

The Fusion and Influence of East Asian and Western Food Culture

Zheyi Qiu^{1,a,*}

¹University of Toronto Mississauga, 1702-4085 Parkside Village Dr, Mississauga, ON, L5B 0K9,
CA

a. qzyjamie57@outlook.com

*corresponding author

Abstract: In recent decades, the culinary industry has experienced a significant fusion of East Asian and Western culinary cultures, creating innovative dishes that integrate traditional ingredients and cooking techniques from both regions. This cross-cultural exchange is becoming increasingly common in restaurants, homes, and culinary schools around the world, driven by globalization. East Asian cuisine is renowned for its fresh ingredients, balanced flavors, and beautiful displays, attracting Western audiences. The diverse flavors and abundant ingredients of Western cuisine also inspire East Asian chefs. The resulting fusion has led to popular culinary trends. This interaction has also led to new culinary innovations and dining experiences like the integration of food creation. In addition to professional kitchens, this exchange has also influenced home cooking driven by media and food blogs, and has impacted the food industry, with a growing demand for cross-cultural ingredients and products. The integration of East Asian and Western culinary cultures has enriched the global culinary landscape, broadened the tastes of food enthusiasts, and enhanced people's appreciation of diverse culinary traditions, and continued globalization may continue to change these culinary experiences.

Keywords: multiculturalism, eastern Asia, west, food culture, food fusion.

1. Introduction

Multiculturalism not only focuses on cultural diversity, but also advocates equal interaction and exchange among different cultures. Food, as an important component of culture, is often a prominent manifestation and specific practice area of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism has driven the emergence of a new culinary culture. When the dietary habits and cooking techniques of different cultures blend together, new forms of cuisine often emerge. The combination of multiculturalism and cuisine not only enriches people's dietary lives, but also promotes cultural exchange and integration, promoting social harmony and development. The integration, influence, and collision between Eastern Asian and Western cuisine is a complex and diverse process. This paper will argue that how the integration and influence of Eastern Asian and Western cuisine have facilitated global cultural exchange, while also creating new culinary cultures.

2. The Difference in Diet Between the East Asia and the West

There are significant differences in dietary habits between East Asia and the West, which stem from their unique cultural background and geographical environment. These differences are not only reflected in the ingredients and cooking methods, but also in cooking utensils, crop preferences, and various aspects of culinary culture. By exploring these differences, we can better understand the unique development paths of the two culinary cultures in their historical evolution.

In East Asian culinary culture, boiling, stir frying, and steaming are the main cooking methods. [1] The technology of boiling and steaming has been widely developed in East Asia and used to make various traditional foods and drinks. For example, in all three countries in East Asia, there are delicacies where ingredients are boiled in one pot. In China, it is a hot pot, while in Japan it is named sukiyaki, and in South Korea it is called budae jjigae. The taste of these ingredients may vary slightly, but the principles and ingredients are similar. In the West, baking and baking are the main cooking methods. Baking and baking techniques occupy an important position in Western culinary culture, with deep connections to religious rituals and sacrificial activities. [1] In the two locations, the preferences for crops are also different. East Asia prefers sticky rice and grains, while the West prefers bread. [1] Through these differences, we can see the unique development paths of the two culinary cultures in their historical evolution.

3. The Interaction Between Eastern Asian and Western Dietary Cultures and Health

The unhealthy characteristics of western diet, including excessive salt, high fat, high sugar and lack of nutrients, will increase the risk of diabetes and promote the development of complications of diabetes. The development of globalization has brought Western food to Asian countries, which has also caused certain counter effects on the health of residents in Asian countries.

Western fast food is known for its high calorie and large serving portions, usually characterized by meat and processed meat. This type of food contains highly refined carbohydrates, often with higher levels of sodium and cholesterol, and lower levels of dietary fiber and essential fatty acids. [2] The high calorie and high salt content of Western fast food, combined with its rich taste, have attracted a large number of consumers, especially in the fast-paced modern life. Its convenient and fast characteristics make it popular. Multinational fast food chains have entered these markets one after another, bringing standardized food and services that cater to the pursuit of modern and international lifestyles by local young people and urban residents. [2] However, the widespread popularity of western fast food has also brought health challenges, such as the rising rate of obesity, cardiovascular disease and diabetes and other health problems are that becoming more and more common in these regions. In short, although Western fast food provides convenient and fast dietary choices, its high calorie, high salt, and high cholesterol characteristics also pose new challenges to people's health, especially in the context of globalization and balancing the convenience and health of diet.

With the spread and popularization of Asian culinary culture, more and more Western restaurants are introducing Asian ingredients and cooking methods and launching dishes with Asian flavors. This not only enriches the variety and taste of Western cuisine, but also promotes the diversified development of the catering market. On average, Americans tend to be more concerned about eating, while Belgians and French people tend to value the pleasure of eating, while Japanese people tend to value the pleasure and health of eating. [3] East Asian culture has always emphasized physical health and spiritual balance, which is fully reflected in dietary culture. People generally believe that a healthy diet is a key factor in maintaining physical health and a happy mood. Diet not only needs to meet nutritional needs, but also helps the body regulate and repair itself, so the dietary habits of East Asians often pay more attention to diversity and balance. The attitudes of different cultures towards food reflect their respective lifestyles and values.

Asian cuisine has had a profound impact on Western culinary culture and health. From the richness of ingredients, innovation in cooking methods, to the spread of healthy eating concepts and changes in the catering market, Asian cuisine has injected new vitality and elements into Western culinary culture. Meanwhile, this integration also promotes communication and understanding between different cultures, providing people with more choices and possibilities for healthy eating.

4. The Fusion of Eastern Asian and Western Cuisine

With the deepening of globalization, the phenomenon of integration between East Asian cuisine and Western cuisine is becoming increasingly common. In terms of cooking techniques, Eastern and Western chefs learn and learn from each other, making cooking techniques more diverse and colorful; In terms of ingredient exchange, this integration promotes the circulation and use of ingredients from different regions, enriching people's dietary choices.

4.1. The Historical Development of Integrated Food

The growing interest in fusion cuisine has led to increased experimentation with dishes that combine elements from various regions. This trend originated in the late 1960s when French chefs started integrating traditional Japanese culinary concepts and the dietary aesthetics of their Eastern counterparts. [4] In addition, current innovative tableware designs also draw on traditional Japanese electroplating techniques. [4] Modern designs incorporate unusual colors and textures, replacing traditional round white American dinner plates, showing a deep influence on Japanese electroplating art, or at least drawing inspiration from it. This design concept not only enriches the visual experience, but also brings new creativity and breakthroughs to the way food is presented.

4.2. The Specific Manifestations of Integrated Food in Contemporary Society

Fusion cooking is defined as a cooking style that combines ingredients and techniques from different food areas. [4] This cooking style is not limited to a single culture but combines the culinary traditions and ingredients of different cultures to create new cuisines. For example, in the fusion cuisine of China and the West, bread is used as the staple food, paired with Chinese unique crab roe sauce. This combination is not only a fusion of taste, but also a collision and fusion of culture. This presentation method not only enriches the layering of dishes, but also reflects the chef's profound understanding of tradition and innovation. By cleverly combining Western bread with Chinese crab roe sauce, a delicious dish is created that combines the soft taste of the West with the rich flavor of the East. This creativity allows people to experience the culinary wisdom of different cultural backgrounds while tasting the food. The innovation of this cuisine not only stays at the level of taste, but also undergoes a profound exchange and integration at the cultural and historical levels.

4.3. Eastern Asian Cuisine Brings New Vitality to Western Culinary Culture

Food plays a crucial role in understanding cultural and social processes. It is not only a basic need for survival, but also profoundly affects people's identity and social interaction. In different cultural backgrounds, food choices, cooking methods, and eating habits can all reflect the history, values, and social structure of a group. Therefore, food is an important identity symbol that can reflect national characteristics and cultural heritage. Due to the historical wave of immigration and the current globalization process, Asian food has become increasingly popular, and the West has experienced a growth in Asian style cuisine, which has particularly influenced American culinary traditions. [5] Asian cuisine has created an appeal to the East and has become very popular in Western countries in recent decades through street snacks. Food, as a tourist attraction, also has tremendous power. One

important purpose of many people traveling is to experience the cuisine of different places. By tasting local specialty dishes, tourists can not only satisfy their taste buds but also gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the local cultural atmosphere. Food tourism has become a popular form of tourism, attracting travelers from all over the world to explore unique culinary cultures and driving the development of the global tourism industry.

Overall, food is not only a nutrient, but also a cultural symbol. It helps us understand cultural and social changes, reflecting the identity of different groups. As a powerful tourist attraction, food attracts countless travelers through its unique charm. In the context of globalization, Asian food has influenced Western culinary traditions and enriched global culinary culture with its unique flavor and healthy dietary philosophy.

5. Conclusion

The integration of East Asian cuisine and Western culinary culture is an important manifestation of globalization and multicultural development. There are significant differences in ingredient selection, cooking methods, and dietary structure between Eastern and Western diets. Meanwhile, there is a close interaction between dietary culture and health. Driven by globalization, there is a trend of integration between Eastern and Western culinary cultures. This integration not only enriches people's dietary choices, but also promotes communication and understanding between different cultures. Sushi, noodles and hot pot in East Asia are gradually moving towards the world, becoming the favorite food lovers all over the world; Western pizza, hamburgers, and steak have also been widely welcomed in East Asia. Through the exchange of culinary culture, people can not only experience the flavors of different regions, but also deepen their understanding and respect for different cultures. The integration of Eastern and Western culinary cultures not only enriches each other's culinary content, but also promotes mutual understanding and respect between the two cultures. Chefs from various countries constantly innovate, combining East Asian ingredients with Western cooking techniques to create many refreshing dishes. The integration of culinary culture has promoted the innovation and development of cuisine, while also promoting cross-cultural communication and interaction. This complex and diverse process is not only a microcosm of cultural exchange in the context of globalization, but also an important driving force for the continuous development of human culinary culture. Through the integration of this culinary culture, people can not only enjoy a richer and more colorful cuisine, but also experience the unique charm of different cultures in the cuisine, promoting communication and cooperation among people from all over the world.

References

- [1] Fuller, D. Q., & Rowlands, M. (2011). *Ingestion and food technologies: maintaining differences over the long-term in West, South and East Asia. Interweaving Worlds-systematic interactions in Eurasia, 7th to 1st millennia BC.* Oxford: Oxbow Books, 37-60.
- [2] ODEGAARD, A. O., PUAY KOH, W., YUAN, J.-M., GROSS, M. D., & PEREIRA, M. A. (2012). *Western-Style Fast Food Intake and Cardiometabolic Risk in an Eastern Country.* *Circulation (New York, N.Y.)*, 126(2), 182–188. <https://doi.org/10.1161/circulationaha.111.084004>
- [3] Lim, C. G. Y., & van Dam, R. M. (2020). *Attitudes and beliefs regarding food in a multi-ethnic Asian population and their association with socio-demographic variables and healthy eating intentions.* *Appetite*, 144, 104461–104461. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2019.104461>
- [4] Spence, C. (2018). *Contemporary fusion foods: How are they to be defined, and when do they succeed/fail?* *International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science*, 13, 101–107. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijgfs.2018.07.005>
- [5] Fusté-Forné, F. (2020). *Understanding the Role of Asian Food in Western Countries.* *Tourism, Culture & Communication*, 20(1), 27–34. <https://doi.org/10.3727/194341419X15554157596218>