

The Anthropology of Su'Style Noodles

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ABSTRACT

In “The Anthropology of Food and Eating” (Mintz and Du Bois 2002) the analytical importance of food is emphasized. Through the authors’ in-depth study of the food system, it is found that food is very important to human life. The scholars have previously linked cooking methods and food importance, and different cooking methods can promote the spread and diffusion of food. While there are many articles on this topic, only a few are available to illustrate the “importance of food.” Moreover, food has a great influence on social change, and the transformation of food can reflect the development of political economy. The interaction of food production and processing technologies is a key factor in dietary change, especially in China. And the movement or migration of human beings also has a great influence on the changes of food culture. War is also a factor. In addition, there is also the risk of food insecurity, such as large numbers of wars or ethnic conflicts leading to unsanitary conditions and overcrowding, and large numbers of people dying from infectious diseases. Food can also represent relationships with others and social functions, such as the definition of food in religious ceremonies. The distribution of food can also symbolize status and social relations within a race. In fact, there is no other difference from the distribution method of gender, and it is even more complicated. The literature on food has grown massively over time. Anthropologists are in a strong position to study the relationship between health, nutrition and food and culture. In “Gusu food dialect”(Wang Yihai)reflects Suzhou's food culture, so that readers can know more about the past in the history of Suzhou culture from the perspective of diet. According to the content, this book is divided into eight parts, such as paradise products, seasonal food, flower boat relics, tea and wine. It describes the original ecological products in the south of the Yangtze River, different market dishes at four o'clock, seasonal pastries and snacks, flower wine boat snacks, etc. This 400,000-word Gusu Food Talk is rich in content, which is a must-read to understand Jiangnan's diet. In the old days, Suzhou was rich, prosperous, delicate and rich, those crowded, bustling streets, refreshing shops, and fragrant and sweet flavours. From the perspective of diet, you can get a glimpse of Suzhou's brilliant and profound cultural heritage. This content contains a lot of interesting concepts about food and diet. However, there is not a lot of mention of food culture in the article. Most of my topics will revolve around cultural output and cultural cognition, to feel the difference between local people and tourists. I will discuss the food recognition and food culture recognition of the local Suzhou culture in the follow-up, which will ultimately be reflected in the local people's understanding of food culture.

Introduction

Traditional food is an integral part of Suzhou, China’s history and culture. It occupies an important position in the history of Chinese food culture. So far, there are 12 categories, stating there are a wide variety of dishes, including sweet and savory. In Suzhou, the development and change of diet has gradually become what we see today with different dynasties and different economic development. Su-style noodles are particularly famous because it is convenience for people to eat everyday and it has been penetrated into local people’s life. There are many kinds of noodles in Suzhou, particularly given how many toppings one can mix and match with the

noodles. There are also distinctions based on the amount of noodle broth the soup contains. Suzhou noodles, pay attention to the taste of the soup, the chefs attach great importance to the soup, and the taste is delicious.

The reason why I choose to eat Su-style noodles each week is because I lived in the old town before, and many authentic folk snacks were not as delicious as in the old town. The original intention of this theme is that many people do not recognize Suzhou's Food culture is a very important culture, which has been indifferent and generalized. The original intention of the old craftsman has also disappeared. Now the progress of science and technology has prompted the local people to not identify with this culture so much, and lack a sense of identity.

Methods

One is to conduct interviews with people who have lived in the ancient city of Suzhou since childhood. For both the elderly and young, I could ask how this local food eating habit exists, what was the attitude towards this habit, and what was the attitude towards life. How would the habit change, and how would it change with my own personality, and another was to experience it myself, from the money spent, to what I was not used to in life, to what changes in the body. I used an onomatopoeia during the interview and explained the situation to the interviewee, which is a social research topic. I am withholding their identities for anonymity.

Another is to conduct data analysis. I use the online questionnaire system and send a questionnaire to the Internet for others to do the questionnaire. The questionnaire presented 12 questions about the initial impression and preliminary understanding of the Suzhou style. In addition, people of different ages were also asked about their understanding of Suzhou culture. I asked 178 people who understand people of different genders, age groups and regions.

I went to a local noodle shop over 20 years old in a small alley to find people of different ages for interviews. I asked these questions, the first is about when will they want to eat Su-style noodles; the second is about what to choose among many high-end noodle shops and old-fashioned noodle shops in alleys; the third is about When you taste Su-style noodles, what will you recall?

The first interviewed person is a man, about 48 years old who grew up in Suzhou. He originally lived in the city, and he felt that if he did not eat the noodles from this old noodle shop for a week, he felt that he would miss the taste very much. Since he always ate this old-fashioned Su-style noodles in his childhood, he was willing to drive an hour to the alley for breakfast. I asked why he still came to this small alley to eat Su-style noodles, he told me that because this noodle restaurant is very old Su-style, and many old Suzhou people cook it. Although many stores are decorated in a Soviet style, they do not have the feeling of old Suzhou people. And the frequency of each visit is probably once a week.

The second interviewed people is a woman, about 24 years old, a tourist who came to Suzhou. They saw Xiaohongshu, an online APP, and the above first looked at the comments. Later, she found that the comments were very good, so she decided to give it a try. Then she found that it was a noodle restaurant in a small alley, and it felt more authentic.

The third family is a local old Suzhou native, who has lived here for more than 30 years and bought a house in the alley. Their narrative expresses that they have led children to taste Suzhou noodles since the older generation, which makes their childhood memories taste like this noodles. Therefore, a habit has been formed.

Data Analysis

In the online questionnaire, the graphics show a wide variety of data. First of all, a total of 178 people completed the questionnaire, and most of the main subjects were middle-aged people aged 36-45, and the proportion of men was uneven, with men accounting for 40%. Most middle-aged people did not grow up locally in Suzhou,

but surprisingly, they have tasted Suzhou noodles. After a detailed inquiry, it was found that they were all attracted to people by the soup noodle topping characteristics of Suzhou noodles. The follow-up questionnaire data surprised me very much. The problem is which of the following nine noodles will you choose if you go to the noodle restaurant for the first time. All nine noodles have many characteristics, but the recommendation rate of one face is nearly 50%. That's braised pork noodles, a specialty noodle that I expected. When I asked the middle-aged people around me, such as my parents and the parents of my classmates, I found that many cashiers in local noodle shops would recommend this noodle, so their first attempt would be this noodle. Therefore, most of the recommendations of local clerks will also determine the choice and follow-up recommendations of travelers who try Suzhou noodles for the first time. And most people who have eaten Suzhou noodles agree that Suzhou noodles are one of the symbols of Suzhou food culture.

I think my questionnaire reflects the initial influence and impression of most people on the Suzhou style. Most people living in Suzhou, whether locals or people who come to Suzhou to work, think that Suzhou noodles represent part of Suzhou's food culture.

Conclusion

Under the study of these two methods, I came to a conclusion. Whether in the hearts of tourists and locals, Soviet noodles have become one of the symbols representing Suzhou's local food culture. From the perspective of tourists and locals, they firmly believe that the old noodle restaurants in the alleys will be very authentic, and can strongly reflect the charm of Suzhou local food culture. Through the interviews with these two different types of people, I realized that Suzhou's food culture has been deeply rooted in the hearts of the people. Both tourists and locals have well understood that Su-style noodles are a symbol of traditional food culture. Tourists will also be willing to try local specialties to better understand the city. The locals are also willing to pass on this feeling and cognition, so that generations of young people can understand the cultural heritage of local cuisine from an early age.

Limitations and Future Considerations

I think my research is only one-sided view and choice of Suzhou noodles by tourists and Suzhou locals, and does not comprehensively summarize the various types of Suzhou food on the market and stores in different regions. First of all, I think my questionnaire is a little broad, and it does not include the ideas of most people and give them choices to a large extent. In the future, I will carry out some more detailed questionnaire questions and add more people of different ages to answer the questionnaire. Second, I don't think there are many types of people interviewing, we can't draw a relatively complete conclusion, and the problem is not very targeted. Although it contains Soviet style and Suzhou culture and symbolism, it is not too detailed about everyone's understanding and understanding of Suzhou food culture.

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References

The Anthropology of Food and Eating written by Mintz and Du Bois in 2002
Gusu food dialect written by Wang Yihai