

Materiality and Subjectivity of Modern Tradition
- A critical analysis of the transformation of modern food tradition -

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Introduction

This paper analyses the transformation of Japanese food tradition in the 1960s and 1970s as the interactive processes of citizens, food-related organizations, nutrition/health professionals, and the nation-state government.¹ It explores how the “disembedding” (Giddens, 1990) of material activities of food-related organizations concerning raw food producing, processing, distribution, and consumption (cooking and dining), on the one hand, and the transformation of subjectivity and identity of citizens, on the other hand, proceeded in a mutually constitutive relationship, and resulted in (un-intended) drastic changes in the food tradition in a rapidly developing economy. The objective of this historical study is to obtain theoretical and practical implications for critically examining the contemporary “invention” and “re-embedding” of modern food traditions, which needs to be understood both as “rationalization”, “systematization”, and “commodification” of food-related activities that are often proposed and driven by food-related organizations and as the citizens’ subjective processes of “appropriation” (du Gay, Hall, Janes, Mackay, and Negus, 1997) of the materiality that those organizations provide.

While we see a recent growing interest among Western societies in “Japanese food” as a healthier, and often alleged as a more sophisticated and thus finer, alternative to Western food, Japanese government and food authorities have found it extremely difficult to define “Japanese food tradition” in its attempts to apply for UNESCO World Cultural Heritage. One of difficulties in the attempts of “definition” is that ordinary foods in contemporary Japan are so diverse and “seemingly so different” from what Japanese people used to eat until the 1950s and from “de-facto standard of Japanese food” widely appropriated by Western societies such as Sushi, Sashimi and Tempura. Another difficulty is that if the government and authorities define Japanese food tradition in terms of domestic agricultural produce and sea food to protect domestic agriculture and fishery and to safeguard against cheap foreign (and sometimes genetically modified) produce, it might accelerate the tendency of genuine traditional Japanese food to become finer and more expensive dining.

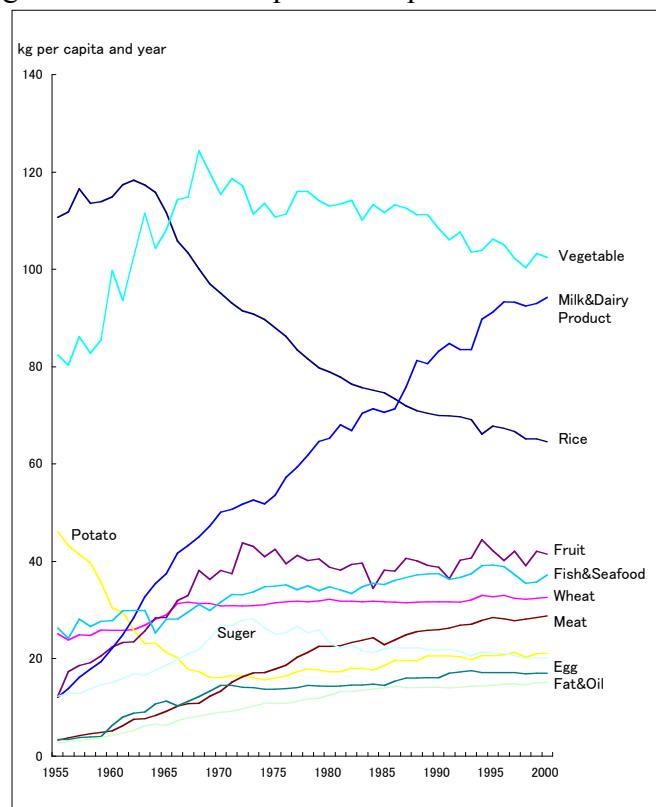
The historical origin of these difficulties, in our understanding, can be found in the 1960s and 1970s of the rapid economic growth. From the perspectives of the institutional approaches to organization studies (Seo and Creed, 2002; Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006; Scott, 2008) and the cultural-historical activity theory (Engeström, 1987), we analyze statistics of food producing, processing, distribution, and consumption in this period as well as extant studies on food tradition and culture in Japan. We especially focus on the changes in vegetable consumption in relation to changes in vegetable producing, processing, and

¹ Preliminary findings on the effects of changing culinary practices of Japanese licensed cooks on the transformation of Japanese dietary culture in the 1960s and 1970s are discussed in Kawamura, Takashima, Inoue, Togo, Bitoh, and Yamada (2008) and Kawamura, Takashima, and Inoue (2009).

distribution. Inspired by the conceptualization of “artifacts as carriers of institutional knowledge”, we aim at answering the question of how changes in vegetable producing, processing, and distribution, and consumption have transformed Japanese food tradition, especially of home cooking, by helping housewives create new institutional knowledge in the forms of time-saving “Westernized Japanese” national-standard home dishes.²

The historical and anthropological studies on food tradition and system in Japan have argued that Japanese food tradition experienced a remarkable transformation in the 1960s and 1970s. The transformation can be characterized by an increased consumption of meat, dairy products, and fat/oil at home in the forms of foreign, especially Western, cuisines, and also by a corresponding decreased consumption of rice as the staple food (Figure 1). Most textbook explanations attribute this drastic change of food tradition to a rapid change in citizens’ preferences. They emphasize that Japanese people in this period became fonder of Westernized food because of (1) a strong “desire” to enjoy affluent American-style living, which had become affordable to larger population thanks to the rapid economic growth, and (2) continued governmental and nutrition/health professional campaigns that urged people to eat more nutritious dishes that used more meat, dairy products, and fat/oil.

Figure 1. Food consumption in Japan from 1955 to 2008



Source: Ministry of Agriculture (1970) “Food Consumption Statistics 1968,” Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, “Food Consumption Statistics” as of May 28, 2008.

Our research findings suggest that in addition, and prior, to these “seemingly-natural” human desire and governmental/professional guidance, such material factors as prices and availability of raw food as well as the conveniences of purchasing, storage and cooking at home should be taken into consideration to understand this drastic change. Among various raw foods, we focus on vegetables that showed a symbolic shift in the consumption pattern

² Preliminary analyses of empirical data in this paper were reported in Kawamura, Takashima, Inoue, Bitoh, and Yamada (2009) and Kawamura, Takashima, Inoue, Takayanagi, Bitoh, and Yamada (2010).

compared with fish and meat. We would argue that it might be simply more rational for Japanese people in the 1960s and 1970s to consume more Western vegetables such as cabbage, potato, carrot, onion, lettuce, tomato, and green pepper than “Japanese” vegetables such as spinach, Chinese cabbage, leek, Japanese radish, burdock, and eggplant.³ Although senior Japanese still preferred conventional dishes such as simmered or pickled “Japanese” vegetables for daily meals, most “Japanese” vegetables experienced higher price increases, larger difficulties in constant year-round supply, and less conveniences in purchasing, storage, and cooking at homes compared with Western vegetables. It naturally led to a striking decrease in cooking conventional dishes.

We also argue that such decline of conventional dishes did not result in the simple increase of Western dishes such as beefsteak, roast beef, omelette, hamburgers, or fried chickens accompanied by bread. Instead, utilizing Western vegetables that became less expensive and were easier to purchase, store, and cook at home kitchens, Japanese housewives created new “national” home dishes such as “curry rice,” “Hamburg-style steak,” and deep-fried fish and meat (*Furai* and *Kara-age*). As a product of “negotiated interpretations” (Hall, 1980), these new “national standard” home dishes can be considered as still belonging to the lineage of conventional dishes because they were regarded as more gorgeous, nutritious, and economical accompaniments to boiled rice as the conventional staple food.

We conclude with some critical discussions, from the perspectives of social complexity theory (Letiche, 2008; 2011), on the contemporary issues concerning food traditions considering the mutually constitutive nature of the material foundations that neo-liberal food-related organizations provide and the subjectivity and identity construction of citizens.

Theoretical Orientation and Framework of Empirical Analysis

In the institutional approaches to organization studies, “culture” is considered as an essential part of “institutions,” which are “comprised of regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life” (Scott, 2008: 48). Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) argue that although institutional approaches to organization studies has traditionally emphasized the explanation of organizational similarity based on institutional conditions, “there has over the past 10-15 years emerged a new emphasis in institutional studies on understanding the role of actors in effecting, transforming and maintaining institutions and fields,” which they refer to as studies of “institutional work – the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions” (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006: 215). They refer to the framework of critical analysis of the relationship between institutional work and the contradictions that are inherent in organizational fields proposed by Seo and Creed (2002) as a potential issue through which the studies of institutional work contribute to institutional research and theory.

Seo and Creed (2002) raise the issue of “embedded agency” in the discussions of institutional change, and introduce the dialectical view of organizational analysis proposed by Benson (1977). They explain four basic principles of dialectical analysis as follows: “various institutions – organizations, organizational fields, or states, can be understood as the multi-level social arrangements that are continually produced and reproduced by social interactions (social construction). However, these ongoing multilevel processes produce a complex array of interrelated but often mutually incompatible institutional arrangements

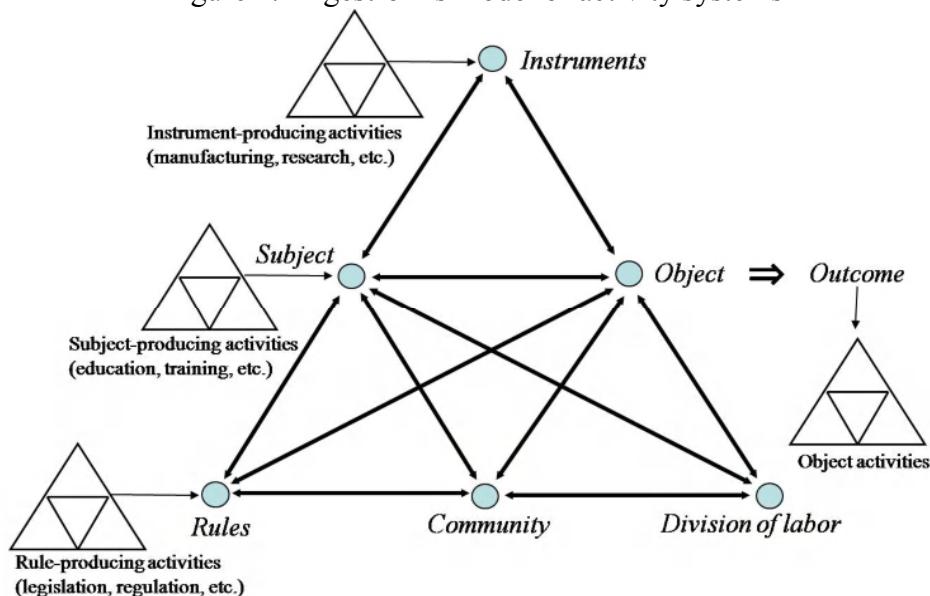
³ It is difficult to biologically delineate “Japanese” vegetables from foreign vegetables because most “Japanese” vegetables are of foreign origins. To make our explanations simpler, we treat those vegetables that had been used for conventional Japanese cuisines in simmered or pickled forms by the 1950s as “Japanese” vegetables.

(totality). Such institutional incompatibilities provide a continuous source of tensions and conflicts within and across institutions (contradiction). The ongoing experience of contradictory reality reshapes the consciousness of institutional inhabitants, as they, in some circumstances, act to fundamentally transform the present social arrangements and themselves (praxis)" (Seo and Creed, 2002: 225). Seo and Creed argue that "both the development and influence of contradictions are more or less specifiable probabilities, rather than inevitabilities (Heydebrand, 1977), and an important mechanism – human praxis – mediates between institutional contradictions and institutional change" (Seo and Creed, 2002: 229). They define praxis as "a particular type of collective human action, situated in a given sociohistorical context but driven by the inevitable by-products of that context – social contradictions" (Seo and Creed, 2002: 230).

In order to analyze detailed mediating roles of praxis between institutional contradictions and institutional change in the organizational field of dietary practices, this paper adopts the conception of activity system as the framework of empirical analysis. The framework of the activity system (Engeström, 1987; 1991; 1999) is a collective-level expansion of the Vygotskian notion of "mediated action" and the "zone of proximal development" of individuals based on the works of A. N. Leont'ev and V. V. Davydov among others. It provides a constructionistic, developmental, and comprehensive viewpoint to capture long-term processes of development, learning, and knowledge creation of communities of practice and their individual members.

The activity system describes cultural-historical development of human activities in terms of subject, instrument, object, rule, community of practice, and division of labor. (Figure 2) Any activity system contains numerous internal contradictions as results of its unique cultural-historical development and is always unstable and changing. These contradictions emerge either as the reification of each element or as the contradictory relations among elements and neighboring activity systems. Engeström proposes the model of "expansive learning" as the process of cultural-historical transformation and development of activity systems, in which the subject becomes aware of the internal contradictions and creates models of new activities to solve them.

Figure 2. Engeström's model of activity systems

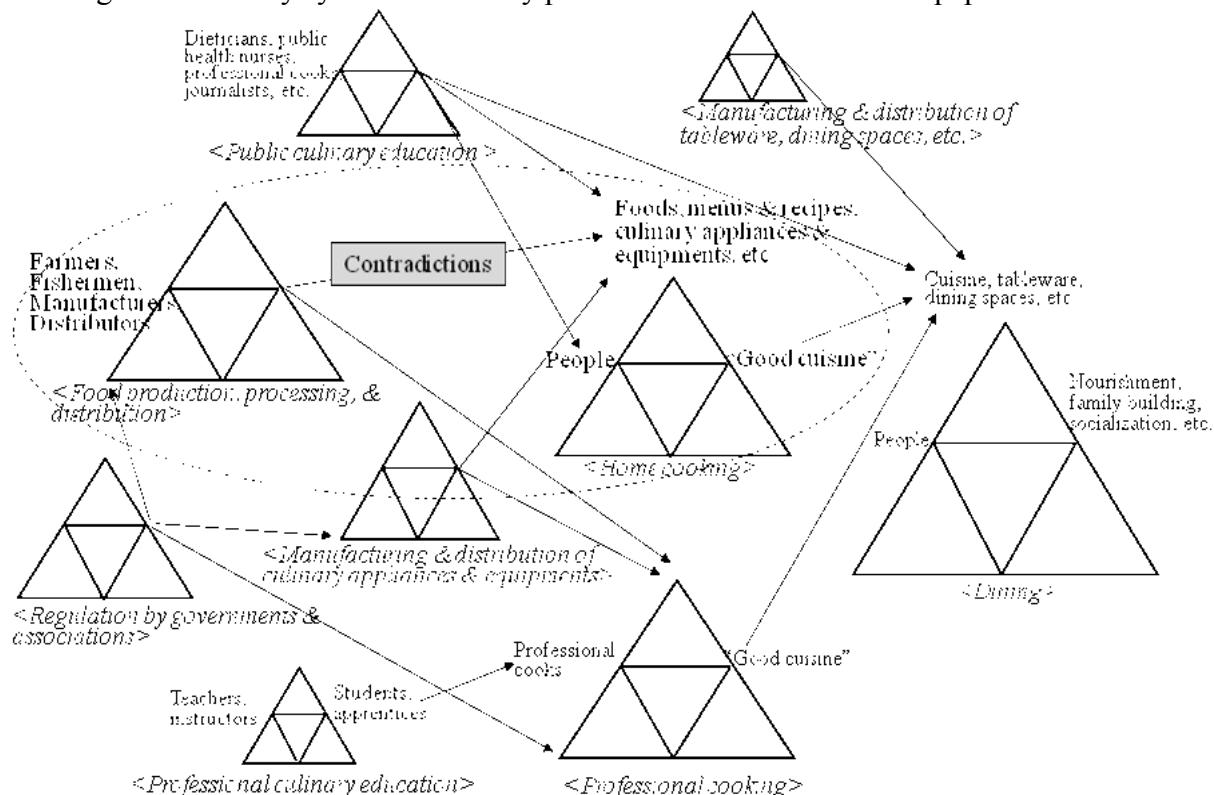


Source: Drafted by the authors from Engeström (1987), Figure 2.7, p.87 and Engeström (1999), Figure 1.2, p.31

By applying the framework to modern dietary practices, we can identify the activity system of dietary practices that is composed of at least seven interdependent activities: (1) Activity of professional cooking of licensed cooks. (2) Activity of dining of people. (3) Activity of food production, processing, and distribution. (4) Activity of manufacturing and distribution of culinary appliances and equipments. (5) Activity of professional culinary education in apprenticeship system and authorized culinary schools. (6) Activity of public culinary education of mass media, publishers, and public schools. (7) Activity of home cooking of people. (8) Activity of regulation by national/local governments and professional/industrial associations. (9) Activity of manufacturing and distribution of dining utensils and interior/exterior of dining spaces.

Among these interdependent activities, this paper mainly focuses on the activity of home cooking of people and the activity of food production, processing, and distribution (Indicated inside the dotted oval in Figure 3) We analyze some “contradictions” between these two activities that are linked by the vegetables, which is the outcome of the activity of vegetable producing, processing, and distribution, and is simultaneously one of the instruments of the activity of home cooking. The contradictions can be regarded as being “embodied” in vegetables as material artifacts. Following Seo and Creed (2002), we would argue that these institutional contradictions embodied in vegetables were solved by the creation of new “national standard home dishes,” which embodied new institutional knowledge and practices.

Figure 3. Activity systems of dietary practices and the focus of this paper



Source: drafted by the authors (Only major links are depicted)

The fall of “Japanese” vegetables at home kitchens

The accumulated historical and anthropological studies including Akiya (1981), Akiya and Yoshida (1988), Ehara (1988), Ishige (1995), Mogi (1996), Kozuka (1999), Harada (2006), Cwiertka (2006), and Ishikawa and Ehara (2007) argue that Japanese dietary culture experienced a remarkable transformation in the 1960s and 1970s, which primarily took place in home cooking and dining, then diffused to the professional cooking for dining-out. While

the Japanese Imperial government introduced and encouraged Western cuisines and dietary habits in the 1860s as an “enlightenment” policy for diplomatic, military, and “nation-state building” purposes, the diffusion was limited to politicians including imperial families, government officials and military officers, and urban wealthier citizens until the postwar rehabilitation. Due to the limitation of domestic food production, majority of Japanese well maintained conventional meals and other dietary habits until the 1950s. Basic components of conventional meals were boiled rice or other grains, soy bean sauce (*shouyu*) and/or paste (*miso*), and pickled and/or simmered vegetables. Fish, either fresh (*sashimi*), deep-fried (*tempura*), dried (*himono*), or pounded, was consumed mainly in coastal areas and in special occasions. The postwar agricultural development, especially of rice production, in the 1950s and the rapid economic growth in the 1960s resulted in a rapid and ironical decrease in rice consumption and a surprising acceptance of “Western” cuisines and dietary habits by majority of Japanese.

British cultural studies such as du Gay, Hall, Janes, MacKay, and Negus (1997) and MacKay (1997) stress the inseparability and interdependence of production (supply) and consumption (demand) of commodities in modern capitalist societies. Following Scott's typology of explanations on institutional construction (Scott, 2008: 104-105) we may summarize the inseparably-interdependent “supply-side” and “demand-side” factors that affected the transformation of Japanese home cooking activities in the 1960s and 1970s as follows.

According to the above historical and anthropological studies, “supply-side” factors that affected the transformation of the home cooking activity can be summarized as follows: (1) the increase in the amount and the variety of food supply including meat, dairy products, Western vegetables, and processed foods. (2) The diffusion of modern public utilities and new household cooking appliances including the built-in ‘system’ kitchen with stainless steel sinks, gas ranges, an electric refrigerator, and an extractor fan. (3) The provision of ‘nutrition education’ with various home cooking recipes of non-staple foods for housewives and children on the mass media and at schools. They were strongly facilitated by the legislation of Dietician Act and Nutrition Improvement Act, and financially supported by the growing processed food industries.

The “demand-side” factors that affected the home cooking activity can be summarized as follows: (1) the rapid increase of the disposable income and the urban population, which enabled more people to encounter and purchase more variety of food at increasing specialty shops and commercial dining places. (2) A strong “desire” for Western and Chinese cuisines, which were regarded as more gorgeous, finer, and nutritious. (3) Children who were accustomed to, and some even became fond of, meat, and fat/oil in the forms of Western and Chinese cuisines at school lunches. (4) The increase of nuclear families and of “full-time” housewives, who became busier in the early education of children or in “part-time” jobs for more income, while saving times by utilizing new electric household appliances such as vacuum cleaner and laundry machines.

As a result of the “production of consumption” (du Gay et al., 1997; MacKay, 1997) in the complex interactions among the supply-side and demand-side factors, the amount of major vegetables purchased annually per person slightly increased by about 6 % in this period. As shown in Table 1, the amounts of such “Japanese” vegetables as spinach, Chinese cabbage, leek, Japanese radish, burdock, and eggplant decreased in comparison with such Western vegetables as cabbage, lettuce, carrot, onion, tomato, green pepper, and some other “Japanese” vegetables such as taro, pumpkin, and cucumber. In the textbook explanations, the rise of Western vegetables and the fall of most “Japanese” vegetables are results of a shift in consumer preferences. Kawamura, Takashima, Inoue, Togo, Bitoh, and Yamada (2008) and Kawamura, Takashima, and Inoue (2009) argue that rising Japanese licensed cooks in this

period created various new recipes of Western-style home cooking and diffused them through newspapers, magazines, and TV programs. Decreases in the consumptions of such “Japanese” vegetables as Japanese radish, Chinese cabbage, and eggplants are also partly explained by the decreases in the home pickling of “Japanese” vegetables that were typical accompaniments with boiled rice, whose consumption was also steadily decreasing in the period⁴. When we take a closer look at the prices, availabilities, and conveniences of purchasing, storage, and cooking of different vegetables, we can also find some material “disadvantages” of declining “Japanese” vegetables.

Table 1. Average annual quantity of major vegetables purchased per person in 1960-1980

Year	Cabbage	Spinach	Chinese cabbage	Leek	Lettuce	White potato	Taro	Japanese radish	Carrot	Burdock	(g)
1960	5,962	3,012	8,742	3,098	N.A.	5,907	1,564	9,177	1,880	1,086	
1965	6,447	2,295	7,759	2,459	317	4,967	1,331	6,602	1,775	837	
1970	6,367	2,164	7,372	2,474	977	4,522	1,583	6,532	2,051	940	
1975	7,147	2,120	6,703	2,276	1,451	5,368	1,476	6,685	2,426	853	
1980	6,984	2,384	5,103	2,039	1,907	5,674	1,954	6,951	2,944	835	
Average of 1960&1965 (A)	6,204	2,653	8,251	2,778	317*	5,437	1,448	7,889	1,828	961	
Average of 1975&1980 (B)	7,065	2,252	5,903	2,158	1,679	5,521	1,715	6,818	2,685	844	
(B)/(A)	1.14	0.85	0.72	0.78	5.30*	1.02	1.18	0.86	1.47	0.88	

(Table 1 continued)

Year	Onion	Pumpkin	Cucumber	Eggplant	Tomato	Green pepper	Total
1960	5,146	1,161	4,684	3,747	3,357	N.A.	58,523
1965	4,712	991	4,292	2,647	3,575	450	51,456
1970	5,149	1,216	5,487	3,197	4,238	950	55,217
1975	5,841	1,219	5,997	3,079	4,419	992	58,051
1980	6,425	1,440	5,449	2,708	4,603	1,024	58,425
Average of 1960&1965 (A)	4,929	1,076	4,488	3,197	3,466	450*	54,989
Average of 1975&1980 (B)	6,133	1,329	5,723	2,894	4,511	1,008	58,238
(B)/(A)	1.24	1.24	1.28	0.91	1.30	2.24*	1.06

Source: created by the authors from Family Income and Expenditure Survey (all households) and Population Census (average persons per household), both by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

* Average amounts purchased of lettuce and green pepper in 1960 were not surveyed in the original statistics

Material disadvantages of spinach, Chinese cabbage, leek, Japanese radish, burdock, and eggplant

Relative material disadvantages of some Japanese vegetables such as spinach, Chinese cabbage, leek, Japanese radish, burdock, and eggplant over Western vegetables in general and some other traditional Japanese vegetables such as taro, pumpkin, and cucumber can be summarized as (1) higher price increase, (2) remained seasonality of supply, and (3) relative inconveniences in purchasing, storage, and cooking at home.

⁴ In order to save time and space, housewives started to purchase factory-made pickles produced by processed food industries and sold at increasing supermarkets in this period. (Ishikawa and Ehara, 2007)

(1) Higher price increase

As shown in Table 2, average prices of vegetables increased almost by four times in this period of rapid economic growth. The prices of spinach, Chinese cabbage, leek, Japanese radish, burdock, and eggplant increased in faster paces than those of Western vegetables, taro, pumpkin, and cucumber. The higher price increases were all the more disadvantageous especially in the period after the first oil crisis in 1973. Japanese housewives became more attentive to prices of goods because the increase of household income considerably slowed down in accordance with the down-turn of national economy. (Akiya, 1981)

Table 2. Average annual prices of major vegetables purchased per household in 1960-1980

Year	Cabbage	Spinach	Chinese cabbage	Leek	Lettuce	White potato	Taro	Japanese radish	Carrot	Burdock	(Yen/100g)
1960	2.85	3.66	1.52	3.92	N.A.	3.04	5.66	1.58	4.88	5.42	
1965	4.37	6.29	2.67	8.14	12.45	4.50	9.83	3.01	8.14	11.31	
1970	7.27	12.32	4.77	12.34	17.67	8.52	13.81	5.90	11.11	15.83	
1975	8.59	23.47	7.61	22.96	27.27	12.10	27.46	9.26	19.79	34.81	
1980	18.01	38.68	13.34	36.68	40.54	17.38	22.26	14.00	21.76	48.69	
Average of 1960&1965 (A)	3.61	4.97	2.10	6.03	12.45*	3.77	7.74	2.30	6.51	8.36	
Average of 1975&1980 (B)	13.30	31.07	10.48	29.82	33.91	14.74	24.86	11.63	20.78	41.75	
(B)/(A)	3.68	6.25	5.00	4.94	2.72*	3.91	3.21	5.07	3.19	4.99	

(Table 2 continued)

Year	Onion	Pumpkin	Cucumber	Eggplant	Tomato	Green pepper	Average
1960	2.87	3.58	4.78	3.83	4.91	N.A.	3.75
1965	5.52	6.36	8.96	7.92	8.59	14.83	7.68
1970	8.64	9.02	13.34	12.30	12.72	18.55	11.51
1975	10.55	16.41	21.88	22.03	22.97	33.00	20.01
1980	14.67	26.94	32.45	32.88	28.32	49.95	28.53
Average of 1960&1965 (A)	4.20	4.97	6.87	5.87	6.75	14.83*	5.72
Average of 1975&1980 (B)	12.61	21.67	27.17	27.45	25.64	41.48	24.27
(B)/(A)	3.00	4.36	3.95	4.68	3.80	2.80*	4.25

Source: created by the authors from Family Income and Expenditure Survey (all households) by Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

* Average prices purchased of lettuce and green pepper in 1960 were not surveyed in the original statistics

Although it is quite difficult to explain precisely the differences in the paces of price increases, we may argue that the faster increases in the prices of spinach, Chinese cabbage, leek, Japanese radish, and eggplant cannot be simply explained as a result of decreasing demand. While the decreases in the purchased amount of leek and Chinese cabbage were larger than those of spinach, Japanese radish, and eggplant, their price increases were lower than spinach and Japanese radish, as shown in Table 2. Rather, the interesting correspondence between the decreased amount of purchase and the rapid price increases of these "Japanese" vegetables can be better understood when we take the producing, processing, and distribution

factors into account.

By their physical nature, such Western vegetables as white potato, carrot, onion, pumpkin, and green pepper longer keep better quality at normal atmosphere, and suit storage, transportation, and distribution at lower costs. Modern mass producing and shipment of these Western vegetables was already started before the Second World War at remote producing centers such as Hokkaido. The mass producing and shipment was further facilitated after the 1960s by the governmental policy, which urged farmers and producing centers to produce more vegetables or fruits in order to solve the over-supply of rice (Akiya, 1981). A drastic shift in the dominant carrier of vegetable transportation from train and ship to truck in this period, (Zaidan Houjin Nourin Toukei Kyoukai, 1971) which was enabled by a rapid construction of nation-wide highway network, contributed to the stability and increase in the market share of major producing centers of Western vegetables as shown in Table 3.

In contrast, small-amount producing and shipment at suburban areas seems to have resulted in faster price increases of "Japanese" vegetables compared with Western vegetables. Because Chinese cabbage and Japanese radish are relatively heavier and less expensive, long distance transportation is not economically feasible, and there producing areas are still limited to suburban areas. Small-amount producing and shipment necessitated the distribution through central wholesale markets that stabilize the retail prices at higher levels. (Akiya, 1981) Rapid urban sprawl might also have demotivated suburban farmers to introduce modern mass producing and shipment of "Japanese" vegetables. As shown in Table 3, faster price increases of spinach, Japanese radish, and eggplant can be partly explained by slower shift to modern mass producing and shipment.

Table 3. Share of top four producing prefectures of major vegetables in 1960-1980

Year	Cabbage	Spinach	Chinese cabbage	Leek	Lettuce	White potato	Taro	Japanese radish	Carrot	Burdock
1960	26.60%	34.98%	29.97%	33.09%	N.A.	60.92%	24.76%	22.54%	34.36%	34.65%
1965	27.91%	33.32%	27.79%	37.39%	N.A.	64.65%	25.06%	20.46%	37.41%	32.38%
1970	34.54%	37.89%	35.62%	36.23%	53.10%	68.07%	33.00%	24.23%	41.46%	39.66%
1975	37.07%	37.47%	40.82%	39.77%	51.44%	73.14%	29.96%	23.06%	44.75%	49.83%
1980	41.08%	33.88%	46.03%	42.40%	55.79%	78.78%	38.09%	24.02%	51.13%	57.00%
Average of 1960&1965	27.26%	34.15%	28.88%	35.24%	N.A.	62.79%	24.91%	21.50%	35.89%	33.52%
Average of 1975&1980	39.07%	35.68%	43.42%	41.09%	53.62%	75.96%	34.02%	23.54%	47.94%	53.41%

(Table 3 continued)

Year	Onion	Pumpkin	Cucumber	Eggplant	Tomato	Green pepper	Average
1960	53.70%	38.84%	25.12%	22.72%	26.09%	N.A.	33.45%
1965	44.66%	32.45%	27.14%	24.16%	29.99%	44.53%	33.95%
1970	49.68%	38.00%	27.45%	23.88%	32.10%	55.73%	39.41%
1975	53.91%	43.28%	27.21%	25.07%	38.20%	58.40%	42.09%
1980	60.81%	42.58%	30.30%	25.54%	39.86%	55.59%	45.18%
Average of 1960&1965	49.18%	35.65%	26.13%	23.44%	28.04%	44.53%	33.70%
Average of 1975&1980	57.36%	42.93%	28.76%	25.31%	39.03%	56.99%	43.63%

Source: created by the authors from Statistics on Production and Shipment of Vegetables, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries.

* Average amounts purchased of lettuce in 1960 and 1965, and green pepper in 1960 were not surveyed in the original statistics

(2) Seasonal supply

Table 4 shows the ratio of the maximum against the minimum amount of major vegetables arrived at Tokyo Central Wholesale Market in the 1960s and 1970s. Compared with such Western vegetables as cabbage, white potato, carrot, and onion, the supply of “Japanese” vegetables showed clear seasonality. In the traditional producing, spinach, Chinese cabbage, leek, and taro were mostly supplied in winter, and pumpkin, cucumber, and eggplant were mostly supplied in summer. (2001 *Yasai Toukei Youran*) Although the ranges of monthly amounts of “Japanese” vegetables decreased in general, spinach, Chinese cabbage, taro, pumpkin, and eggplant were slow in the transition toward the year-round constant supply, which is necessary to increase opportunities of purchase and consumption. The season-specific consumption patterns associated with such seasonal supply might also have prevented the shift to constant supply utilizing forcing culture. Such remained seasonality in the supply may also partly explain the decreases in the purchased amount of “Japanese” vegetables in this period.

Table 4. Range of monthly amounts of major vegetables arrived at Tokyo Central Wholesale Market in 1965-1980

Year	Cabbage	Spinach	Chinese cabbage	Leek	Lettuce	White potato	Taro	(Max/Min)	
								Japanese radish	Carrot
1965	2.54	238.10	35.27	4.49	3.49	1.76	263.21	2.30	1.99
1970	1.99	49.57	11.52	2.93	3.65	1.88	57.59	2.64	1.61
1975	1.81	23.35	11.15	2.91	1.72	1.73	28.01	3.00	1.61
1980	1.83	4.91	8.76	2.24	1.78	1.60	6.36	2.31	1.52

(Table 4 continued)

Year	Onion	Pumpkin	Cucumber	Eggplant	Tomato	Green pepper
1965	1.65	304.06	10.89	401.42	21.49	8.80
1970	1.48	98.19	5.35	39.96	9.35	3.12
1975	1.40	33.80	3.60	8.51	7.15	2.36
1980	1.65	12.95	2.63	5.29	4.60	2.46

Source: created by the authors from 2001 *Yasai Toukei Youran* (Handbook of Vegetable Statistics 2001), pp.72-87 Tables V-2 (1)-(16) edited by the Vegetable Supply Stabilization Fund (Yasai Kyoukyuu Antei Kikin, now integrated into Agriculture and Livestock Industries Corporation) using original data from the Annual Report of Tokyo Central Wholesale Market, Tokyo Metropolitan Government.

(3) Inconveniences in purchasing, storage, and cooking

In the 1960s and 1970s, increasing ‘full-time’ housewives at nuclear families became busier in the early education of their children or in ‘part-time’ jobs for more income. (Akiya, 1981; Akiya and Yoshida, 1988) Utilizing new home cooking appliances such as electric refrigerators, gas ranges, and extractor fans, they tried to save time for purchasing and cooking foods. In the conventional Japanese cuisines, most vegetables need time-consuming cooking with heat or pickling. Especially burdock, which is the most typical ingredient of simmered vegetables, needs longer time to remove harshness. Due to their physical nature, such “Japanese” vegetables as spinach, Chinese cabbage, and leek could not be stored longer at home even in early electric refrigerators without freezers, and thus required frequent purchasing. In this period, Chinese cabbage, Japanese radish, and pumpkin were sold by piece, which is larger and heavier than most Western vegetables except cabbage. We also need to note that in the increasing nuclear households, busier housewives were freed from cooking time-consuming simmered or pickled “Japanese” vegetables for grandparents, and also

gradually lost skills to cook conventional vegetable dishes in accordance with decreasing opportunities to succeed to “traditional” cooking skills of their mothers. (Akiya and Yoshida, 1988)

In contrast, Western vegetables such as white potato, carrot, and onion can be stored at homes longer than “Japanese” vegetables. Cabbage, carrot, onion, and tomato can be consumed in time-saving “fresh salad,” which was introduced as a part of American dishes after the Second World War. (Tamura, 1996) The exceptional increase in the consumption of cucumber can also be explained by the innovative use in the fresh salad. In the 1960s and 1970s, Japanese processed food manufacturers started providing cooking oil, processed meat, and various prepared seasonings such as the seasoned flour for deep-fries and for “Hamburg-style” steaks, the prepared roux of curry, and dressings for fresh salads. These prepared seasonings also facilitated cooking of new “Westernized Japanese” national home dishes such as deep-fried fish or meat, “Hamburg-style” steaks, and curry rice with fresh salads. (Kozuka, 1999) These convenient seasonings sold very well at rising chain supermarkets, which appealed lower prices and one-stop time-saving shopping. They promoted prepared seasonings together with Western vegetables as necessary ingredients, and attracted housewives who became more attentive to prices and time-thrifty.

The “survival” of taro, pumpkin, and cucumber

This section briefly examines the destinies of taro, pumpkin, and cucumber, which were a few “Japanese” vegetables that had “survived” in the period of drastic change. As shown in Table 1, the purchased amount of taro, pumpkin, and cucumber relatively increased in the 1960s and 1970s. As for taro, although the transition to the mass producing and shipment and to the constant supply was slower, the increase in their retail prices was among the slowest in all major vegetables.

Pumpkins were lucky enough to find their places at Western dishes and sweets. In order to take the opportunity, most pumpkin growers in Japan replaced Japanese pumpkins (*Kabocha* squash or *c. moschata*) with sweeter Western pumpkins (*c. maxima*) in the 1960s. As shown in Table 4, while the replacement did not seem to accelerate the constant supply, which was later realized by foreign imports that expanded in the 1980s, it might have facilitated the transition to the mass producing and shipment as shown in Table 3. The shift to the modern producing and shipment might also have contributed to the modest price increase as shown in Table 2.

Cucumbers were also very lucky enough to find their new place at fresh salads, which became swiftly popular after the Second World War. Because there was no such habit to eat raw vegetables in conventional Japanese dishes, it was really an innovative combination of Western fresh salads and fresh cucumber. Although the shift to mass producing and shipment seemed to be slower, the price increase was slower and the shift to the constant supply was faster than other “Japanese” vegetables.

The “creation” of new national home dishes

Finally, we examine the destinies of Western vegetables, which seemed to have “won” the competition at Japanese home kitchens in the 1960s and 1970s. As we have argued, most “Japanese” vegetables suffered from “material disadvantages” over Western vegetables in terms of price, availability, and conveniences of purchasing, storage, and cooking. In addition to the wide-spread, strong “desire” to enjoy affluent American-style living and to the continued governmental and professional campaigns that urged people to eat more nutritious foods⁵, it became rational for busier and more informed housewives to cook more Western

⁵ In the nutrition education provided by the government and nutrition/health professionals at schools and

vegetables than “Japanese” ones when they considered these material characteristics.

Although senior Japanese people still hoped to dine conventional home dishes for daily meals, cooking such conventional dishes as simmered or pickled “Japanese” vegetables became more expensive and inconvenient. We need to note that in the 1960s of rapid economic growth Japanese people wished to spend more on such durable goods as automobiles and electric home appliances including TV sets, electric refrigerators, and laundry machines, and spend less on food. (Ehara, 1988) The monetary constraints concerning food consumption became even stronger in the period of economic downturn after the first oil crisis in 1973.

Combining nutritious meat or fish, oil/fat, and Western vegetables, Japanese housewives started cooking various new “Westernized Japanese” home dishes, which were gorgeous, nutritious, and economical accompaniments to the boiled rice as the conventional staple foods. They became “national standard” because Japanese people who still preferred conventional meals welcomed them as belonging to the lineage of conventional dishes. (Akiya and Yoshida, 1988; Ishige, 1995) Typical examples were: 1) “curry rice” made of pork or beef, potato, carrot, and onion, 2) “Hamburg-style” steak made of inexpensive minced meat and onion, and 3) deep-fried fish or meat. These new home dishes that used more fat/oil were typically accompanied by fresh salads, which were made of shredded cabbage, cucumber, and tomato, as tasty and nutritious (contains more Vitamin C) side-dishes.

Although all of these “Westernized Japanese” dishes had been invented and provided at urban popular restaurants, schools, or military bases before the Second World War (Ishikawa and Ehara, 2007), it is in the 1960s and 1970s that they swiftly diffused at almost every home kitchen and became truly “national standard.” Such rapid and wide diffusion was facilitated by the invention and merchandization of aforementioned cooking oil, processed meat, and convenient prepared seasonings by rising processed food manufacturers. Among them, the sweet roux of curry for children drastically expanded the consumption of curry rice and made it enduring for generations. (Kozuka, 1999) Rapid diffusion of such new home kitchen appliances as gas ranges and extractor fans made the cooking of deep-fried fish or meat at home kitchens easier and more comfortable. (Ehara, 1988; Harada, 2006) It should also be noted that these “Westernized Japanese” home dishes, which had been provided as special foods for adults by the 1950s, diffused in the 1960s and 1970s as daily standard foods for children, who had been considered to deserve special cares. As children grew up, these gorgeous and nutritious home dishes became daily standard foods for both adults and children. They have raised a national concern for over-nutrition of contemporary Japanese adults, who grew up in the 1960s and 1970s and are accustomed so deeply to these “Westernized Japanese” home dishes.

In terms of the activity theory, the creation of these new “Westernized Japanese” home dishes can be regarded as an example of the “expansive learning” by busier and more informed housewives to solve the contradictions between the activity of home cooking and the activity of food producing, processing, and distribution. Being faced with increasing financial and time constraints, busier and better-informed Japanese housewives decided to cook more Western vegetables than “Japanese” ones while they and their husbands preferred boiled rice as the conventional staple food. In order to solve these contradictions, they “created” new knowledge and practices of home cooking utilizing other new “instruments” such as the prepared seasonings, gas ranges, and home extractor fans.

In terms of British cultural studies (du Gay et al., 1997; MacKay, 1997), we may also argue that Japanese housewives, together with rising manufacturing organizations of processed foods and kitchen appliances, played the roles of “cultural intermediaries”

on mass media, consumption of such brightly colored vegetables as spinach, carrot, and pumpkin were also promoted.

(Bourdieu, 1979; du Gay et al., 1997) who bridged the activities of “commodification” of raw food and the dining preferences of people by “appropriating” Western vegetables to be included in the new home dishes, which were gorgeous, nutritious, economical, and still “Japanese.” We also need to note that this appropriation in the cooking activity also partly legitimated the “exodus” of Japanese housewives from their houses under the pretexts of earning more income from part-time jobs or providing better care and education for their children. Ehara (1988) argues that it also resulted in the shift of the social recognition of home cooking activity from “slavery duty” to “value-added work,” and therefore contributed to the partial “emancipation” of Japanese educated housewives from their traditional social status. In these senses, the creation of “Western Japanese” national standard home dishes can be understood as the “negotiate interpretation” (Hall, 1980) of various, mutually-confronting role expectations that were sent to housewives on various “media” including foods and kitchen appliances.

In terms of the institutional approaches to organization studies, this process of expansive learning driven by the initiatives of cultural intermediaries can also be understood, as Kawamura et al. (2009) suggest, as the process of institutional changes through the creation of new practices to solve institutional contradictions (Seo and Creed, 2002). Our analysis has shown that rising manufacturing organizations of processed foods and kitchen appliances played critical mediating roles in creating and changing a new national dietary culture in this period. Without timely provision of cooking oil, processed meat, prepared seasonings, and home kitchen appliances, the creation of “Westernized Japanese” home dishes and the transformation of Japanese dietary culture might have been slower and have taken different forms. It implies that further analyses of the product development activities of these manufacturing organizations is required to develop a practice-based model of organizations as “cultural intermediaries,” which may also open a new research terrain in the institutional approaches to organization studies.

Implications and discussions

This paper has examined how changes in vegetable producing, processing, and distribution in the 1960s and 1970s have transformed Japanese home cooking and dietary culture. It has shown that mainly due to the higher price increases, seasonal supply, and inconveniences in purchasing, storage, and cooking, most “Japanese” vegetables “lost” in the competition at home kitchens against Western vegetables. The producing, processing, and distribution organizations of “Japanese” vegetables such as agricultural cooperatives, wholesale markets, wholesalers, and retailers could not play well the roles of “cultural intermediaries.” They could neither supply these vegetables constantly at competitive prices nor provide new recipes that enabled busier and more informed housewives to use “Japanese” vegetables more in the home dishes. Some “Japanese” vegetables such as Chinese cabbage, Japanese radish, and eggplant had later found their ways into the emerging processed food markets, and had come to be purchased by busier housewives as ingredients of delicatessen, factory-made pickles, or “instant” or “frozen” prepared meals.

In addition to the desire to enjoy “affluent” Western food, which became cost-efficient, it was mainly another “desire” of housewives to emancipate them that settled the “vegetable wars” in the 1960s and 1970s. In order to save time for food purchasing and preparation, Japanese housewives started cooking “Westernized Japanese” home dishes, which made Japanese food faster. The rising manufacturers of processed foods and kitchen appliances helped housewives to save time budgets for food purchasing and preparation. The acceleration of Japanese food starting in the 1960s can be regarded as the “disembedding” (Giddens, 1990) of food in the forms of “merchandization,” which has been taking place alongside with “merchandization” of many other household commodities and activities

including children and elderly care. Together with manufacturers of processed foods and kitchen appliances, Japanese housewives, who have always been in need of more time budgets, have preferred Western vegetables that have been “more industrially” produced, processed, and distributed compared with most “Japanese” vegetables, and thus contributed to the disembedding of food production, processing, and distribution in general.

In a stagnant economy and the progress of “globalization” (Giddens, 1999) since the 1990s, Japanese people have been realizing some “unintended consequences” of the disembedding of food. The acceleration of food in Japan has not been confined to the fewer time for purchasing and preparation. It has also entailed a faster “change” of food and dietary habits. Since the creation and rapid diffusion of “Westernized Japanese” national standard dishes in the 1960s, the actual foods that Japanese people eat have been changing continuously. Numerous new home dishes have been created by almost unrestricted combination of food materials and cooking methods of Western, Japanese, Chinese, Indian, Korean, and many other countries⁶. It has been spurred by active product developments with some “planned obsolescence” and sales promotions with suggestions of new recipes on the mass media by processed food manufacturers, who have been fiercely competing and shortening product lifecycles. Producers of raw foods have been also involved in merchandizing their product. In order to win intensifying competitions in the national market, they have been seeking for a price leadership by mass producing or differentiating with a “brand.” The pace of change seems to be still accelerating by a rapid increase of low-cost imported foods, both fresh and frozen, especially in the stagnant economy since the 1990s.

According to aforementioned historical and anthropological studies, Japanese popular food had been quite stable. Most Japanese ate boiled rice as the staple food, soy bean sauce and/or paste, and pickled and/or simmered vegetables for every meal until the 1950’s mainly due to the limitation of food supply. This is the main reason why Japanese government and nutrition/health professional have been encouraging people to eat a wider variety of food including meat, dairy products, and fat/oil in each meal. This is also a reason why most Japanese people have come to regard the habit of eating different foods in every meal is affluent and of value as a personal realization of individual freedom. However, such conventional dietary culture had been also an essential source of safety and security that provided the sense of stability and continuity of daily life for Japanese people, as is still the case for most societies today. Facing and realizing increasing “risks” and “anxieties” (Giddens, 1990) concerning every spheres of life, Japanese people are now finding their food today is also a “risk” and a source of “anxiety.” Recent surveys have indicated that the largest concern of Japanese housewives today is “what to cook.” Increasing number of new foods including raw, imported, and processed foods as well as massive information on the nutrition and safety of foods have been embarrassing Japanese housewives. They have been partially freed from “slavery duties” of conventional cooking, but now are “cursed” by nutrition/health professionals with “cook different foods for every meal” and “eat at least 30 food items per day” in order to decrease risks of lifestyle related diseases.

In March, 2012, Japanese government submitted the nomination file of “WASHOKU; Traditional Dietary Cultures of the Japanese” for inscription on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO (hereafter referred to as ICH), following the inscriptions of four food/dietary cultures in the world⁷ (see Table 5). According to the latest

⁶ For example, one of the most popular Japanese website for home cooking provides today provides about 778 thousands home cooking recipes that are originally devised and posted by lay citizens. (<http://cookpad.com>)

⁷ Four food/dietary cultures that are inscribed on the representative list are “the gastronomic meal of the French” (2010, France), “traditional Mexican cuisine - ancestral, ongoing community culture, the Michoacán paradigm” (2010, Mexico), “the Mediterranean diet” (2010, Spain, Greece, Italy, Morocco),

leaflet issued by MAFF to publicize the application, “WASHOKU is a social practice based on an essential spirit of the Japanese, “respect for nature”. It contributes to healthy life and strengthens familial and community ties.” (MAFF, 2013) When we examine the nomination file and proceedings of a governmental committee that prepared the file, we see Japanese government struggling for the “stabilization” of contemporary Japanese foods and dining activities.

Table 5. Outline of food/dietary cultures inscribed on the list of UNESCO ICH and outline of the nomination file(s) of WASHOKU by Japan

Name of the element (year of inscription)	State(s) Party(ies)	Brief summary of the element
The gastronomic meal of the French (2010)	France	<p>The gastronomic meal of the French is a customary social practice for celebrating important moments in the lives of individuals and groups, such as births, weddings, birthdays, anniversaries, achievements and reunions. It is a festive meal bringing people together for an occasion to enjoy the art of good eating and drinking. This very popular practice, with which all French people are familiar, has flourished in France for centuries. It is constantly changing and being transmitted. This social practice is associated with a shared vision of eating well, rather than with specific dishes. Its homogeneity in the whole community stems from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the meaning that it confers, namely togetherness, consideration of others, sharing the pleasure of taste, the balance between human beings and the products of nature; - specific rites it follows, including the search for good products, references to a repertoire of codified recipes, culinary know-how, setting a beautiful table, the order of courses, food and wine pairing, conversation about the dishes. <p>The gastronomic meal gives rhythm to the lives of community members. It draws circles of family and friends closer together and, more generally, strengthens social ties. It constitutes an important reference point for identity and gives rise to feelings of belonging and continuity.</p>
Traditional Mexican cuisine - ancestral, ongoing community culture, the Michoacán paradigm (2010)	Mexico	<p>Traditional Mexican cuisine –and in this case, the Michoacán paradigm– is an integral part of the ancient cultural system based on corn, beans and chili. This trilogy, along with numerous other associated original crops, has been a communal diet and at the core of ritual and ceremonial life. It is related to secular practices and techniques –sometimes millenary– that are still in use, such as nixtamalization (cooking process that increases corn's nutritional value). Likewise, unique farming methods like the milpa (self-sustainable field of corn and other crops) and chinampa (man-made farming islets in lake areas), as well as singular utensils including metate grinding stones and molcajete stone mortars, are still in general use. Besides its originality, its ancestral, collective and communitarian nature, clearly observable in the traditional cooks project in the highly-preserved Michoacán areas, presented herein, makes its preservation imperative. That wise system encouraged the development of great Mesoamerican civilizations and its continuation ensures ongoing historic continuity in both indigenous and ethnically mixed communities. Protecting it involves reviving products, procedures and techniques through transfer of knowledge and insertion in circuits of sustainable development. There is a pressing need to transfer the model in place in Michoacán to hubs of traditional culinary knowledge in communities experiencing similar circumstances and threats.</p>
The Mediterranean diet (2010)	Spain, Greece, Italy, Morocco	<p>The Mediterranean Diet – from the Greek word <i>díaita</i>, lifestyle – is a social practice based on the set of skills, knowledge, practices and traditions ranging from the landscape to the cuisine, which in the Mediterranean basin concern the crops, harvesting, fishing, conservation, processing, preparation and, particularly, consumption. This set, recreated within and by the communities identified in the territories of the four States Parties, is unavoidably linked to a seasonal calendar marked by nature and religious or ritual meanings. The Mediterranean Diet as a unique lifestyle, determined by the climate and by the Mediterranean area, is also manifested through related festivals and celebrations. These events become the receptacle of gestures of mutual recognition, hospitality, neighbourliness, conviviality, intergenerational transmission and intercultural dialogue. This is how among these communities in particular, and the Mediterranean people in general, there is a feeling of rebuilding identity, of belonging, and of continuity, allowing them to recognise this element as an essential part of their shared intangible cultural heritage.</p>

and “ceremonial Keşkek tradition” (2011, Turkey).

Ceremonial Keşkek tradition (2011)	Turkey	Ensuring solidarity and collective workforce, keşkek tradition is a social and cultural practice carried out preferably at ceremonies of high-level participation as wedding ceremonies, circumcisions, national and religious holidays, charity organizations and prayers for the rain. Within the context of the tradition, women and men work together to cook wheat and meat called ‘keşkek’ in huge cauldrons on fire and then serve it to the guests to enjoy the meal. ‘Hulling the wheat’ before cooking and mashing the wheat by following a fixed rhythm during ‘cooking’ are practices of ‘keşkek’ tradition. Organizers of the ceremony have predetermined social roles pertaining to the preparation, cooking and serving of keşkek. Keşkek tradition has unifying, blessing and bonding aspects for the participants of the ceremony.
Washoku, traditional dietary cultures of the Japanese, notably for the celebration of New Year (to be examined in 2013)	Japan	<p>WASHOKU is social practice based on a comprehensive set of skills, knowledge, practice and traditions related to the production, processing, preparation and consumption of food. It is associated with an essential spirit of respect for nature closely related to the sustainable use of natural resources. WASHOKU has developed as part of daily life and with a connection to annual events and is constantly recreated in response to changes in human relationship with natural and social environment.</p> <p>Basic knowledge, social and cultural characteristics associated with WASHOKU are typically seen in New Year's cerebrations when Japanese people immerse themselves in their tradition transmitted from generation to generation, thus reaffirming their identity and continuity. WASHOKU in New Year's celebrations are regionally rich in diversity, given that each province has its own historical and geographical specificity. People make various preparation to welcome the deities of the incoming year; pounding rice cakes, preparing special meals such as beautifully decorated dishes called Osechi, Zoni and Toso, using fresh locally available ingredients each of which has a symbolic meaning. These dishes are served on special tableware and shared by the family members, or shared collectively by the community members, ensuring peoples' health and social cohesion. This provides an occasion for elderly persons to teach the meanings contained in this social practice to the children.</p> <p>In daily life, WASHOKU has important social functions for the Japanese to reaffirm identity, to foster familial and community cohesion, and to contribute to healthy life, through sharing traditional and well-balanced meals.</p> <p><i>(Cited from the English version of nomination file currently downloadable from UNESCO web site.)</i></p>
WASHOKU; Traditional Dietary Cultures of the Japanese (English name on the final Japanese version of nomination file, which is currently made public at MAFF website, and was probably submitted to UNESCO in 2012.)	Japan	<p>WASHOKU are customary social practices that strengthen the bonds of family and community members by taking meals in harmonious relationships between nature and human being with community based on the spirit of the Japanese, “respect for nature”. They are also traditional knowledge and customs closely associated with nature and all things, which are used to cook ingredients to bring out their natural tastes to the full and to express the beauty of nature. They have developed over time closely associated with annual events such as new year celebrations, rice-planting, and harvest festivities. They have also been transforming in relation to histories of societies and groups and to their interactions with environment and nature.</p> <p>The relationships of WASHOKU and nature are multi-layered as follows:</p> <p>Concerning the relationships between the ingredients of WASHOKU and nature, based on distinct changes of four seasons and geographical diversity, WASHOKU utilizes diverse and fresh Ingredients that are available at local land in four respective seasons. To bring out their natural tastes and to highlight these tastes, WASHOKU require minimum cooking and processing. They have devised cooking techniques including the utilization of Dashi that contains rich Umami (the basic taste of Japanese diet) and of unique kitchen utensils such as Sashimi knives. WASHOKU meals are widely known as health because of well-balanced ingestion of these diverse ingredients.</p> <p>WASHOKU have developed fermenting technologies rooted in respective local climate, and use variety of fermented seasonings. Sake (rice wine) is often served with WASHOKU to set off their tastes.</p> <p>Concerning the relationships between the dining places and nature, the beauty of nature and changing of seasons is emphasized in the presentation of WASHOKU. Plates are decorated with leaves, flowers and bamboo, and natural motifs are represented in decoratively cut foodstuff. Decorating tables and rooms with objects, china and porcelain, and japan ware matched to the season are also closely associated with WASHOKU.</p> <p>Thus, WASHOKU are inclusive customary social practices that are based on the spirit of “respect for nature” and include cuisines, formation of social bond, promotion of health and sustainable development, and heightening of aesthetics.</p> <p><i>(Translation of a Japanese version of nomination file currently made public at MAFF website.)</i></p>

Source: prepared by the authors from nomination files of inscribed ICH by France, Mexico, Spain, Greece,

Italy, Morocco, and Turkey (downloaded from <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?pg=00559>, as of April 30th, 2013), the latest English version of nomination file of Japan for inscription (downloaded from <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00553>, as of April 30th, 2013), and a Japanese version of nomination file presented at the meeting of Council for Cultural Affairs of Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs on February 6th, 2012. (downloaded from http://www.maff.go.jp/j/study/syoku_vision/pdf/8_2.pdf, as of April 30th, 2013). There has been no official announcement or explanation on the differences between two versions of nomination file.

In July, 2011, Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (hereafter referred to as MAFF) launched a committee “Nihonshokubunka no Sekai Mupei Isan Touroku ni muketa Kentoukai (Study Group for the Registration of Japanese Dietary Culture to the Intangible Cultural Heritage; hereafter referred to as Study Group)” to prepare the nomination file⁸. After four meetings in July, August, September, and November, 2011, it completed the draft of nomination file, which was authorized in February, 2012, with some modifications, by Council for Cultural Affairs at Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs to be submitted to UNESCO.⁹ In September, the Council for Cultural Affairs has made a resolution that Japanese government should propose to UNESCO that the nomination of “WASHOKU” will be evaluated first among other nominations submitted by Japan in 2013, and the Agency for Cultural Affairs announced that the UNESCO evaluation result will be notified in November, 2013¹⁰.

At the first meeting of Study Group held on July 5th, 2011, after the explanation of the inscription system to the representative list of ICH by the manager of Office for International Cooperation in Cultural Properties at the Agency for Cultural Affairs, the manager of policy planning division at MAFF explained the outlines of inscribed three food/dietary cultures and the first draft of nomination file, and asked Study Group members to discuss, revise and authorize the final draft by October, 2011. In the following discussions, expressed by and shared among committee members were strong concerns against the rapid proliferation of so-called “Japanese restaurants” including un-authentic ones abroad, and against the substantial transformation, or “collapse”, of traditional Japanese dietary culture, which urgently requires governmental measures and national movements for preservation and food and dietary education for general public. Members also expressed essential elements of Japanese dietary culture to be included in the nomination file. These elements included ingredients such as rice and fish, fermented seasonings such as soybean paste and rice vinegar, tastes of Umami typically contained in Dashi broth made of sea weed and fish, alcoholic beverages such as Sake, traditional cuisines such as medieval Japanese banquet cuisine for the noblemen, Shojin cuisine (religious cuisine for Buddhism), Cha-no-yu cuisine (cuisine for tea ceremonies), and Kaiseki cuisine (contemporary fine banquet cuisine mainly for formal festive ceremonies such as wedding and festivals), specific dishes such as Sushi, Tempura, and Soba noodle, presentations such as decoratively cut of foodstuff and tableware including

⁸ Study Group was composed of: a famous anthropologist (chairperson) who has been studying Japanese dietary culture for years, Director of Department of Intangible Cultural Heritage of National Research Institute for Cultural Properties, Tokyo (advisor), an agriculture scientist, representatives of the association of traditional Japanese restaurants, traditional Japanese cooks, sushi restaurants, noodle restaurants, Sake (rice wine) breweries, presidents of the largest soybean sauce manufacturer and a “umami” seasoning manufacturer (industrial manufacturing of sodium glutamate, which was originally made from sea weed), and two professional schools of licensed cooks.

⁹ The drafts and final Japanese version of nomination file are downloadable from MAFF website: http://www.maff.go.jp/j/study/syoku_vision/kentoukai.html and http://www.maff.go.jp/j/study/syoku_vision/pdf/1_8_2.pdf (as of April 30th, 2013). The proceedings of four meetings are also downloadable at MAFF website: http://www.maff.go.jp/j/study/syoku_vision/kentoukai.html (as of April 30th, 2013).

¹⁰ See http://www.bunka.go.jp/ima/press_release/pdf/unesco_120925_2.pdf (as of April 30th, 2013).

the use of chopsticks, related cultural traditions such as tea ceremony and Ikebana flower arrangements.

At the second meeting on August 19th, 2011, reviewing the opinions of eminent scholars of Japanese food research and a draft of independent nomination file of Kaiseki cuisines in Kyoto under the name of “Japanese culinary art and culture” for ICH proposed by Kyoto Prefectural Government in collaboration with an association of Japanese cuisines cooks, Study Group discussed a revised draft of nomination file, which focus on Kaiseki cuisine as the most sophisticated and distinct form of Japanese dietary culture. Some members expressed the concern that the number of authentic Kaiseki restaurants and cooks have been declining, and claimed that some preservation measures should be taken. At the third meeting on September 28th, 2011, after examining opinions collected at public hearings held in all regions of Japan and the results of interviews to food professionals and scholars in France, Study Group discussed if the nomination file should focus on Kaiseki cuisine or on more popular and diverse local home cuisines. While over 90% of around 3,000 adult respondents of both sexes to the web questionnaire survey supported the nomination of Japanese dietary cultures for ICH, considerable number of public opinions claimed that the nomination file should focus on diverse local home cuisines rather than on finer Kaiseki cuisines only for limited occasions. Interviews in France revealed that while Sushi was becoming popular in foreign countries, the recognition of authentic Kaiseki cuisines was critically small. Study Group shared the understandings that UNESCO has been maintaining the policy to exclude so-called “high culture” or expensive finer arts from the inscription on the list of ICH, and that the nomination of traditional Korean court cuisine “Royal cuisine of the Joseon dynasty”, which has been recently re-created by the strong initiative of government, would be successfully inscribed in 2011 because of the specificity of nomination.

At the beginning final meeting on November 4th, 2011, the manager of Food-related Initiatives Coordination Office at MAFF informed the suspended inscription of Korean nomination for ICH and the inscription of Turkish nomination of traditional local dietary culture based on the evaluation report of the Consultative Body of UNESCO ICH committee. The surprising suspension of Korean nomination was explained due to insufficient information contained in nomination file on the reproducibility of traditional Korean court cuisine and its relatedness to the national identity, its continuity from past to the contemporary era, and the contribution to ensuring visibility of the ICH and awareness of its significance.¹¹ Study Group chairperson then proposed a further-revised draft of the nomination file, which added the word “traditional” to the name of the element, and focused more on various traditional local home cuisines. Study Group members agreed to the proposal, with requests for some minor modifications, taking the results of Korean and Turkish nominations in consideration. The final draft of the nomination file was then discussed at two meetings of Council for Cultural Affairs held on January and February, 2012. The Council for Cultural

¹¹ According to the decisions of 6th session of Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, “the information provided in nomination file 00476, Royal cuisine of the Joseon dynasty, is not sufficient to allow the Committee to determine whether the criteria for inscription on the Representative List are satisfied, as follows: R.1: Additional information would be needed to identify more clearly the community concerned with the element and its current social function for it, as well as to describe how the practice is recreated by its bearers and provides them a sense of identity and continuity today; R.2: The State should demonstrate clearly how inscription of the Royal cuisine of the Joseon dynasty on the Representative List could contribute to ensuring visibility of the intangible cultural heritage and awareness of its significance; R.4: Although two masters and two Institutes participated in the nomination process and provided their free, prior and informed consent, additional information is needed on the participation of a larger community outside the academic environment.

(ITH-11-6.COM-CONF.206-Decisions-EN.doc file downloaded from
<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00362>, as of April 30th, 2013)

Affairs officially authorized the proposed nomination file at the meeting held on February 6th with adding some clarifying expressions and specific data such as “over 15,000 varieties of local cuisines”, “natural motifs are represented in decoratively cut foodstuff”, “inheritance of traditional cook books,” OECD data on the life expectancy and obesity ratio of contemporary Japanese, examples of seasonal consumption of tuna with different name and some typical preserved foods and fish stock soup.

While it is still too early and difficult to fully examine the significance of developing story above for the inscription of “traditional Japanese dietary cultures” on ICH list, we can see that following the enactment of “*Shoku-iku* (food and dietary education) Basic Act” in 2005, Japanese government has started to formulate a kind of “cultural policy” to “regulate” domestic dietary practices of Japanese breaking the administrative boundary between MAFF and Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), which is the parent ministry of the Agency for Cultural Affairs. It should be noted that although Study Group was formed at MAFF, no member represented the associations of raw food producers such as farmers, fishermen, stock raisers, and dairy farmers. It might be safe to say that because these raw food producers in Japan have been facing serious shrinkage of market and are really on the verge of disappearance, MAFF has asked Study Group members, who are influential representatives of Japanese restaurants, cooks, and food manufactures, to claim high “cultural” value of Japanese raw foods to be preserved as UNESCO ICH. The inscription will domestically legitimate MAFF’s stronger measures to protect raw food producers against further globalization, which will be accelerated by Trans-Pacific Partnership.

We also need to note that the all discussions of Study Group seem to be dominated and driven by a shared strong concern against recent substantial transformation, or “collapse”, of traditional Japanese dietary culture, which all members argued, urgently requires governmental measures and national movements for preservation and “*shoku-iku*” food and dietary education for general public, both children and adults. Because such the existence of national movements for preservation is one of critical requirements for ICH inscription, MAFF organized in March, 2012 an Investigative Commission as a national voluntary organization of citizens and organizations for the inscription of Japanese dietary cultures on ICH list. It now consists of nearly 300 “representatives of local communities, groups, local governments, research institutions and experts who have been striving to preserve and transmit their dietary cultures which have been gradually weakened in the era of globalization”¹². Although some Study Group members insisted at the beginning of discussions that the nomination file should focus on Kaiseki cuisine, which has been highly renowned as a fine cuisine among foreign food professionals such as famous chefs of French cuisines, as the most sophisticated form of Japanese dietary culture, voices of these nation-wide local citizens and organizations made the final Japanese version of nomination file focus more on wide variety of traditional local home cuisines. The re-direction seems to have left the opportunity for Kaiseki cuisine to be nominated independently in near future if it is persuasively explained as the traditional local “banquet” cuisine of ordinary Kyoto citizens, rather than the finest “high-culture” cuisines for limited number of affluent people. At the same time, the focus on the wide variety of traditional local home cuisines as all having equal importance necessarily made the final Japanese version of nomination file rather abstract and philosophical, because it could not exemplify any specific local cuisine. It might be also inferred that the notation on the celebration of New Year in the latest English version of nomination file was added in order to make the description of nomination file more specific and easier to understand for UNESCO examiners.

We may now conclude our analysis by arguing that we need to explore new food-related

¹² Cited from the latest English version of nomination file downloaded from <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00553> (as of April 30th, 2013).

organizational and institutional practices that help modern Japanese people, who are involved in, and partially benefitted from, the disembedding and merchandization of food, “stabilize” their foods and dining activities and allocate more time and value for cooking and dining. From the perspectives of activity theory and social complexity theory (Letiche, Lissack, and Schultz, 2011), the on-going “governmental” initiatives for the inscription of Japanese dietary culture on the list of UNESCO ICH have suggested a new way of “managing” the culture as the “coherence in the midst of complexity containing numerous contradictions”. By focusing on wide variety of local home cuisines as “traditions to be (re)invented” as invaluable “heritages” (See figure 4), these “governmental” initiatives seem to aim at searching for and opening up the possibility spaces for the “emergence” of wide variety of new food-related practices, which are expected to contribute to “stabilize” foods and dining activities of local people. The emerging process of these new practices can be analyzed and facilitated as the process of “expansive learning” to solve numerous “contradictions” among the activities of cooking and dining of local people, activities of local raw food producers, and activities of local food professionals including restaurants and cooks.

Figure 4. Picture of Vegetables on the leaflet of “WASHOKU: Traditional Dietary Cultures of the Japanese”



Source: Extracted by the authors from MAFF (2013)

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