Filipino Food Ways in Japan: A Case of Filipino Migrant Women Married to Japanese Men in Tokyo

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INTRODUCTION

This paper explores food ways of Filipino migrants married to Japanese men. By looking into their everyday food ways, I tried to uncover the processes, of food practices, as well as the structuration of Philippine identities in the context of migration to Japan. I view food as a way by which Philippine identities and meanings are articulated and possibly reconstructed and the Filipino-Japanese intermarriage as a space in which Philippine identities are articulated.

Food ways, like identities, are characterized by negotiations, variability and change. Difference is the social milieu in which food ways and identities emerge. Difference is where the traditional is rationalized. However, even differences are situated within organizing structures outside the self, which the self tries to make sense of. What to eat and how to eat is not solely a decision of the self or the structure, but of the self negotiating and making sense of the structure's rules and resources.

CONCEPTUALIZING FOOD WAYS

Food and the processes surrounding food (production, distribution and consumption practices) are best conceptualized in terms of food systems that reflect *sociocultural structurations*[1] over time. Such a view encapsulates the prominent ideas in the discourse on food and eating – food as functional to the continuity of social systems, food as communicative (transmitting meanings, messages, information), and food as a reflection of material, social, cultural and historical contexts in which it is situated. At the same time, such a view opens up the discourse to further research. This study takes this direction when it explores food as an expression of identities on the move (i.e., Filipino females in intermarriage and migration).

PHILIPPINE SOCIOLOGICAL REVIEW 48 (2000): 52–71.

Such a conceptualization can also help locate the various concepts and approaches applied to sociological and anthropological studies on food and eating. Mintz and Du Bois (2002) and Beardsworth and Keil (1997) have noted the variety of theoretical approaches used in framing food studies in anthropology and sociology. For example, Mintz and Du Bois observe that anthropological food studies have been concerned with food systems as reflections of broad societal processes such as political-economic value-creation, symbolic value-creation and the social construction of memory. This is why anthropological food studies and ethnographies have been most extensive in the areas of food insecurity, ritual and identities. Other themes include single commodities and substances, food and social change, and instructional materials (food anthologies). Food studies also enhance the bigger theoretical discourse on anthropological theories such as cultural materialism and symbolic structuralism.

Meanwhile, Beardsworth and Keil provide a broad overview of three approaches used in sociological food studies: functionalist, structuralist and developmentalist. The first approach maintains an organic analogy where food subsystems serve the continuity of the social system as a functioning whole. For example, food is seen as symbolically significant in preserving obligations and reciprocities or promoting collective sentiments of kinship groups and communities. This approach has failed to explain the realities of conflict and change due to its static view of human organization and social systems. Therefore, it has generally become out of fashion, although the "functional" aspect of food permeates food studies until now. The second approach preoccupies itself with the search for underlying patterns of a universal human mind and society as reflected in food systems. Food is thus symbolically significant in that it communicates meaning and information that, for symbolic structuralists, also have underlying universal patterns. This approach has failed in linking meaning with sociocultural variations in material and historical contexts. However, its strength lies in its linguistic analogy on food as a transmitter of meaning and information. The third and last approach examines patterns of cultural forms and social relations over time. The concept of change is central to its argument: there are conflicting, contradicting and competing ideas and practices surrounding food that lead to variance and transformation. Food systems not only reveal symbolisms but also practical considerations, such as material and economic conditions. Beardsworth and Keil also note the arbitrariness of such a classification of concepts into theoretical niches.

These seem to indicate a greater realization that the anthropological and sociological studies of food, eating and other food-related issues

will essentially be diversified. Thus, an understanding of food can also mean diversifying one's framework by utilizing various approaches. For instance, we can look at food and eating, not just as reflections of material, social, cultural and historical contexts, but also as interactive processes engaging social actors and structures. It is for this reason that this study conceptualizes food systems as processes of sociocultural structuration. Utilizing Giddens' theory of structuration, *food ways* can be summarized as human agents acting upon their knowledge of rules (gastronomy) and resources (alimentary totality) and thus reproduce and transform these rules and resources (food structure). Structures are seen here as both setting the parameters for action (as in traditional menus) and expanding the possibilities for action (as in rational menus). Examining "frames of meaning" of agents help identify their knowledgeability. There are also "spaces of control" (such as within intermarriages) wherein individuals are able to mobilize rules and resources to their own advantage and for their own purposes, which make the articulation of identities possible.

To elaborate, *gastronomy*[2] consists of the rules, norms and meanings that structure the food system in particular societies. It relates to (but does not necessarily coincide with) actual material food resources, the *alimentary totality*. *Aliments* are basic items considered edible within a particular nutritional culture. How social actors make use of their alimentary totality and make sense of their gastronomy relates to *menus*. There are *traditional menus*, which are customary practices built over many generations and have thus gained authority and legitimacy in identifying the rules in food practices. An alternative to these are *rational menus*, which are more goal-oriented and involve deliberate measures for purposes of convenience, pleasure, moral practice or, in this study, to signify meaning and identity. Filipino migrant women rationalize the traditional menus within their intermarriages, in effect practicing distinct Filipino food ways in the context of migration.

One important note should be made regarding the concept of *foodways*. Counihan (1999) defines it as the "behaviors and beliefs surrounding the production, distribution and consumption of food" and notes that unique foodways can be found in every coherent social group. There is reason to be cautious about the implicit coherence of foodways. First, social coherence can be largely imagined (but not imaginary). Secondly, various elements come to play in the practices surrounding food, especially in sites of difference such as intermarriage and migration, producing varied outcomes. Thus, this study uses the concept of foodways in Counihan's sense, but assuming its coherence only in relation to imagined communities and identities expressed by food. Thus, the use of *food ways*

deliberately takes on a very general meaning, emphasizing the mundane everyday practices surrounding food that are not necessarily coherent but that are guided by imagined food ways. This also conceptually links food consumption patterns to personally rationalized menus and processes to identities.

While there have been extensive works on the relationships between food and identity, this study explores an area that has not been sufficiently tread despite the availability of data — that is, everyday food ways in the context of Filipino female intermarriage and migration to Japan. In particular, this study demonstrates that while Filipino food ways in intermarriage and migration to Japan reveal structured patterns of Philippine-Japanese social relations, these are also negotiated by Filipino migrant women in a process of articulating and reconstructing their identities through food.

INFORMATIONAL SOURCES ON FILIPINO FOOD WAYS

Data include (1) Philippine and Japanese gastronomies and (2) some Filipino food ways in the context of intermarriage and labor migration to Japan. The first is basically obtained from articles, books and some informal supplementary interviews. The second data have been extracted from another set of data obtained from libraries and by doing fieldwork during a 15-month stay in Tokyo as an exchange student. My topic then was the cultural negotiation between Filipino wives and Japanese husbands in Nama town,[3] an aspect of which was food. However, the focus was on filial obligations to Filipino families than food ways. Therefore, the cases to be presented here are not as in-depth as desired. However, it is advantageous to this study that the respondents consist of Filipino migrant women who are married to Japanese men. As women, they are greatly involved in the everyday food practices within the Philippine-Japanese household. Moreover, as outsiders, negotiating the Japanese gastronomy is one of their primary activities. They are key actors who respond to food rules and resources.

Data on Philippine and Japanese gastronomies will be briefly discussed to set the context of food rules and resources in which Filipino women who are married to Japanese men respond and act out identities at the everyday level. Cautioned against the implied coherence of foodways, data from interviews will be used to present the actual everyday practices of negotiation between social actors and food structures — their food ways. Some mention will also be made regarding Philippine labor migration to Japan and Philippine-Japanese intermarriages to locate food ways and guide the study into a theory of structurating identities in the context of intermarriage and migration.

GASTRONOMIES, ALIMENTARY TOTALITIES AND TRADITIONAL MENUS

It is best to begin an exposition of two different gastronomies with an explicit statement that even within them, we find variations. "Philippine foodways" or "Japanese foodways" — like national identities — are misnomers for the actual variety of food behaviors and practices among ethnicities subsumed under these nation-states. However, the reality and power of national foodways and their associated culinary traditions and cuisines lie in their articulation of imagined identities. Indeed, one way of concretizing identities, national or ethnic, is by imagining and articulating national or ethnic cuisines (Mintz and Du Bois 2002). Food is a way by which the nation is imagined, as in Anderson's (1991) sense. As Filipino migrant women locate their identities in a new surrounding, they imagine their identity through imagined national foodways. Moreover, while food and foodways solidify group membership, they also set groups apart (ibid). This is particularly true in contexts where different ethnicities meet, such as in intermarriages and migration. Thus, Filipino migrant women recreate Philippine and Japanese foodways as part of articulating and negotiating their identities in Japan, thereby practicing various food ways.

This subsection discusses some of the basic rules included in Philippine and Japanese gastronomies, and some of the alimentary totality recognized in these societies.[4] Rules are illustrated through traditional menus that set the standard for everyday cooking. They are cuisines that assert national identities.

Philippine Gastronomy and Aliments. Fernandez (1994, 2003) and Alejandro (1982) point out the hybridity of what is considered "Philippine foodways". It derives from geographical variability (especially in relation to aliments) and a number of cultural strains arising from the country's archipelagic nature and its colonized history. The Malay strain is often considered the source of authentic Philippine cuisines, which Fernandez and Alejandro both call "indigenous" recipes or food. These include traditional dishes that are cooked in the following styles: steaming, boiling, roasting on coal, and simmering in vinegar. A few examples of these dishes are *sinigang* and *kinilaw*. But even these merely represent the varieties of sinigang and kinilaw across Philippine ethnic groups. Other dishes are *kare-kare*, *pinakbet*, and *dinuguan*. On the other hand are foreign strains that have influenced the Malay strain or merely added to the overall modern Philippine culinary repertoire. The Chinese, along with their trade in pre-hispanic times, are known to have brought the use of soybeans to make curds (tofu) and sauces (soy sauce), noodle dishes and soups (*pansit*, *sotanghon*, *mami* and *bihon*), springrolls (*lumpia*), dumplings

(*siomai*) and meat cuts (*liempo* and *kamto*). Unlike the Chinese, Spanish influences came from a context of colonization underlined by relations of power between superior (Spain) and inferior (Philippines). Therefore, Hispanized dishes give general impressions of festivity and grandeur, but are also prepared and consumed as everyday dishes. Some examples are meat and vegetable stews (*pochero*), stuffed meat (*morcon* and *relleno*), and rich desserts (*leche flan* and *Brazo de Mercedes*). But what Spanish cooking introduced to Philippine gastronomy is sautéing tomatoes and garlic with onions in (olive) oil. American influence on food has been characterized by efficiency and convenience (canned food, sandwiches and fast food), but also includes salads and pies.

Present day Philippine cooking thus consists of a variety of styles and flavors (bitter, sour, sweet, savory) and uses a variety of aliments. Traditional cooking is assumed to have incorporated all the above-mentioned influences. There are dishes for rice, poultry, pork, beef, fish and shellfish, noodles, vegetables; there are various salads, desserts and refreshments. Some common cooking styles include: cooking in vinegar, soy sauce and garlic (*adobo*), cooking in vinegar and garlic (*paksiw*), boiling with sour fruit or vegetable (*sinigang*), cooking with coconut milk (*ginataan*), sautéing in garlic, onion, tomato, or ginger (*guisado*), stuffing (*rellenado*), preparing with sugar sauce (*estofado*) or other sauces (*sarciado*). Flavors, textures and colors are derived from various miscellaneous ingredients such as fish or shrimp sauce (*patis*), shrimp paste (*bagoong*), red annatto seeds (*achuette*), banana blossoms or flowers, dried Chinese mushrooms, Spanish and Chinese sausages, bean curd, etc.

Eating is a continuous and undifferentiated whole, unmarked by courses or table settings such as in western Europe or separate dishes such as in Japan. Thus, Alejandro notes that "when a Filipino sits down to eat a meal, it is all there — all at once — appetizers, soup, main dishes, desserts — to be eaten randomly at will" (20). Families eat together but food preparation is generally a task for women (especially mothers). Yet there is relatively little fuss about servicing household members while eating.

Although eating practices are also differentiated (according to ethnicity and consumer power),[5] this study is more interested in the imagined totality of Filipino food ways, which observations such as Alejandro's give a picture of. However, this study takes a modest approach in that soups, appetizers, side dishes and desserts will be considered a bonus for Filipino meals. Ordinary meals are considered as consisting of plain white rice (*kanin*) and a variable number of main meat/fish/vegetable dishes (*ulam*). (See Footnote 4.) The use of plates, spoons, forks and knives are also differentiated according to ethnicity and

consumer power. Modern households use plates, bowls, spoons, forks, and glasses for eating. However, eating with bare hands (*pagka-kamay*) is also an option and carries an aspect of a pristine national identity, although sometimes derogatorily.

Japanese Gastronomy and Aliments. In contrast to the Philippine food structure, Japanese make an important distinction between Japanese-style dishes (*washoku*) and western-style foods (*youshoku*). Even Chinese dishes (*chuuka*) are distinguished from Japanese dishes despite some Chinese influence on and similarity to Japanese cuisine. For example, ramen noodles came from China but have become a typical Japanese food with various flavors that regions in Japan have localized (Yoshizuka 2003). Influences from other countries are articulated more as fusion cuisines, maintaining Japanese styles and taste to foreign dishes. Dishes like spaghetti, curry, hamburger sandwich and steak, cream and beef stews, and croquettes have become incorporated into everyday Japanese dining that they have Japanized names.[6] However, like in the Philippines, Japanese cuisine includes a motley of regional foods that are articulated as one: traditional Japanese food.

Similar to the Philippines, plain white rice is a distinguishing feature of Japanese meals. An ordinary meal[7] includes a bowl of rice (*gohan*) and a variable number of side meat/fish/vegetable dishes (*okazu*), pickled vegetables (*tsukemono*), and soup (*shiru*, usually *miso* or fermented bean paste soup). There are recipes for various soups, tofu, noodles, rice, salads, beef, pork, chicken, eggs, vegetables, seafoods, and desserts. Sushi and one-pot fares (*nabe*) are special categories. Sushi is food for special occasions, not for everyday consumption, while nabe is a communal meal (e.g., shared and literally eaten from one pot in small parties between intimate friends). Some of the common foods are described by the methods used for cooking: agemono (deep-fried), tsukemono (pickled), shirumono (soup), yakimono (grilled or pan-fried), mushimono (steamed), nimono (simmered), and nabemono (one-pot cooking). Some common miscellaneous ingredients include: ginger, sesame seeds, dried bonito (*kastsu-obushi*), konjac jelly (from *konnyaku* yams), and soy-based *yuba*. Families eat together, but it is usually the wife's task to prepare meals, service the household head (her husband, his father or mother) and male members, and clean up after (Hendry 1981).

We can see some similarities in Philippine and Japanese food structures with regard to everyday meals. For example, both share plain white rice (kanin and gohan) and a variable number of main dishes (ulam and okazu) as central aspects of meals. Some basic methods of cooking are also shared but are differentiated in relation to aliments that are used. Major differences are about

preparation processes, the other activities surrounding food preparation (such as servicing household members), and their articulation of national traditions — that is, Philippine or Japanese foodways. The second difference is a matter of gender roles and expectations. We find that at the table Japanese foodways are more stringent for women than Philippine foodways.

Menu Differentiation and Rational Menus: Frames of Meaning and Spaces of Control

It should be no surprise to find Filipinos or Japanese, even in their own countries, reformulating the traditional menus prescribed by their own society's gastronomy for purposes of achieving certain goals. From time to time, they can generate rational menus that are more suitable to their needs, which the traditional menus cannot meet. For example, most traditional Japanese housewives used to prepare a pickling base made of rice bran and salt (*nukadoko* mix) used to infuse flavors into vegetables to pickle them (*nukazuke*, a form of *tsukemono* which is a mainstay in traditional Japanese meals). Flavors differ depending on households, implying a parallel between the quality of nukazuke and the virtues of the housewife. The maintenance of this pickle-base is also done by hand and on a daily basis. Neglect of this base could mean preparing a new one all over again. It is therefore a difficult task. Modern Japanese women can no longer attend to such tedious work because they lead more busy lives. The food industry has also provided instant nukazuke mixes for women. In this sense, traditional Japanese menus prescribe the preparation and consumption of nukazuke, but housewives are able to rationalize the menus by preparing nukazuke but not in the prescribed way. Filipino housewives are also faced with similar changes in modern lifestyles — relying on faster preparation methods. There is a belief held among some Filipinos that noodle dishes are best served on birthdays because they symbolize longevity. The traditional menu for this is pansit. However, it is faster and cheaper to prepare spaghetti, which led to an increased preparation and consumption of spaghetti instead of pansit during birthdays. However, the ingredients used for spaghetti are those that are available within the alimentary totality and the limits of consumer power — ground beef can be substituted with ground pork, tomato or banana ketchup can be used together with tomato sauce, hotdogs or sausages are also added — in effect localizing the spaghetti dish as a way of rationalizing the traditional menu for birthdays.

We can see that there are spaces to rationalize traditional menus, but traditional menus continue to set the standards around which rational menus revolve. Globalization has increased and continues to increase our contact with gastronomies and

aliments other than ours. Menu differentiation occurs as more and more foreign foods and food ways are introduced to us. However, food ways are still tightly knit with national identities. Therefore, traditional menus continue to influence food ways. Gender roles and expectations are also influential in determining food ways, with women having greater participation in the preparation of food.

Food ways become more complicated when different groups, not just their dishes, come together. Take Philippine-Japan labor migration and intermarriage as an example. Similar to Cwiertka's findings on Japanese foodways in the Netherlands, when Filipinos move away from their familiar environment to settle into a new one, the foods they have gotten used to and have taken for granted in their original setting suddenly take on symbolic and nostalgic qualities in their new setting.[8] We find a struggle between the gastronomies and traditional menus of one's original and new setting. Rational menus emerge to make sense of the gastronomic struggles. Intermarried Philippine-Japanese couples are faced with contrasts in the food structures they follow.

Filipino women, as housewives in Japanese households, are expected to be most concerned about food in their Japanese households. Planning and preparing palatable and healthy food for their family is largely their sole responsibility, something by which their value as wife and/or mother will be assessed (Iwamura, 1987). This occurs in a backdrop of house chores that are treated by some housewives as one coherent whole (that includes food preparation and cooking). Having moved to live in their husbands' country also exerts some pressure for Filipinos in accepting and utilizing traditional Japanese menus in order to assimilate or integrate in a different setting and make their intermarriages work out.[9] Hypothetically, if a Filipino woman can cook and learn how to cook Japanese food, along with other tasks, there should be no problem in assimilation. However, the reality of Filipino migrant women involves a number of factors that affect their food ways. These will be illustrated in the following vignettes of Filipino women's lives. Their ages range from 35 to 45 years and they all live in Nama town.

Case 1. Betty Breaks Up

Betty was married to an English teacher in a local Japanese junior high school. She met him in the Philippines while she was working as an office clerk for a school in Quezon City that he briefly studied in. Having introduced him to her family and their socioeconomic conditions, she assumed that they had both understood her plans of being economically productive in Japan. However, once she was assumed as housewife into her husband's family, her husband and his parents expected her to stay home. (He was an only child in the family and he lived in his parents' house.) Betty was not free to work outside or invite friends over because these would consume the time she needed for being a good housewife. Thus, Betty was initially unable to fulfill her goals. After a while, she was allowed to teach English to children but only in their house. Then she was able to earn a little money.

Her main tasks were to maintain the house, care for her in-laws, and later on raise a daughter. These entailed a lot of tedious Japanese-style food preparation, which she learned from a very strict mother-in-law. She recalls to me how she patiently learned in the duration of several months how to prepare a presentable *o-bento* or lunchbox for her husband and sometimes for their daughter. Her mother-in-law also taught her the basic methods of Japanese-style cooking so that she could serve the household well. She prepared and served only Japanese food during meals. She did not dislike Japanese food. In fact, she had looked forward to it before she lived in Nama. But she resented the tedious preparations that were part of her duties to her husband's household. And yet she mastered the skills she was expected to.

The death of her mother-in-law brought her a renewed freedom. Her father-in-law was more liberal — allowing her to leave the house or to invite friends over. She took the opportunity to work other jobs outside the house, such as cleaning restaurants and households or babysitting children of American expatriates or diplomats. These jobs were more lucrative than teaching English at home. Without the mother-in-law telling her what and how to cook, Betty also began to change the culinary repertoire of the household. She introduced Filipino dishes she missed, especially to her daughter, but did not insist on her husband or father-in-law liking them. From then on, her household duties centered on caring for her daughter. She kept her daughter's health and happiness in mind when preparing food. She also invited her Filipino friends over her house sometimes for small parties where they would cook traditional Filipino

food or experiment on Filipino-Japanese fusion dishes. But she made sure her husband was not home. Her husband resented the changes he saw were taking place. The friction between her and Betty escalated such that after 19 tense years of marriage, they were finally divorced and Betty was asked to leave the house.

Betty now lives alone in a more simple space in Tokyo away from her old house in Nama town, but continues to be busy with work. Having no one to prepare food for and having minimum appliances, she satisfies herself with fast food that she takes out from convenience stores. She and her Filipino friends also get together more frequently now. They usually eat out or come over to a friend's house to prepare traditional Filipino dishes.

Case 2. Michele Marries for Love

Michele met her husband when she was chosen to join a panel of representatives from Manila at the Yokohama Expo. She was a staff member of Manila City Hall and wrote feature articles for a local paper part time. He was a civil engineer/architect who spoke some English and whose uncle was part of the Expo. She belonged to a modest family and admits that she thought of improving their life chances by going to Japan. But she notes that she married for love, not for staying in Japan. The initial stages of their married life were spent independently in an apartment in Nama town far away from the husband's parents. (He was the youngest of three sons.) Thus, decisions were marked by sound negotiations between the two of them. He worked while she kept the house and prepared food for him. Because her in-laws lived far away, her mother-in-law could only make occasional visits to teach her Japanese cooking and other household chores. But she also learned about other facets of Japanese life from Filipinos she met in Nama. She was relatively free to incorporate Filipino dishes to their daily regimen, except when her husband did not like them (e.g., dishes based on fish or shrimp paste such as *pinakbet*). However, if there was a Japanese dish that she did not like but which her husband wanted, she still had to prepare that dish.

Michele enjoyed relative freedom in meeting her friends and working outside the home, as long as these did not interfere with her doing house chores. Michele decided to work part-time as a cocktail waitress/ bartender in a Japanese bistro to send some money to her Filipino family. Then she worked night shift at a coffee shop. When she became pregnant with their first child, her husband confronted her about taking it easy.

She explained that she wanted to send money to her Filipino family. They reached a compromise where she would stay home and he would give her a sufficient amount of money to remit on a regular basis. She was also allowed to teach English to children in their home. Michele had another baby and learned to balance all these tasks in order to keep her Japanese household together and remain dutiful to her Filipino family.

Her husband also became more relaxed about matters of finances and food. He gave her money to invest in apartments in Manila. He also let her rule the kitchen. One of his favorite Filipino dishes is *adobong manok*. Michele, however, has learned to appreciate Japanese food and their preparation. Thus, she cooks both Japanese and Filipino dishes.

They visit her family in Manila almost every two years. Michele recalls the fondness and compassion her husband had for her nephews, nieces and relatives. Her husband has grown to like Filipino food (except for fish and shrimp paste), although she is always cautious about feeding him. I met them recently at a party for Michele's husband in her family's house in Manila where they stayed briefly for summer vacation, and I witnessed their commensality.

Case 3. Diana Doesn't Cook

Diana was introduced to her husband when she was in the middle of a relationship with a neighbor. Hard times in Cebu influenced her to consider marrying a Japanese and moving to Tokyo, despite her heart's desire. Her husband was an only child who lived with his parents in a house. Thus, she was expected to care for them at their old age and to maintain the household. Diana's first biggest hurdle was language, because her Japanese household had great difficulty understanding English. And Diana was no quick learner of the Japanese language within household settings either. Initial stages of married life were thus characterized by lack of communication and understanding of differences. Her mother-in-law tried to teach her Japanese-style cooking among other things, but because of the language barrier, she could not learn her duties well. Her in-laws were very displeased with this and they often berated their son for marrying such a woman who couldn't even cook. The tension that Diana experienced during her initial stay also pushed her inside herself. She would stay in her room most of the day (she did not have friends yet then). She was choosy about Japanese food and would only eat what she cooked. And she would cook only what she brought with her from Cebu – canned corned beef. Her in-laws thought that was the only dish

she can prepare. Diana was free to go out but practically could not because she did not know the place and the language. However, her husband and in-laws forbade her from working or from inviting friends over the house. After some language classes from volunteer teachers at the city branch office and after meeting other Filipino women in the town, she was able to speak out a bit more. She was able to negotiate with her husband to allocate some money for her to send back to her Filipino family. He was very obliging, thus Diana never had to work like her other friends. In time, she learned some of the methods of Japanese-style cooking and prepared Japanese food for her household. She also began introducing Filipino dishes to their daily menu. Her husband is fond of garlic-sautéd dishes because he believes that garlic was an alternative medicine for various ailments, such as sexual impotence. However, he and Diana never had children. Meanwhile, her in-laws disliked Filipino dishes that used fish and shrimp paste but could tolerate other dishes. Her in-laws have both died and left her husband a generous inheritance. Diana and her husband have planned their retirement getaway by traveling and settling down in Cebu.

In actuality, Diana was an excellent cook of traditional Filipino food. She cooked the best *pinakbet* and *sinigang* among her Filipino friends in Nama town. I often found her in the kitchen if I saw her at all when Filipino women got together in Nama. She preferred to spend time doing household chores and keeping to herself. Betty and Joan often tease her for staying at home, but Michele praises her for trying to keep her household and her life together.

Case 4. Joan of Jazz

Joan was a true blue entertainer. She rendered performance-level songs for a living in hotels or with bands before deciding to marry a Japanese. She had been in Japan for quite some time and was thus fluent with the language and adept in its ways. She was also an entrepreneur who established the widest social networks extending farther outside Nama town. She must have had friends in every town in Tokyo.

Her husband was the only son in his family. She moved in with him in a house near her in-laws' house. The family owns a company where they all work. They invited Joan to work full-time with them, but she preferred self-employment. Self-employment allows her to do what she loves best — to sing in gigs and gatherings. Her husband fell in love with her as a singer and feels awfully jealous whenever she sings in public. So she conceals her singing engagements from him to avoid issues. However,

she works part-time for her husband's company in order to keep good relations with her in-laws.

But because she keeps herself very busy with work, hobbies, meeting friends and reinforcing social networks, she hardly has time for house chores. With her language skill, she is also able to assert herself and her goals. Whereas her husband had initially expected her to stay home to clean and cook, now he just lets her do what she wants. She is financially independent, very vocal and articulate about her beliefs and desires. She likes to believe that she cleans when she wants to and cooks what she wants to. She learned how to cook some Japanese dishes from her mother-in-law but never really had to prepare and cook for her husband or his parents. She neither dislikes Japanese food (except for raw fish) nor scorns its preparations. She just does not like that it takes time. She somehow manages to cook something, whether Filipino or Japanese for her husband to find when he comes home. She is usually not there to serve him. They do not have children so they have both gotten used to their busy and independent schedules. When she is alone, she satisfies herself with Japanese fast food. Her husband does the same when she is unable to cook food for him.

ANALYSIS

The above cases reveal the distinct food ways of four Filipino women married to Japanese men. Food is one aspect of difference, which Philippine-Japanese couples encounter and negotiate in their intermarriage.[10] As mentioned in the previous section, major differences lie in food preparation, the processes surrounding food preparation, and their articulation of national identities.

Negotiating Japanese and Philippine Food Structures in Spaces of Control

Despite differences in aliments, as with the kind of dishes and tastes in Philippine and Japanese gastronomies, the Filipino women in general do not show a disliking of Japanese food or taste, regardless of their husbands' liking or disliking of Philippine food. Even Diana's initial dislike for Japanese food parallels the tensions she experienced in the household, which she eventually overcame when tensions in the household subsided. Michele and husband also grew to appreciate each other's imagined foodways as they got along in their marriage.

Moreover, all four migrant women are able to cook and adapt to the kind of cooking in Tokyo. Betty is perhaps the most able of them all because she received stringent training on cooking and food preparations from her

mother-in-law. Diana did not learn as much of cooking and preparations as Betty, because her learning was initially hindered by the language barrier between her and her mother-in-law. Joan learned how to cook but resisted practices surrounding food preparation and serving. Michele wholeheartedly wanted to cook and do food preparations but did not receive as much training from her mother-in-law as Betty, Diana and Joan.

Occasions in which these women turn to rational menus instead of traditional Japanese menus are limited. The main reason for this is that following traditional Japanese menus is a way for these migrant women to integrate into Japanese society and work out their marriages. As Joan's case shows, traditional Japanese menus are rationalized because she does not have that much time for following traditional food practices. Joan is ritualistic about cooking Japanese food, without paying attention to the processes surrounding food preparation (e.g., pleasing her husband or being a good wife) because she spends more time outside the house. This can be generalized to Philippine labor migrant women who are married to Japanese men, but not to non-worker[11] migrant women such as Michele, Diana and Betty. Being contributors to the income of their Philippine families adds an important dimension to their food ways in Japan. Because they have to be economically productive to remit money back to the Philippines, they lose time in performing house chores, including food preparation and cooking. Diana and Michele are able to spend time at home because their husbands provide them with remittance money. However, for Betty who has to work independently and for Joan who prefers to work independently, food preparations are weighed against work schedules. They turn to rational menus to save time. Both Betty and Joan incorporate Filipino dishes (ulam) to the household repertoire because they are most familiar with its preparations. Plain white rice remains and so does the way food is served, but the main dishes differ.

Japanese menus are also rationalized when Betty and Joan wish to assert their feelings and persuasions about being housewives in a Japanese household setting. They feel that Japanese expectations on housewives are too strict and that following them would mean their subservience. Food and its practices are one way by which they express their independence and negotiate their freedom from strict expectations in the household. For instance, by alternating between Filipino and Japanese dishes, Joan was able to temper her husband's expectations on her fulfillment of her housewife duties to him. Betty, on the other hand, used Filipino food as a way of asserting her freedom from the control of her husband and his household.

Food Ways and Frames of Meaning: the Nation in Migration

Meanwhile, those who are able to cook Philippine dishes in their households are able to use Japanese ingredients for some Philippine dishes. Other Philippine aliments can be bought in Philippine shops in Nama. The availability of aliments is one reason why Filipino housewives create rational menus for traditional Philippine menus in Japan. However, despite the creation of rational menus for traditional Philippine menus, these do not lose their potential symbolic meaning. Imagined Philippine foodways give them a sense of identity in a different country and in Japanese household settings.

However, when these Filipino women get together with their Filipino friends in Nama, they assert their same-ness by preparing traditional Filipino dishes. They spend time, energy and money looking for the specific Philippine ingredients for the Philippine dishes they miss most. Substitution with Japanese aliments is not desired. They pride themselves in being able to prepare traditional Philippine food. Although they are aware of regional variations among their food ways, these are consciously subsumed under the category Philippine foodways. Same-ness in imagined traditional foodways also parallels the problems with foreignness that they feel within their households.

This is why food ways can also differ according to social networks, because Filipino migrant women tend to make friends with those of similar experiences. The four women belong to two different but intermingling social networks. Michele and Diana are closer friends who belong to another group of Filipinos in Nama, while Betty spends more time with Joan and Joan's wider social network inside and outside Nama. The food practices of Michele and Diana both tend to prioritize their households, whether properly feeding Michele's children or Diana's in-laws and their husbands. Meanwhile, the food ways of Betty and Joan are more individual-oriented. However, the nutrition of her daughter keeps Betty's food ways bound to the household, while Joan does not have children to prepare food for. Their relationships with their husbands are also found as a variable that affects these women's food ways. Diana and Michele do not mind following the more stringent Japanese practices of servicing their husbands during meals. As mentioned above, Betty harbored feelings of resentment for her husband, thus for a long time shunned servicing him in all aspects, including food. Joan always asserts her independence and level of equality with her husband, and so does not service him during meals in the Japanese way. Indulging and liberal husbands such as Michele's and Diana's also allow a free environment for both Philippine and Japanese

traditional dishes. Strict and suspicious husbands and in-laws create an atmosphere where Betty and Joan covertly assert themselves through food, usually by generating rational menus.

However, rational menus are not limited to situations such as Betty's and Joan's. Rational menus may be goal-oriented in purpose but may also be symbolic. All these Filipino women's food ways create rational menus, whether they need to save time or assert themselves or express their Filipino identities.

CONCLUSIONS

Food ways are processes where Filipino women make sense of and negotiate with structures of food and national identity, and thereby assert and articulate themselves. Living and working in Japan sets the parameters along which they generate rational menus from both traditional Philippine and Japanese menus. Food ways are thus not fixed, just like the identities that practice them or are created by them. Identities are located within bigger contexts and are as variegated as a global context will allow.

Locating Food Ways in Philippine-Japan Labor Migration and Intermarriage

The impetus for intermarriage is provided by a history of interacting demographic and market forces in the Philippines and Japan. Increasing economic deficits and a growing predominantly female population in the Philippines and a concurrent economic growth in Japan, which was experiencing marriage squeezes for men and shortages in unskilled and semi-skilled labor in its industries, provided an enabling setting for the movement of Filipino women to Japan as labor and as wives. With the astounding amount of overseas workers' remittances, labor migration was promoted by state actors and by migrants themselves as a development strategy. Intermarriage is instrumental to economic productivity. Several agencies and networks in both countries emerged to promote movement and marriage. Recent articulations of Philippine labor migration hail Filipino overseas workers as new heroes (*bagong bayani*). The result is a trend toward increasing Philippine-Japanese migration and intermarriages.

At the level of everyday household practices, food ways are processes in which these Filipino women who marry and work in Japan mobilize rules and resources for their own advantage and their own purposes. The interaction of food and other related structures in the Philippines and Japan (such as gender, ethnicity, and location in a capitalist world-economy) creates a complex situation that provides both prescriptive guidelines and myriad possibilities. By emphasizing structuration and presenting

concrete cases of Filipino food ways in Japan, this study suggests that the picture of Philippine-Japan migration and intermarriages is not merely about imposed and oppressive structures or of migrants existing in self-determination. These also involve processes of the migrants' skillful consenting and negotiating within the limits of social and cultural structures. This may point to the reinforcement or the creation of new oppressive structures, especially for women from developing countries who bear the brunt of social and capitalistic reproduction. For example, there was only one small Filipino restaurant in Nama, but there were several Philippine pubs and bars. There is greater consumption of Filipino women than of Filipino food in Nama. It is not because the Japanese in Nama have little knowledge or exposure to Philippine food. Indeed, as my cases show, there are households that have introduced Philippine food to the Japanese table. The lack of Filipino restaurants in Nama or fusion between Japanese and Philippine cuisines despite the increasing number of Filipino women in Japan rather points to the politics in which food and people are situated.

However, there are more details that should be investigated and refined by theory in the topic of food ways in Philippine-Japan migration and intermarriage, which this study perhaps has not duly covered. It thus remains exploratory.

NOTES

1. I wish to emphasize here the interactive process between agency and structure in socio-cultural practices, much like Giddens' concept of structuration.

2. This is a concept by Fischler that is cited in Beardsworth and Keil (1997).

3. This is a fictional name for the real ward where the Filipino migrant women live.

4. There is more data needed in a discussion such as this — for example, one that includes rituals and feasting. Only some initial information and data on everyday eating are presented here to serve the purposes of this exploratory study.

5. This seriously sets the parameters for the aliments used in cooking and what is considered part of table etiquette (table settings and servings). A wide gap between those who we consider "poor" and "rich" make it difficult, if not impossible, to attempt to organize eating practices according to standard foodways. For example, the poorest families sometimes cannot even afford plain white rice, even though this is considered a mainstay in Filipino meals. They may substitute it with non-white rice, rice mixed with corn, or by eating a non-staple food such as sugar cane or

noodles. Meanwhile, those who can afford rice, may not be able to afford a main dish and thus resort to available condiments for taste – salt, fish or shrimp sauce, soy sauce, coffee, or ketchup. Some can afford only one main dish, without having other dishes, appetizers, soup or dessert. Others can afford consuming more.

6. Foreign dishes' names, as with other nonfood items' names, are written in Japanese script (*katakana*), which is used for incorporating foreign words into the linguistic repertoire, in a way "Japanizing" them. Japanese words are written in this study according to sound.

7. The data on this basic Japanese meal structure comes from The Government of Japan (1991). Unlike the Philippines, Japanese have a more homogenous standard of living that allows a more precise description of an "ordinary Japanese meal." Even meals differentiated by region and by season have similarities shared by most Japanese.

8. I am citing Cwiertka's paper "The Japanese in the Netherlands and Their Foodways," which was written when she was at Leiden University, the Netherlands.

9. The latter is closely related to their life chances in Japan. Marriage to a Japanese man elevates their social status, which confers on them more entitlements than being undocumented or alien.

10. Others are language, religion, class and other aspects of one's ethnicity (Cahill 1990).

11. This term was derived from Hiroshi Komai (1999). He used the term *non-working immigrants* to highlight the existence of migrants who came to Japan for non-economic reasons. I am using this term to include Filipino women who do not primarily go to Japan for economic reasons (as *workers*) but as wives, but who may eventually find some productive activity after their marriage (as *working* individuals).

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