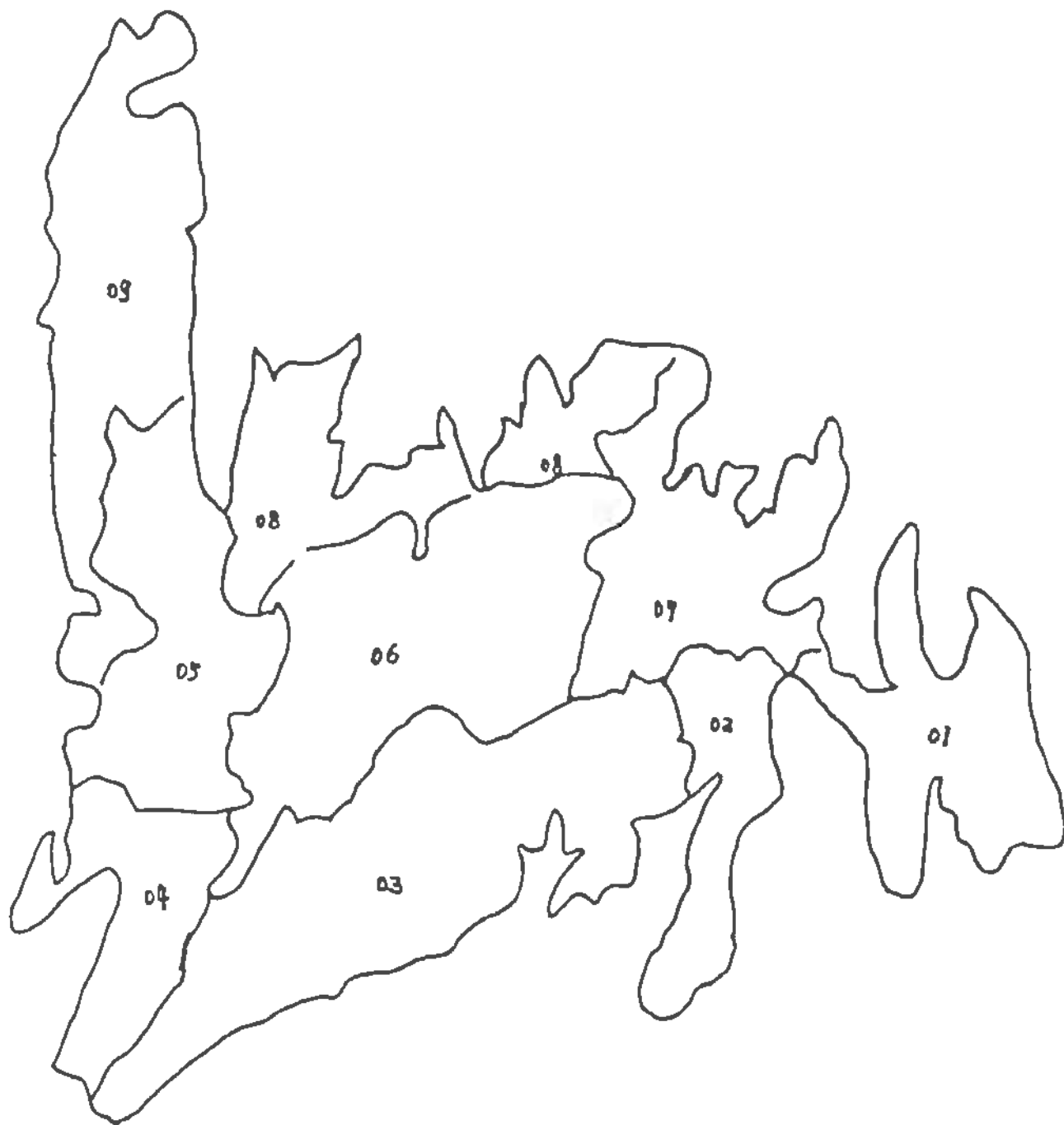
Division No.1	450
Goulds	10
Mount Pearl	50
St. John's	380
Wedgewood Park	15
Division No. 2	5
Grand Bank,	5
Division No. 5	45
Corner Brook	45
Division No. 6	60
Gander	15
Grand Falls	40
Windsor	5
Division No. 7	25
Port Union	25
Division No. 8.	25
Division No. 10	5 <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The above figures are from *Canada 1986 Statistics Canada, Newfoundland: Part 2: 94-102: 1-350.*



Figure 6: Census Division, 1981, of Newfoundland  
and Labrador



The above data, taken from official census reports, might be said to be accurate. It does not account, however, for the current population of Chinese in St. John's, for the figure of 380 is for Chinese Canadians. A large group of young Chinese is excluded who do not hold Canadian citizenship. A very conspicuous group of Chinese in St. John's, these are primarily university students currently registered at Memorial University. The total number of Chinese students at the end of 1989 was 207, of which 69 come from the People's Republic of China, 59 from Hongkong, 52 from Malaysia, and 27 from Singapore, studying in various disciplines, as both undergraduates or graduates.<sup>2</sup>

Apart from the MUN student group, there are three groups of Chinese in Newfoundland:<sup>3</sup> later generations of early immigrants to St. John's of either Kaiping (Hoiping) or Taishan (Toisan) origin; those from Hongkong and Macao; and those from Taiwan. The first group are mostly restaurant owners or workers. Their forefathers are described by Yu as "rural-born, poorly educated, and deficient in knowledge of English" (1986: 24). Their descendents, however, are engaged in a much wider range of occupations. The second group from Hongkong and Macao is described as educated, "whose training and sophistication allow them relatively easy entrance and adaptation into Canadian society and lifestyle . . . they are professionals, living an affluent life here" (Yu: 24). The third group from Taiwan came here as university students and are now associated largely with research institutions in St. John's.

The Chinese Association of Newfoundland and Labrador was established in 1976. It is the only officially registered Chinese organization in Newfoundland, with a membership of over two hundred. The backbone of the Association is the first Chinese group, people from Kaiping and Taishan (Hoiping and Toisan). It organizes various activities, among them: sponsoring celebrations (Chinese Spring Festival, Moon Festival,

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<sup>2</sup>The above information was provided by Lillian Beresford, the current Head of International Student Affairs at Memorial University of Newfoundland.

<sup>3</sup>Provided by Yingping So, the secretary of the Chinese Association of Newfoundland and Labrador on Sept. 10, 1989.

Flower Service, Christmas and Easter); setting up a Chinese school; raising funds to reward outstanding Chinese students; organizing recreational activities on weekends; helping those in difficulty (apply for allowances, repair houses etc.); and helping newly arrived students. A representative organ for the Newfoundland Chinese, the Chinese Association of Newfoundland and Labrador functions as a liaison with other ethnic groups as well as an active body in multicultural activities.

The Chinese in Newfoundland struggled for existence during their pioneering years and over the next one hundred years have attempted to better their lives. The first generation of Chinese were engaged in a struggle for existence, and the second generation, establishing themselves economically. Of course, improving political status was also one goal of the second Chinese immigrant generation. The greatest effort towards this goal, however, was made by the third generation. While the restaurant business still appeals to new immigrants with less education and little knowledge of English, many Chinese have been endeavoring to receive a higher education, and seek professional careers. This trend for better social status was reinforced by educated Chinese from Taiwan, Hongkong and Macao in the 1970s. As a result, there are now Chinese "professionals in all disciplines working in the government, in Memorial University, in post-secondary colleges, in hospitals and in private sectors" (Yu 1986: 23). Some locally born Chinese have been quite successful in availing themselves of the wider opportunity of occupations in other provinces. Hence the Chinese in Newfoundland are actively involved with the development and progress of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, and of Canada as a whole.

Along with the struggle in the New World, the Chinese in Newfoundland have been greatly concerned with the fate of their Chinese motherland. As early as 1937 to 1945, the Newfoundland Chinese, despite their own ordeals encountered in the New World, showed their deep concern over the war against the Japanese invaders by contributing \$12, 419.11 (Yu 1986: 22), which helped in the cause of driving out the Japanese from China. Now their love for China is expressed in the form of keeping close contacts with the Old World, by paying frequent visits to China, and showing deep concern for China's

future and destiny. Another important way of linking Newfoundland Chinese with the Old World is carrying on the Chinese heritage in the New World while accommodating themselves to the new culture. Continuing old world food habits is one aspect of this. With the above background in mind, I will turn to a detailed discussion of the specific foodways of three Chinese families.

## **Chapter IV: Procurement of Foodstuffs**

Kurt Lewin, in proposing his channel theory for food habits, treats as its primary objective the question "why people eat what they eat" (1952: 174-7). This "why" and "what" is involved with a broad spectrum of cultural and psychological aspects in foodways. However, in Lewin's view, the main answer to the above question can be obtained if one could answer the question "how food comes to the table and why" (175). Hence it is of utmost importance to study the ways in which food reaches the table and the value system involved with the entire process. Since the procurement of foodstuffs is the first step in the process, I would like to examine, in this section, ways of obtaining food ingredients by my three informant families and the food that is selected. The former part will focus on presenting the current ways for obtaining food. The latter will deal with both the psychological aspects related to the buying situation and the characteristics of the food ingredients selected by the three families.

### **A. Ways of Obtaining Food**

To ask someone in a Western society how food ingredients are obtained seems to elicit the obvious answer, "from supermarkets and stores". Such a question, however, to an immigrant Chinese living on the most easterly point of North America, St. John's, Newfoundland, leads to many diverse answers. Geographically isolated, with no local Chinatown, the Chinese in Newfoundland have their own unique ways of obtaining food ingredients. My study of the three Chinese immigrant families reveals this uniqueness in the following methods: purchasing, harvesting the fruits of nature, home gardening, and exchanging. Among these options, purchasing is, by far, the main means; the others being mainly supplementary. The following is a description of the four methods used by the three families.

#### **1. Purchasing**

Purchasing is the dominant method of food procurement for people living in a modern society. This is true for the Chinese in St. John's. However, purchasing food

ingredients for the three Chinese families is inescapably determined by their access to local stores and the availability of certain items in St. John's. The homemakers of the three families are familiar with every kind of grocery store and supermarket in St. John's, from *Dominion*, *The General*<sup>1</sup> and *Sobey's*, to *Mary Jane's* and the *Magic Wok*. *Dominion*, *The General* and *Sobey's* are supermarkets which have supplies such as meat and vegetables, as well as spices. *Mary Jane's* and the *Magic Wok* are specialized grocery stores, where dried and preserved foods are sold.

When asked which of these locations is the place that they most often shop for their food ingredients, the answer was the same from all three families: *Sobey's*. One reason given was its wide variety of foodstuffs; to use Mr. Sing Lang Au's words, "*Sobey's* supply more Chinese items, vegetables and spices . . ." (Nov. 21, 1989). Another is the factor of convenience. This is clear from Mrs. Hong's words:

*The General*, *Sobey's*, and *Dominion* are the same. I don't go there (*The General*), because it is not convenient. You know, you have to carry your grocery from the store to the car. . . . I don't want to do it, because I always have a big load. *Sobey's*, you can pick it up, the boys will bring it to your car. *The General* don't have that . . . I don't go to *Dominion*, because I am so used to *Sobey's* . . . (Oct. 10, 1990).

In St. John's, there are five *Sobey's* stores and the three families go to the one most convenient to their own residence. The Pings shop at the *Sobey's* in the Avalon Mall on Kenmount Road, the Aus in the Village Mall area on Topsail Road, and the Hongs on Elizabeth Avenue (for the locations of their residence and *Sobey's* stores, see Figure 7).

If we review the history of the establishment of stores for Chinese food ingredients in St. John's, their choice of *Sobey's* is no surprise. Despite the fact that the earliest Chinese arrived in St. John's in the 1890s, Chinese food ingredients did not become available to immigrants in the city until about twenty years ago. *Sobey's* was the first store in which Chinese foodstuffs appeared. At the beginning, there was a limited choice of items. As time went by, variety increased as the chain began catering more extensively to the Chinese in St. John's. There is even an overhead signboard designating the Chinese food section at the *Sobey's* on Elizabeth Avenue.

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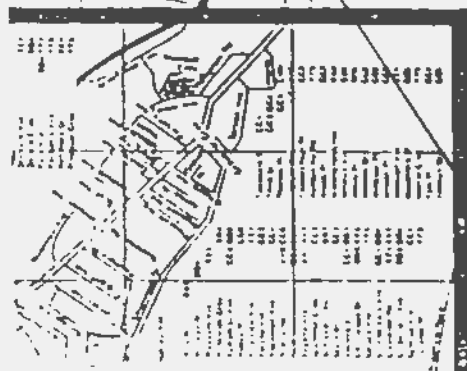
<sup>1</sup>While completing my thesis, *The General* stores in St. John's were taken over by *Dominion*.

Figure 7: Locations of Each Family Residence and  
Sobeys Stores:  
Sobeys 2, Hongs' shopping place  
Sobeys 3, Pings' shopping place  
Sobeys 5, Aus' shopping place



RESIDENCES

SOBEYS



For Chinese ingredients, *Mary Jane's* and the *Magic Wok* are the places the three families frequent most. *Mary Jane's* was established in 1968, and it has had a special relationship with the Chinese community from the beginning. It was the first grocery store to cater to the needs of the Chinese in the downtown area. Almost at the same time as *Sobey's* began to sell Chinese items, *Mary Jane's*, in response to a request by some Chinese who came in and asked for special items, started importing Chinese groceries from the mainland, specifically from the Chinatowns in Montreal and Vancouver, and set up a Chinese corner in the store.<sup>2</sup> The appearance of Chinese foodstuffs in the two stores was of great significance to the Chinese in Newfoundland, because it eliminated the need for Newfoundland Chinese to obtain foodstuffs solely from mainland Canada; prior to that time Chinese ingredients were shipped entirely from the mainland.<sup>3</sup>

The first grocery store, however, owned and run by Chinese was opened only about three years ago (June 1986). With a self-explanatory name, the *Magic Wok* is devoted solely to Chinese groceries, and possesses a large variety of goods (it has a list of 350-400 items, much larger than *Mary Jane's* list of 200-250 items). With relatively cheaper prices, this Chinese store draws more and more Chinese customers. What is more, with the two stores complementing each other, the Chinese in St. John's can get most Chinese food ingredients.<sup>4</sup>

However, as far as the purchasing of Chinese ingredients is concerned, local stores, such as *Mary Jane's* and *Magic Wok*, are only back-up sources. The first choice for Chinese groceries is from the Chinatowns of mainland Canada. This kind of purchase takes two forms: one is to order foodstuffs by catalogue, or through long-distance calls; the other is to bring foodstuffs back whenever any member of a family travels to mainland cities where a Chinatown is located.

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<sup>2</sup>Interview with Nancy Maher, current manager of *Mary Jane's*, Dec. 13, 1989.

<sup>3</sup>Mr. Sing Lung Au, Nov. 21, 1989.

<sup>4</sup>Two other stores need mentioning here. One is a Chinese grocery store established in the Quidi Vidi Lake area around five years ago. It remained open for about two years before it was closed. Another is the Curry House at the west end of Water Street, St. John's, a small store for Oriental groceries with one corner devoted to Chinese foodstuffs. Strangely enough, none of my informants have been there.

The Pings usually order through a catalogue or by telephone from Vancouver's Chinatown once a year, just before Christmas. The usual foodstuffs ordered are listed by Mrs. Ping as follows: dried mushrooms, sausage, dried duck, dried bean milk cream in tight rolls . . . (Feb. 12, 1990).<sup>5</sup>

With much larger families, the Aus and the Hongs order and buy food ingredients more frequently from the mainland. The Aus order by telephone from Toronto or Montreal, two or three times a year. The shipment takes only about ten days (Mr. Au, Nov. 21, 1989). The Hongs just buy foodstuffs from any Chinatown in Canada three times a year. Whenever any member of the family goes away to the mainland, when it is convenient, he or she will bring home as much Chinese foodstuffs as possible from Toronto, Vancouver or wherever there are Chinatowns (Mrs. Hong, Nov. 22, 1989). A sample list of the ingredients from the Aus and the Hongs includes "instant noodles, soya beans, quail eggs, onions, lotus seeds, ginseng, straw mushrooms, oyster sauce". There are two reasons for importing the ingredients from the mainland. One is the price factor, as was explained by Mrs. Hong, "It is cheaper there from Chinatowns" (Nov. 22, 1989). Another is the variety factor, for you can "order something you can't get from St. John's" (Mr. Au, Nov. 21, 1989).

## 2. Harvesting the Fruits of Nature

While purchasing is the major way of obtaining food ingredients for the three Chinese families, other ways of obtaining food are nonetheless employed. The first among these is to utilize the natural substances provided by Newfoundland's sea and forests. Fishing and berry picking are two common activities in this respect. Mrs. Au said that her husband and her brother-in-law often go salmon fishing on the weekend during fishing seasons, both for physical relaxation and enjoyment. Besides, they can make delicious dishes of fish fresh from the waters. The caplin season is familiar to them, but

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<sup>5</sup>A list of food ingredients found in the Ping's storage room obtained through ordering by catalogue is contained in appendix D.

the families seldom keep caplin in large quantities, nor for a long time. Berry picking for them is fun; for the Aus, it is mostly the young girls who engage in this activity. It is the same with the Hong family. The male member of the Hong family, however, also takes part in it. Dr. Kim Hong went to the country last summer, and picked lots of blueberries for home consumption. After picking berries (blueberries and raspberries), the Hong family wash them, put them in plastic bags, and place them in the deep freezer. Berries are used in making pies, cakes (see Figure 8), muffins, pancakes, or are eaten fresh with ice cream. The Hong family also make berry jams. These kinds of berries can be kept for three or four months, or even longer.

### 3. Home Gardening

Growing vegetables during the summer season is also a practice among the three families. Their backyards are used for this purpose. By the time I conducted fieldwork, however, only the Aus and the Hong family were engaged in home gardening activity. Since the Pings are an elderly couple at home alone, they stopped home gardening a long time ago. The Aus plant a limited variety of vegetables on a relatively small scale. The home garden vegetables for the Aus are snow peas and green beans. The vegetables they plant usually need little care, since they are so fully engaged with their businesses. The Hong family have a much bigger garden, with more variety of vegetables. They plant snow peas, lettuce, green onions and turnip tops during the summer season (Figures 9-10). The vegetable garden is taken care of by Dr. Kim Hong's mother, who came to St. John's with him in 1953.

Taking part in home gardening is obviously not done by these two families simply because of economic need. The two families are well established in St. John's, and they do not feel they have to save money on food; rather, gardening is more of a hobby. Mrs. Au, the caretaker of her family's vegetable garden, said: "I love working on the vegetable garden during weekend . . . It is just for fun" (Nov. 21, 1989). Mrs. Hong also said, ". . . for fun, to grow your own vegetables, plus, ah, you save a little money, I suppose, not that much, you know, because just for fun . . ." (Nov. 22, 1989). And no doubt, the

Figure 4: The Cake Made by Mrs. Hong with Raspberries  
Picked by the Family from the Countryside

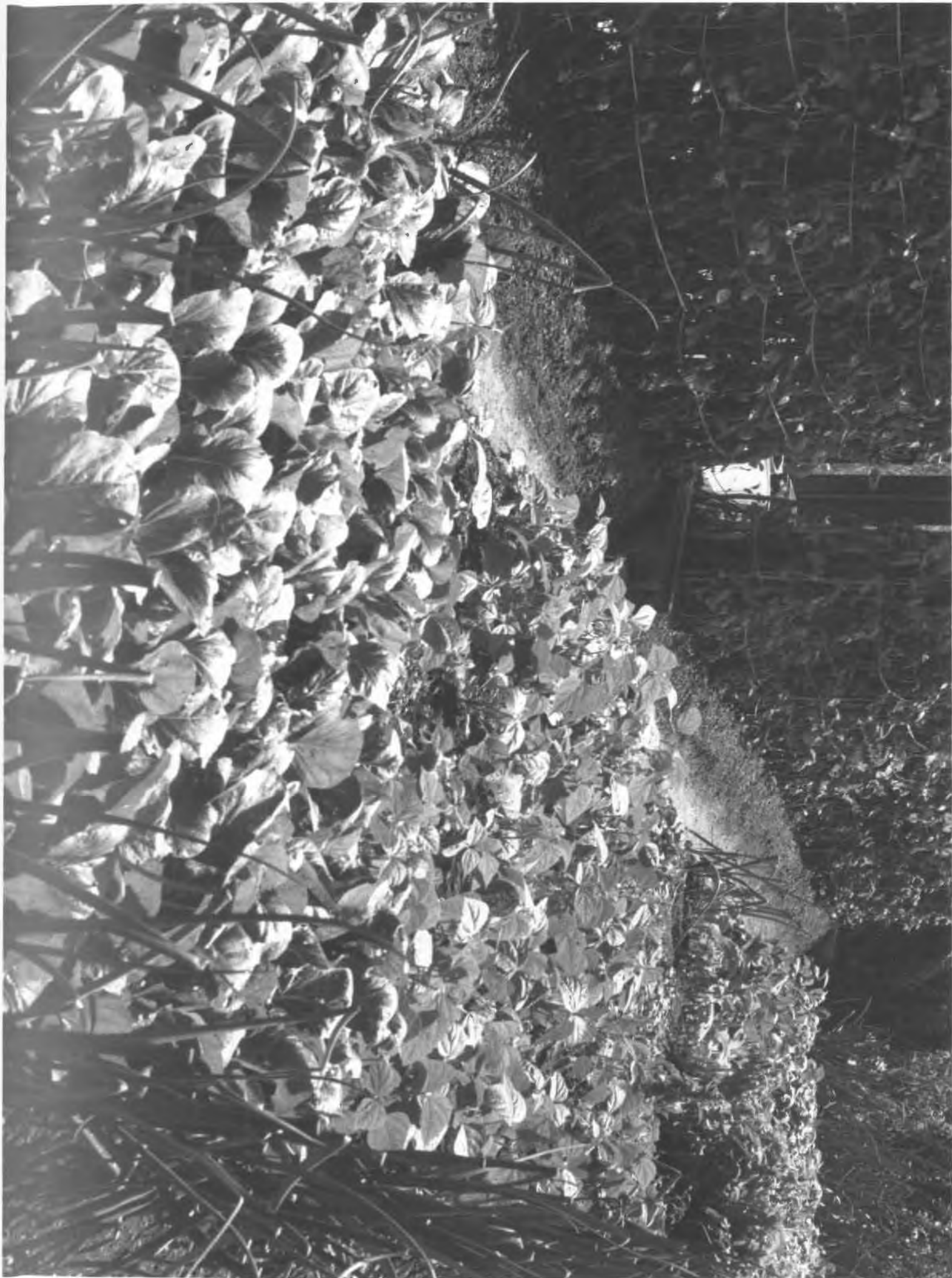


Figure 9: Snow Peas Grown in the Hongs' Garden  
(August 5, 1990)





Figure 10: Turnip Tops, Chinese Cabbage and Green  
Onions Grown in the Hong's' Garden  
(August 5, 1990)



quality of produce is another reason that they enjoy gardening, as vegetables from their own gardens are fresher than those purchased from supermarkets.

#### 4. Exchanging

Foodstuffs obtained through exchange are common among all three families. The Hongs send out food as gifts to, and receive food as gifts from, their friends, either here or in Toronto. Mrs. Hong mentioned that they receive food ingredients such as moose or caribou meat from friends in Newfoundland and BBQ pork, chicken or sausage from their friends in Toronto. These foods -- BBQ pork, chicken and Chinese sausage -- are much sought after by the Chinese. While here in St. John's, they have to be ordered in advance; in Toronto they are readily available. The Aus and the Pings are especially familiar with the practice of exchanging traditional festive food specials, such as *zong zi*<sup>6</sup> and moon cakes. Mr. Au expressed it, "We exchange moon cakes or other things with our relatives or friends, let them try and taste to see which kind is good . . ." (Nov. 21, 1989).

Ways of obtaining food ingredients for the three families assume these four forms, purchasing, harvesting the fruits of nature, home gardening and exchanging. There are two forces at work here, continuation and acculturation. For the major means -- purchasing -- the three families have one thing in common, namely, obtaining Chinese ingredients, either at local stores or from sources outside St. John's. This desire for Chinese ingredients is also manifested in the vegetables that they grow in their own backyards -- Chinese greens. Food exchange is another way in which Chinese foodstuff assumes an obvious importance, for the food exchanged includes traditional Chinese festival food specials. The only exception is food through harvesting the fruits of nature. As they are the products of the local land, they are of a local nature.

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<sup>6</sup>*Zong zi* is a special food eaten at the Dragon Boat Festival. For details about this celebration, see the section on festival foods, Chapter VI.

## **B. Food Selection**

To select is to choose what is considered as best, or most suitable from a group. Food selection involves choosing foods that are best or most suitable for some persons or group of people. This suitability of food may be regarded as a variable in that some foods are best or most suitable to a certain group of people, but not to others. Hence, to a great extent, suitability of food is what people think it to be, governed by the value system of food behind that people's choice. In Lewin's view, the value system influences the people who are responsible for food selection, who, in turn, control the movement of food from one section to another. Lewin designates the person doing the buying of food as "gatekeeper" (177), and insists that the psychology of the gatekeeper should be studied so as to understand food habits.

If we use the term "gatekeeper" to refer to the person who controls the food channel, there are different "gatekeepers" for the different ways of obtaining food ingredients. Among the four ways for my three informant families, the person doing the buying is the "gatekeeper" for the purchasing channel. The "gatekeeper" for home gardening is the one who cares for the vegetable garden. The "gatekeeper" for using non-domestic sources is the person who engages in the activities. For the exchanging method, this is different, for the "gatekeeper" here is shared by both persons giving and receiving food, and the refusal of the food by the recipient can block the passage of food through this channel.

It is important to study the psychology of the "gatekeeper" for each of the four channels to understand food selection by the three families. However, for this section, I will only examine the psychology of the "gatekeeper" for one channel, namely, purchasing. I made this choice for two reasons. Firstly, the "gatekeeper" for three families is exclusively the wife, or the homemaker, of each family. This focuses my study on one group of people, the homemakers. Secondly, since purchasing is the major means of obtaining food by the three families, a study of the "gatekeeper" for this channel can reveal, to a large extent, the value system behind their food selection as a whole. This study will be followed by an examination of the characteristics of foodstuffs selected by the three families.

### 1. Decision Making

As far as purchasing of food ingredients is concerned, homemakers of the three families are "gatekeepers" for food selection. The psychology of the "gatekeeper", in Lewin's view, includes a great variety of factors, which he has classified under two headings: cognitive structure and motivation (177-85). One of the most interesting factors examined by Lewin is "cultural availability" of food, which is recognized in such a phrase as "food for us". This can be understood as food for one ethnic group, or for the children, or for the husband (178-9). Since my study is on three families, this "cultural availability" may be recognized as "food for my family". Linked with this notion of "food for my family" is the value system of each homemaker. When the homemaker engages in the buying activity, decision making for the food ingredients is an important reflection of the psychology of each homemaker.

Many issues can be related to the decision making process in a food ingredients buying situation. Here, however, I would like to examine only three basic issues, namely, nutrition, family preference and cost. These three issues are basic in that the foremost function of eating is for survival. To provide basic food nutrients that humans need for basic functioning and sustenance is the first concern in food selection. Hence nutrition is one of the issues that a food "gatekeeper" is first concerned with. Family preference is another concern for the "gatekeeper", as the like or the dislike for a certain food item by members of the family will have an effect on the "gatekeeper". In this way, the family members play an indirect role in the decision making process of the "gatekeeper". Thus, I assume family preference is a great concern of the homemaker. I assume that the cost of food ingredients may have a role in the decision making for food ingredients by the three families. As all these three issues are involved with the decision making process, finding out the attitudes towards these three issues can reveal, to a certain extent, the psychology of the "gatekeeper" in a buying situation.

My fieldwork found that cost is the least important factor among the three. This is explicitly expressed by Mrs. Hong and Mrs. Au. Mrs. Hong gave an example to illustrate the point:

. . . For example there is ground beef. In store, there are three kinds of ground beef, ok, different prices. I pick up the top price, because there is less fat. Ok, I don't care how much it cost, but I am concerned about the health, you see . . . I prefer the lean one, although I paid a little more . . . (Nov. 22, 1989).

But when nutrition or cost is balanced with family preference, preference takes the upper hand; as Mrs. Au said, ". . . for whatever we like, we don't care about the price, you know whatever it is good, we buy it . . ." (Nov. 21, 1989).

Mrs. Ping, while agreeing with the importance of nutrition in diet, places more emphasis on family preference, as is clear in her statement, ". . . I will buy things to please the family whether they are nutritious or not . . ." (Feb. 12, 1990).

Mrs. Hong is more affirmative when asked whether she bought some food to please her family; she answered, "Of course, that's the most important. Whatever I think that they will like, you know. If I know they won't eat it, like kidney. I don't buy it, because nobody will eat it, kidney or liver . . . I buy whatever everybody will eat" (Nov. 22, 1989). It is clear from the above quotes that nutrition and preference assume very important roles in homemakers' decisions to buy specific food ingredients, and cost usually comes last. Nutrition here is culture-based, however, rather than science-based. Just as the popular saying goes, "one man's meat, another's poison", what one thinks is nutritious might not be so regarded by another. It is more often the case with people from different cultures. An illuminating example comes from my fieldwork.

While people buy nutritious food, there are times that people buy things just to please the family, which may not be healthy. When asked whether she buys any kind of food which she does not think necessarily good for health to please certain members of her family, Mrs. Au's answer was in the positive. She mentioned such items as candy bars and potato chips for the children (Jan. 19, 1990). As far as calories are concerned, they are high. In Chinese culture, eating too many sweet things is not considered good for one's health. Potato chips, with so many steps in their processing, are also not very nutritious.

The Chinese hold their own views on nutrition which differ from those of people from other cultures as well as among themselves. However, the three families here view a nutritious meal largely in the same light. Mrs. Hong considers a nutritious meal to be a "well-balanced one with both vegetables and meat (chicken or fish)". She emphasizes the serving of vegetables at every supper by saying: "I always serve vegetables" (Nov. 22, 1989). Mrs. Au's list is almost the same: vegetables, chicken, fish. And the Pings' important elements in a meal are "lots of vegetables" (Feb. 12, 1990). Their words indicate that all three families regard a balanced meal as nutritious.

When I say cost is the least important factor, I do not mean that the three Chinese families do not consider it at all. Mrs. Hong's explanation to my question may serve to illustrate the point. When discussing why she did not buy any ready-to-serve food, she said: "because it is a big family, we have eight in a family. And if you buy this, it is more costly . . . I prefer home-made, you know, home-cooked meals than buying ready-to-serve dinner . . . and definitely this is not more nutritious . . ." (Nov. 22, 1989). The above explanation shows that the three families do consider the cost, for it is the first reason given. Cost, however, is considered in relation to the other two factors, nutrition and family preference.

After examining the three factors influencing decision-making in food selection, it is clear that, while nutrition is emphasized by the three families, preference has a much stronger hold, and cost is relatively less important. Here I would disagree with Ree's conclusion that homemakers with a higher level of education are more concerned about nutrition than those with a lower level of education. And those with a lower level of education are more concerned with preference (1959:30). I would rather suggest that attachment to family preference has little to do with education. In the case of my three informant families, it is a demonstration of a homemaker's concern for the family members. For immigrants in a foreign country, the content of preference in food may be viewed as an index to ethnic identity.

## 2. Characteristics of Food Ingredients Selected

Choosing foodstuffs is an on-going activity, and is governed by social, economic and psychological factors. Hence, in the strictest sense, it is difficult to generalize about these characteristics. Nonetheless, I will still endeavor to analyze, in this section, the characteristics of the food ingredients selected in the hope of finding out some basic ideas about food for the three families.

As was discussed in the previous part, purchasing of food ingredients by the three families takes place at both local stores and Chinatowns on the mainland. Food ingredients ordered and brought back from Chinatowns, needless to say, are of Chinese nature. Hence for this section, I will only analyze the characteristics of food ingredients selected by the three families bought at local stores. To do this I have collected the grocery bills from the three families for one week, a xeroxed copy of each bill for three families is included in appendix D.

The three sets of bills, first of all, prove that their most frequented source of food ingredients is *Sobey's*. The Pings and Hongs each gave me one bill from *Sobey's*. The Aus, though providing me bills from three places - *Sobey's*, *Dominion*, and the *CO-OP* - shopped for most of their food ingredients from *Sobey's*. This can be seen from the proportion that the Aus spent in *Sobey's* out of the total amount for that week's consumption of food.

	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$261.43</b>	
<b>Sobey's</b>	<b>\$122.84</b>	<b>47%</b>	
<b>Dominion</b>	<b>\$88.51</b>	<b>34%</b>	
<b>CO-OP</b>	<b>\$50.08</b>	<b>19%</b>	

Other characteristics of food ingredients selected for that week can be better viewed if examined by categories. I have categorized all the food items into six classes, namely, starch, meat and seafood<sup>7</sup>, dairy products, vegetable and grocery, fruit, beverages; all

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<sup>7</sup>I have included eggs in the meat category since they provide protein, and are thus an alternative to meat.



other items, such as oil and candy, come under the category "others", which is not included here. The following is a list of the above categories for the three families, with information about the total money spent for the week, the amount spent on each category, its percentage, and place among the six categories.

Table 2

### Amount of Money Spent over One Week by Goods Category

Category	Pings (\$48.59)			Aus (\$240.11)			Honggs (\$182.81)		
	\$	%	#	\$	%	#	\$	%	#
starch	7.09	13.99	2	43.70	18.19	3	16.1	8.81	3
meat & sea food	17.90	35.33	1	125.56	52.29	1	112.55	61.57	1
dairy	6.42	12.67	3	16.88	7.03	4	17.33	9.48	2
vege- tables	4.44	8.76	5	59.04	24.59	2	12.99	7.11	4
fruit	4.78	9.43	4	2.49	2.34	5	7.23	3.95	6
bever- ages	0.89	1.76	6	2.98	1.24	6	12.74	6.97	5

It is important to more fully explore the above categories, as they reveal interesting characteristics.

#### a. Meat and Seafood

Meat and seafood for the three families falls largely into two classes -- raw and prepared. The first point to stress is the proportion of prepared meat to raw meat. Raw meat is dominant for each family's weekly selection (Pings 84.69%, Aus 64.37%, Honggs 84.91%). A notable fact here is that the Aus' percentage of raw meat is much lower than

the other two families, which means that the Aus use more prepared meat than the other two.

For the three families, apart from delicatessen products, the variety of meat is limited. The information summarized in the following table supports this:

Table 3

### Variety of Meat Purchased by the Three Families

Pings	Aus	Hongs
beef(stew, oxtail), pork(shoulder chops), ham, chicken	pork(pig's feet, chops), chicken, clams(canned), tuna, eggs	beef(stew, ground), sliced pastrami, chicken, pork(ham, chops)

Meat varieties are limited to pork (three families), chicken (three families), beef (two families), clams and tuna (one family). There is another noticeable factor, namely, a small variety of seafood is present in their bills (clams, tuna).<sup>8</sup>

#### b. Starch

Starch for the Chinese mainly comes from rice and wheat flour, with rice the southern staple grain and wheat the northern staple. However, among the three families, neither rice nor flour is bought on a weekly basis. Hence starch here means all items functioning as starch from the three bills. To be more specific, starch items are flour products like noodles, oats, cereal, donuts, bakery items, pizza, and potato chips. Another feature of this list is that all items are prepared.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Strangely enough, there is no fresh fish on all the bills from the three families. However, this does not mean that they do not consume fresh fish. One example is that among the three dinners I observed, two dinners contained fresh fish (see page 122).

<sup>9</sup>Certain items such as pizza may not fit well in the starch category, for the toppings of a pizza may consist of cheese, meat, or even vegetables or fruit. Since the basic stuff of pizza is flour, however, I include it in the starch category.

In the Pings' bill, the starch category includes white bread, pizza, potato chips and kaiser rolls. In the Aus' bill, there are Cris/Arrowroot, Kellogg's Froot Loops, cereal, donuts, white bread, pizza, and bakery items. And in the Hong's bill is white bread, hot dog buns, Kraft Italian noodles, Quaker oats and Kellogg's Rice Krispies.

The above-listed starch items for the three families demonstrate a few interesting features. Firstly, they are exclusively non-Chinese products. Secondly, the Aus have the biggest percentage of starch foodstuffs (Pings 13.99%, Aus 18.19%, Hong's 8.89%), and the greatest variety. Apart from the white bread that the three have in common, the Aus have several other kinds of starch for cold breakfast and snacks, e.g. Cris/Arrowroot, Kellogg's Froot Loops, cereal, donuts, chips, pizza and health foods. The other two have much a smaller selection (e.g. Hong's: hamburger and hot dog rolls, Italian noodles, oats and Rice Krispies; Pings: rolls, pizza and potato chips).

### c. Vegetables and Groceries

Vegetables and groceries include fresh or canned vegetables, or vegetable-based seasoning such as ketchup. For the week, the Pings bought mushrooms (canned), green beans, garlic and ginger root. The Aus had broccoli, iceberg lettuce, green onion, tomatoes, other items listed as produce, and ketchup. The Hong's had peas (frozen), green onion, cauliflower, tomatoes, potatoes, and other items listed as produce.

Vegetables from the three bills are in four forms: fresh, canned, frozen and processed. Canned vegetables are only found with the Pings (canned mushrooms), and the frozen vegetable is from the Hong's (frozen peas). There is only one processed vegetable item, ketchup. The majority of vegetables are fresh. Therefore, the consumption of fresh vegetables can be said to be a common feature for the three families. In this category, the Aus are distinct from the other two with regard to proportion (Aus 24.59%, Pings 8.76%, Hong's 7.11%) and variety.

#### d. Dairy Products

The dairy products in the Pings' bill are yoghurt, fresh milk, and Carnation milk. Those in the Aus' bill are fresh milk, evaporated milk and yoghurt. The Hong's have cheese slices, tinned milk, fresh milk and peanut butter. Dairy products assume a very small proportion for each family (Pings 12.67%, Aus 7.03%, Hong's 9.48%). The variety is limited to milk (fresh for the three families, tinned for the three, evaporated for one), cheese (for two), yoghurt (for two) and cream (for one).

#### e. Beverages

Beverages in the Pings' bill are Kool-aid, cherry and grape juice. The Aus have coffee and apple juice. The Hong's have Tang drinks and tea bags. Milk should also be included in this category. The proportion for beverages is small (Pings 1.76%, Aus 1.24%, Hong's 6.79%). Juice is present in every bill (Pings: Kooler Cherry juice; Aus: apple juice; Hong's: Tang drinks). Coffee is found on the Aus' and Hong's' lists, tea on the Hong's'.

#### f. Fruit

Fruit items in the three bills are as follows. The Pings have dates, pears, and bananas; the Aus have bananas and pineapple; the Hong's have pineapple, pineapple chunks (canned), grapes and apples. The fruit for each family is in two forms, fresh and canned. Only the Hong's have canned pineapple chunks, and the Pings, pitted dates; the rest of the fruit is fresh.

### C. Summary

The ways of obtaining food ingredients by the three families can be summarized as follows. The major means is purchasing, which includes shopping at the local supermarkets and stores in St. John's (with *Sobey's* the most frequently visited place for meat and vegetables, the *Magic Wok* and *Mary Jane's* for groceries), and importing from

the Chinatowns of mainland Canada. Apart from this, there exist three other supplementary means, namely, harvesting the fruits of nature (fishing and berry picking), home gardening and exchanging. Among the four ways of obtaining food, the three immigrant families demonstrate their continuation of old world food habits in the following aspects. The first one is their attachment to Chinese food ingredients, indicated by their practice of importing Chinese foodstuffs from mainland Canada and their frequent shopping at *Sobey's* chain stores, which cater best to the Chinese needs among all the supermarkets in St. John's. Secondly, they plant Chinese greens in vegetable gardens, crops such as snow peas, Chinese lettuce, turnip tops and green onions. Thirdly, they exchange traditional Chinese festival food specials, such as mooncakes and *zong zi* among friends and relatives. In harvesting the fruits of nature, the three families demonstrate their adaptation to the local culture.

One week's food selection by the three families at local stores reveals interesting features. All the starch, beverages and dairy products categories are largely non-Chinese items (as is the prepared meat) which reflects their acculturation aspects. The remaining categories are indications of continuation by the three families as they are more related to traditional Chinese beliefs and practices. For vegetables and fruit categories freshness is the striking feature, a reflection of a popular Chinese belief: *the fresher, the better for health*. Among meat and seafood items, some are quite unusual to native Canadians. One is "oxtail", another is "pig's feet". Both are used for making soup. In Chinese popular belief, either kind of soup can help build up energy. They are good for the elderly and for growing youth. Another evidence of continuation is the lack of variety and small amount of dairy products consumed by the three families.

This continuation of Chinese traditions is obvious in the variety of meat purchased by the three families. Pork and chicken were bought by all the three families for that week. This may indicate that pork and chicken are their favorite meat, which coincides with those of the mainland Chinese for "pork, poultry, and eggs are most favoured" in China (Barer-Stein 1979:110). However, beef, the favorite Western meat, is also present in two bills, which is an indication of acculturation. On the whole, however, the selection

of starch, dairy, beverage and the prepared meat categories is more of localized character, and vegetables, fruits and raw meat, more of Chinese. In short, the two forces of continuation and acculturation are evident in the two areas discussed: ways of obtaining food and the selection of food ingredients. Having examined food ingredients, I will now turn to the topic of meals, including the entire process of how food ingredients are prepared for them.

## Chapter V: Meals

After all the food ingredients are obtained, the next step is to prepare meals for the table. Accordingly, my discussion on procurement of foodstuffs in the previous chapter will now move on to the discussion of meals. The study of meals includes food preparation, actual cooking methods and the consumption of food. The above specific research areas will naturally lead to the study of material objects in relation to meal preparation and consumption. The chapter will contain three sections: the first details one week's menu for three families, the second examines three meals that I observed during my fieldwork, and the third summarizes the findings.

### A. One Week's Menu

This section first presents a week's menu of the three families, followed by an analysis of the menus presented. Specific issues, such as meal patterns for these families and characteristics of the menu, will be examined in particular. I prepared a one week menu calendar for each family, sent out the material and received responses through correspondence (see appendix C).

For the convenience of analysis, I have arranged the three menus in the following table, in the order of breakfast, lunch, supper and snacks.

Table 4

### One Week's Menu for the Three Families

	<i>Breakfast</i>		
	Pings	Aus	Hongs
M	Kellogg's Corn Flakes, toast	tea and toast	French toast
T	Quick oats, toast	tea, toast, fried eggs	fried rice with egg & sausage
W	boiled egg, toast	rice soup, toast	fried eggs, toast, grapefruit

Th	Quick oats	toast & tea, tea biscuits	oatmeal, toast
F	bacon & egg, toast	tea, toast, ham	cereal and milk
S	Quick oats	boiled eggs, hot dogs, toast, tea, hot milk	tea, coffee, orange juice, milk
Su	toast, boiled egg	none	none

*Lunch*

M	hash	apple	bring own sandwiches to school or work
T	fish & potatoes	rice soup	the same
W	home-cooked beans	ham & cheese sandwiches	the same
Th	sausage & beans	macaroni salad	the same
F	sausage & beans	ham sandwiches	the same
S	pork soup	ham sandwiches	Chow Mien (noodles with meat and vegetables)
Su	noodles, soup with pork	steamed rice, white fungus soup with pork, broc- coli with beef, chicken with potatoes in black bean sauce, salt fish	roast turkey, potato, carrot, cabbage, rice, gravy

*Supper*

M	rice, broccoli with beef, Chinese cabbage soup with pork	rice, beef and green beans, roast duck, black bean, oxtail soup	spaghetti, lettuce salad, garlic, fresh fruits
T	rice, soup with pork, green beans with beef	rice, ground meat, halibut, green peas with egg	rice, pork chop with BBQ sauce, pasta with vege- tables, salad, broccoli & shrimp



W	rice, stew meat with black beans, fish steamed with bean sauces	vegetable soup, meat pie, pineapple squares, shortbread cookies	rice, pan-fried cod, steamed cod, vegetable salad, rice
Th	rice, steamed chicken, Chinese vegetable soup with pork, beef with curry potato	rice, tomatoes & beef, Chinese sausages, winter melon soup with pork	beef stew with carrots and potatoes, rice, fresh fruit
F	rice, canned tomato soup with pork, chicken, beef with green pepper, celery	wonton soup with rice, noodles, fried rice with carrots, peas and egg	sweet & sour meat balls, broccoli with shrimp, steamed salmon with black beans, rice
S	steak, vegetable and pork soup	macaroni with beef and spaghetti sauce	rice, chicken and soysauce, tomato soup with beans, fruits
Su	boiled dinner, roast pork	fried chicken and fries	left over turkey

*Tea Break, or Snacks*

toast & tea, can fruit with cream, coffee, tea, hot roll, fruit, cookies with cheese, roll	tea cookies, cake, fruit, biscuits, shortbread cookies, hot milk, hot chocolate	tea, apple pie, cake, rice, crispy square, cheese & crackers, milk, coffee
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I will now examine two aspects of the menu: meal patterns for the three families and characteristics of the menu.

### 1. Meal Patterns for the Three Families

Meal patterns for Chinese in the homeland have been described by such scholars as Chao (1963), Lo (1972) and Barer-Stein (1979). Meal patterns vary considerably from different regions and nationalities. As China has an area of 9.6 million square kilometers, and 56 nationalities, it is impossible to give an all embracing meal pattern for the

Chinese. Previous Chinese foodways scholars are well aware of this, as can be seen from their technique of dealing with the meal pattern issue by regional or nationality divisions. Barer-Stein mentions meal patterns for Northern Chinese and the Han Chinese (1979: 117), Chao presents meal systems for the Chinese in Anhui Province and those for other places (1963: 3-4).

Barer-Stein's description of meal patterns should be noted here, for they reflect those of the Chinese from the birthplaces of the heads of my three informant families in China. "... breakfast is a bowl of *CONGEE* or *JOOK*: hot rice gruel ... served with pickles, salty side dishes ... The noon meal ... is a smaller version of the evening version of the evening meal: soup, a rice or wheat dish, vegetables, and fish or meat, if possible ..." (117-8).

Meal patterns for the three families can be drawn from their one week's menu. Table 4 yields the following meal pattern for the three families: three meals a day with a tea break or snacks once or twice a day; quick breakfast, light lunch and a rich supper. The above is true for the Pings seven days a week. Sundays is an exception for the Aus and the Hongs, when two meals are served. One more variation is that the Pings have a hot lunch every day, while the Aus and the Hongs have, on the whole, a cold lunch on weekdays.

## 2. Characteristics of the Menu

Though the three-meals-per-day pattern of the above three families can hardly be identified as either specifically Chinese or Canadian, further investigation into the details of their menus leads to the generalization that their meal patterns resemble the Canadian pattern, "a quick breakfast, light lunch and evening dinner" noted by the Toronto Nutrition Committee in 1967 (42). Within the meal pattern, evidence of substantial acculturation and continuation can be found. But the degree of acculturation varies with each meal of the day; to be more specific, there is a higher degree of acculturation for breakfast and weekday lunch, a lower one for evening meals and weekend lunch. An

examination of the contents of the food served at each meal by the three families will illustrate this point.

#### a. Breakfast

For convenience of description, I would like to borrow Norge Jerome's terms: core items and secondary items.<sup>1</sup> Here I will use the term *core items* to refer to food ingredients or food items with high frequency of use by the three families. To be more specific, the food items used by all three families will be included in this category. Those used by two families will be designated as *secondary items*. Those which appear only in one menu or used by only one family will be placed in the category of other items. The core items for breakfast are toast, cereal, eggs, oats, milk, and tea. Other items are rice soup, fried rice, grapefruit, coffee, juice, tea biscuits, hot dogs, and bacon. Except for tea and eggs, all the rest of core items for breakfast are foreign to native Chinese. Even among the other items, only rice soup and fried rice are familiar to the Chinese. This majority of local ingredients makes breakfast more of a local nature. Compared with a normal Chinese breakfast made up of rice porridge accompanied by salted vegetables, breakfast for the three families here is much more localized, much more readily identified with that of North Americans.

#### b. Lunch

Lunch for the three families has to be dealt with in terms of weekdays and weekends. It is quite individualistic for each family. Weekday lunch for the three families is different from that on weekend. Generally speaking, weekday lunch is either cold food or simply-cooked meals. The Pings have a hot and cooked lunch every day. The Aus have cold lunch most of the time, with only one hot lunch for weekdays and a hot lunch

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<sup>1</sup>Jerome used four terms to express preferences and needs in food consumption frequencies by his informants. These four terms are *core items*, those with a very high frequency of consumption scores, *ceremonial/marginal dietary items*, those foods receiving very low frequency of consumption scores, *secondary core items*, those with intermediate frequency ratings, and *peripheral items*, those with low frequency scores (1975: 105).

on Sundays. The Hong's weekday lunch is uniformly cold, but weekend lunch is well prepared. On the whole, lunch for the three families can be said to be of a lighter nature, for they are either cold lunch brought to work/school for the Aus or the Hong's, or are simply prepared meals as those of the Pings on both weekdays and weekends.

As far as the details of lunch are concerned, each family has its own core and secondary items. The core items for the Pings' lunch are sausage, beans, and pork soup. Other items are fish and potatoes, hash, and noodles. The Aus have ham or cheese sandwiches as their core lunch item, as well as other items such as fruit, rice soup and salad for weekdays and a large dinner for Sunday. The Hong's have sandwiches (turkey or tuna) for all the weekdays, and a big lunch for Saturday and Sunday.

A light lunch for the three families is an explicit manifestation of the compromises they have made within the larger social framework. For two families, the Aus and the Hong's, cold lunch is necessary because of their short lunch time either between classes, or while at work. This pressure is felt to a much greater degree by the Aus, because both Mr. and Mrs. Au are looking after two businesses simultaneously, and working six days a week. As a result, even on Saturday, while the Hong's can sit down around the table and enjoy a more diversified hot lunch, the Aus still have the same cold lunch. The Pings have enough time to prepare and eat a hot lunch every day, for Mr. Ping goes to his laundry whenever he wants to, and it is only two or three minutes' walk across the street from his house. Pings' lunch is light, however, compared with their cooked supper. This has something to do with Mrs. Ping's viewpoint. A native Newfoundlander by birth, she prefers to have a light lunch, and even one supper a day is too much for her with regard to the time it takes to prepare. Her words, "I don't want to be chained to the kitchen all day long" (Nov. 19, 1989), fully reveal her attitude. Mr. Ping's advanced age, and, no doubt, the habit of eating hot food before he came to St. John's, however, also play a role in the couple's hot lunch practice. Therefore, either the weekday cold lunch and weekend hot lunch for the Aus and the Hong's, or a light hot lunch for the Pings, are determined by their social environment. This conforms to Goode and his fellow scholars' theory of effects of work and leisure schedules on meal formats (1984:143). In a similar vein, the

Pings' hot lunch for the benefit of the aged can be said to be one of the compromises they have made with regard to their physical conditions, although the earlier practice of having a hot lunch may also have a role to play in it.

This work/leisure schedule effect on meal formats is also manifested in the large meals they have on weekends. Sunday lunch or brunch for the Aus and the Hongs is the biggest meal of the whole week, with both more variety and more "festival food" items. However, the Aus' food ingredients are typically Chinese (white fungus soup with pork, black beans) whereas the Hongs' are, to a large extent, Western (roast turkey, gravy). The most distinctive feature is that the Aus' lunch on Sunday is like one on a Chinese festival, for white fungus soup is not a daily eaten meal ingredient in China. Further still, the use of black beans is a typically Cantonese practice, for the taste of it in food is often termed as that of "village flavour" by overseas Chinese. Hence the biggest meal of the week for the Aus is Chinese in character.

On the Hongs' table, turkey is prominent. This also conveys a festival feeling, but it is that of Western culture, for turkey is, as is well known, often related to Western festival celebrations such as Christmas or Thanksgiving.

This dramatic alternative for the Sunday lunch serving as the biggest dinner of the week is not a part of the Pings' menu. Having only the nuclear family members together on Sunday, Mr. and Mrs. Ping observe the same pattern as weekday lunch.

The above features manifested by the lunch of the three families reveal that the quick weekday lunch and the heavy and more complicated weekend lunch for the three families is in accordance with the rhythm of the larger social framework. It is an explicit expression manifesting their acculturation in the host society, an inevitable response to their social environment. Within the meal structure, however, while the Pings' shows no obvious characteristic in this regard, the Aus and the Hongs share the same practice of making the Sunday noon meal the biggest of the week. They contrast with each other, however, since the Aus make a typical Chinese meal and the Hongs a typical localized one.

### c. Supper

Supper is the main meal of the day for the three families. It is rich in the variety of its dishes, as is shown in their menu. The core items for the three families are rice, meat and seafood dishes, vegetables and soup. The secondary core item is dessert. Other items are salad, fries, and macaroni. Here, many kinds of food of different ethnic origins can be found, such as Italian (macaroni, spaghetti), or American (salad, turkey, shortbread cookies, French fries). Nonetheless, supper is the meal in which distinct Chinese traditions are retained. This can be illustrated by the following elements.

The first element is the serving of rice in the supper by the three families (surprisingly the same, five out of seven suppers for each family). Rice is served in different forms: steamed rice, fried rice, rice soup, and rice noodles. As rice has been the primary marker of the Chinese starch staple for the southern Chinese since antiquity (the heads of the three families are southern Chinese), the serving of rice at supper is certainly a manifestation of a continuing Chinese food tradition.

Secondly, the dishes for supper are mainly in Chinese style. Except for a small portion of the supper which is of non-Chinese origin, quite a number of dishes are familiar to native Chinese. They are: black bean and oxtail soup, vegetable soup, Chinese sausage, winter melon soup with pork, broccoli with beef, stew meat with black beans, fish steamed with bean sauces, steamed chicken, sweet and sour meat balls, broccoli with shrimp, steamed salmon with black beans, and wonton soup. Among the above are some very distinctive Cantonese items, namely, sweet and sour pork and the use of black beans (salted, strongly fermented soybeans) to enhance a dish's flavour. This regional touch is all the more enhanced with the presence of "winter melon soup with pork", a dish largely claimed to have originated in the villages of Kaiping and Taishan (Hoiping and Toisan), the birthplace of the heads of the three families.

The above characteristics illustrate well that supper for all three families includes significant Chinese elements. Compared with the other two meals of a day, breakfast and

lunch, supper can better be recognized as a Chinese, rather than a North American meal. However, the degree of these Chinese characteristics varies with each family. Comparatively, the Ping's supper is more Chinese than the others' suppers. Western dinner is usually associated, by the Chinese, with the serving of salad and dessert. The Pings' suppers were totally free from these two elements, whereas the Aus served dessert once, and at the Hongs' suppers, dessert were served three times in the form of fresh fruit. They also server salad three times. Obviously, the practice of the Hongs contrasts with both the Pings' total omission of the two typical Western items, and Aus' omission of salad. Judged from this aspect -- the presence of salad and dessert -- the Pings' supper may be said to be the most Chinese, the Aus' somewhat Chinese, and the Hongs' the most localized of the three.

Another fact that supports the above point is the presence of soup, a typical Chinese meal feature, supported by the popular Chinese saying: *You cannot call it a meal without soup*. The soup served at each Chinese meal functions more or less the same as the fruit juice of Westerners, for better digestion. The Pings served soup five times during the week, the Aus four times, whereas the Hongs served it only once.

Another supporting point is found in the content of supper. The Hongs' suppers, according to their menu, are more international, with the presence of Italian food, pork chops with American BBQ sauce, and Western fowl (turkey), although the overwhelming number of supper dishes are Chinese. Compared with the other two families, however, the Hongs stand out, and the other two show a much lesser degree of localization.

On the menu one more aspect should be noted, namely, the tea break and snacks. The core items for snacks are tea, fruit, and cookies. The secondary items are cake, milk, and coffee. Other items are rolls, pie, rice squares, and hot chocolate. Here again, like supper, both Chinese and local items are present. The most distinct item is tea. Just as rice is the marker for the starch staple, tea is that for drink in China. Along with its Western counterparts -- coffee and hot chocolate -- tea has been kept for snacks and breaks in the three families.

### 3. Summary

The above analysis of one week's menu from the three families leads to the conclusion that the menu for each family presents a Chinese-Western complex. It is Western as far as the meal pattern is concerned: quick breakfast, light lunch and a large evening meal. This pattern is subject to change on weekends when two meals are usually served. The above meal patterns for the three Chinese families has clearly been shaped by their social environment. It is a product of the effects of a work/leisure schedule of the society as a whole.

For details of each meal, both Chinese and Western elements are present in the daily menu. The most frequently used ingredients for breakfast are toast, tea, eggs, and cereals; for lunch are sandwiches (ham or cheese or turkey meat) for weekdays, and rice, meat and seafood, vegetable, and soup for weekend lunch and weekday suppers. The most frequently used ingredients for that week's breakfast and weekday lunch are mainly from the following categories (as was analyzed in Chapter IV on ingredients purchased by the three families for the week) namely, starch, prepared meat, fruit and beverages, which are not familiar items to native Chinese. Those ingredients for supper or weekend lunch are mainly raw meat and fresh vegetables, items which are more frequently found in a Chinese household.

The employment of various ingredients in different meals each day results in different characteristics of the daily meals for the three families. Specifically, breakfast and weekday lunch carry more Western characteristics than supper and weekend lunch in which many distinctive Chinese foods are readily identified: these are: rice served in various forms, typical Cantonese black beans as a flavour enhancer, and winter melon and pork soup. As such, supper for the three families shows more Chinese features than Western ones.

However, the degree of Chinese and Western elements in the menu varies with each family. A Chinese often views two items, salad and dessert, as typical in a Western meal,



rice and soup in a Chinese meal. In line with this assertion, the Pings' menu retains most Chinese elements (greatest frequency of soup serving at the evening meal). Next comes the Aus' menu, with a fairly frequent serving of soup (four out of seven meals), an occasional dessert (one out of seven), and the absence of salad. The Hongs' menu shows many more Western features in the frequent serving of both salad and dessert (three for each), and the only one time serving of soup at supper, the main meal of the day. The content of the Hongs' menu is more acculturated, embracing as it does both Italian and North American meals.

### **B. Three Meals**

The three meals in this section are three suppers that I observed with each family on the following dates: the Pings on December 7, 1989; the Aus on February 6, 1990; and the Hongs on December 1, 1989. I was there during the whole process, beginning with meal preparation to the serving and eating of the meal. A general description of my observation will be followed by the presentation of the three meals in terms of utensils used in processing and cooking; ways of cooking; dishes on the table; food serving in regard to the room where the meal is served, table utensils, method of serving, table manners; and beverages. Information gathered from fieldwork will be described family by family before it is analyzed.

#### **1. Participant Observation**

##### **a. The Pings' Meal**

The Pings eat supper at 6:00 pm everyday. Both Mr. and Mrs. Ping take part in the preparation of supper. At 5:00 pm, Mrs. Ping begins meal preparation by cleaning vegetables and cutting up all the ingredients, getting everything ready for cooking. The cooking is done by Mr. Ping, especially the making of the dishes per se.

On December 7, 1989, I arrived at the Pings' home at 4:20 pm. Upon my arrival there, Mrs. Ping phoned Mr. Ping at the laundry and asked him to come home to cook

supper. On the food counter were pork roast, cod fillet, chicken and beefsteak, all defrosted. They had been taken out of the deep freezer to thaw early in the day.

Mrs. Ping soon started the preparation. She began by choosing and picking fresh vegetables (snow peas and spinach). Then she cleaned all the ingredients before cutting them up. She cut green pepper into strips and broccoli into chunks (Figure 11).<sup>2</sup> She then prepared the meat and fish. She first cut a piece of beefsteak into slices, and placed the sliced beefsteak in a small container for Mr. Ping to add other ingredients. Then she sliced a few small pieces from a chunk of pork chop and put them in a soup pot. She explained the use of the above ingredients to me while preparing the ingredients. She said that the beefsteak slices were to be stir-fried with vegetables. Pork slices were to be used in the soup to give it more flavour. The chicken was to be used whole in the boiling water with only some salt rubbed on the surface of the chicken meat. Obviously, Mrs. Ping knows how to cook these dishes, but she always leaves the cooking to Mr. Ping. Her preparation of ingredients went on until five o'clock, when Mrs. Ping took out a pot, put some rice in it, filled it with cold water, and put the pot with a cover on the burner. Mrs. Ping explained that everyday at five o'clock she puts on the rice and, after it boils, leaves the rice on the burner to be slow-cooked until meal time at six o'clock. Then the soup pot with pork slices was put on the burner, and left there to stew. Lastly, she put a large pot filled with cold water on the burner to let it boil for the chicken. By now Mrs. Ping had finished her portion of preparation and went to sit and relax at the table.

Mr. Ping came home from work in the middle of her preparation of the ingredients. A little after five o'clock, Mr. Ping began preparing the dishes. The first dish he made was steamed chicken. He first coated the chicken with some salt. When the water in the big pot was boiling, he put the whole chicken in, turned it over time and again (Figure

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<sup>2</sup>The pictures of the Pings' family making supper are not those for the meal I observed on Dec. 7, 1989, but those taken on Nov. 4, 1990, because the first roll of film was spoiled. I am most grateful for the Pings, for they tried to make almost exactly the same dinner I observed one year ago. The more startling coincidence on Nov. 4, 1990 was that their son Bill, who was present the first time I observed their supper, happened to come back home for supper right before the supper started. This makes my second observation all the more similar to the first one.

Figure 11: Green Pepper Cut into Strips and  
Broccoli into Chunks by Mrs. Ping  
(November 4, 1990)



Figure 12: Mr. Ping Making Steamed Chicken  
(November 4, 1990)



12). Half an hour later the chicken was ready, taken out of the pot, and placed on the cutting board for Mrs. Ping to cut into small chunks (Figure 13).

Mr. Ping then began to cook the fish (fresh cod fillet). He cut a piece of one pound fillet into eight pieces. He was using a Vision Cookware pot. Mr. Ping first put some vegetable oil on the bottom of the pot, coated the fish chunks with the oil in the pot, put in the salt, onions, brown sugar, soya sauce, black beans, minced ginger root and garlic, and then added a little bit of cold water. After that, the fish was put on the burner and was steamed for about 10 to 15 minutes. Shortly before the fish was taken off the burner, some sliced green onions were added to the dish.

While the fish was being steamed, Mr. Ping added salt, black pepper, spinach and green onions into the soup pot. After that, he broke one egg, beat it lightly to blend whites and yolks, and then slowly poured egg in a thin stream into the broth, stirring gently. As soon as it boiled again, the soup was ready. The last dish to make was stir-fry vegetables. He first stir-fried beefsteak slices in the hot vegetable oil in the frying pan, then all the vegetables were added in. After a few minutes' stir and fry, the dish was made (Figure 14). Now the dishes were all ready, and the table arrangement again was taken care of by Mrs. Ping. It was six o'clock, the time for serving the meal and eating.

The following documentation will present data from my observations dealing with utensils and equipment used, ingredients, ways of cooking, food serving and beverages. The utensils and equipment used were first a cutting board and knife for cutting the ingredients. A rice pot, frying pan, steam cookware, big boiling pot, and soup pot were used for cooking. The following ingredients were at hand: green pepper, snow peas, spinach, a whole chicken, eggs, pork, beefsteak, fresh fish, onions, green onions, garlic, ginger root, black beans, pepper, salt, vegetable oil, soy sauce.

Green vegetables were washed before cutting, the spinach cut into smaller pieces, green pepper into strips and green onions into chunks. The fish was cut into chunks and beefsteak cut into bite-sized slices, as was the pork. The garlic and ginger root were

Figure 13: Mrs. Ping Cutting up the Steamed Chicken  
(November 4, 1990)





Figure 14: Mr. Ping Stir-frying Vegetables  
(November 4, 1990)

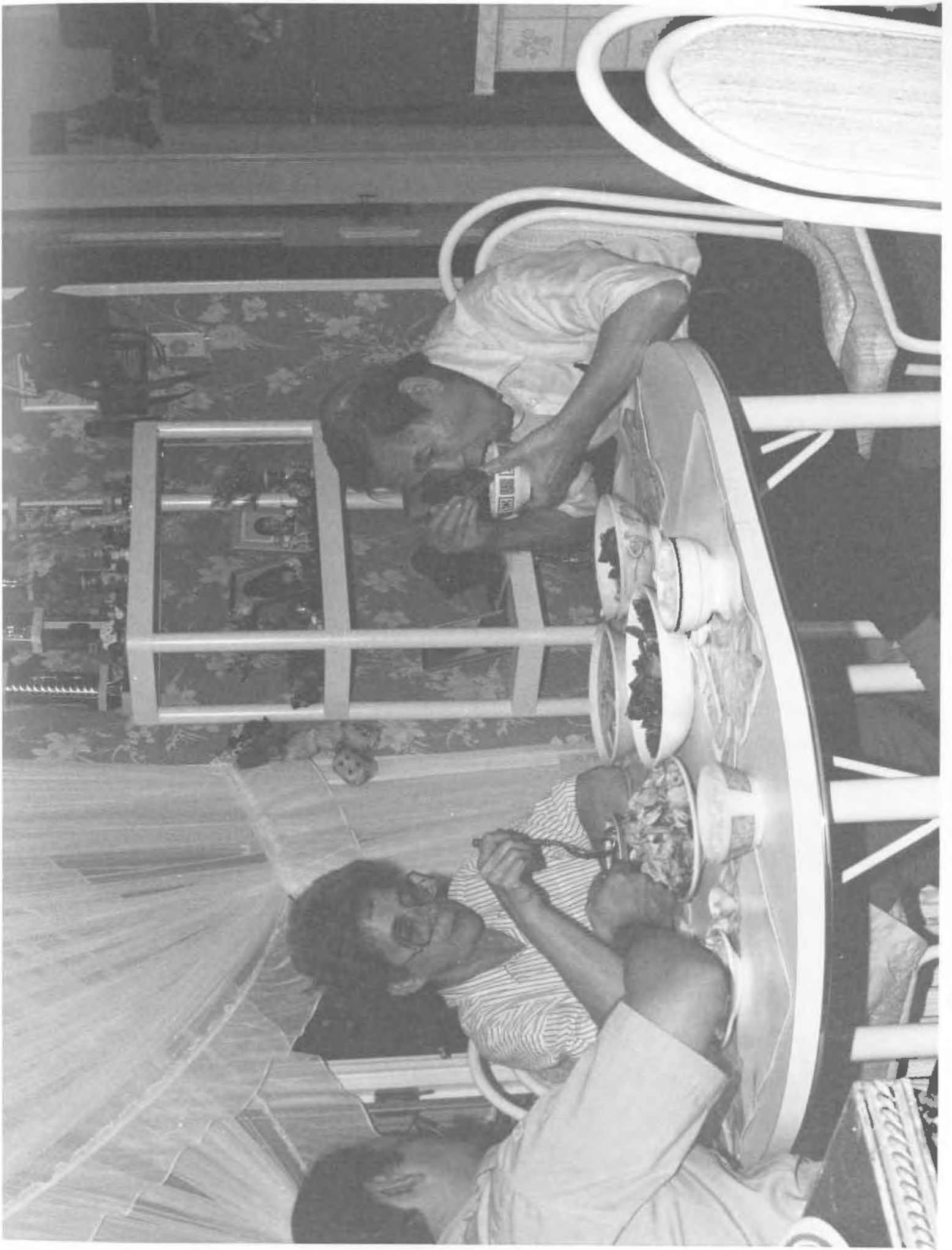


minced. The following ways of cooking were used by the Pings: boiling (whole chicken), stir-frying (vegetables with beef), steaming (fish) and stewing (soup). Four dishes, apart from cooked rice, were brought to the table: soup (spinach, pork, eggs, green onions), boiled chicken, steamed fish (with onions, black beans, ginger root) and stir-fried vegetables with beef slices.

The meal was served in the dining corner of the kitchen. Four persons were present for the supper, Mr. and Mrs. Ping, their son Bill (who is working as an engineer on a ship), and me. These were the table utensils: serving plates in the center of the table, serving spoons, a soup serving bowl, small rice bowls, chopsticks for Mr. Ping and myself, porcelain soup spoons, plates and forks for Bill, and napkins.

For serving the food, rice was placed in each bowl or plate before the family sat around the table. Bill filled his plate with a bit of every dish from the serving plates before eating. Mr. and Mrs. Ping, on the other hand, had only a small rice bowl. Mr. Ping used chopsticks, and Mrs. Ping, a fork, to eat the rice. Mrs. Ping selected from dishes with serving spoons. Mr. Ping ate his rice and took whatever he wanted from the dishes with his own chopsticks (Figure 15). No obvious rules or table manners were observed. The atmosphere was relaxed, the diners made random talk all through the meal. Some of the topics were parents' enquiries after Bill's family and his work at sea, comments on the dishes, as well as urging Bill and me to have more. The only beverage at the meal was cold water for Bill. After the meal, however, tea was consumed by Mrs. and Mr. Ping and was offered to me.

Figure 15: The Pings Eating Supper  
(November 4, 1990)



### b. The Aus' Meal

Mr. and Mrs. Au are managers of two businesses, as previously described. They work at the gas station in the morning and at the bar in the afternoon and evening. The preparation, therefore, of supper everyday is usually made either by Mr. Au or Mrs. Au, whoever can spare an hour or so in the afternoon. Having made an appointment one week before, I went to the Oriental Garden (the name of their bar near the Village Mall) at 2:00 pm on February 6, 1990. Mr. and Mrs. Au were both there attending to a few customers. Around 2:30 pm, Mrs. Au took me to her home at 25 Cherrington Street. Obviously, the AUs had done some preparation early in the day, for on the food counter there were dried shrimp, dried mushrooms, dried oysters, dried day lily, fungus, and rice noodles -- all previously soaked in cold water. There were also a chunk of pork roast and some beefsteak defrosted on the counter.

On arriving at her home, Mrs. Au treated me first to some of her home-made steamed buns with meat stuffing and a cup of hot tea. Soon after, she started to prepare for the meal. She made the soup first. She filled a big soup pot with cold water, put some soaked-through dried oysters, ginger root slices, canned lotus, and straw mushrooms into the pot before she put the pot on a burner. Mrs. Au explained to me that this soup needed to be brought to a boil first, and then left it there to stew for over two hours. After that she started preparing other ingredients. She began by cleaning the vegetables (bok choy), then cut them into chunks (Figure 16). She then cut some green onions into chunks and ginger root into slices and placed them in a saucer for use. After that she cleaned all the soaked-through dried ingredients, and put them in bowls for use. Then she began cutting up the meat. She first sliced the beefsteak, then cut the pork roast into bite-sized cubes.

The above process went on about one hour (I assume it took much longer than usual, because she was trying to explain the use of the ingredients all during the time she was preparing them. When all ingredients were ready, she began to cook. First, she made the rice in an electric rice cooker (the same as that used by the Hongks). It is easy to make rice with a rice cooker, because all one needs to do is to put rice in, add an appropriate amount of cold water, and plug the cooker in. It will then take care of itself.

Figure 16: Bok Choy Cut up by Mrs. Au  
(February 12, 1989)





The first dish she made was stir-fried vegetables. She first stir-fried beef slices in a frying-pan with well-heated vegetable oil. After a couple of minutes, the beef was taken out of the pan. Then she stir-fried all the vegetables -- bok choy, soaked lily, fungus, and green onion chunks -- with salt and black pepper. When the vegetables were done, she mixed in the beef slices and placed the vegetables on a serving plate.

The next dish to be prepared was stir-fried rice noodles. She first had some vegetable oil in the frying-pan, had the oil well heated before adding the thoroughly-soaked rice noodles. Salt and soysauce were added, and then the shrimp, and finally green onions.

She made the sweet and sour pork last. She first put a considerable amount of vegetable oil into a deep-frying pan, placed it on a burner, and left there to be heated. Meanwhile, she broke two eggs into a small bowl, beat them to blend whites and yolks, added some salt and black pepper. Then she dipped all the diced pork into the blended eggs. When the oil was boiling, she deep-fried all the diced pork with the blended eggs until they were crispy. She placed the crispy diced pork on a platter. Then she began to prepare the sauce for the diced pork. She had one cup of cold water, added in some vinegar, one tablespoonful of plum sauce, some ketchup, two and a half tablespoonfuls of sugar, two teaspoonfuls of corn starch. Having mixed well the above ingredients, she put it on a burner and brought the mixture to a boil. She then coated the already fried and crispy diced pork (Figure 17).

The making of all the above dishes took almost another hour. By now the soup was well cooked. Thus the supper was ready. It was around 4:30 pm, a bit earlier than their usual supper time. However the Aus had supper then without some of their family members, and finished at about 5:20 pm.

The following paragraphs will detail some specific data from my observations that day. These aspects relate to utensils and equipment used, ingredients, ways of cooking and food serving, as well as beverages.

Figure 17: Mrs. Au Deep-frying Diced Pork  
(February 12, 1989)



The utensils and equipment used were a cutting board and knife for preparing ingredients (Figure 18). For cooking, a frying pan, rice cooker, soup pot, and a slice were used.

The following ingredients were at hand: pork chops, beefsteak, eggs, dried oyster, dried shrimp, rice noodles, green onions, dried day lily, canned lotus, fungus, bok choy, straw mushrooms, ginger root, vegetable oil, salt, pepper, soysauce, plum sauce, vinegar, ketchup, sugar, starch.

Green vegetables were washed before cutting, bok choy cut into chunks and green onions chopped. Beefsteak was sliced into pieces, the pork chop was diced. Dried mushrooms, dried shrimp, dried oyster, lily, fungus and rice noodles were previously soaked in cold water.

The following ways of cooking were used for the preparation of this meal: steaming (rice in a rice cooker), stewing (soup stewed for hours), deep-frying (diced pork), stir-frying (vegetables with beef slices) and coating (on fried diced pork).

The four dishes cooked, apart from rice, were: sweet and sour pork (deep-fried diced pork with sweet and sour sauce coating), stir-fried vegetables (bok choy, lily, fungus, green onions, with beef), stir-fried rice noodles (with shrimp) and soup (oyster, canned lotus, straw mushrooms).

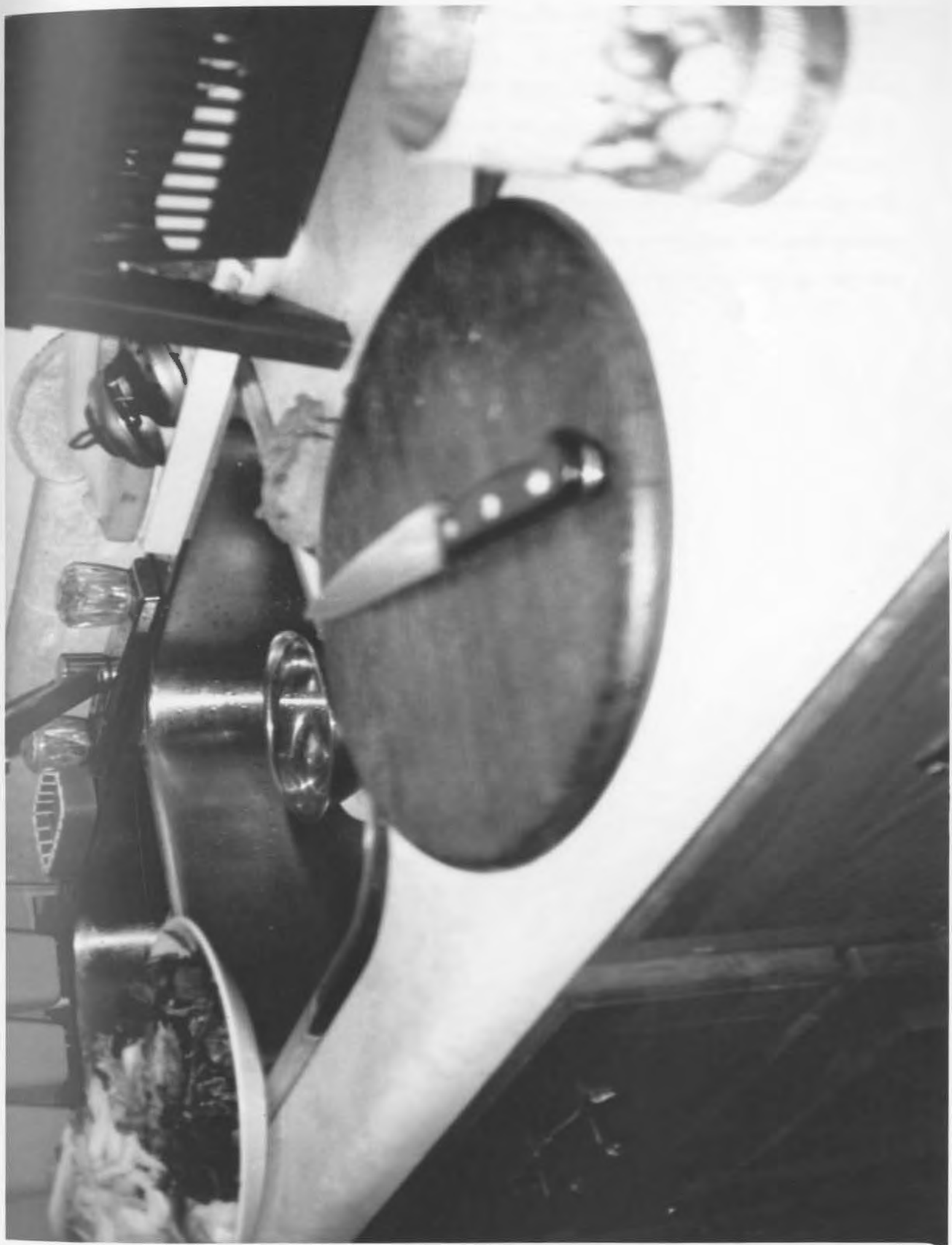
The meal was served in the dining-room.<sup>3</sup> Five persons were present for that meal, Mrs. Au, her three daughters, and me; Mr. Au was working at the bar, and two of her other children were at school.

These were the table utensils for the day: serving plates for holding dishes, a big bowl for soup, small rice bowls, chopsticks, steel serving spoons, porcelain soup spoons for each person and napkins.

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<sup>3</sup>Mrs. Au told me that for everyday meals they just use the dining corner of the kitchen. As I was there that day, they used the dining room instead.

Figure 18: The Cutting Board and Knife for  
Preparing Ingredients by the Aus  
(February 12, 1989)



Dishes were arranged in the middle of the table (Figure 19). Cooked rice was previously placed in rice bowls before each person sat at the table. Each helped herself to dishes, while eating rice. Serving spoons were used by everyone. The girls sometimes passed dishes to each other and to their mother. As I was there, all the girls were shy and did not talk much during the meal, and they seemed a bit too conscious of their eating behaviour since they were being observed by me. No beverages were served during the meal. Only hot tea was served afterwards.



Figure 19: The Arrangement of the Dishes for  
Aus' Supper, February 12, 1989;



### c. The Hong's Meal

Mrs. Hong, a full time homemaker and the only person cooking for a large family of eight persons, has her unique arrangement for cooking. As supper is the only time when the whole family gathers together everyday, she carefully prepares the meal. She also does not want to hurry herself in preparing supper shortly before everyone comes home for supper. Hence it is her habit to prepare supper in the middle of the afternoon. She usually begins her preparation around 2:30 pm, gets the supper ready and has it warmed or reheated either in the microwave or in the oven immediately before the meal is served at 6:00 pm every day.

When I made my appointment, I was told by Mrs. Hong to be at her home at 2:00 pm on December 1, 1989. I arrived there as requested. Just like the other two families, Mrs. Hong had already defrosted the meat and fish before I arrived. She started preparing soon after. The first dish she made was ground beef meat balls. She used a large bowl, put in two pounds of lean ground beef. Then she added the following ingredients: two eggs, onions, breadcrumbs, vegetable oil, milk, salt, pepper, garlic powder, mustard powder, all spice powder, chili sauce, and all-purpose soy sauce. Having blended all the above ingredients together, she made meat balls with her hands, and put them on a baking rack. It was then put in the oven to bake 20-25 minutes at 350 degrees Fahrenheit. While the meat balls were being baked, she began to make sauce for the meat balls. She used one can of pineapple juice, half a cup of vinegar, one cup of brown sugar, some ketchup, salt and pepper, some soy sauce, and one tablespoonful of corn starch. Having had all the above mixed together, she brought the mixture to a boil, stirring all the time. When the meat balls were ready, she moved them from the baking rack to a big serving container, poured in the sauce, and put some carrots and pineapple chunks on top of meat balls. It was then placed in the fridge, to be warmed up in the microwave immediately before supper time.

The next dish she made was steamed fish (fresh cod fillet). She cut the fish (about one pound) into chunks and put them in microwave cookware. Some salt, black pepper,

ginger root, garlic, green onions, onions, and then a little bit of water were all added. After that the dish was placed in the microwave to be steamed for five to eight minutes. When it was done, she placed some small pieces of tomatoes on top for colour.

The last dish that Mrs. Hong made was stir-fry vegetables. Only then did she prepare all the ingredients. She first washed a bunch of fresh broccoli and cut it into small chunks. Then she peeled and split fresh shrimp. She put them in different containers. The preparation took almost one and a half hours. By then Mrs. Hong told me she had already finished the first stage of supper preparation. It was about four o'clock. She could now rest for a while, or attend to something else until shortly before supper time.

The Hong's' supper time is between 5:30 pm and 6:00 pm. That day family members came back from work or school after 5:00, and they came to the kitchen after 5:30 pm. The family members, especially Dr. Kim Hong's mother and the Hong's' daughter, helped in setting the table. At the same time, Mrs. Hong was warming the fish and then reheating the meat balls in the microwave. In about eight to ten minutes, she made the stir-fried broccoli with shrimp (she first stir-fried shrimp in the well heated vegetable oil with a little bit of salt and pepper, and then stir-fried broccoli chunks). Within twenty minutes, all the hot dishes were on the dining table. Every member of the family was there in the kitchen ready to have supper (Figure 20).

The following discussion presents data from my observations that day. This data, as with the previous two families, will relate to utensils and equipment used, ingredients, ways of cooking and food serving, and beverages.

Utensils and equipment used were a cutting board and knife for processing ingredients (the same as those used by the Aus); a rice cooker (Figure 21), frying-pan, baking rack, oven, microwave, spatula, and container were used for cooking.

The following ingredients were at hand: lean ground beef, cod fish, shrimp, eggs, canned pineapple chunks, broccoli, tomato, green onions, breadcrumbs, milk, onions, ginger root, garlic, vegetable oil, mustard powder, all spice powder, salt, pepper, garlic powder and chili sauce.

Figure 20: The Dishes and Table Plan for the  
Hong's' Supper, December 1, 1989



Figure 21: Rice Cooker Used by the Hongs  
(December 1, 1989)





Fresh vegetables were cleaned before cutting, broccoli cut into chunks, tomato into slices, green onions into chunks, ginger root into small chunks and garlic minced. Fresh shrimp was peeled and split, and the fish was cut into big chunks.

The following ways of cooking were used during the meal preparation: steaming (rice), baking (beef meat balls), steaming fish in microwave and stir-frying (vegetables with shrimp). The three cooked dishes were: beef meat balls, fish, and broccoli.<sup>4</sup>

Food was served in the dining corner of the kitchen (Figure 22) with the whole family present. Three dishes placed in four containers were set in the center of the table (see Figure 20). For Mrs. Hong (Dr. Hong's wife), and her children, plates and forks were used, but Dr. Hong's mother and Dr. Hong, head of the family, used rice bowls and chopsticks.

Rice was previously placed in plates and bowls. Those who used plates and forks filled their plates with some of every dish before eating, and the two with rice bowls and chopsticks used their own chopsticks to sample dishes while eating rice. No obvious rules were followed, nor special attention paid to any member of the family. Each helped himself or herself to whatever he/she liked. Some children drank juice or milk in the middle of the meal. No adults had anything to drink until after the meal, when hot tea was served.

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<sup>4</sup>See appendix B for recipes of all the dishes served at the supper I observed for each family.

Figure 22: The Hongs' Dining Corner within the  
Kitchen(December 1, 1989)



## 2. Analysis

My analysis here will focus on two aspects, continuation and acculturation, manifested in the three observed meals. Again, general features of the three families will be discussed first, then distinct features of each family will be dealt with. To make things easier, I have placed the three meals in a table form, similar to my previous discussions, primarily regarding utensils used, ways of cooking, cooked dishes, food serving, and beverages.

Table 5

## Food, Food Preparation, &amp; Serving for the Three Meals

	Pings	Aus	Hongs
u t pro- e cessing n	cutting board knife	cutting board knife	cutting board knife
s cook- i ing l s	rice pot, frying pan, slice, soup pot, stove	rice cooker, stove, frying-pan, soup pot	rice cooker, oven, stove, frying pan, baking rack, slice, microwave
ways of cook- ing	boiling stewing steaming stir-frying	steaming stewing stir-frying deep-frying coating	steaming baking boiling stir-frying
cooked dishes	boiled chicken steamed fish vegetables soup	sweet & sour pork stir-fried rice noodle vegetables soup	meat balls steamed fish vegetables
F room O O table D uten- sils S E R V	kitchen	dining room	kitchen
I method N of O serv- ing	pick up dishes while eating rice, fill plates before eating	pick up dishes while eating rice	pick up dishes while eating rice, fill plates be- fore eating
beve- rages	cold water with meal, hot tea after meal	hot tea after meal	juice and milk with meal, hot tea after meal

### a. Continuation

From my observation of the three meals, I discovered that continuation is dominant. The foremost feature illustrating this point is the preservation of the *Fan-Tsai* (rice-dishes) principle<sup>5</sup> in their supper preparation. The *Fan-Tsai* principle has been noted as the most significant institution in Chinese foodways (Chang 1977: 7; Chao: 3; Hsu 1977: 300). Hence the maintenance of this principle may well be viewed as a distinctive marker of Chinese cooking.

Other factors contribute to the maintenance of this principle. Firstly, there is separate equipment for rice and dish preparation. The three families have their separate rice cooking utensils (electric rice cooker for the Aus and the Hongs, the rice pot for the Pings), and those for dishes (frying-pan and soup pot). Secondly, Chinese ways of cooking (boiling, steaming, stewing, stir-frying and deep-frying) are dominant. Though these ways of cooking cannot strictly be related only to the Chinese, they are certainly among the most frequently used methods of cooking for the Chinese. Of the above five cooking methods, three are among the seven most important means underlined by Chao (20).<sup>6</sup> The fact that the methods frequently adopted in the past are still prevalent among them certainly illustrates the point that they are carrying on the tradition in regard to methods of cooking. Thirdly, the most typical way of food serving is present in every family, namely, the arrangement of dishes in the middle of the dining table, the serving of rice before sitting down to eat, together with typical Chinese table utensils, rice bowls and chopsticks, and the practice of serving oneself from dishes while eating rice.

The content of meals is also predominantly Chinese in that two families (the Aus and the Pings) have prepared a complete Chinese meal (rice, a few dishes and soup). The serving of hot tea after the meal is another manifestation of the continuation of Chinese

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<sup>5</sup>For details of this principle, refer to p. 56.

<sup>6</sup>The seven methods that Chao underlined are: steam, red-cook (braise in soy sauce), stir-fry, deep-fry, shallow-fry, meat (cook rice or shredded pancakes with meat, vegetables and water), and salt.

tradition, for tea drinking after a meal has been a typical Chinese practice for thousands of years.<sup>7</sup>

#### b. Acculturation

While acknowledging the dominant feature in the three suppers I observed, I will also discuss some factors relating to aspects of acculturation. The first is the noticeable absence of the *wok* in meal preparation. The *wok* is a stereotypical utensil of Chinese cooking, specifically for the preparation of certain dishes. My talk with the three homemakers reveals that each family possesses a *wok* in their kitchen, but only uses it occasionally. Hence its absence in the three suppers observed confirms that the *wok* is not in daily use for the three Chinese immigrant families. One reason for this is that it is inconvenient to use a *wok* on an electric stove, for the *wok* needs a stand upon the stove to function well, since it is arched in shape. Hence the frying-pan has become a substitute.

Another factor is the presence of serving spoons. The Chinese have been noted for their practice of every diner serving him or herself directly from the same dish. A typical Chinese way of eating at home is illustrated (Figure 23).<sup>8</sup> This practice, though regarded as a sign of close ties between the diners, has been said to be unhygienic. The use of rice bowls and chopsticks, however, calls for a frequent replenishing of dishes while eating rice. Hence the use of serving spoons has been the solution to the issue concerned. This might also be said to be a copy of the Western way, in that the Westerners use serving utensils so that all diners can share cooked food.

The most interesting phenomenon is the presence of two ways of eating food at the same supper table, namely, the Chinese way and the Western way. Illuminating pictures

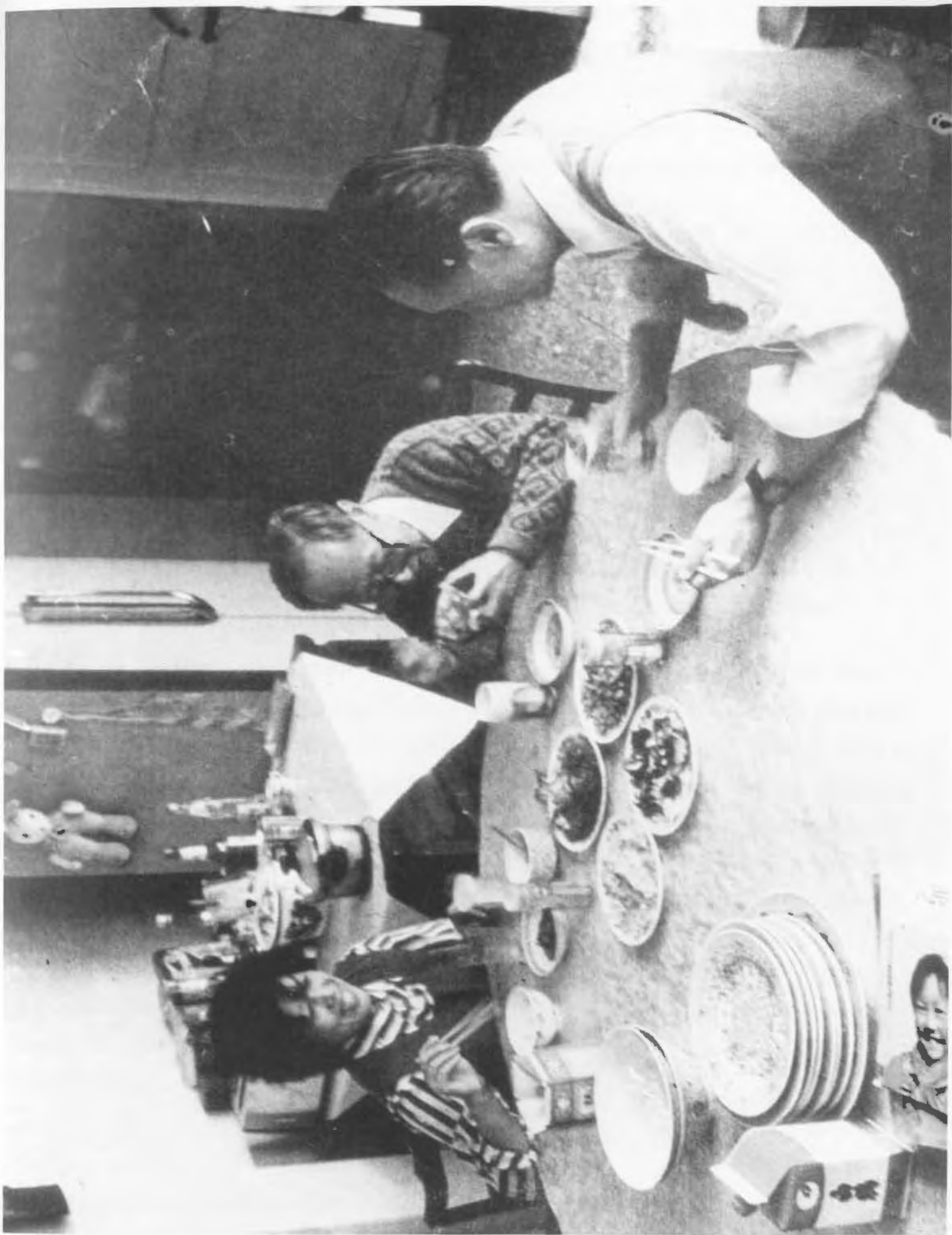
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<sup>7</sup>Tea drinking after a meal is reputed to have the function of assisting digestion in Chinese popular belief. More functions attributed to tea by the Chinese have been recorded by Blofeld (1985: 155).

<sup>8</sup>*China: Pictorial* 1 (1989): 31. This is published and edited by China Pictorial Publications, Huayuancun, Beijing 28, China.

Figure 23: A Typical Chinese Way of Eating  
(from China Pictorial)





come from the Hongs' and the Pings' suppers (Figures 15 and 20). Chinese utensils are placed side by side with Western table utensils. Consequently, those using rice bowls and chopsticks follow the Chinese way of eating, and those using plates, the Western way.

The two ways of eating in two of the families, however, are practiced by two distinct groups, immigrants sticking to the Chinese tradition (Grandma Hong, Dr. Kim Hong, Mr. Ping, and Mr. and Mrs. Au), and those born in Canada following the host culture. Though no evidence can be drawn from the Aus from only observation of one supper about the demarcation of the two practices between the immigrant Chinese and native born generation (for at the Aus' supper, rice bowls and chopsticks were used by everyone), the answer to my question posed to the three girls of the Au family (whether they were more used to forks or chopsticks) is most telling. Their answer was they were more used to forks. Related to the above point is the use of beverages with meals. The adults of the three families still follow the Chinese pattern, hot tea after the meal, whereas the children born in Canada have either cold water or juice or milk with their meal.

As far as the observation of the three meals is concerned, the three families vary in the degree of continuation or acculturation. While the Aus and the Pings made an entire Chinese evening meal for my observation (rice dishes with soup), the Hongs made a supper with many features quite different from those of the other two families. Firstly, Mrs. Hong made greater use of equipment (stove, oven, microwave), which contrasts with the other two families (stove only).<sup>9</sup> This diversity in employing cooking equipment resulted in the unique cooking method of the Hongs (baking). Secondly, the Hongs' supper contained no soup, a necessary component of a complete Chinese meal. Therefore this absence of soup is definitely an absence of a very important traditional Chinese element in a meal. These two features may serve to demonstrate that the Hongs' evening meal, though largely Chinese in nature, tends to be more Westernized than those of the other two families.

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<sup>9</sup>All three kitchens are equally furnished.

However, this does not mean to say that the evening meals I observed of the Pings' and the Aus' are exactly the same. One of the examples that indicate their difference, although minor, is that the Aus use an electric rice cooker, and the Pings used a steel rice pot. This rice pot is all the more impressive if we consider the fact that the rice pot has been used by the Pings for over thirty years (Figure 24). And the reason for avoiding the more popular and time saving electric rice cooker is that this rice pot can make burned rice. Mr. Ping developed a preference for burned rice when he was a child in China, and has maintained it to this very day, when he is eighty-one years old.<sup>10</sup> The above examination indicates that the Pings' way of cooking is the most traditional, and the Hong's the most Westernized, with the Aus' in between.

### 3. Summary

The meal pattern for the three families is a localized structure, supported by its Western characteristics, namely, quick breakfast, light lunch, and a big evening meal for weekdays, with some alternatives on the weekend. This structure is a reflection of social pressure in meal pattern shaping, an inevitable response to the larger social framework. This conformity with the larger society's rhythm is more obvious with the families of Aus and Hong's, who have more social activities to attend to. It is less so with the Pings, for while their weekday meals are more like those of the other two families, their meal pattern shows no difference on the weekend. This fact results from the nuclear nature of their family, and much narrower scope of their social interaction.

The three meals I observed, however, show more Chinese characteristics both in regard to their preparation, ways of cooking, food serving, and beverages. Features that indicate continuation can be seen from the following traits. Firstly, the preservation of the

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<sup>10</sup>Here "burned rice" might be misleading: it is the term used by William Ping. Actually, "burned rice" means "rice crust", the bottom crispy layer of rice resulting from overtime slow cooking. For this the electric cooker is not suitable. He has also explained that burned rice is good for health: commenting

... In the summer, the human body had the heat run out, no heat inside (it means the hot summer weather has caused much loss of iron elements from the human body, which results in the shortage of iron elements within one's body. This is my explanation.). That's why, you know, they use the burned rice to keep the iron (May 14, 1990).

Figure 24: Pings' Rice Pot (November 4, 1989)



*Fan-Tsai* principle in meal preparation (rice and dishes prepared separately). Along the same lines, different cooking utensils are used, and many Chinese ways of cooking are retained (stir-frying, steaming, boiling, deep-frying, stewing). Secondly, traditional table utensils, such as chopsticks and rice bowls are still being used, and the practice of replenishing dishes while eating rice is still present. Thirdly, the serving of hot tea after the meal is still retained and practiced, a finishing touch to the Chinese nature of their evening meals.

These overwhelmingly Chinese characteristics in the three families' evening meals are tempered, to a certain degree, by local features in their foodways. The noticeable absence of the *wok* in dish preparation and the adoption of serving spoons are two indications of deviance from the traditional Chinese food habits.

However, the most interesting phenomenon in food serving among the three Chinese families is the co-existence of tradition and localization at the same table, which is exemplified in the presence of both Chinese and Western ways of serving food. The supporting details are the presence of two types of eating utensils, and the practice of the two ways of eating food. The immigrant generation sticks to traditional practices (using rice bowls and chopsticks, replenishing dishes while eating rice), whereas the native born generation conform more to the practice of the host culture (taking plates and forks, filling plates before eating). This complex is also shown in beverages connected with evening meals. While immigrants use no beverages during the meal, and only have hot tea after, the native-born generation has either cold water, juice or milk with the meal. In short, evening meals for the three immigrant families demonstrate both Chinese and Western characteristics. Chinese elements, however, are far more numerous than those of Western culture.

## **Chapter VI: Food in Relation to Custom and Belief**

The primary function of food is to maintain man's bodily needs. Food has been employed, however, for countless purposes other than survival; as Barer-Stein has said about other food functions, "Food is a source of pleasure, comfort, security. Food is also a symbol of hospitality, social status, and has ritual significance" (1979: vii). Food with my three informant families is no exception. They use food for various purposes. Having discussed two specific aspects of foodways -- ingredients and meals -- I will discuss some aspects of food use other than survival by the three families in this chapter. The discussion will be centered around custom and belief.

Custom covers a wide range of human activity, referring to both established socially-accepted practice and the habitual practice of a person (Longman 273). In this chapter, however, I shall confine my consideration of customs to the following: festival celebrations, life cycle celebrations, food as gifts, eating together, food as medicine, and preference and avoidance. Beliefs relating to these customs and beliefs will be noted and examined. Data were collected primarily through interviews with my informants, and my observations obtained through my interaction with them. Findings will first be reported, with an analytical study following their presentation.

### **A. Food on Special Occasions**

The term "special occasions" is somewhat vague, for a special occasion varies from culture to culture and among individuals. In this section, special occasions will encompass festival celebrations and life cycle celebrations. Food on such occasions will be considered in the context of the three families I have studied. Some symbolic meanings of food in festival celebrations will also be examined.

## 1. Festivals

The importance of food in a festival celebration cannot be overemphasized. Prosterman remarks, "food is often central to a celebration event" (1984: 127). This is also true for Chinese immigrants. A pertinent example is offered by William Hoy. He stated, while examining native festivals of the California Chinese, that "the most important custom which heralds the beginning of Chinese Spring Festival, is a gastronomic one . . ." (1948: 243). Hence an examination of food for festival celebrations is of prime importance. Before looking at the foods *per se*, however, I will give a brief account of the festivals observed by the three families.

The three immigrant Chinese families celebrate festivals of both the host culture and their country of origin. My investigation has determined that the three families celebrate the following festivals: Christmas, Chinese New Year<sup>1</sup>, the Flower Service, the Dragon Boat festival<sup>2</sup>, the Moon Festival<sup>3</sup>, Thanksgiving, Easter, and Regatta Day. Among the above, there are three Chinese festivals, namely, Chinese New Year, the Moon Festival and the Dragon Boat Festival. The rest belong to the host culture. Food served in relation to these celebrations is presented in the following table form. The order of presentation is chronological.

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<sup>1</sup>The Chinese New Year is also called the Spring Festival. It is the first day of the first month in the Chinese lunar calendar. It is the most important and popular of all Chinese festivals. The principal ritual activity during this festival is known as "New Year's visiting" whereby relatives and friends go to each other's houses and exchange greetings.

<sup>2</sup>The Dragon Boat Festival falls on the fifth day of the fifth month on the Chinese lunar calendar. This festival was established in commemoration of Qu Yuan (c.340-278 B.C.), a statesman and poet of the Warring States period (475-221 B.C.). An official of the state of *chu*, Qu Yuan was thwarted in his ambitions to save his country and threw himself into the Miluo River when the state of *Qin* conquered *chu*. *Zong zi* - glutinous rice dumplings wrapped in bamboo leaves - are served on the festival and dragon boat races are held (*China A B C* 1985: 208-9).

<sup>3</sup>The Moon Festival is also called the Mid-autumn Festival. It is on the fifteenth day of the eighth month in the Chinese lunar calendar, when the Chinese traditionally eat round moon cakes, while enjoying a view of the bright, full autumn moon.



Table 6

## Festival Foods of the Three Families

Festivals	Foods		
	Pings	Aus	Hongs
Chinese New Year	BBQ duck, and pork, steamed chicken, vegetables, soup	roast duck, chicken, pork, vegetable, soup, dried bean curd, dimsum	Chinese Dumplings
Easter	almost the same as that on Christmas	turkey, vegetables, gravy	the same as Christmas
Dragon Boat Festival	zong zi	zong zi	zong zi
Regatta Day	nothing special	nothing special	nothing special
Flower Service	picnic with the Chinese community at the celebration	the same as the Pings	the same as the Pings
Moon Festival	mooncakes	mooncakes	mooncakes
Thanks Giving	turkey, carrot, potato, pea or beans	turkey, vegetables, stuffing, gravy, rice	turkey or chicken, or Chinese dinner
Christmas	turkey, ham, carrot, potato salad, cauliflower, beans, dessert, bread, cookies	turkey, ham, beans, duck, chicken, rice, soup, shrimp, vegetables	turkey, fish, ham, noodle dish, rice, vegetables, potato, assorted desserts

If the celebrations observed by the three families display a complex of continuation and acculturation, the food listed in the above table supports the point. It is quite clear that the three families prepare and eat foods appropriate to each festival, with Chinese foods for Chinese festivals, and host culture foods for the local festival celebrations. Based on Oring's statement, "... ethnic groups are recognized on the basis of a particular cultural tradition or style" (1986: 34), their way of preparing foods on different occasions reveals their immigrant status in a foreign land. The observance of the old world celebrations marks their ethnic identity, and their observance of the host culture's celebrations confirms their assimilation to that host culture. Food here serves as a reinforcement of the ethnic status of the three Chinese immigrant families in St. John's.

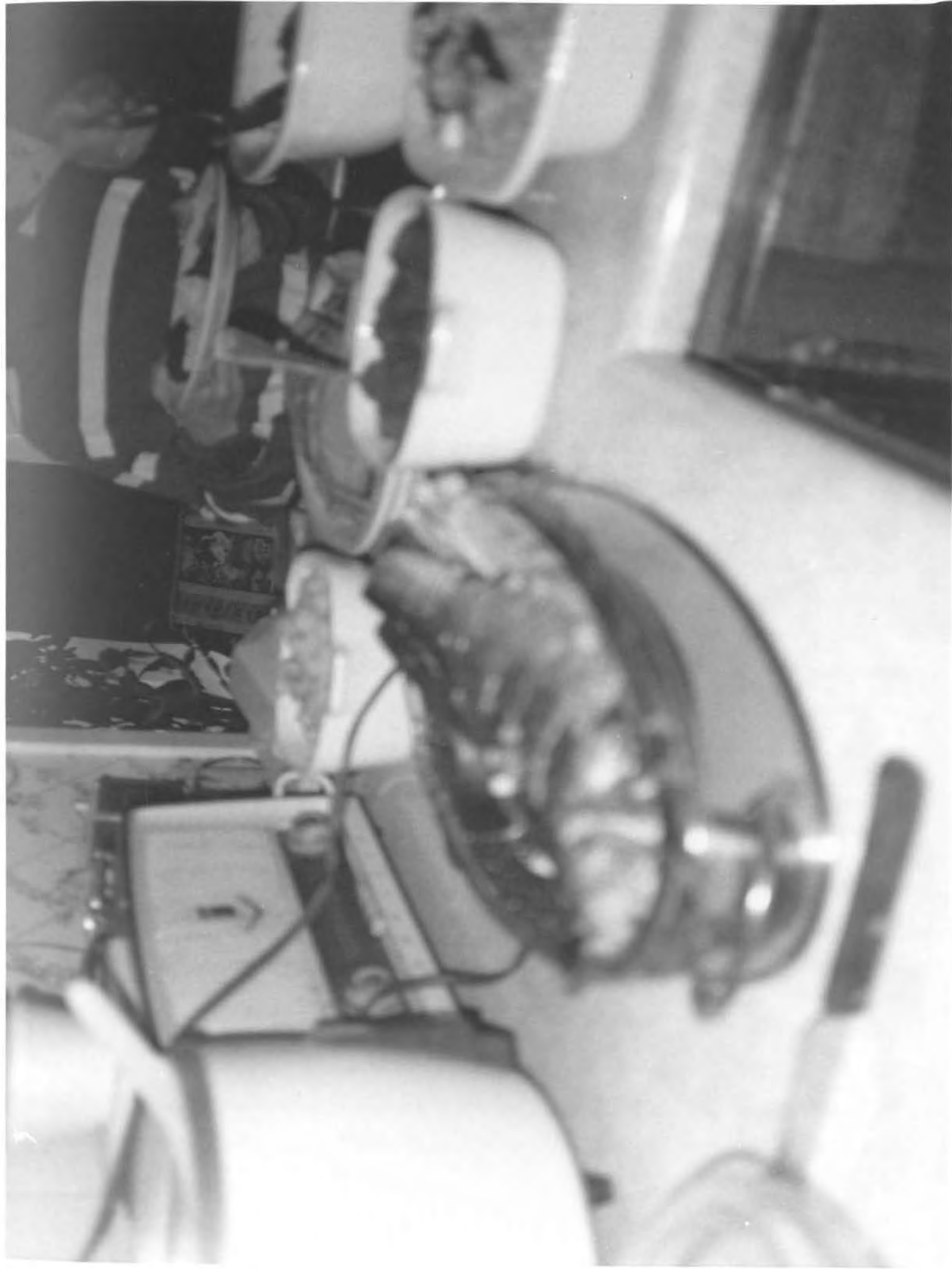
Among the various festival foods, some are of notable symbolic significance in Chinese culture. Two examples are chicken and dumplings. Chicken, especially, cooked in its whole form, symbolizes luck and fortune in the Kaiping and Taishan (Hoiping and Toisan) regions.<sup>4</sup> Mrs. Hong mentioned that Kim Hong always asks her to cook chicken for Chinese guests. Fried Chinese dumplings, according to Hong's mother, is a must for the Chinese New Year in the Toisan region. They are a sign of good luck. What is more, the pronunciation of dumpling -- *yiou jiaozi* -- is homonymic with the Chinese phrase indicating *many children* (Hong's mother), an obvious symbol of wealth. Fish is also present in the Hong's Christmas dinner, and indicates a sign of good luck. In the Chinese language, "fish" is pronounced as "yu", which is homonymic with another Chinese character "surplus". As "surplus" implies that you can always have more than you need to consume, it indicates wealth in Chinese culture. Hence this dish is commonly considered a luck-bringing one and is a must for certain ceremonial occasions (Figure 25). Food having local cultural significance is also present. The most common one is turkey for Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

There is another feature of food consumed on special occasions, namely, food used in Chinese festivals is all of Chinese nature, but food for local cultural festivals is not.

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<sup>4</sup>Provided by Kim Hong on June 6, 1990.

Figure 25: A Cooked Fish, Taken on Christmas 1990  
at the Hongs



The three families cook Western food on Easter and for Thanksgiving and Christmas there appears a combination of food items from both cultures. On Thanksgiving Day, the Hongs may either have turkey or chicken, the former a ritual food of the local culture, and the latter, that for the Chinese. Besides turkey for Christmas dinner, the Aus and the Hongs have duck, chicken, and fish. The two food items, fish and chicken, are special for this dinner on the last day of a year. As they are traditionally believed to be luck-bringing foods, this dinner is said to be a farewell to the past year and an ushering in of the new.

## 2. Life Cycle Celebrations

The Chinese are noted for three meals served during their life cycle celebrations: first at one month old (a full moon); second, at the wedding; and the third, at the funeral. The most recent reference to the above practice was made by Hoe (1990: 69). My investigation among the three Chinese families, however, shows that only two meals are prepared: at the wedding and the funeral.

Wedding dinners have been served by the three families, whereas a funeral dinner has been served by only one of them. Only the Au family has served a funeral dinner, as it alone has experienced the death of a family member since arriving here.

For the three families, wedding ceremonies have been held at restaurants with food and a wedding cake ordered in advance. The Aus' household served a funeral dinner at the death of Mr. Au's father. Special foods, such as dried bean curd cream and rice noodles, had been served in their home village tradition. It was the practice in Kaiping (Hoiping) for the whole family to eat as vegetarians for days to show their deep grief as well as the respect of the living for the dead.

One aspect to add to life cycle celebrations is that of birthdays. The most noted custom and belief associated with birthdays is the eating of noodles and peaches, both of which are symbols of long life.<sup>5</sup> Here, in the three families, birthdays of seniors and

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<sup>5</sup>For details of their symbolic meaning, see p. 35.

juniors are celebrated. The Pings usually go to a Chinese restaurant for celebration.<sup>6</sup> The AUs normally prepare a big dinner for Mr. Au, the head of the family, and Mr. Au's aged mother, when Chinese dishes such as chicken, duck and soup are made. A noodle dish is a must. For the younger family members, only cakes are provided. The Hongs either go to a restaurant or make a big dinner at home; for their children, only the western style birthday cake is served (Figure 26).

Compared with common practices in China, life cycle celebrations in Newfoundland demonstrate features of both the original country and the New World. Some significant elements of Chinese culture are retained with regard to funeral and birthday celebrations. They are: a vegetarian diet to show grief and respect for the departed, and the preparing and offering of noodles as a good-will wish for longevity at birthday celebrations.

However, life cycle celebrations among the three Chinese immigrant families function largely in relation to the host culture. Food no longer plays a special role in the childbirth celebration, for none of the three families observe the traditional childbirth celebrations here. Birthday celebrations for adults are normally held at restaurants. Those for the native-born generations are celebrated exclusively with birthday cakes. Food for a wedding ceremony is of a local nature, with a wedding cake as the symbolic food for marriage.

### **B. Food Sharing**

Food sharing is realized through food exchanges and feasts. In his work *Food and Nutrition: Customs and Culture*, Fieldhouse has expounded upon these two forms of food sharing (1986: 75-108). In his view, food given as gifts can be realized within the framework of exchange principles, namely, an "unstated", but "expected" reciprocity

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<sup>6</sup>Mr. Ping had his eighty-first birthday on May 20th, 1990; that day he, together with his wife, three grandchildren, and one son and daughter-in-law, went to a Chinese restaurant, the *Magpie Wok Eatery*, on Water Street.

Figure 26: One of the Hong's Sons' Birthday  
Celebrations, Christmas 1990





(87). Fieldhouse identified three types of reciprocity. They are: generalized reciprocity (no immediate expectation of return, no attempt to make gift-giving balance out), usually between family members and close friends; balanced reciprocity (expectation of return, delayed perhaps, and assessment of the gift value), between social equals; negative reciprocity (impersonal exchanges, such as commercial transactions) (87). For eating together, Fieldhouse focused on feasts of all kinds, specifically, feasts in relation to festivals. Here in my discussion, I will also focus on these two forms, food as gifts and food gatherings among the three families. Since my discussion is family-centred, I will confine my discussion of food as gift to the exchange that takes place within the first type of reciprocity, that is, the practice of giving food as a gift between family members and their close friends. The food gatherings will be those which centre around their residences.

#### a. Food as gift

Food as gift has been long used by the Chinese for political, religious, ritual and secular purposes. As far as secular and ritual purposes are concerned, food as gift has been described by the Chinese as an important means of establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships.<sup>7</sup> Based on his research on Chinese foodways, Anderson noted the presence of this practice among the Chinese as early as the Chou Dynasty (12th cent. BC - 221 BC) (1988: 204). Here are some examples to illustrate food as gift for ritual and secular purposes. For ritual purposes, food as gifts is found with life cycle celebrations such as childbirth, engagements, weddings and funerals. It is a tradition for the Chinese to announce the birth of the first child to the child's grandparents on the new-born's mother's side on the very day the child is born. On this occasion, food as gift is a must. In the western part of Hunan Province, it is recorded that two *jin*<sup>8</sup> of wine, two *jin* of pork, two *jin* of sugar and a cock, or a hen, or both hen and cock are designated for

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<sup>7</sup>I do not discuss the political and religious uses of food as gifts as they are not part of my focus here.

<sup>8</sup>*Jin* is a Chinese weight unit. It equals 0.5 kilograms or 1.1023 pounds.

this purpose. If a cock is brought, then the notified family knows immediately that the new-born is a boy. If a hen is presented, then the new-born is a girl. If both cock and hen are brought along, it means the newly-born are twins (Qiao 1990: 75). Food as gift exchanged between the two parties' families was traditionally a necessary element of the betrothal process (Doolittle 1868: 47), and a must before a wedding ceremony (49). Food as gift to the deceased was part of the funeral ceremony of old China, about which Doolittle made a very detailed description:

The eldest son now approaches and kneels down before the corpse. He then *takes a cup of wine and offers it to the dead* three times. He then takes *some cooked vermicelli* by means of chopsticks, out of a bowl, and *presents it to the mouth of the dead* . . . three times. After this he takes *a bowl of cooked rice*, and makes a presentation in similar manner . . . three times (1868: 129-30).

For secular purposes, this practice is applied to festival food exchanges, and on occasions such as visiting friends and visiting the sick. Food as gift for these purposes can be in various forms, raw meat, baked foods, cooked food, or fresh fruit. Food as gift for the dead is offered in the form of a sacrifice, about which Ahern gave a detailed description in 1973 (166-74). For festive celebrations, food as gift is limited to special festivals, for instance, *zong zi* at the Dragon Boat Festival, mooncakes at the Moon Festival (Mid-Autumn Festival). For visiting friends, foods in any form can be brought along. It is more likely, however, that food presented to the aged be usually of high protein value, or something specially liked by the person visited. For visiting the sick, cooked soup -- considered to be of high nutritional value -- is usually offered, or fruit in either fresh or canned form.

The practice of food as gift has also been noted as prevalent among immigrant Chinese in the United States. An illuminating example is offered by Langlois, who recorded that mooncakes in New York have been, and still are, an ideal gift to relatives and friends (1972).

In my fieldwork, I asked a number of questions about the ritual and secular aspects of the practice of giving gifts of food. My findings suggest that food as gift is a practice familiar to all three families. All of them give food to, and receive food from, their

relatives or friends, as gifts. The occasions are much more limited, however, and so is the variety of food. This is supported by data collected in my interviews with my informants.

The Pings mention the occasion of get-togethers with friends, when they bring either a bottle of wine or a box of chocolates, and the occasion of visiting the sick at a hospital, when fresh fruit might be brought along. Mrs. Ping added, however, that most of the time they send flowers to the sick at a hospital, as native Canadians do.

The Aus talk about potluck meals, when they usually bring a bottle of wine or champagne; and visiting the sick when Chinese soup (chicken with Chinese medical herbs) is offered, because this kind of soup is considered to be good for one's health and functions to facilitate a patient's recovery. They also mention their practice of sending mooncakes at the Moon Festival to close friends and relatives, and *zong zi* on the Dragon Boat Festival. The Hongs often bring homemade food to a gathering, or sometimes just a packet of tea or a box of chocolates. Mooncakes are usually a gift from Mrs. Hong's friends.

The occasions on which food is brought as gifts are limited then to gatherings (three families), folk festivals (two families), and to visiting the sick (two families). Food is limited to only a few varieties: drink (wine, champagne, tea), candy (chocolate), festival specials (mooncakes and *zong zi*<sup>9</sup>), home-made dishes, and fresh fruit. It is clear therefore that with these three families, the practice of giving food as gifts exists only within a very limited scope. The recognizable Chinese occasions are two, namely, Chinese folk festivals, and visiting the sick.<sup>10</sup> Food as gifts for both occasions, however, is practiced by two families. Food brought to gatherings is practiced by all three families. Though

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<sup>9</sup>For details about *zong zi*, refer to p. 133n.

<sup>10</sup>Visiting the sick is not only a Chinese custom. But visiting the sick with food is a very popular practice in China. Its Chinese nature lies in the use of food as gift to a sick person, not the practice of visiting the sick per se. However, the foregoing statement does not indicate that other cultures do not use food as gifts to the sick. One example is provided by Dr. G. Thomas. In Welsh tradition, it was/is common practice to take either fresh fruit or flowers to the sick, though in minor types of "sickness" e.g. removal of tonsils, ice cream is brought along (July 18, 1990).

food brought to a family dinner is popular in China, homemade dishes are never brought along (foodstuffs frequently brought to a dinner include alcohol, bakery products and candies). Bringing cooked foodstuff is 'potluck style', a product of Western culture. Hence, though the practice of giving food as gifts still maintains some Chinese characteristics (traditional festival specials, food as gifts to the sick) among the three families, it is also applied to host culture occasions, such as a potluck meal or a get-together.

Within the three families, the Hongs do not use food as gifts for the sick. This is another sign of the Hongs' more localized, acculturated behaviour. Among the three families, food as gift is not practiced in relation to any ritual occasions, such as childbirth and weddings. It is practiced, however, on two secular occasions, the festivals (the Dragon Boat Festival and the Moon Festival) and when visiting the sick.

Giving food as gift is an important means of strengthening existing social bonds. When Mr. Au said: "We send out moon cakes to our relatives or friends to let them have a taste of different varieties of this special festival food . . ." (Nov. 21, 1989) and Mrs. Hong said: "We always bring some food, no matter [how] small, what time, anything, not costly, a box of tea, just to appreciate or a box of chocolate. That's a nice gesture . . ." (Nov. 22, 1989), it fully demonstrates their awareness of the social function of foods as gifts, and their conscious manipulation of the practice. The practice of giving food as gifts is an important feature of foodways, but it has been neglected by foodways scholars. Apart from some scattered, relevant information (Firth 1926, 1973; Mors 1958; and Farb 1980: 158-161), no in-depth research has been carried out so far.

## 2. Eating Together

While the form of food sharing -- the giving of food as gifts -- is a much neglected aspect of foodways research, food sharing in the form of eating together has been more widely explored. Scholars such as Hortense Powdermaker, Cussler and Marry de Givé, Sandra Joos, and Susan Kalichik, have all made scholarly studies on the subject of eating together, and explored the social dimensions of such food events.

The issue of eating together has also been much discussed in Chinese culture. A supporting argument is that all the essays in *Food in Chinese Culture* devote a certain portion to a discussion of this issue, providing a historical picture of eating together from the highest level of social formality -- imperial feasts and banquets -- to ordinary get-togethers. However, except for Anderson's essay in this volume, food sharing in the form of eating together was largely descriptive. Hardly any social dimensions were dealt with.

Eating together, like giving food as gifts, helps facilitate social, political and interpersonal interactions. It is also popular with my informants. My interviews with them reveal that eating together takes place at two levels, among relatives and among friends. The descriptions by my informants support this point (the following are taken from fieldwork notes; for illustrations of these events, see Figures 27-30 for the Pings, and 31-34 for the Honggs).

#### The Pings

We have big parties on Christmas, and Chinese New Year. The members are my extended family members, and their relatives (e.g. my son-in-law's parents). Some other friends may be invited, but not that many. We usually have 15 or 16 persons. For Christmas, we have sit-down dinner, and for Chinese New Year, we usually have buffet. Things cooked are almost the same.

#### The Aus

We often eat together. For long weekends, we have our extended family members over for a big dinner. We have a large extended family, 15 or 16 persons together. We do invite friends or guests to my home at festivals, such as Christmas, and Chinese New Year, and New Year, but mostly family members, only a couple of friends occasionally.

#### The Honggs

We have big parties on Christmas, and Chinese New Year. We invite adults with kids on Christmas, for other occasions, only adults. We serve buffet on these occasions, for we usually have over 25 guests over plus their kids . . . The guests are mixed friends, Chinese, Canadian and Filipinos etc. . . .

Figure 27: The Decorated Table for the Pings'  
1989 Christmas Dinner



Figure 28: Mr. Ping and Mrs. Ping Having  
Just Finished Food Preparation  
for the Christmas Party, 1989





Figure 29: Buffet-style Food on the Pings' Counter at 1989 Christmas Party



Figure 30: The Pings Eating Christmas Dinner  
at their 1989 Christmas Party;  
on the right, their second son;  
on the left, their eldest grandson





Figure 31: Chien Mian, a Typical Chinese Food at  
the Hongs' 1989 Christmas Party



Figure 32: Fried Chinese Dumplings, Taken at  
Christmas 1990 at the Hongs





Figure 33: The Buffet Serving of Food at  
the Hongs' 1989 Christmas Party



Figure 34: Talk After the 1989 Christmas Dinner  
at the Hongs

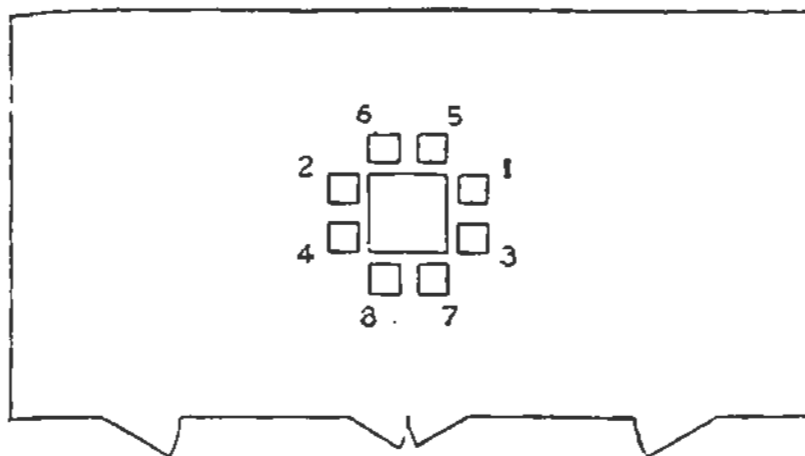


Two points are clear from these data. Firstly, these families' ways of eating together manifest both Chinese and localized characteristics. The most popular Western way of eating together, the buffet, has been adopted by Chinese immigrants. Although, the sit-down dinner is not confined to any specific culture, traditional Chinese dinners have never taken any other forms. What is more, seating arrangements have a very important role in a formal dinner, with the seat of honour usually reserved for the most distinguished guest and the rank of all the diners being clearly manifest from the position they occupy at a banquet or feast table (see Figure 35). So, the buffet dinner as a form of eating together is a sign of acculturation among the three families.

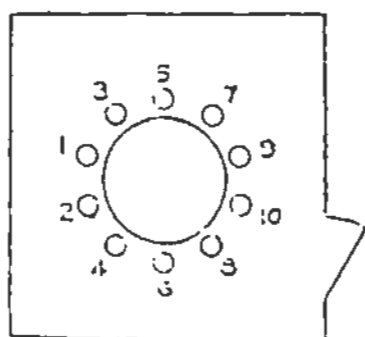
Secondly, the range of guests varies with each family. The guests for the Pings and the Aus are mainly family members and relatives. The Hong's, on the other hand, have a much broader spectrum of guests. This is revealed from the last Christmas celebration which I observed. The guests were of different cultural backgrounds, native Canadians, British, Swiss, East Indians, and Filipinos. The majority were Chinese, but they were from various parts of the world: Singapore, Thailand, Taiwan, Macao, Hongkong, as well as from Guangdong, China. They came from all walks of life: among them were medical doctors, lawyers, a social worker, a restaurant owner, a clothing businessman, as well as housewives. Everyone was in high spirits, talking with old and new acquaintances. The whole house was filled with pleasant greetings and conversations. All through the party, before, during, and after the dinner, people of similar interests stayed together. All kinds of topics were brought up, world events, rumours about certain old acquaintances and business topics as well as recreation such as gambling. People speaking the same dialect grouped together. This enjoyment of togetherness was also manifested through the fact that some guests stayed for a much longer period of time talking with each other. Even one of Hong's friends came after the dinner. He came in and sat at the table, joining in the conversation, and stayed on.

The Hong's Christmas party manifests, most strongly, a sense of friendship. Thaddeus Dreher, vice president of the Multicultural Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, has clearly expressed this feeling as follows: ". . . Kim and me are great

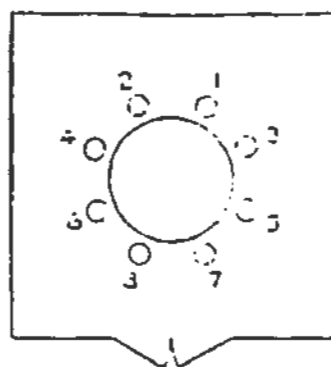
Figure 35: Three Examples of Seating Arrangements  
at a Formal Chinese Dinner



A



B



C



friends. And I have been to the Hongs' Christmas party for almost twenty years . . ." This feeling might be that of many other friends. But this sense of friendship is experienced by both the host and the guest. Here is what the host said to me on that day: ". . . It is good to have many friends, not only Chinese, but also friends from other ethnic groups . . ." This also illustrates that eating together does not only create a sense of unity, but also serves as a psychological fulfillment for both the guests and the host. Contrary to the Hongs, eating together events for the Pings and the Aus largely convey the sense of cohesion among the kin group, for the participants at their parties are mainly relatives and family members.

### C. Food As Medicine

Food as medicine has been well noted in Chinese culture.<sup>11</sup> It is also one of the areas that has been explored by overseas scholars. The hot-cold concept has been studied from various cultural perspectives (Yeung et al; Betty Chang 1974; Wheeler and Poh; and Anderson 1980, 1984). Their findings confirm the fact that the deep-rooted hot-cold principle is in practice among the Chinese immigrants they sampled. Prompted by their findings, I constructed a questionnaire based on Yeung's essay (1973) in an attempt to find out whether my informant families were aware of the hot-cold concept, and whether or not they believed in it and practiced it.

As the hot-cold concept is related to the *yin-yang* principle, the dominant concept in traditional Chinese philosophy, I approached my informants first with questions in regard to this key *yin-yang* contrast. The results reveal that the Pings and the Aus are well aware of the *yin-yang* concept. They both believe in it and practice the hot-cold principle in foodways. The Hongs, on the other hand, show no sense of awareness of it, and consequently, they do not practice it.

Mr. Ping showed the greatest interest in the hot-cold concept with regard to the classification of some common foods. His response to the hot-cold concept was "I believe

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<sup>11</sup>For more details, see pp. 45-6.

it a hundred percent" (Feb. 12, 1990). For the classification of some common Chinese foods, Ping had his own opinion. While agreeing with the classification, he says it depends on cooking. To illustrate the point, Ping said: "... chicken when cooked with curry is hot, for curry is hot. But when cooked with *Luo Han Guo*<sup>12</sup>, it is cold" (Feb. 12, 1990). He also went a step further by giving me three recipes, two for bringing down a fever in a child, another for expelling the heat from one's body (see recipes in appendix B). Mrs. Au also mentioned to me that winter melon soup is good for the internal body system. She provided me with a soup recipe effective for expelling heat, namely, *Four Flavours Soup*.<sup>13</sup>

The postpartum period is a time that the hot-cold concept is normally observed in China. It is believed that the mother should only eat hot foods and avoid cold foods. This practice is still common in today's China. When I asked the three homemakers of my informant families, all three told me that they did not avoid any foods. They just ate what they wanted (see the responses in appendix C). Mr. Ping remembered, however, making some soup for his wife in her postpartum period. The recipe he gave me is for soup made of the following ingredients: Chinese angelica with pig's feet. It is a soup considered to be of a very hot nature, which can stimulate the circulation of blood.

These findings reveal that the age-old hot-cold concept is not only in existence in the Chinese community in St. John's, but also that it is being practiced. Within the three families, the Pings and the AUs are firm tradition holders and practitioners. The Hong's seem to be totally ignorant of the concept. However I cannot arrive at the conclusion here that traditional food as medicine is absent from the family, for Kim Hong's mother is over seventy, and came to St. John's in her forties. A long-standing Chinese tradition cannot vanish without any vestiges. What is more, she speaks Cantonese dialect, which may well have been too much of an obstacle to her acculturation. And since food has

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<sup>12</sup>*Luo Han Guo* is a kind of fruit, somewhat like the *Kiwi* fruit in shape and color. It is believed by the Chinese to be of cold nature.

<sup>13</sup>The Chinese version is attached in appendix C.

often been considered the last aspect to change, popular Chinese beliefs in this regard have not lost their hold on her. Moreover, the response to my questionnaire was provided by Mrs. Hong (wife of the family head), she is non-Chinese, and from my talks with her, she knows little about Chinese concepts of food. The best person to get information from is Hong's mother. But the language barrier (I cannot understand any Cantonese, which is the only language she speaks), prevents me from exploring this valuable resource for my thesis. The pressure of time, as well, prevented me from obtaining data from her by other means, such as with the help of an interpreter. Therefore, I cannot make assumptions about the existence or disappearance of traditional Chinese beliefs regarding food used for medical purposes in the Hong family. Nonetheless, Mrs. Hong attaches great importance to the balance of meals, specifically, a balance between meat and vegetables; to use her own words, "I always serve vegetables at every evening meal" (Nov. 22, 1989). This balance of food, meat and vegetables, can be related to that of Chinese belief. Her practice might be said to coincide with the *Yin-Yang* principle, for the majority of meat is classified as hot (yang), and the majority of vegetables, cool (yin). A glance at the traditional classification of some common Chinese foods by the Hot-Cold principle may illustrate this (See Yeung 1973: 198):

**Table 7: Classification of Common Chinese Foods  
by the Hot-Cold Principle**

Food Group	Hot (Very Yang)	Warm (Yang)	Intermediate (Yang & Yin)	Cool (Yin)	Cold (Very Yin)
Meat, fish	Beef lamb prawns	chicken duck	fish eggs	pork	crab
Cereals	noodles			millet wheat gruel	
Vegetables		red beans parsley	bean curd	green onions spinach turnip bean sprouts	watercress green beans Chinese cabbage
Fruit	nuts dates		grapes	pineapple orange pear	banana watermelon
Condiments	chili ginger	honey vinegar garlic			salt white sugar soysauce
Beverages		boiled water			cold unboiled water tea

Hence when Mrs. Hong emphasizes the balance between meat and vegetables, it strikes a sympathetic note with traditional Chinese beliefs. So, in this regard, I may well say that Mrs. Hong is actually practicing the hot-cold principle without her knowing it.

To summarize with regard to the uses of food as medicine, the Pings and the Aus still maintain Chinese food beliefs and practice them. The Hong, who seem to be ignorant of the traditional Chinese food beliefs, actually practice them.

#### **D. Food Preference and Avoidance**

The issue of food preference and avoidance has been the interest of scholars such as Angyal, Cussler and De Give, Simoons, Nicod, and Palmerino. While some nations are noted for certain food preferences and avoidances, the Chinese are often said to have few

taboos in food. However, they still show a preference for certain kinds of food over others. One example is pork. Pork is the most popular meat consumed by the Chinese, whereas beef lacks the popularity in China that it enjoys in the West. My three informant families live in a community having access to both host culture and Chinese foodstuffs. With a different cultural background, I assumed they would show a preference for some foods over others. Hence the issue of food preference and avoidance was part of my fieldwork.

The following data are abstracted from the written responses of the questionnaire prepared by the Folklore Archive of Memorial University of Newfoundland, and my talks with my informants.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>See the written responses in appendix C.

Table 8

### Food Preference and Avoidance of Three Families

Preference			
	Pings	Aus	Hongs
Dishes	steamed chicken, oxtail soup with black beans	spareribs, sweet & sour pork, sweet & sour duck	nothing special
Meat	chicken, pork	beef, chicken, cod	chicken, pork, cod, halibut, salmon, squid, shrimp
Vegetables	all kinds	broccoli	all kinds
Dairy		milk	milk, cheese
Drink	tea	tea	tea
Fruit	nothing special	bananas, grapes, cantaloupe	nothing special
Spices	ginger, garlic, soysauce	MSG	pepper, oregano, paprika, chili powder, curry powder, cinnamon
Avoidance			
	canned food, occasional sandwiches, no raw vegetables	no raw vegetables	occasional raw vegetables

It is not easy to make generalizations about preferences and avoidances in the three families. From the data collected, however, a few notable points can be made.

With regard to meat, vegetables and fruits, freshness is emphasized, while canned food is avoided. The practice of eating raw vegetables, however, is either avoided or takes place only occasionally. The preferred type of drink is tea among all the three families. Dairy products are confined mostly to milk and cheese. In the meat category, chicken is the meat preferred by the three families. Next comes pork, and then seafood. Preferred spice items are mostly those familiar to native Chinese, although those of the Hongs tend to be more diversified.

The above information shows that preferences and avoidances carry a more traditional touch. The preference for fresh meat, vegetable and fruits is quite Chinese in nature. For the Chinese are believers in the concept: "the fresher, the better for health". Hence canned food, with preservatives added, is avoided by many people in China.

Avoidance of raw vegetables is another Chinese practice. The Chinese are aware that cooked vegetables can lose lots of valuable elements good for health. They strongly believe, however, that raw vegetables may cause diseases, for some invisible live bacteria may enter one's body when one eats them raw. The Chinese have the popular belief that *Every disease bacterium enters the body by way of mouth*. In line with this belief, Chinese children are taught to wash their hands before eating and avoid touching ready-to-eat foods, unless they use clean eating utensils. The purpose is to prevent the entry of bacteria through the mouth and, thus, reduce the chance of getting sick.

The preference for tea is undoubtedly Chinese. China is tea's place of origin (Blofeld 1985: xi), and tea drinking has been a practice in China for over 2,000 years. Traditional claims that tea drinking is good for one's health have been found in seventeen different sources (Blofeld 1985: 155). Obviously, a preference of tea as drink can be regarded as a marker of Chinese ethnic identity in the three families.

The small variety of dairy products used is another unique foodways feature for Chinese immigrants. China is often stereotyped as a nation which consumes no milk in its diet (Barer-Stein 1979: 107; Eckstein 1973: 288; Galdston 1960: 66). Though the above

assumption is not true in its strictest sense, for some minority nationalities in China widely use dairy products (e.g. in Mongolia). It is certainly true for the Han nationality, to which the three heads of my informant families belong.<sup>15</sup> Hence the small amount of dairy products consumed illustrates that immigrant Chinese are indeed adapting themselves in this regard, but only to a limited degree. If the total absence of dairy products consumed was characteristic of Han Chinese<sup>16</sup>, a relatively low consumption of dairy products has become a stereotype of Chinese immigrants. Judy Perkin and Stephanie F. McCann noted this characteristic of Chinese immigrants in the United States in 1984 (238-58). My findings from the three families in St. John's add to this stereotype of Chinese immigrants in North America.

The content of food preferences and avoidances is a useful index to a certain people's beliefs about food. So are customs relating to food events. Customs are often determined, however, by the external environment. As a consequence, the change in a custom may lead to a change in the beliefs involved. An illuminating example is concerned with beliefs about three-meals-per-day pattern.

Traditional Chinese belief places emphasis on the order of breakfast, lunch and supper for three meals a day. This emphasis is clearly reinforced by the Chinese saying *Eat a good breakfast, a big lunch and a small supper*. The popular belief is that it is harmful for one to go to bed on a full stomach. Again, this belief is supported by the popular saying *One mouthful less at supper will enable one to live up to ninety-nine years old*. Therefore, the traditional Chinese belief emphasizes the nourishment of one's breakfast, the nourishment and quantity of one's lunch, and the moderate quantity of one's supper. What these three families do, however, is just the other way around, namely, a light breakfast, a quick lunch and a big supper. When the difference in the

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<sup>15</sup>In China, there are fifty-six known nationalities, with Han the most populous, making up 93.3% of the total population in China *China A B C* (1985: 52).

<sup>16</sup>Now, with easier access to milk products, and an awareness of milk's benefit for health, milk is becoming popular increasingly in China among the Han nationality.



three meals in the two countries was pointed out, my informants' reply was largely the same as the following (my summary from Mrs. Au's talk):

I do think this traditional Chinese belief is reasonable, and good for health, but I just cannot do it here. A hot breakfast may be more comfortable, but with handy bread, and cereal, which can be eaten right away, no one would take the trouble making a hot breakfast for over half an hour. Most family members are away either at school or at work at lunch time, a big lunch is almost impossible (even it is possible, cooks do not like the idea of being chained to the stove all day long). Since supper is the only time all members of the family can gather together, a big supper is necessary both physically and spiritually. And as time goes by, we are used to this meal pattern.

This has, in the long run, effected their value system on the nourishment and quantity to be taken from each meal per-day, resulting in a preference for host culture meal pattern to that of the Old World. The above statement demonstrates that the traditional Chinese idea about three meals is still there and believed in, but the social environment prevents it from being practiced. Their comfort with the host culture meal-pattern will most likely erode the traditional belief of the old world in the immigrants' minds, and leave no vestige of their traditional belief in coming generations.<sup>17</sup>

### E. Summary

Food is used extensively by the three families for purposes other than survival. Food on special occasions, such as festivals and life cycle celebrations, is used mainly to convey ritual significance. Among the three Chinese immigrant families, the ritual significance of food is a combination of both the Old World culture and the New. As they observe traditional Chinese festivals, they have to use food to mark the occasion. Some of the examples are whole chicken and Chinese dumplings on the traditional Chinese New Year's Day. They are lucky food items in the Chinese culture symbolizing prosperity and good luck in the coming year. The special food, *zong zi* and mooncakes, not only convey the ritual significance, but also express the immigrants' identity with the Old World culture. In observing the host culture festivals, Chinese immigrants also adapt

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<sup>17</sup>I have asked one child of the Aus' family about the above three meal belief, and she showed no awareness of it.

local food traditions, most evident in the use of turkey on Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas, clearly a Western food item with ritual significance. Chinese food is also occasionally used to celebrate local festivals as with the Hongs' family. Foods for local festival celebrations, especially, those on Thanksgiving or Christmas, may consist, as well, of some significant Chinese food items along with those of the local culture. Hence local festivals can be celebrated with either local food items or Chinese food items, or a combination of things from both cultures.

Food in life cycle celebrations tends to be of a more localized nature. The traditional Chinese three meals for life cycle celebrations (one month old, wedding, funeral), have been reduced to two only (wedding and funeral). Within the three families, only the funeral meal is of Chinese nature, and the wedding meals are overwhelmingly acculturated. Though at birthday celebrations they still observe some traditional practices, such as eating noodles, this celebration is becoming Westernized, for the immigrants often go to a restaurant for this celebration, and the younger generation usually has birthday cakes.

In food sharing for the three families, food functions as a facilitator for social interactions. The practice of food used as gift has been carried out on both traditional Chinese occasions (Chinese folk festivals, visiting the sick), and local cultural events (potluck parties, and the exchange of the local or special food products among relatives or close friends). With the same function of establishing and maintaining social ties, eating together events for the three families resemble more closely local food habits. A buffet style of food serving, the utensils and equipment used, and the table manners are all recognizably of the local culture.

Food as medicine reflects the three immigrant families' food beliefs in relation to supporting human body functions. A longstanding folk practice -- food as medicine -- is still prevalent among the immigrant families. While the Pings and the Aus, however, are consciously practicing some of the traditional beliefs, the Hongs are eating food, more or less, in accordance with the traditional Chinese belief system, namely, the *yin-yang* balance in food preparation.

Preference and avoidance for the three families reflect more the taste of the Chinese immigrants. The list of preferred dishes for the three families are Chinese (steamed chicken, oxtail soup with black beans, spareribs, sweet and sour pork, and duck). Their preferred meat is chicken, pork, fish, and beef, which is more or less in line with stereotyped consumption meat items for the Chinese -- pork, chicken, and fish. The preferred core beverage by the three families is tea, the well noted traditional Chinese beverage. The two families' avoidance of eating raw vegetables is a most characteristic Chinese food habit. Hence Chinese preference and avoidance can be said to have been influenced or effected by traditional beliefs.

In summation, with the three families, food in relation to customs is also an area where a co-existence of continuation and acculturation of foodways is evident. Chinese foodways are retained in celebrating the Old World festivals, and appropriate adaptation in food is made on host cultural festival celebrations. Life cycle celebrations for the three families tend to become more and more localized. For the major celebration of host culture festivals, however, there often is a combination of food items with ritual significance from both cultures. In food sharing, the three families have acculturated more with the food habits of the New World than holding onto those of the Old World. However, some traditional Chinese beliefs with regard to food are still being practiced by the three families and affect their diet, which is exemplified in their food preference and avoidance.

## Chapter VII: Conclusion

The foregoing discussion and analysis of fieldwork data reveal that two forces, continuation and acculturation, in the foodways complex of the three Chinese immigrant families in St. John's, are manifest in each of the aspects studied: procurement of foodstuffs, actual meals, and food as it relates to custom and belief. In the procurement of foodstuffs for the three families, continuation is strongly present in the following factors: the three families purchase Chinese food ingredients by either shopping at the local stores where most varieties of Chinese ingredients can be obtained, or importing groceries from the Chinatowns in Montreal, Toronto or Vancouver; the purchase of foodstuffs for one week's consumption shows the traditional characteristics in foodstuffs selection, namely, freshness, and a small amount of dairy products. For the three daily meals, supper is overwhelmingly Chinese, this is obvious from the content of suppers on each family's menu for one week, and the three suppers I observed. Chinese elements are also found with meal preparation. Supper preparation adheres to the traditional Chinese *Fan-Tsai* principle (grain-dishes contrast). Traditional cooking methods are still adopted, such as boiling, stir-frying, deep-frying, stewing and steaming. Traditional Chinese ways of serving food are practiced by all three families, with stereotypical Chinese table utensils being used (rice bowls and chopsticks) for almost every supper. Traditional Chinese tea drinking after a meal is practiced by all three families. Continuation is also manifested in the presence of some traditional foodways customs and relevant beliefs. Some special festival foods with symbolic messages are still being served on traditional folk festivals and life cycle celebrations (e.g. funerals and birthdays).

The popular Chinese practice of giving food as gifts is used by the three families, and applied specifically to two types of traditional Chinese occasions: Chinese festivals and visiting the sick. The concept of food as medicine is familiar to two families and practiced by all three families, with two families practicing it consciously and frequently, and one family practicing it without apparently being aware of it. Food preferences and avoidances are also more Chinese in nature, in that favorite dishes for two families are those of Chinese origin (their own village recipes). Their avoidances are closely

identified as Chinese, specifically, in the avoidance of eating raw vegetables and consuming limited amounts of dairy products.

Some notable features of acculturation are manifested in the following practices. First, structural acculturation is obvious in the meal pattern for the three families. Their adopted meal pattern resembles the Canadian model, "a quick breakfast, light lunch and a big evening dinner", with breakfast and lunch being more readily identified with those of the host culture. In meal preparation, there is the noticeable absence of the *wok*, a traditional Chinese dish-preparing utensil. With host culture festivals, appropriate foods are prepared. Food for weddings is localized, with no traditional Chinese foods and their symbolic messages in evidence on such occasions. Lastly, a public get-together is a very localized event, in which the buffet style is adopted with all the usual Western eating utensils employed.

The above findings on foodways acculturation fit into Glazier's theory of ritual change. In my study of the three immigrant families in St. John's, two forces are obvious, namely, the tendency for Old Chinese foodways and those of the New World to merge, and the tendency for traditional Chinese foodways to be kept separate from the mainstream host culture, which are characterized by factors in relation to continuation and acculturation. Influenced by the surrounding environment, the foodways complex of these three families can be identified neither as Chinese nor Canadian. Traditional Chinese meal patterns have given way to those of the host culture and the subsequent generations have uniformly adopted host culture food habits, resulting in a compromise of two ways of food habits in the same household. Still, there is the strong force in these families to keep separate from the mainstream host culture. The mere fact that the immigrant generation follows host culture food habits in public food gatherings and observes old Chinese foodways among private circles indicates their comfort with the early childhood habits. This comfort prompts the immigrant generation to observe traditional Chinese food habits whenever possible and appropriate, which is exemplified in their daily serving of rice, using chopsticks and rice bowls. Their food preference and avoidance are more readily identified as Chinese, and most important of all, they practice

traditional Chinese food beliefs in a new world cultural environment. The resultant complex is the coexistence of two cultures' food habits in an immigrant Chinese family, which is visualized by the pictures of two dining tables revealing two ways of serving supper in the same room (Figures 15 and 20). Hence Glazier's notion of "juxtaposition" seems to fit foodways changes in the three immigrant Chinese families studied.

I recognize these conclusions are based on a limited sample of immigrant families; I do feel, however, they may shed light on the overall processes involved in the foodways of Chinese immigrants in St. John's, especially with immigrants who have experience of both the Old World and the New. However, the degree to which the two tendencies are in evidence varies among the three families. Placed side by side, the tendency towards continuation is strongest in the Ping family, while the Hongs show the strongest tendency to acculturation. The Aus fall between these two extremes.

Differences in the degree of foodways acculturation among the three families may be accounted for by various factors. Some of these factors which may have exerted an influence on the process of foodways change for the three families include length of time spent in the New World, the age of immigrants upon arrival, the cultural backgrounds of spouses of the Chinese immigrants, the family head's occupation and his social role, and the family's inclination either to acculturate or keep separate as far as foodways are concerned.

My findings are contrary to the notion that length of time spent in the New World plays a key role in foodways change. The strongest tendency to continuation is found in the Ping family, whose head has been in the New World for over half a century (1931-1990). The greatest acculturation is found with the Hong family, whose head has been here twenty years less than the head of the Ping family. Hence, I conclude that a greater passage of time does not necessarily produce a greater degree of foodways acculturation.

The respective age of the immigrants upon arrival in Canada might also be considered a potentially significant factor in assessing the degree of acculturation and continuation. The elder Ping arrived here at the age of twenty-two, a fully grown man. Hong was fifteen when he arrived, still at an age lending itself to adaptation. Au came at the age thirteen, in the same decade as Hong (1950s). Yet one must still question this factor as a significant one for foodways acculturation in the three families. The Aus' foodways is more closely identified with the Chinese than the Hong's. There is a considerable gap between the two families as far as foodways acculturation is concerned. Thus I believe that the age upon arrival does not play a key role in changing immigrants' foodways.

Further, considering the role of spouses in the Chinese immigrant families, it may seem probable that Hong's more acculturated food habits have something to do with the fact that Hong's wife is a non-Chinese, whereas Mrs. Au is Chinese. This point may not be valid, however, if the Pings' case is taken into consideration. Ping's wife is a native Newfoundlander, as well as full-time home-maker. Instead of enforcing host-culture elements upon her family's food habits, however, she has been drawn more to the Chinese side, and she is now more used to Chinese food. Therefore, the role of spouse does not seem to be necessarily important in influencing the degree of foodways acculturation.

With the above points in question, one must now consider the social role of each family head in relation to foodways change. Hong is a medical doctor. His occupation calls for contact with a wide range people. What is more, Hong enjoys a certain prestige among the Chinese community in Newfoundland, and has been acting for the Chinese in Newfoundland as the liaison person with other ethnic groups. Therefore, both his occupation and his social role enable him to be exposed to a broad spectrum of social institutions. Since food is a great facilitator of social relationships, Hong has had the greatest need to acculturate as far as food habits are concerned, so as to cater to the tastes of friends from all walks of life and various ethnic backgrounds. The Aus and the Pings have one thing in common, namely, they both have their own businesses (Au, who is

manager of a bar and a gas station; Ping, who is a laundromat owner). The nature of their respective businesses, compared with Hong's profession, may well have resulted in a much narrower scope of social interaction for them.

Closely related to the social role played by the head of each family is the inclination either to acculturate or to keep separate from the host culture. This inclination can be deduced from the discussion of the characteristics of each family's cooking as offered by my informants: Mrs. Hong, "international" (Nov. 22, 1989); Mr. Au, "of Toisan Style" (Nov. 21, 1989); Mr. Ping, "eat the same as in China" (Nov. 4, 1989).

These characterizations serve as more than a mere description of the typical trait of current cooking habits in each family. They also reveal each family's inclination either to acculturate or to keep separate. It is clear that the Hongs are more deliberate about foodways acculturation, which is reinforced by the nature of Hong's occupation and social role, while the AUs and the Pings are far less motivated in this direction.

Hence, I conclude that in foodways acculturation for these three Chinese immigrant families, the most important and influential force comes from the family head's inclination to acculturate or to keep apart. Such a difference in attitudes produces a difference in the degree to which foodways acculturation occurs in an immigrant family. While length of time, age of arrival, and the background of the spouses in immigrant families may play a role in foodways acculturation, they are certainly not crucial factors in my study.

This thesis can only be considered the result of a preliminary research on foodways acculturation, based as it is on a small sampling of Chinese immigrant families. The validity of the conclusions will depend on the results of a much broader and more detailed study. The potential for further research in this will be apparent from this initial study, and I hope it will stimulate further studies on the foodways of Chinese immigrants, and indeed of other aspects of the culture of contemporary Chinese immigrants in Canada.



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## **APPENDICES**

## Appendix A

### Questionnaire

1. Do you grow any vegetables? If yes, please name them.
2. Do you go and pick up any fruits for home consumption (e.g. blueberries)? If yes, when and where? How long will this kind of fruit last every year?
3. Do you go hunting or fishing for home consumption? If yes, when and where? How do you preserve them? And how long do they last?
4. Do you obtain some food through informal exchange with your relatives or friends? If yes, what kind of food do you get? From whom, when and for what purpose?
5. Where do you buy your ingredients? What things do you get from Dominion? How often do you go shopping?
6. Do you go to any Chinese grocery stores? If yes, please name the stores? What kind of ingredients do you buy from the Chinese stores? Can you get them from any other stores in St. John's? If yes, tell the reason why you choose the Chinese store?
7. Do you order some food ingredients from Chinatowns in North America or elsewhere? If yes, please tell me the place and the list of the things you ordered? (If you could offer me a xeroxed form of your order, I would be most grateful.) How often do you order foodstuff? And why do you order them (because of their price, flavour, or lack of supply here in St. John's)?
8. Do you buy canned or ready-to-serve foods? If yes, do you buy them very often? And why? When do you eat them? If not, why (because they are expensive, or you do not like their flavour)?
9. Who makes the decision on what ingredients to buy?
10. If the home maker makes the decision, do you select food to serve the family, or please the family?
11. Is the cost or nutrition a major factor for your selection? If nutrition is the base, what kind of things do you think nutritious for the family members?
12. Do you select food for family preference rather than nutrition? Do you buy foods just to please the family which you feel are not necessarily good for them? If yes, could you name them?
13. Could you name some unusual ingredients?
14. How do you cook your meals?

	Frequency
Methods	frequently   occasionally   hardly ever
Stir-frying	



deep-frying  
 steaming  
 slow-cooking  
 roasting or barbecuing  
 smoking  
 baking

15. Do you prepare meals following the *Fan, Tsai* division? Is rice prepared for all the meals? If not, which meal of a day that rice can be found? Was rice found at every meal in your home village before you came to Canada?

16. What kind of spices do you use for cooking?

17. About how often do you make \_\_\_\_ from basic ingredients?

Food	Make
	frequently   occasionally   hardly ever

cakes  
 pies  
 cookies  
 rolls  
 breads  
 chicken or meat pies  
 dumpling  
 pancakes  
 steamed buns  
 meat pies  
 mooncakes  
 egg rolls  
 spring rolls  
 zongzi  
 others (list)

18. Do you ever find that you are pressed for time in preparing

Meal	Frequency
	frequently   occasionally   hardly ever
breakfast	
noonmeal	
evening meal	

19. When you are pressed for time, do you change your family's meals by doing any of the following

\_\_\_\_ preparing foods in advance  
 \_\_\_\_ using fully prepared foods  
 \_\_\_\_ using partially prepared foods  
 \_\_\_\_ eating away from home  
 \_\_\_\_ others (explain)

20. In preparing meals, do you have to give any special attention to individual family members? If yes, please explain.
21. Does your family have a favorite meal which they all enjoy? Yes\_\_\_, No\_\_\_. If yes, what is it? Do you enjoy preparing and serving this? Yes\_\_\_, No\_\_.
22. Do you use any cookbooks? If yes, please tell me whether it is in Chinese or English. How many cookbooks do you have? If not, please explain from whom you learned to cook meals?
23. Where does your family usually have your breakfast, lunch, supper, snacks etc.?
24. Could you check how meals are served in your family?
- breakfast lunch supper
- a. everyone helps himself in the kitchen
- b. plates served in the kitchen
- c. food put into serving dishes and taken to table
- d. food put on trays
- e. rice served in bowls and different tsai dishes set up on the table and each helps himself to whatever she/he likes
25. Does your family observe some etiquette for seniors, kids, or women? If yes, please specify.
26. Do you consider the following good eating manners?
- a. each diner takes equally from the different tsai dishes 1 2 3
- b. not to let co-diners be aware of what his or her favorite dishes are by his or her eating patterns
- c. no piece of meat left rested in one's bowl between bites
- d. raising the bowls to one's lips with one's left hand while using chopsticks in the right hand to shove the food into one's mouth
- e. the junior should wait to eat until the senior have begun to do so
- f. not a single grain of fan left in the bowl after finishing up meals
- g. children should listen to the conversation of adults while dining, and should not speak unless asked
27. Does your family have any other good eating manners being observed here? If yes, please specify.
28. What do you and your family think are bad eating habits?
29. How would you describe the actions and feelings of family members at meal time?

30. Does your family usually comment about the meals you have prepared for them? Yes \_\_, No \_\_. If yes, please explain.
31. Could you tell me if your family use the following drinks?
- |               |     |    |            |              |             |
|---------------|-----|----|------------|--------------|-------------|
| Drinks        | yes | no | frequently | occasionally | hardly ever |
| tea           |     |    |            |              |             |
| milk          |     |    |            |              |             |
| fruit juice   |     |    |            |              |             |
| coffee        |     |    |            |              |             |
| others (list) |     |    |            |              |             |
32. Does your family drink alcohol very often? If yes, would you please name them? On what occasions?
33. What kind of beverages do your family prefer? Why? Any beverages that your family try to avoid? Why?
34. Do you restrict your children, or little kids, to certain drinks? If yes, please specify. Could you give me the reasons?
35. Do you and your family consider breakfast an essential or an important meal? Why? Does everyone in your family eat breakfast? What do you think constitutes a good breakfast? Why?
36. Which meal of the day do you think is the most important, breakfast, lunch, or supper? Why?
37. What foods do you usually eat for breakfast? Describe two or more breakfast menus most common at your home. Do you eat differently during the week than you do on weekends? Is breakfast a larger meal on Saturday and/or Sunday mornings? Do you have a special meal on holidays?
38. Who prepare breakfast in your family? Do individuals prepare their own food? Does every one eat the same thing for breakfast?
39. Where does your family eat breakfast? Does the whole family eat together? Is breakfast a "sociable" meal, are people talkative, irritable, etc? Does any of this vary on weekends?
40. Did breakfast differ in your home country from those that you have in your home today? Was your meal then larger than it is today? If so, were large breakfasts considered important? Why? If you ate less than you do now, explain the reasons for this.
41. How did the food served at breakfast in your home country differ from what you eat today? Were there more home-made foods? Describe several typical breakfast menus. Did your family eat differently on weekend mornings? Describe any breakfast foods that may have been considered unusual or festive?

42. Who prepared meals in your home country? Where did your family eat meals? Did everyone eat together? Did your parents consider it important for the family to be together at breakfast?
43. Could you offer me your whole week's meals?
44. Did lunch and supper differ in your home country from those in St. John's? If yes, could you describe several typical lunch and supper meals?
45. Tell me which of the following festivals do your family observe and
46. the food found on these occasions
- | Festivals            | yes | no | Foods |
|----------------------|-----|----|-------|
| Christmas            |     |    |       |
| New year             |     |    |       |
| Spring Festival      |     |    |       |
| Ching Ming           |     |    |       |
| Dragon Boat Festival |     |    |       |
| Moon Festival        |     |    |       |
| Thanksgiving         |     |    |       |
| Easter               |     |    |       |
| Regatta Day          |     |    |       |
| Others (list)        |     |    |       |
47. What kind of specific food is used for your family member's birthday celebration? Home maker, husband, mother, child, etc. Do you think that some food is a must for the occasion? If yes, why? Does the food have any implication? Any drinks for the occasion?
48. What food do you consume for a wedding occasion? What do you think is a must for the occasion?
49. Have you ever experienced the death of your family members in St. John's? If yes, could you recall whether there was any specific food for the occasion? If yes, please specify. Any specific drinks?
50. Do you use food as a sacrifice to your deceased family members? If yes, please specify. Any drinks used?
51. Do you dine out? If yes, how often?

52. Do you dine in restaurants? If yes, how often? Once a week\_\_\_\_, more than once a week\_\_\_\_, once two weeks\_\_\_\_, once a month\_\_\_\_, seldom\_\_\_\_.
53. What kind of restaurants do you go to? Could you give me the reason for your choice? what kind of food do you usually order at the restaurant or at take-out?
54. Do you use food as a gift? If yes, could you tell me what kind of food you use as gifts? On what occasions? (e.g. festival celebrations, birthday celebration, wedding ceremony, visiting the sick, house warming etc.)
55. Do you often invite friends or guests to your home to share certain foods? If yes, what foods are most frequently prepared as the treatment? On what occasions? For what purpose?
56. If you serve daily meals in the kitchen, do you still use the kitchen when you have guests and friends over with you for a dinner? If not, which room is used for that purpose? What makes you use the place other than kitchen for meals?
57. If guests are invited to a dinner at your home, do you follow any rules like allocating a specific seat for the guest? Do you have any specific foods for specific guests? for example, any distinction of foods served to your boss, or the seniors, and your close friends? If yes, could you list the specific foods?
58. What kind of drinks do you treat your guests to?
59. Do you believe in the traditional Chinese concept that food can be used for health promotion, disease prevention, and cure? If yes, could you give me some information on the above ideas and beliefs?
60. Do those beliefs affect your food selection, preparation, and serving in St. John's? If yes, could you tell me what food is used for what kind of purpose?
61. Do your neighbours and friends practice them here? If yes, could you offer some information on that?
62. Do you have any secrete family recipes? If yes, could you share them with me?
63. Could you please tell me something about your family background which probably affects your use of food? Please feel free to answer this, for I will not reveal your identity without your permission.

relation to home-maker    persons living in household  
    age last    last grade    occupation  
    birthday    of school  
    completed

homemaker

husband

father

mother

children

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

64. Could you tell me the characteristics of Taishan cooking? How do you describe your present cooking?
65. Could you name those foods of Taishan origin that you are still making today? At which meal of the day that Taishan foods are most frequently found? breakfast, lunch, supper, or snacks?
66. Do you make other foods than those of Taishan? If yes, please specify.
67. How do you invite guests to your home? How did you invite guests to your home in China? Do you invite both Chinese and Canadian friends? If yes, do you treat them differently? What food do you treat them to? with your Chinese friends, and your Canadian friends?

## Appendix B

### Recipes

#### 1. The Three Meals Observed

The following recipes were collected during my fieldwork. The first part contains recipes for all the dishes made by the three families for my observation. They are from notes that I took while the dishes were being made. The second part has two recipes written for me by my informants. The first one has been translated into English with the original Chinese version attached. Unfortunately, it is not possible to translate the names of ingredients in the second recipe into English, as they are Chinese herbs that have no English equivalents. Therefore I have attached the original Chinese version here.

#### The Pings

##### *Boiled Chicken*

a whole chicken  
salt

Bring a big pot of water to a boil. Rub some salt all over and inside the chicken before it is placed into the boiling water. Cook for half an hour, turn frequently until it is done. Cut cooked chicken into pieces, serve with sauces (mustard or soysauce).

##### *Steamed Fish*

one pound of fish  
ginger root  
green onions  
vegetable oil

Cut fish meat into chunks. Mince ginger root. Cut green onions into chunks. Put a little bit of vegetable oil on the bottom of the saucepan. Coat fish with oil. Put in ginger root, green onions, and a little bit of water. Steam it on the stove for about ten minutes.

*Vegetables with Beef*

beef steak  
 snow peas  
 green peppers  
 black beans  
 salt, vegetable oil, pepper

Cut beef into slices. Stir fry beef in vegetable oil. Place the cooked beef aside. Stir-fry snow peas, and green pepper strips in vegetable oil. Add salt, pepper, black beans, then mix with cooked beef.

*Soup*

pork chop  
 spinach  
 one egg  
 salt, pepper

Cut pork into slices. Place in cold water in a soup pot. Bring the water with pork slices to a boil, then slowly stew it for half an hour. Add cleaned spinach, salt, pepper. Finally add the well-beaten egg to the the soup.

*The Aus**Sweet and Sour Pork*

pork chop  
 two eggs  
 vegetable oil  
 salt, pepper

Cut pork chop into cubes. Dip them in mixture of eggs with salt and pepper. Deep-fry pork cubes until crispy.

*The sauce*

Mix vinegar with cold water (one cup), one tabiespoonful of plum sauce, ketchup, sugar (two and a half tablespoonfuls), corn starch (two teaspoonfuls). Bring the above mixture to a boil. Coat the fried pork cubes with it.



*Rice Noodles*

rice noodles  
 dried shrimp (previously soaked)  
 green onions  
 vegetable oil  
 salt, pepper, soysauce

Stir fry rice noodles with shrimp. Add a little bit of soysauce and the shrimp's water into the pan. Finally add green onions.

*Vegetables with Beef*

beefsteak  
 fungus (previously soaked)  
 bok choy  
 day lily  
 canned lotus  
 soysauce, salt, pepper, vegetable oil

Cut beef into slices. Quickly stir fry beef slices in vegetable oil, and place cooked beef in a container. Stir fry fungus, lily, canned lotus, bok choy chunks. Add salt and pepper, some soysauce, then mix vegetables with beef.

*Soup*

Put dried oysters, straw mushrooms, canned lotus, salt, into a large soup pot filled one third with water. Bring to a boil, then slowly stew for over two hours.

*The Hong's**Meat Balls*

lean ground beef (2 lb)  
 two eggs  
 onions  
 breadcrumb  
 vegetable oil  
 milk  
 salt, pepper, garlic powder  
 mustard powder, all spice powder  
 chili sauce, all-purpose soysauce

Blend the above ingredients together, make meat balls by hand, and put them onto a baking rack. Bake 20-25 minutes at 350 F.

#### The sauce

Mix canned pineapple juice (one can of 398 ml), vinegar (half a cup), one cup of brown sugar, ketchup, salt and pepper, some soysauce, one tablespoonful of corn starch together. Bring the above mixture to a boil, stirring all the time. Place the sauce on top of meat balls with some carrots and pineapple chunks. Warm when serving.

#### *Steamed Fish*

fish (1 lb)  
ginger root, garlic, green onions, onions  
salt, pepper  
tomato

Cut fish into chunks, put into a saucepan. Add a little bit of water. Put in all the spices, cook five to eight minutes in microwave. Put some small pieces of tomatoes on top for colour.

#### *Broccoli*

one bunch broccoli  
fresh shrimp  
salt, pepper

Peel broccoli, clean and cut into small chunks. Peel and split shrimp. Stir fry all the above ingredients in a frying pan.

## 2. Recipes Using Food as Medicine

### The Pings

#### *For lowering a fever*

#### Ingredients:

stew beef, black beans, orange peels, chestnuts

Boil for around two and a half hours.

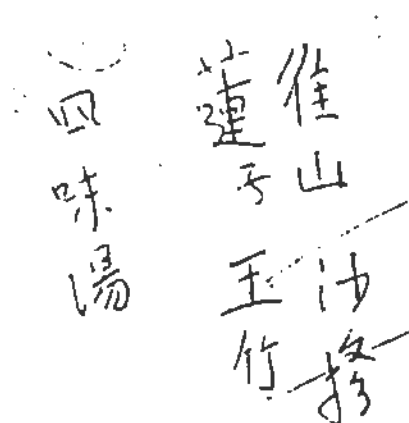
[There are four other recipes written for me by Mr. Ping. They are in Chinese (see next page). The first two are for lowering a fever. The third one is for relieving internal heat. And the last is for stimulating blood, specifically suitable for women after childbirth.]

### The Aus

#### *Four Flavors Soup*

Ingredients: (See attached recipe)

These four ingredients are Chinese herbs that have no North American equivalents.



四味湯  
蓮花 淮山  
玉冰燒 竹葉

## **Appendix C**

1. What are the terms you use to designate meal times? At what times do you eat these meals?

8:00 am - 12:15 pm 6:00 pm

2. How many meals do you usually eat per day? Do you ever skip a meal? Give details.

3 meals sometimes skip

3. What do you usually eat for your first meal of the day? At what time do you eat this meal?

1st meal of Corn Flakes. at 9 am

4. What is your largest meal of the day? At what time do you eat it?

6 pm dinner food

5. Do you take coffee breaks or snack between meals? When and what do you have? (for example, coffee at 11:00 a.m.)

None

6. How often do you eat dessert at the conclusion of dinner? supper? Have you always followed this pattern? Please name some typical desserts.

None

7. Do your meals vary according to the day of the week? (like fish on Fridays) If yes, please give details. If no, did you or your family ever follow such a pattern. Give details.

*Yes*

8. Do you usually eat a 'Sunday dinner?' Please describe a typical Sunday dinner.

*Yes Roast beef & Lamb*

9. Write down every food that you usually find on your Christmas dinner table.

*Turkey, Ham, Carrots, Potatoes, Peas,  
Cauliflower,*

10. Write down every food that you usually find on your Thanksgiving dinner table.

*Turkey, Carrots, Potatoes, Peas & Beans*

11. What other special holiday foods can you think of? Please name food and holiday. (for example, Shrove Tuesday, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, Regatta Day, All Hallow's Eve, Bonfire Night)

*The children eat only for special foods.  
Hallow & Reg. & Regatta day go out eat.*

12. Within each of the following food groups, what do you prefer?

vegetables lettuce

fruits apple

meats beef

fish cod

dairy butter

synthetic or man-made \_\_\_\_\_

13. What foods do you like best?

all

14. What foods do you like least?

none

15. What do you prefer to drink?

water

16. Do you buy your bread from the store, bake your own, or have someone else home-bake it? What kind of bread do you prefer?

Home-bake

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17. How often do you eat out? At what kinds of places, restaurant or take-out?

Not too often, Restaurant once a while

18. What foods do you eat that you do not buy in the store? (for example, berries) Do you or any of your friends/relatives hunt or fish for any specific foods?

Anything from store, Only fish from our boat

19. Do any men in your family cook or prepare food? If so, what do they make?

I ~~make~~<sup>cook</sup> Chinese food, Wife prepares food.

20. Are there any foods that only adults eat? or only children? Please give details.

All like

21. Name everything that you ate yesterday, even if you ate in the University Dining Hall. Be honest! Please include meal names.

Fish Stew, Rice & Chinese Pancakes.

3 times 2 salad dinner 1 chicken

22. Please name what you consider to be traditional Newfoundland foods (for example, fish 'n brewis).

Fish & brewis, and Ling Chow



23. What traditional foods do you or your family eat regularly?

*Phishers and all season, Vigs.*

24. Are there foods that you ate when you were a child that you no longer eat? If so, why has this happened?

*No*

For Cooks

25. Do you use a cookbook? If so, what is your favorite one?

*No*

26. Do you keep a scrapbook of recipe clippings, card file of recipes, or written manuscript of recipes?

*No*

27. What spices and herbs do you use when you cook? Give examples.

*ginger, Coriander, Navy Beans.*

28. Which do you use more of? Check both if you use equal amounts.

fresh cod <u>✓</u>	or, salt cod <u>✓</u>
fresh beef <u>✓</u>	or, salt beef <u>✓</u>
fresh pork <u>✓</u>	or, salt pork <u>✓</u>

29. What kinds of convenience foods do you use? (for example, canned, frozen, pre-cooked) How often do you use them? At any particular times of the year for certain things.

*Same time*

30. Where do you usually shop for groceries, at a supermarket or corner store? Do you prefer one over the other? Why?

*Supermarket Friday or Saturday.*

31. Do you buy food in bulk or in small quantities? How often do you shop?

*Bulk*

32. Does your family have special family recipes? Are any secret? Please give details that you can.

*No secret, no special*

33. Please give your favorite recipe(s). If possible, include origin.

*Steak Chicken*

1. What are the terms you use to designate meal times? At what times do you eat these meals?
2. How many meals do you usually eat per day? Do you ever skip a meal? Give details.
3. What do you usually eat for your first meal of the day? At what time do you eat this meal?

Two. Lunch and supper.  
Skip Lunch because I usually wake  
up around 10:00 and eat around  
11:00 AM.

Toast and tea. Around 11:00 AM

4. What is your largest meal of the day? At what time do you eat it?

Supper. Usually around 7:00-8:00 PM.

5. Do you take coffee breaks or snack between meals? When and what do you have? (for example, coffee at 11:00 a.m.)

Yes. Tea.

6. How often do you eat dessert at the conclusion of dinner? supper? Have you always followed this pattern? Please name some typical desserts.

Not very often for both meals. Maybe  
once or twice a month. Yes.  
Apple and ice cream, Cake.

7. Do your meals vary according to the day of the week? (like fish on Fridays) If yes, please give details. If no, did you or your family ever follow such a pattern. Give details.

No.

No.

8. Do you usually eat a 'Sunday dinner?' Please describe a typical Sunday dinner.

Yes. Rice, meat, vegetables and soup.

9. Write down every food that you usually find on your Christmas dinner table.

Turkey, ham, beef, duck, chicken, Soup (Chinese), shrimp, rice, vegetables

10. Write down every food that you usually find on your Thanksgiving dinner table.

Turkey, vegetables, stuffing, gravy, rice.

11. What other special holiday foods can you think of? Please name food and holiday. (for example, Shrove Tuesday, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, Regatta Day, All Hallow's Eve, Bonfire Night)

Easter - Turkey, vegetables, gravy

12. Within each of the following food groups, what do you prefer?

vegetables broccoli

fruits bananas, grapes, cantaloupe

meats beef, chicken

fish cod

dairy milk

synthetic or man-made \_\_\_\_\_

13. What foods do you like best?

14. What foods do you like least?

15. What do you prefer to drink?

Tea

16. Do you buy your bread from the store, bake your own, or have someone else bake it? What kind of bread do you prefer?

Store-bought  
white bread

17. How often do you eat out? At what kinds of places, restaurant or take-out?
18. What foods do you eat that you do not buy in the store? (for example, berries) Do you or any of your friends/relatives hunt or fish for any specific foods?
19. Do any men in your family cook or prepare food? If so, what do they make?  
*Yes.*
20. Are there any foods that only adults eat? or only children? Please give details.  
*No.*
21. Name everything that you ate yesterday, even if you ate in the University Dining Hall. Be honest! Please include meal names.
22. Please name what you consider to be traditional Newfoundland foods (for example, fish 'n brewis).

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23. What traditional foods do you or your family eat regularly?
24. Are there foods that you ate when you were a child that you no longer eat? If so, why has this happened?

No.

For Cooks

25. Do you use a cookbook? If so, what is your favorite one?
26. Do you keep a scrapbook of recipe clippings, card file of recipes, or written manuscript of recipes?

No.

27. What spices and herbs do you use when you cook? Give examples.

MSG

28. Which do you use more of? Check both if you use equal amounts.

fresh cod <u>✓</u>	or, salt cod _____
fresh beef <u>✓</u>	or, salt beef _____
fresh pork <u>✓</u>	or, salt pork _____

29. What kinds of convenience foods do you use? (for example, canned, frozen, pre-cooked) How often do you use them? At any particular times of the year for certain things.
30. Where do you usually shop for groceries, at a supermarket or corner store? Do you prefer one over the other? Why?
31. Do you buy food in bulk or in small quantities? How often do you shop?
32. Does your family have special family recipes? Are any secret? Please give details that you can.
33. Please give your favorite recipe(s). If possible, include origin.



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Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Depositor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Depositor's Permanent Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Archivist

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Newfoundland Food Traditions

Q77B- \_\_\_\_\_

1. What are the terms you use to designate meal times? At what times do you eat these meals?

Breakfast - 7-8 a.m.  
 Lunch - 12 - 1 p.m.  
 Supper - 6 - 7 p.m.

2. How many meals do you usually eat per day? Do you ever skip a meal? Give details.

No regular breakfast - just tea or coffee  
 Yes -

3. What do you usually eat for your first meal of the day? At what time do you eat this meal?

Lunch - Sandwich - 1-2 p.m.

4. What is your largest meal of the day? At what time do you eat it?

Supper - 6-7 p.m.

5. Do you take coffee breaks or snack between meals? When and what do you have? (for example, coffee at 11:00 a.m.)

Yes - 10<sup>30</sup> a.m. - 11<sup>00</sup> - Coffee

6. How often do you eat dessert at the conclusion of dinner? supper? Have you always followed this pattern? Please name some typical desserts.

Occasionally - after supper - no.  
 Fruits & some light dessert (cake)

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7. Do your meals vary according to the day of the week? (like fish on Fridays) If yes, please give details. If no, did you or your family ever follow such a pattern. Give details.

*didn't follow pattern*

8. Do you usually eat a 'Sunday dinner?' Please describe a typical Sunday dinner.

*yes*

*Sunday - Roast turkey or Chicken } with vegetables  
Roast Beef  
or Eat out either Chinese meal or with American*

9. Write down every food that you usually find on your Christmas dinner table.

<i>Roast turkey</i>	<i>Rice</i>
<i>Bake Ham</i>	<i>Potato</i>
<i>Mix vegetables</i>	<i>Assorted desserts</i>
<i>Mashed dish</i>	

10. Write down every food that you usually find on your Thanksgiving dinner table.

*Roast turkey or chicken or Chinese dinner.*

11. What other special holiday foods can you think of? Please name food and holiday. (for example, Shrove Tuesday, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, Regatta Day, All Hallow's Eve, Bonfire Night)

*Chinese New Year - Chinese food*  
*Moon Festival - " "*

12. Within each of the following food groups, what do you prefer?

vegetables all kinds -

fruits Oranges, Apples, grapes

meats Chicken, pork & beef occasional

fish cod, halibut, Salmon, Squid, Shrimps

dairy milk 2%, Cheese,

synthetic or man-made may

13. What foods do you like best?

Chicken, fish, vegetable

14. What foods do you like least?

nothing particular

15. What do you prefer to drink?

Chinese tea, Coffee occasional  
Beer,  
Wine with meal.

16. Do you buy your bread from the store, bake your own, or have someone else home-bake it? What kind of bread do you prefer?

yes, white & whole wheat.

17. How often do you eat out? At what kinds of places, restaurant or take-out?

Once ~~every~~ month  
Nothing particular

18. What foods do you eat that you do not buy in the store? (for example, berries) Do you or any of your friends/relatives hunt or fish for any specific foods?

- Berries  
- Some home-grown vegetables (snow peas, lettuce  
turnip tops) during summer months.  
- Moose or Caribou meat from friends.

19. Do any men in your family cook or prepare food? If so, what do they make?

no

20. Are there any foods that only adults eat? or only children? Please give details.

no

21. Name everything that you ate yesterday, even if you are in the University Dining Hall. Be honest! Please include meal names.

Spaghetti + Salad - Supper.

22. Please name what you consider to be traditional Newfoundland foods (for example, fish 'n brewis).

- Salted meat with vegetables (Tiggs Dinner)  
Cod and Potato

23. What traditional foods do you or your family eat regularly?  
*Chinese, Filipino, North American, or Italian*

24. Are there foods that you ate when you were a child that you no longer eat? If so, why has this happened?

*no*

For Cooks

25. Do you use a cookbook? If so, what is your favorite one?

*Sometimes. Chinese & Filipino Cookbook.*

26. Do you keep a scrapbook of recipe clippings, card file of recipes, or written manuscript of recipes?

*YES.*

27. What spices and herbs do you use when you cook? Give examples.

*Pepper, Oregano, Paprika, Chilli powder; Curry powder, Cinnamon.*

28. Which do you use more of? Check both if you use equal amounts.

fresh cod <u>yes</u>	or, salt cod <u>occasional</u>
fresh beef <u>yes</u>	or, salt beef <u>no</u>
fresh pork <u>yes</u>	or, salt pork <u>no</u>

29. What kinds of convenience foods do you use? (for example, canned, frozen, pre-cooked) How often do you use them? At any particular times of the year for certain things.

*Canned - tomatoes, corn, peas, beans.  
Frozen - peas, ..  
Use occasional .. no.*

30. Where do you usually shop for groceries, at a supermarket or corner store? Do you prefer one over the other? Why?

*Sokeys - Elizabeth Ave.  
Yes - Used to the place & know exactly where  
to find certain items*

31. Do you buy food in bulk or in small quantities? How often do you shop?

*- Sometimes in bulk.  
- Once a week.*

32. Does your family have special family recipes? Are any secret? Please give details that you can.

*no*

33. Please give your favorite recipe(s). If possible, include origin.

*—*

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Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Depositor Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Depositor's Permanent Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Archivist Date

Newfoundland Food Traditions

Q77B- \_\_\_\_\_



1. Are you aware of the concept that food is considered in the Chinese belief as being cold (yin) and hot (yang)? If yes, do you believe it? What kind of foods that you think are cold, what, are hot?
2. Here is a table classifying some common Chinese foods by the hot-cold principle. Tell me whether you agree with the classification or not. If not, why?

Table 2: Classification of Common Chinese Foods by the Hot-Cold Principle

Food Group	Hot (very Yang)	Warm (Yang)	Intermediate (1/2 Yang & 1/2 Yin)	Cool (Yin)	Cold (very Yin)
Meat and Fish	Beef Lamb Prawns	Chicken Duck	Fish Eggs	Pork	Crabs
Cereals*	Noodles	-	-	Millet Wheat Rice gruel	-
Vegetables	-	Red beans Parsley	Bean curd	Green onions Spinach Turnip Bean-sprouts	Watercress Green beans Chinese-cabbage
Fruits	Lichee nuts Dates	-	Grapes	Pineapple Orange Pear	Banana Watermelon
Condiments	Chilli Ginger	Honey Vinegar Garlic	-	-	Salt White sugar Soya sauce
Beverages	-	Boiled water	-	-	Cold unboiled water Tea

\*The classification of rice is complex and influenced by many factors as place of origin, variety, cooking method.

3. Do you believe that illness caused by an excess of cold foods can be treated by "hot" foods? And those caused by yang excess, treated by "cold" foods? If yes, could you share with me some of your practices?
4. Do you often eat raw vegetables? Yes Mr ✓, No Mr ✓. If yes, why? If not, why not?
5. Do you like foods containing milk and milk products, such as cheese or creamed dishes?

Mr. st. milk

no

Mr. does

Mr. & Mrs. Ping

To Mrs Au, Mrs Hong, Mrs Ping and Grandma Hong

1. Did you avoid any food during your pregnancy? Yes \_\_, No \_\_ (e.g. avoid excessive use of soy sauce during the pregnancy so that the baby will not be too dark; shun shrimp and other shellfish during the first trimester in the belief that this will prevent the baby from developing allergies later in life, or refuse iron supplements in the beliefs that the iron will harden the bones and contribute to a difficult delivery). If yes, what foods?
2. Did you avoid cold foods in your postpartum period? Yes \_\_, No ✓. If yes, how long did you avoid them? And why? Do you believe that an excess of cold foods would induce spontaneous abortion and after giving birth too much cold food would cause lassitude due to anemia?
3. Did you eat a diet high in "hot" foods during your postpartum period? Yes \_\_, No \_\_. Do you believe that hot foods for the post-partum period can stimulate the blood and prevent anemia? Yes \_\_, No \_\_. Did you avoid fruits and vegetables? Yes \_\_, No \_\_.
4. Did you stay in hospital for your child birth? Yes ✓, No \_\_. If yes, did you eat the foods prepared by the hospital, or foods prepared and brought from home? If from home, could you recall now your foods then?

1. Are you aware of the concept that food is considered in the Chinese belief as being cold (yin) and hot (yang)? If yes, do you believe it? What kind of foods that you think are cold, what, are hot?
2. Here is a table classifying some common Chinese foods by the hot-cold principle. Tell me whether you agree with the classification or not. If not, why? YES

Table 2: Classification of Common Chinese Foods by the Hot-Cold Principle

Food Group	Hot (very Yang)	Warm (Yang)	Intermediate (½ Yang & ½ Yin)	Cool (Yin)	Cold (very Yin)
Meat and Fish	Beef Lamb Prawns Noodles	Chicken Duck	Fish Eggs	Pork	Crab
Cereals*				Millet Wheat Rice gruel	
Vegetables		Red beans Parsley	Bean curd	Green-onions Spinach Turnip Bean-sprouts	Watercress Green beans Chinese-cabbage
Fruits	Lichee nuts Dates		Grapes	Pineapple Orange Pear	Banana Watermelon
Condiments	Chilli Ginger	Honey Vinegar Garlic			Salt White sugar Soy sauce
Beverages		Boiled water			Cold unboiled water Tea

\*The classification of rice is complex and influenced by many factors as place of origin, variety, cooking method.

3. Do you believe that illness caused by an excess of cold foods can be treated by "hot" foods? And those caused by yang excess, treated by "cold" foods? If yes, could you share with me some of your practices?
4. Do you often eat raw vegetables? Yes \_\_, No ✓. If yes, why? If not, why not?
5. Do you like foods containing milk and milk products, such as cheese or creamed dishes? YES

To Mrs Au, Mrs Hong, Mrs Ping and Grandma Hong

1. Did you avoid any food during your pregnancy? Yes ☒ , No ☐ (e.g. avoid excessive use of soy sauce during the pregnancy so that the baby will not be too dark; shun shrimp and other shellfish during the first trimester in the belief that this will prevent the baby from developing allergies later in life. or refuse iron supplements in the beliefs that the iron will harden the bones and contribute to a difficult delivery). If yes, what foods?
2. Did you avoid cold foods in your postpartum period? Yes ☐ , No ☒ . If yes, how long did you avoid them? And why? Do you believe that an excess o cold foods would induce spontaneous abortion and after giving birth too much cold food would cause lassitude due to anemia?
3. Did you eat a diet high in "hot" foods during your postpartum period? Yes ☐ , No ☒ . Do you believe that hot foods for the post-partum period can stimulate the blood and prevent anemia? Yes ☐ , No ☒ . Did you avoid fruits and vegetables? Yes ☐ , No ☒ .
4. Did you stay in hospital for your child birth? Yes ☒ , No ☐ . If yes, did you eat the foods prepared by the hospital, or foods prepared and brought from home? If from home, could you recall now your foods then?

1. Hong

1. Are you aware of the concept that food is considered in the Chinese belief as being cold (yin) and hot (yang)? If yes, do you believe it? What kind of foods that you think are cold, what, are hot? *yes*

2. Here is a table classifying some common Chinese foods by the hot-cold principle. Tell me whether you agree with the classification or not. If not, why?

Table 2: Classification of Common Chinese Foods by the Hot-Cold Principle

Food Group	Hot (very Yang)	Warm (Yang)	Intermediate (1/2 Yang & 1/2 Yin)	Cool (Yin)	Cold (very Yin)
Meat and Fish	Beef Lamb Prawns	Chicken Duck	Fish Eggs	Pork	Crab
Cereals*	Noodles			Millet Wheat Rice gruel	
Vegetables		Red bean Parsley	Bean curd	Green-onions Spinach Turnip Bean-sprouts	Watercress Green beans Chinese-cabbage
Fruits	Lichee nuts Dates		Grapes	Pineapple Orange Pear	Banana Watermelon
Condiments	Chilli Ginger	Honey Vinegar Garlic			Salt White sugar Soya sauce
Beverages		Boiled water			Cold unboiled water Tea

\*The classification of rice is complex and influenced by many factors as place of origin, variety, cooking method.

3. Do you believe that illness caused by an excess of cold foods can be treated by "hot" foods? And those caused by yang excess, treated by "cold" foods? If yes, could you share with me some of your practices? *yes*

4. Do you often eat raw vegetables? Yes \_\_, No \_\_. If yes, why? If not, why not? *not always*

5. Do you like foods containing milk and milk products, such as cheese or creamed dishes? *yes*

To Mrs Au, Mrs Hong, Mrs Ping and Grandma Hong

1. Did you avoid any food during your pregnancy? Yes \_\_\_\_, No ☒ (e.g. avoid excessive use of soy sauce during the pregnancy so that the baby will not be too dark; shun shrimp and other shellfish during the first trimester in the belief that this will prevent the baby from developing allergies later in life, or refuse iron supplements in the beliefs that the iron will harden the bones and contribute to a difficult delivery). If yes, what foods?
2. Did you avoid cold foods in your postpartum period? Yes \_\_\_\_, No ☒. If yes, how long did you avoid them? And why? Do you believe that an excess of cold foods would induce spontaneous abortion and after giving birth too much cold food would cause lassitude due to anemia?
3. Did you eat a diet high in "hot" foods during your postpartum period? Yes \_\_\_\_, No ☒. Do you believe that hot foods for the post-partum period can stimulate the blood and prevent anemia? Yes \_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_. Did you avoid fruits and vegetables? Yes \_\_\_\_, No ☒.
4. Did you stay in hospital for your child birth? Yes \_\_\_\_, No ☒. If yes, did you eat the foods prepared by the hospital, or foods prepared and brought from home? If from home, could you recall now your foods then?

To Mrs Au, Mrs Hong, Mrs Ping and Grandma Hong

1. Did you avoid any food during your pregnancy? Yes \_\_\_\_, No ✓ (e.g. avoid excessive use of soy sauce during the pregnancy so that the baby will not be too dark; shun shrimp and other shellfish during the first trimester in the belief that this will prevent the baby from developing allergies later in life, or refuse iron supplements in the beliefs that the iron will harden the bones and contribute to a difficult delivery). If yes, what foods?
2. Did you avoid cold foods in your postpartum period? Yes \_\_\_\_, No ✓. If yes, how long did you avoid them? And why? Do you believe that an excess of cold foods would induce spontaneous abortion and after giving birth too much cold food would cause lassitude due to anemia?
3. Did you eat a diet high in "hot" foods during your postpartum period? Yes \_\_\_\_, No ✓. Do you believe that hot foods for the post-partum period can stimulate the blood and prevent anemia? Yes \_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_. Did you avoid fruits and vegetables? Yes \_\_\_\_, No \_\_.
4. Did you stay in hospital for your child birth? Yes ✓, No \_\_. If yes, did you eat the foods prepared by the hospital, or foods prepared and brought from home? If from home, could you recall now your foods then?

## Appendix D



SOREYS  
#804  
ST. JOHNS  
THANK YOU

Pings

SOM WT BREAD .69  
SOM WT BREAD .69  
BUTTER 2.13  
MAYO 1.99  
SOM CX HAM 1.39  
1 PK KST SMO 3.75  
OLK PIZZA 5 1.79  
5 PK MILK 2 2.62  
CHICKEN LEGS 2.89  
BONE STEAK 4.12  
1 CASH .89  
1 KIDNEY CHICK 5.89  
1 CASH OIL 5.19  
BELL 1.29  
JCS MUSHROOM .99  
PC GRP CHICK .99  
MILK CHICK .75  
MILK/TON SHORE 1.37  
0.320 KG X  
2 PKG /15.05  
PITTED DATES 1.42

CASH 7X MILK .68  
0.650 KG X  
2 PKG /13.28  
PEACH MILK 2.13  
1 PKG PEACH 1.59  
0.085 KG X  
3 PKG /15.71  
GARLIC CULY .54  
TOM SOAK BEA .96  
1 SHD MISC 3 1.59  
CASH 1 PKG .89  
0.675 KG X  
3 PKG /11.52  
CASH 1.03  
0.175 KG X  
2 PKG /18.90  
GINGER ROOT 1.54  
1 PKG YOG 125G .39  
1 PKG YOG 125G .39  
PILL CR/DOLL 1.59  
SAL II .75  
1 PKG HOT/SPIC 2.55  
1 PKG HOT/SPIC .75  
2 PKG HOT/SPIC .75

TAXI .23  
TOLL \$50.67  
CASH 106.00  
CASH 49.33  
TIER 35  
1261 604108  
5992 613040 11/17/89

SOMEY'S SAY -  
HAVE A NICE DAY

CRIS/ARROWPT	2.45
KEL/FRT LOOP	2.09
CRNCH CEREAL	2.83
TAX DJE	.00
TOTAL	7.37
CSH TEND	7.37
CHG IUE	.00
2/20/90 21:25	12212

[illegible][illegible]

SUBJECTS SAY -  
HARVEY IS NOT SAY

[illegible]

20250 1435 20001

SOIKEYS SAY -  
HAVE A NICE DAY

WHITE BREAD	.79
DELI	2.18
TAX DUE	.00
TOTAL	2.97
CASH TEND	5.00
CHG DUE	2.03
2/24/90 21:30	49759

SOCEYS SAY -  
HAVE A NICE DAY

UIWA P TOWEL	.89	T
UIWA P TOWEL	.89	T
WHITE BREAD	.79	
DETTOL	4.79	T
SAU/KEF PP1E	.79	
2 C.79SAU/TUR	1.58	
MCCAIN PIZZA	6.59	
C D 2 MILK	2.69	
TAX ICE	.81	
TOTAL	20.02	
CSH TEND	25.00	
CHG DUE	4.98	
2/23/90 18:58	60291	

2/23/90 18:50

SO DEVS SAY -  
HAVE A NICE DR!

BROCCOLI	.78
MEAT	1.53
BROCCOLI	.78
WHITE BREAD	.79
SOUEYS KETCH	2.29
DELI	1.45
WHITE BREAD	.77
MEAT	6.09
DELI	1.50
DELI	1.68

**.210K5**

85.27/KG DIT	1.11
TAX DUE	.00
TOTAL	19.19
CSH TEND	30.00
CHG DUE	30.81

2/17/90 16:56 15776

CODEYS SAY -  
HAVE A NICE DAY

COFFEE WHITE	1.99
PERF/EUP MLK	.64
PERF/EUP MLX	.64
TAX DUE	.00
TOTAL	3.27
CASH TEND	5.00
CHG DUE	1.73
2/20/90 19:25	73555

2/20/90 19:25 73555

SOCEYS SAY -  
HIVE A NICE DAY

W/W DONUTS	.79
W/W DONUTS	.79
W/W DONUTS	.79
MELI	1.05
DONUTS.CHOC.	.79
TAX DUE	.00
TOTAL	5.01
CASH TEND	5.01
CHG DUE	.00
70 21:29	12212

2/20/70 21:29 12212

SOE'S SAY -  
HAVE A NICE DAY

WHITE BREAD	.79
LARGE EGGS	1.89
GROCERY	2.69
DELI	2.18
BROWN SUGAR/OIL	.75
	.015KG

**.015kg**

AL-96/KGBWNA	1.60
TAX DUE	.00
TOTAL	9.90
CSN TEND	10.00
CNG DUE	.10

2/13/90 14:21 82491

DOMINION STORES LTD.  
430 TOPSAIL RD.  
ST. JOHN'S Nfld.  
STORE #912 02/24/90

100	1.10	whole
100	1.10	red bell
100	1.31	
100	1.32	white
100	1.33	
100	1.34	
100	1.35	
100	1.36	
100	1.37	
100	1.38	
100	1.39	
100	1.40	
100	1.41	
100	1.42	
100	1.43	
100	1.44	
100	1.45	
100	1.46	
100	1.47	
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## Weekly Menu

Mr. Peng  
+ 1-... ..

Monday      time      Foods      the cook      family members not present

8.30 - 9 AM

Breakfast

Kellogg's Corn Flakes Toast

Noon meal

12<sup>30</sup> PM Nank

Evening meal

6 PM Rice  
Broccoli with beef  
Chinese Cabbage Soup with Pork

Snacks

10 PM Toast &amp; Tea

Tea break<sup>1</sup>

4 PM

<sup>1</sup>If you have any guests or relatives over for meals, please make a \* mark before the meal.

## Weekly Menu

Tuesday      time      Foods      the cook      family members not present

Breakfast 8:30-9. *Quick, toast*

Noon meal 12:30 *Fish & Salads*

Evening meal 6 PM *Rice*  
*Browned Saus with Pork*  
*Green Bean with Beef*

Snacks 10 PM *Low Fruit with Cream*

Tea break<sup>2</sup> *Coffee or tea anytime*

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<sup>2</sup>If you have any guests or relatives over for meals, please make a \* mark before the meal.



## Weekly Menu

Wednesday      time      Foods      the cook      family members not present

Breakfast 8:30 9 AM Omelette with toast

Noon meal 12:30 Home Cook Beans

Evening meal 6 PM Rice  
Steamed meat with Black Beans  
Fish ~~steamed~~ with Beer Sauce

Snacks 1:30 PM Hot Roll

Tea break<sup>3</sup> Anytime

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<sup>3</sup> If you have any guests or relatives over for meals, please make a \* mark before the meal.

## Weekly Menu

Thursday      time      Foods      the cook      family members not present

Breakfast 8:30-9 AM *Breakfast*

Noon meal 12:30 *Penopu & Potatoes*

Evening meal 6 PM *Rice  
Steamed chicken  
Chinese vegetable with Pork for Soup  
Beef with Curry Potatoes*

Snacks 10 AM *Fruit*

Tea break<sup>4</sup> *any time*

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<sup>4</sup>If you have any guests or relatives over for meals, please make a \* mark before the meal.

## Weekly Menu

Friday      time      Foods      the cook      family members not present

Breakfast 830 Oat Corn & Egg, Toast

Noon meal Sausage & Bacon

Evening meal 6<sup>15</sup> Rice, Soup can tomato. B.V.H. - L.H.K.  
 6<sup>45</sup> Whisked Beef with Green pepper, celery & onion.

Snacks 1030 Ritz & cheese

Tea break<sup>5</sup> Anytime

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<sup>5</sup>If you have any guests or relatives over for meals, please make a \* mark before the meal.

## Weekly Menu

Saturday      time      Foods      the cook      family members not present

Breakfast 8<sup>30</sup> - 9<sup>45</sup> *Q&A meal.*

Noon meal 12<sup>30</sup> *Pear Soup*

Evening meal 6<sup>pm</sup> *Steak or Chop with vegetable, season*

Snacks 10<sup>30</sup> *Rack*

Tea break<sup>6</sup> *any time*

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<sup>6</sup>If you have any guests or relatives over for meals, please make a \* mark before the meal.

## Weekly Menu

Sunday      time      Foods      the cook      family members not present

Breakfast 9<sup>am</sup>      Toast & Boiled Egg

Noon meal 12<sup>30</sup>      Roast & Gravy with Pork & Meat

Evening meal 8<sup>pm</sup>      Roast & Gravy & Potatoes

Snacks 10<sup>30</sup>      Coffee & Tea

Tea break<sup>7</sup>      Anytime

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<sup>7</sup>If you have any guests or relatives over for meals, please make a \* mark before the meal.

Mrs. Au

## Weekly Menu

Monday	time	Foods	the cook	<u>family members not present</u>
Breakfast	10:30 Am	Tea + Toast	miss Au	childrens At school
Noon meal	2:00 pm	Apple (fruit)	—	miss. At school
Evening meal	7:00 pm	meat Vegetables Soup RICE	Mr & miss Au	All present
No Snacks				
Tea break <sup>1</sup>	11 pm or 12 AM	Tea COOKIES/CAKE	—	
Evening meal	=> Beef And Green Beans Roast Duck Black Bean And Ox Tail Soup			

<sup>1</sup>If you have any guests or relatives over for meals, please make a \* mark before the meal.

## Weekly Menu

Tuesday      time      Foods      the cook      family members not present

Breakfast 10:00<sub>am</sub> = Tea, Toast And Fried Eggs, Mrs Au  
Kids at school

Noon meal 2:00pm = Rice Soup, Mr Au,

Evening meal 6:30pm = Steamed Rice, minced meat,  
Halibut, Green peas with egg, Mr & Mrs Au  
All present

~~Sweets~~

Tea break<sup>2</sup> 10:30pm = Tea, cookies or fruit

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<sup>2</sup>If you have any guests or relatives over for meals, please make a \* mark before the meal.

## Weekly Menu

Wednesday      time      Foods      the cook      family members not present

Breakfast 10:00<sub>Am</sub> = Rice Soup and Toast, MKS AU,  
2 kids at school

Noon meal 2:00<sub>pm</sub> = Ham and cheese sandwiches,  
made by the kids

Evening meal 6:30<sub>pm</sub> = Vegetable soup, Rice soup, meat  
pie and Pineapple squares and shortbread  
cookies for dessert, MKS AU, All present

~~Snacks~~

Tea break<sup>3</sup> 10:30<sub>pm</sub> = Tea and biscuits, shortbread  
cookies, MKS AU.

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<sup>3</sup>If you have any guests or relatives over for meals, please make a \* mark before the meal.



## Weekly Menu

Thursday      time      Foods      the cook      family members not present

Breakfast 10:30am, Toast And Tea And Tea biscuits,  
MRS AU, 2 KIDS AT school

Noon meal 2:40pm = Macaroni Salad, Mrs AU  
2 KIDS AT school

Evening meal 7:00pm = Tomatoes And Beef, Steamed Rice,  
Chinese sausages, winter melon soup with  
pork.

Snacks

Tea break<sup>4</sup> 11:00 pm = Tea, hot milk and cookies,  
MRS AU

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<sup>4</sup>If you have any guests or relatives over for meals, please make a \* mark before the meal.

## Weekly Menu

Friday      time      Foods      the cook      family members not present

Breakfast 10:30am = Tea And Toast And Hnm, MKS At  
2 KIDS nt school.

Noon meal 2:00 pm = Ham sandwich, Apple, MKS At

Evening meal 6:00 pm = Won Ton soup with rice noodles  
fried rice with carrots, peas and  
egg, m & Au, All present

Snacks

Tea break<sup>5</sup> 10:00pm = Tea, hot chocolate, oreo cookies

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<sup>5</sup> If you have any guests or relatives over for meals, please make a \* mark before the meal.

## Weekly Menu

Saturday      time      Foods      the cook      family members not present

Breakfast 9:30 am = Boiled eggs, hot dogs, Toast, Tea and Hot milk, Mrs Nu, All present

Noon meal 2:00 pm = Ham sandwiches, made by kids All present

Evening meal 6:30 pm = macaroni with Beef and spaghetti sauce (Goulash), Mrs Nu All present

Snacks 8:00 (or so) pm potato chips, cookies, milk

Tea break<sup>6</sup> 11:00 pm = Tea or hot milk

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<sup>6</sup>If you have any guests or relatives over for meals, please make a \* mark before the meal.

## Weekly Menu

Sunday      time      Foods      the cook      family members not present

NO  
Breakfast

Noon meal 12<sup>pm</sup> or 1:00pm = Steamed rice, White fungus  
soup with pork, Biscuits with Beef,  
Chicken with potatoes in Black Bean  
sauce, salt fish. ME + MESAU, All present

Evening meal 4:00pm = Fried Chicken and French fries,  
ME AU / MESAU, All present

-Snacks

Tea break<sup>7</sup> 10:30pm = Hot milk and Tea biscuits

<sup>7</sup> If you have any guests or relatives over for meals, please make a \* mark before the meal.

Before see 1  
Chris May

## Weekly Menu

Monday      time      Foods      the cook      family members not present

Breakfast

8:00 a.m. - Lunch meat

3 of the children

Noon meal

Bring them even sandwiches  
for lunch

see all the community  
in town

Evening meal

6:00  
p.m.

Spaghetti  
Vegetable Salad  
Charlie bread  
Fresh fruits

Everybody home

Snacks

12:30

Tea &  
apple pie

all day

Tea break<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>If you have any guests or relatives over for meals, please make a \* mark before the meal.

## Weekly Menu

Tuesday      time      Foods      the cook      family members not present

Breakfast      8<sup>45</sup> am      7.00 am      Muffins      -      3 of the children  
apples & bananas

Noon meal      -      all the children bring their own sandwiches

Evening meal      6<sup>30</sup> pm.      Pick chop.  
BBQ Salmon      Muffins      all home.  
Pasta & veg.  
Sausages.  
Lemon & lime & sugar.

Snacks      -      No snacks  
1 Orange

Tea break<sup>2</sup>      Tea &

<sup>2</sup>If you have any guests or relatives over for meals, please make a \* mark before the meal.



## Weekly Menu

Thursday	time	Foods	the cook	family members not present
Breakfast	8:15 am	Scrambled eggs Toasted		2 people
Noon meal	12:30	Scrambled eggs Grapefruit		
Evening meal	6:00 pm	Big steak Mashed potatoes baked Fresh fruits		Everybody home
Snacks	12:30	Apple pie tea		alone
Tea break <sup>4</sup>				

<sup>4</sup>If you have any guests or relatives over for meals, please make a \* mark before the meal.



## Weekly Menu

Friday      time      Foods      the cook      family members not present.

Breakfast 12:00 - 1:00

Noon meal

Evening meal 6<sup>00</sup> pm

Snacks      100 - 100 - 100 - 100 -

Tea break<sup>5</sup> - Fresh fruits

<sup>5</sup>If you have any guests or relatives over for meals, please make a \* mark before the meal.

## Weekly Menu

Saturday      time      Foods      the cook      family members not present

Breakfast      Tea + Coffee  
Orange juice -  
milk

Noon meal      1.2<sup>30</sup> -      Cheese & Ham (1 whole dish)

Evening meal      Rice  
Chicken & Soy sauce  
Tomato soup & beans  
Snacks      Fruits

—      Cheese + Crackers  
Tea + milk

Tea break<sup>6</sup>      Tea & cookies

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<sup>6</sup>If you have any guests or relatives over for meals, please make a \* mark before the meal.

## Weekly Menu

Sunday      time      Foods      the cook      family members not present

Breakfast      -

Noon meal      - 1<sup>00</sup> pm      Roast turkey  
Potatoes, Carrots  
Cabbage &  
Kiss  
Dressing      Everybody home

Evening meal

6-7      Left over turkey

Snacks

- Cherry cake &  
Milk  
Tea or Coffee

Tea break<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup>If you have any guests or relatives over for meals, please make a \* mark before the meal.

Catalogue

F. 12, 10  
Also Ping - 12 G. 10.

Chinese ingredients storage room

bean sauce

pickled beetroots

豆豉 fermented bean curd

Sultana raisins

straw mushrooms

豉汁

black beans

preserved radish with chilli

oyster sauce

chestnuts

peanut - paste flour

dried shrimp

rice sticks

dried Lily flower

pork skin

Chinese Barbecued <sup>powder</sup> 豉汁

preserved turnip pulp 豉汁

pickled mustard red beans

pickled scallion

chestnuts

polygona

Lotus seeds

pearl barley

preserved turnip

dried Lily bulb

plum sauce

chiosweet

green beans

dried Longan

1/2 lb 2.





