

CHEUNG, Sidney C. H.
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Hong Kong Foodways.
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In this short book published by Hong Kong University Press, Sidney C. H. Cheung, an anthropologist at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, summarises his research's main findings related to Hong Kong's food culture in the last century. Over the last decade, Cheung has indeed focused on food in Hong Kong society as a lens to explore the shifts in local production dynamics, consumption patterns, and social identity that have marked the territory over the past century. His research therefore examines the factors that have shaped Hong Kong's foodways and influenced not only the eating habits of Hong Kong people, but also the sociopolitical development of the city as global consumerism advanced. The book is divided into five thematic sections that follow classic themes in food studies, here adapted to the context of Hong Kong: locality, culinary migration and identities, the emergence of new cuisines, nostalgia and the sense of authenticity, and finally, intangible heritage. Given the quantity of examples provided in the book, I will just focus here on a few of them that I found particularly revealing.

As demonstrated in Chapter One, which focuses on local food production, Hong Kong's location near the Pearl River estuary and the deep sea has made it a prime location for fishing and importing goods from both North and South. One example developed by the author concerns the oyster industry, which has a long history in the Pearl River Delta. In the nineteenth century, oysters were farmed in Lau Fau Shan (New Territories), but matured in the bay in Shenzhen, making them less salty. However, the introduction of strict border controls in the 1950s and concerns about agricultural contamination in the 1960s led to a change in practice. By the 1980s, floating barges had replaced traditional oyster farms, and mudflat cultivation techniques were introduced along the coast. Collaboration with government agencies also led to the installation of purification systems to control bacteria in the fresh oysters from Lau Fau Shan. This case showcases the still ongoing dilemma between food safety and heritage conservation, as also pointed out by Cheung in his 2019 article.

Chapter Two, titled "The Arrival of Migrants' Food in the Post-war Era," explores the contributions of migrant chefs. Cheung highlights the postwar rise of Hakka restaurants, which served simple yet popular dishes that defined the period. Hakka cuisine gained prominence in the 1950s, and was appreciated for its hearty, meat-based meals that sustained workers in Hong Kong's expanding industrial sector (Cheung 2001). By the 1980s, however, these restaurants began to decline as shifting social values and tastes sparked a culinary transformation. In contrast, Shanghaiese migrants who settled in North Point during the 1950s brought with them the culinary traditions of Jiangsu and Zhejiang Provinces, which were later promoted by organisations such as the Ning Po Residents Association (established in the late 1960s) and the Shanghai Fraternity Association (founded in 1977) in an effort to preserve regional food traditions, rooted in a nostalgic connection to their places of origin (Cheung 2020).

Chapter Three deals with the rise of *nouvelle* Cantonese and international cuisines. In the 1950s and 1960s, *yumcha* 飲茶 was primarily "a venue for men to socialize" (p. 43), but gradually became a gathering for the entire family, hence reinforcing the institution of the family. *Yumcha* also reflected a structural change in Hong Kong society, as the working class experienced upward mobility and moved into the middle class. Moreover, Hong Kong's food scene has long incorporated Western and Japanese influences. Western restaurants have been operating since the 1930s and have evolved through various trends, including British and other influences. But the 1970s saw the emergence of *nouvelle* Cantonese cuisine that catered to Hong Kong's increasingly cosmopolitan middle class. This cuisine, which featured both exotic ingredients and Western-style dining environments, remained popular into the 1980s. Finally, the rise of international cuisines in the 1980s reflected the emphasis on "freedom of choice," with the introduction of American fast food, French haute cuisine, Italian pasta, Japanese sushi, etc.

In Chapter Four, "In Search of Nostalgic Foods," Cheung explores "low everyday dishes" that have deep personal or cultural significance, such as basin food (*puhn choi* 盆菜). *Puhn choi*, a festive dish originally prepared for ancestor worship and weddings, was popular among the Punti, the indigenous people of the New Territories. Before the 1997 handover, *puhn choi* was widely promoted for its "taste of tradition": its original function as a focus for lineage gathering in the New Territories then turned into a symbol of Hong Kong heritage that anyone could share. Cheung also draws the reader's attention to another "low" cuisine: the private kitchens. Emerging in the early 1990s, private kitchens were unlicensed, exclusive eating places popular among the middle class, which offered "authentic" home-cooked food that represented (and still continues to represent) a contemporary conflation of everyday, home-cooked food with a commercialised rendition and image of the home (Cheung 2005).

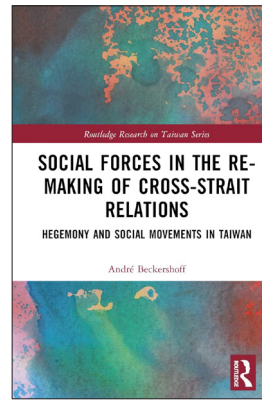
In the last chapter, "The Awareness of Food Heritage," Cheung highlights the challenges of preserving food heritage, such as the decline of freshwater fish farming, which has suffered from a lack of government support. Species such as grey mullet are no longer produced locally, and local authorities are pushing for the introduction of exotic species for monoculture to replace

the traditional practice of polyculture. All these elements raise important questions about heritage conservation (as detailed in Cheung 2019).

As this book aims to bring together and introduce the results of twenty years of research on various aspects of food in Hong Kong, the reader may end up frustrated with access to only the research results without the ethnographic materials that would give more substance to the author's arguments. In addition, the author occasionally blends together different time periods without clearly delimiting them, making it sometimes difficult for a non-Hong Kong specialist to follow the historical trajectory of foodways in Hong Kong. However, this monograph still provides the food researcher with a great basis for further discussion.

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**BECKERSHOFF, André.
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Social Forces in the Re-making of Cross-strait Relations: Hegemony and Social Movements in Taiwan.

London: Routledge.

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Social Forces in the Re-making of Cross-strait Relations traces the historical formation of material and ideological factors that facilitated the normalisation of cross-strait exchanges in the Ma Ying-jeou era and the role of social movements in this process. Beckershoff confronts the question of how closer ties with China evolved from a matter previously viewed in Taiwan as highly political and concerning national security to a matter of apolitical mutual benefit. The latter narrative appeared to woo the Taiwanese electorate sufficiently to hand Ma and his party (the Kuomintang) a landslide victory in 2008. Beckershoff rightly problematises the notion of this extraordinary transformation across Taiwanese society as being either natural or inevitable.

Operationalising a Gramscian framework (1971), Beckershoff traces the origins of the normalisation of cross-strait relations – what he terms a “hegemonic project” – from Japanese colonisation and the Kuomintang’s (KMT) establishment of the Republic of China government in Taiwan up to the 2014 Sunflower Movement. Positing a praxeological and dialectical approach to Gramscian hegemony, Beckershoff explores how the hegemonic project of depoliticising cross-strait relations and the social movements that emerged in resistance to this project co-evolved over time (p. 27-8). In so doing, Beckershoff seeks to illuminate the workings of hegemony itself (p. 29).

Rooted in rigorous empirical and theoretical analysis, *Social Forces in the Re-making of Cross-strait Relations* offers several contributions that resonate not only within Taiwan studies, but also extend to the fields of international political sociology, international political theory, and beyond. At an empirical level, the book builds on the literature of Taiwan social movements by synthesising the historical trajectories of the Wild Strawberry Movement (*ye caomei xueyun* 野草莓學運), the Anti-media Monopoly Movement (*fan meiti longduan yundong* 反媒體壟斷運動), the Sunflower Movement (*taiyanghua xueyun* 太陽花學運), and other related movements. Beckershoff deftly compares the dialectal dynamics