Portland State University
PDXScholar

Dissertations and Theses Dissertations and Theses

2009

The traditional and the modern : the history of Japanese food culture in Oregon and how it did and did not integrate with American food culture

David P. Conklin
Portland State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/open_access_etds

Part of the Food Studies Commons, History Commons, and the Japanese Studies Commons
Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation
Conklin, David P., "The traditional and the modern : the history of Japanese food culture in Oregon and how it did and did not integrate with American food culture" (2009). *Dissertations and Theses.* Paper 3786.
https://doi.org/10.15760/etd.5670

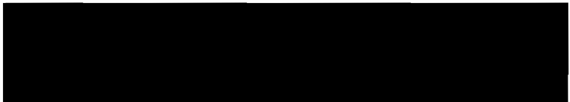
This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dissertations and Theses by an authorized administrator of PDXScholar. Please contact us if we can make this document more accessible: pdxscholar@pdx.edu.

THESIS APPROVAL

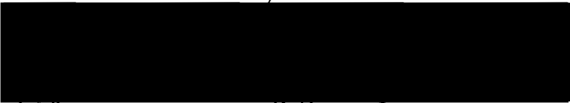
The abstract and thesis of David P. Conklin for the Master of Arts in History were presented April 30, 2009, and accepted by the thesis committee and the department.

COMMITTEE APPROVALS:

Kenneth Ruoff, Chair



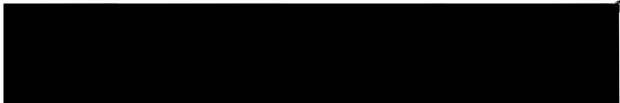
Thomas M. Luckett



Linda Walton

Laurence R. Kominz

DEPARTMENT APPROVAL:



Thomas M. Luckett, Chair
Department of History

ABSTRACT

An abstract of the thesis of David P. Conklin for the Master of Arts in History presented April 30, 2009.

Title: The Traditional and the Modern: The History of Japanese Food Culture in Oregon and How it Did and Did Not Integrate with American Food Culture.

The study of food and foodways is a field that has until quite recently mostly been neglected as a field of history despite the importance that food plays in culture and as a necessity for life. The study of immigrant foodways and the mixing of and hybridization of foods and foodways that result has been studied even less, although one person has done extensive research on Western influences on the foodways of Japan since 1853. This paper is an attempt to study the how and in what forms the foodways of America—and in particular of Oregon—changed with the arrival of Japanese immigrants beginning in the late-nineteenth century, and how the foodways of the first generation immigrant Japanese—the *Issei*—did and did not change after their arrival. In a broad sense, this is a study of globalization during an era when globalization was still a slow and uneven process and there were still significant differences between the foodways of America and Japan.

THE TRADITIONAL AND THE MODERN:
THE HISTORY OF JAPANESE FOOD CULTURE IN OREGON AND HOW IT DID AND DID NOT INTEGRATE WITH AMERICAN FOOD CULTURE

by

DAVID P. CONKLIN

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
in
HISTORY

Portland State University
2009

Acknowledgements

Among the many people that need to be mentioned for their assistance and inspiration in creating this work there are two that should be mentioned first; my advisor and the person who not only suggested the topic for this research and encouraged me throughout but also got me interested in Japanese history, Dr. Ken Ruoff, and my wife, Fumiko Yano-Conklin, who has helped and supported me in ways too many to mention and has been patient with me throughout. She has also helped give me a first-hand knowledge of Japanese food that has hopefully given me insights into the subject matter that have made for a much better paper.

Thanks must also be given to the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center for their help, especially in making their records readily available to me; to the people at the Oregon Historical Society Library; to Atsuko Richards for her help in reading old Japanese documents; and to the local *Nikkei* community, especially Homer Yasui, for their information and assistance. Special thanks must also be given to the Yasui family for the preservation of records and artifacts from the Yasui Brothers' Store of Hood River. Thanks also to people such as Alice Sumida, Yoji Matsushima, and, in Japan, Dr. Nobuo Harada for taking time to sit down with me and tell me their stories and answer my questions; To Professors Larry Kominz, Tom Luckett, and Linda Walton; to Molly Blalock-Koral and the other librarians at P.S.U; and to my friends and family for giving me places to stay when I visit Portland. Thanks also for friends in Japan that have helped, including Shimamoto Shuji, his wife Mito, and Sen So-oku.

Thanks with apologies should also be given to everyone whose help and information I was not able to include due to a lack of space, in particular Eileen Ota.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements..........i.

INTRODUCTION..........1.

CHAPTER I: Differences between the food..........8.

Food in Japan..........19.

The Arrival of Perry..........22.

Dekasegi Laborers and Why People Left Japan..........25.

Food on Board Ships and in Detention..........32.

CHAPTER II: Early *Issei* in America..........38.

Canned Goods..........55.

Rice..........66.

CHAPTER III: The Second era of the *Issei*..........74.

Changing Foodways..........76.

Forces for and Against Integration..........94.

Restaurants..........101.

Sukiyaki..........109.

CHAPTER IV: Beverages..........114.

Tea..........114.

Issei, Tea, and Coffee..........129.

Alcohol/*Sake*..........134.

CHAPTER V: Anti-Japanese Laws and Food..........148.

CONCLUSION..........154.

WORKS CITED..........162.

INTRODUCTION

Today most people who live in the Pacific Coast states of the United States, including Oregon, are probably aware that a wide variety of Japanese foods are available. Items such as shiitake mushrooms, *sake*, bentō, tōfu, soy milk, teriyaki, and sushi should in many, if not most instances, be familiar to people, even if they had never tasted them. Few people, however, probably realize how these foods, and many others from Japan, came to be in America. Nor do people likely realize that most of these foods have been available in much of Oregon since the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, ever since the first Japanese people arrived. While the subject matter of this paper is primarily the history of Japanese food in Oregon, it is also about the globalization of the food and foodways, how the foods and people of Japan and the United States interacted and were received when these two cultures intersected in North America.

Although people have written about food for over two thousand years, it has not been until relatively recently that the role of food in development and culture has become a field of historical study. Food is important in forming cultural and social relationships and has a great influence on a wide variety of historical forces including, in particular, the shaping and marking of cultural identities. Although food consumption is indispensible, the specific foods consumed are the choice of individuals with tastes and preferences that are shaped by a variety of forces and also made possible by global economic forces.

The study of Japanese food in America presents some opportunities not available with other immigrant food cultures. Unlike the foodways of most other cultures, Japanese food was introduced to America quite suddenly, making it much

easier to observe patterns of diffusion and hybridization than with food cultures that were integrated incrementally over long periods of time. Japanese food and food culture is also very different from "American" and Western food in general, the differences much greater than between any other major food cultures.[1] These differences often extend not just to how people view the food but also to how people perceive the culture associated with it. When the French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss developed his "culinary triangle" to explain the relationship between food and civilized culture he failed to consider that raw foods such as those found in Japanese cuisine could be the product of a highly civilized culture, a mistake likely born out of basic ethno-centrism.[2]

The study of American immigrant food culture is an aspect of globalization that is only just now beginning. In the case of early Japanese immigrants it has not been done until now. Only one person, Katrarzyna Cwiertka, might be considered to be a specialist in the area of the impact of Western food on the foodways of modern Japan, a subject that is in many ways similar to this work, if based on the other side of the

---

[1] It is quite likely that there are food cultures in the world that are more different, but not among any of the more well known and easily recognizable food cultures.

[2] The culinary triangle first appeared in an article in French in *L'Arc* in 1966 ("Le triangle culinaire," *L'Arc,* 26, p. 19-29), and in English in *Partisan Review* ("The Culinary Triangle," translated by P. Brooks, *Partisan Review,* Vol. 33, p. 586-595). In his model the three points of the triangle represent the raw, the cooked, and the rotten, where the raw/cooked axis has characteristics of culture and the fresh/decayed axis characteristics of nature, "since cooking brings about a cultural transformation of the raw," a theory that in essence implies a direct connection between cooking and civilized culture. For a fairly simple explanation of Lévi-Strauss' culinary triangle see Jack Goody, *Cooking, Cuisine and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology,* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 17-26.

Pacific.[3]

The focus of this paper is how Japanese food and "American" food crossed paths in America, specifically in Oregon, in the pre-WWII Period, and in particular the ways, reasons, and to what extent the food cultures of the immigrants and of the "American" majority populations mixed, interacted, and hybridized. These processes did not usually occur in even and predictable manners. It is also important to understand the history of Japanese food in Japan and how it was a product of the interaction between Japan and other countries and food cultures. A common popular misconception about Japanese history is that during the Edo Period (roughly 1600-1853) Japan was a "closed" country with little or no contact with the outside world. The reality was far from that; there was interaction with neighboring countries, in particular China, Korea, Thailand and the Ryukyu Islands (Okinawa), and also with the West through regular contact/trade with the Dutch. But while there were exchanges of commodities with the outside world and an importing of learning to Japan, there was nothing significant in the way of foreign/outside food culture being introduced to Japan.

Until 1600 or so Japan had followed a path typical of other cultures in developing a food culture. Over the course of some 2,000 years numerous new foods had been introduced from the Asian continent, most importantly rice, soy foods, noodles, and various techniques used in preservation. The sixteenth century saw the arrival of European explorers who introduced more new foods to Japan.[4] Although the flow of

---

[3] Although several others have written about the impact of the West on Japanese foodways, Cwiertka has by far done the most work.

[4] Among the more important European contributions of this period were *tempura* (from the Portuguese) and a variety of vegetables, including many newly brought from the Americas.

new foods virtually ceased during the nearly 250 year period of Japan's "seclusion," and no significant change were brought by external forces, Japan's food culture did not remain static. Instead Japan turned inward and developed and refined its existing foodways.

By the time extensive interaction with the outside world resumed after 1853, Japan had created a food culture that was quite different from anything else in the world. Westerners who visited Japan after Commodore Perry's arrival in 1853 often found Japanese food to be "strange" or "abominable," and something to be avoided. Instead of eating the local fare, Westerners in Japan usually ate Western food, food that was initially imported, often in cans, and later produced in Japan. The first Japanese to travel to America had similar reactions; to them American food was initially viewed as dangerous and to be avoided. In behavior quite similar to that of Westerners in Japan, the early Japanese visitors to America initially imported their own food from Japan and then later replaced and augmented the supply with foods produced in America.

As interaction between Japan and America increased so too did the exchange of food and food cultures. These interactions occurred in several different yet inter-related contexts: as a result of economic opportunity; as a result of industrial development; and as a result of individual choices. Except in cases of individual choice, most of this took place under the general umbrella of emerging "modernity," but also as part of what people today would recognize as globalization. Because of the high degree of interconnectedness between these three aspects, it would be nearly impossible to separate them; instead the relative importance of each will be included in the examination of various aspects of Japanese and American food culture as it evolved in Portland and elsewhere in Oregon and the Pacific Northwest.

Economic opportunity was important for many reasons. Economic opportunity was likely the reason many, if not most, of the early *Issei* (first generation Japanese immigrants) left Japan. It was part of the reason why many *Issei* chose food production, especially farming, as an occupation once they settled in America, a path that inevitably led to the diffusion of foods across cultures, although mostly from Western to Japanese. It was also important in creating a food supply and distribution network as there was money to be made in both Japan and America supplying Japanese food to the *Issei*..

Industrialization also was important in several ways. Industrialization had a direct impact on *Issei* food culture through "modern" transportation (railroads and steam ships) that was used in bringing the *Issei* and their food to America. There were many less direct but by no means less important consequences of industrialization as well. First was the role of nineteenth century food processing and food science on the development of American food culture, something that greatly contributed to the differences between the food cultures the Japanese brought to America and the food culture they discovered after arriving. Less direct results of industrialization had multiple effects on *Issei* food culture that were of particular significance, especially in allowing them to maintain their traditional foodways. In one instance the development of industrialized food processing machinery led to a need for a new variety of rice that could withstand "modern" milling equipment, a development that would have far reaching consequences by making this principle staple, rice, affordable. Later the mass production of canned foods in Japan would be important in allowing the *Issei* to maintain their traditional foodways. But this use of canned foods in itself was made possible by industrial developments that came from the West.

What was possibly the most important factor in the interaction of Japanese and American foodways in America was personal choice. The ways and degree to which the food cultures mixed ultimately depended on people's decisions on what they wanted to eat. Japanese food initially came to America because people willingly chose to leave their home country to go to America, and once in America they chose to hold on to their traditional foodways, even when it would have been easier and less expensive to convert to American food. The *Issei*, the first generation immigrants from Japan, did incorporate many Western foods into their diet, usually not as replacement for Japanese items but as additions, making for a much more diverse and ultimately more satisfying menu. The exchange of foods happened in the opposite direction as well (from Japan to America), but not nearly as frequently, and usually only with foods that had a strong similarity to Western foods. The reasons for this unevenness of exchange are not known, although there are surely multiple theories available, including that embracing alien foodways was very much in keeping with the historical development of Japanese cuisine.

While it is natural for people to prefer eating foods they are familiar with, there are other reasons as well the *Issei* continued to eat a mostly-Japanese diet. Japanese food was generally made available to *Issei* laborers and immigrants from the time they arrived in Oregon, often as part of labor contracts. From roughly the time of WWI through the 1920s Portland had a Japanese immigrant community that offered a food culture quite similar to what was available in Japan. This was something that indicated a prosperous, middle-class, Japanese-American community. But despite the similarities to Japan there were always differences. Some of the differences were due to the presence of Western foods that had been integrated into the Japanese diet or the

unavailability of certain fresh foods from Japan. But other differences were due to transposing Japanese foodways into an American environment where the food cultures were often radically different. At times these differences between food cultures led to permanent changes or additions to the existing food cultures, but more often, it seems, the changes did not last.

Much of this research concerns the foodways of the *Issei*, people who arrived in America with well-established food preferences. At the time of their immigration, there were still very large differences between the food cultures of Japan and America, differences that allow for observing clear examples of hybridization and diffusion of food and foodways. The era was also less globalized: people were not as familiar with other cultures as people today, the result being, it seems, less willingness or eagerness to embrace foreign foods. Thus, when changes did occur, they were usually quite noticeable. By the time the *Nisei* (the American-born second generation of Japanese) came of age distinctions between the foodways were much less clear: the *Issei* had Americanized their foodways while the *Nisei* had become the center of a new period of integration and hybridization, intermediaries (agents of change?) between the traditional foodways of their parents and the American culture they were born into.

CHAPTER I:

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE FOOD CULTURES

In order to better understand how and why the food cultures of Japan and America did and, especially, did not always easily integrate with each other it is necessary to have an understanding of just how radically dissimilar the two were. The differences were many, and were the result of geography, culture, histories, as well as divergent levels of industrialization. To illustrate just how different the foods of Japan and America were (and still are), mention should be made of an article that was written concerning tastes and how culture helps determine how foods are considered to be either "delicious" or "disgusting." In the article, the author, Carolyn Korsmeyer, developed a theory that some foods that may ordinarily be considered to be "disgusting" to eat—either due to its taste, texture, form, or several other factors—may be considered delicious and desirable in some cultural settings.[5] In her article two of the three dishes cited as examples of foods that are generally considered to be "disgusting" to American tastes are Japanese dishes, *fugu* (puffer fish, famous for being potentially fatally poisonous if not properly prepared) and *ikedsukuri*, fish served live with the gills still functioning and the eyes looking around but with part of its flesh carefully sliced off, hidden under the skin of its side.[6] While not all Japanese dishes are as extreme in their

---

[5] Carolyn Korsmeyer, "Delightful, Disgusting, Delicious," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. 60, No. 3 (Summer, 2002), p. 217-225. In addition to taste and texture, Korsmeyer adds foods that may be delicious in limited amounts but that too much of it may make it disgusting, such as eating too much cheesecake; foods that are similar in form to things close to the consumer, such as human flesh; foods that are too close in form to their original form, such as being alive when eaten; and foods that may be overly decomposed.

[6] The third dish mentioned was *ortolan*, a small bird found in France that have been caught in the wild, kept in the dark to fatten them, and, when ready, drowned in Armagnac brandy, plucked, then cooked and

"shock" appeal, these dishes do indicate how different some Japanese foods can be from those Westerners are accustomed to.

In the late nineteenth century America was a vast and generally sparsely populated land full of the resources necessary for large scale agricultural and industrial production. Japan, by contrast, was a nation of mountainous islands whose limited amounts of arable lands had been under intensive cultivation for many centuries. America's past was one primarily of settlement by immigrants from a variety of European cultures. Japan's roots were in Asia, with a much more homogeneous (compared with America) population and culture. America, with its abundant resources, was one of the leaders of the industrial revolution. The industrial revolution was only then taking place in previously "isolated" Japan after being introduced by Westerners. Combined with other lesser influences, these things created food cultures that were radically different.

In late nineteenth-early twentieth century Japan, most people would have lived on a simple diet based primarily on grains, fresh, seasonal vegetables, pickled vegetables (*tsukemono*), soy products—especially tofu, *miso,* and *shōyu*—fish, and other foods from the sea. Rice was the preferred grain, if it was affordable and available. Meat, possibly whale (*kujira*) wild boar (often called *yama kujira*, or 'mountain whale'), venison, or other wild game, was occasionally consumed, while beef was only rarely eaten.[7] Even as late as the 1930's livestock production accounted for

---

served whole, with the diner covering his head with a napkin, the napkin keeping the aroma inside while at the same time it "hides the shame of the feast from the eyes of God." Korsmeyer, "Delightful, Delicious, Disgusting," p. 224.

[7] It is impossible to say now exactly what was eaten by the people that would later come to America while they were still in Japan. Different areas had different levels of modernization and with it different

less than 2% of total farm output of Japan.[8] Limited availability of arable land and limited resources had contributed to a food culture where virtually nothing was wasted, the result being the development of some food products that for many outsiders might seem unusual.

Shun, the eating foods fresh and in season was—and continues to be—an important characteristic of Japanese cuisine.[9] When food was preserved it was either by drying, salting, or pickling, techniques that trace their roots back thousands of years. Refrigeration of any kind was unknown, especially in the generally warmer, western region of Japan that most of the *Issei* came from. Transportation of goods was still quite primitive, mostly either on foot or by boat. This lack of an efficient transportation system was in part responsible for the development of many locally specific food products and a great diversity of regional cuisines, each developed in isolated river valleys.[10] The industrialization of food characterized by mass production

---

exposure to Western foods. I am trying to give a general sense of what was and was not eaten, using a variety of sources, including personal accounts and statements in a wide variety of sources that mention food. I have also drawn from Naomichi Ishige's *History and Culture of Japanese Food*, as well as other food-related histories. Naomichi Ishige, *The History and Culture of Japanese Food* (London, New York: Kegan Paul, 2001).

[8] Katarzyna Joanna Cwiertka, *The Making of Modern Culinary Tradition in Japan* (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Leiden, 1999), p. 48.

[9] The word *shun* refers to an idea or concept related to Japanese cuisine that is quite difficult to translate in both meaning and pronunciation into English. The meaning refers to using and eating foods that are fresh and in season, something quite at odds with American foodways of the past 150 years or more. The word is pronounced with a sound similar to "June," but is generally written in English as *shun*, a spelling that will be used here even though it does appear to be the word "shun" (as in "to avoid"), a word far different in meaning.

[10] As there were often no bridges or other means to travel across river valleys transportation was at times restricted to moving up and down the river, from the sea to the mountains. This contributed to limited

and uniformity of product had, with the possible exception of beer, had not yet reached the general population (canned and processed foods were used almost exclusively by either the military or the catering industry).[11] Japanese food today has been described as "the most elegantly simple… the taste for the natural things which is the essence of Japanese culture," a description as apt today as it was 100 years ago.[12]

The food the *Issei* would have encountered in the United States at this time stood in sharp contrast to that of Japan. From the colonial period on, American cuisine was a cuisine that developed from the bounty of the land and the plentifulness of what was available: giant lobsters, flocks of forty pound turkeys, a fertile soil, and in the Pacific Northwest, abundant runs of salmon.[13] American meals traditionally emphasized meat and maize, with other dishes merely peripheral.[14] And the amounts of meat eaten were huge when compared with consumption in the twenty-first century, let alone in comparison to nineteenth century Japan. In the first cookbook of American food, *American Cookery or the art of Dressing Viands, Fish, Poultry & Vegetables and the best Modes of Making Pastes, Puffs, Pies, Tarts, Puddings, Custards & Preserves and All Kinds of Cakes from the Imperial Plumb to Plain Cake adapted to This Country & All Grades of Life,* (first published in 1796; all previous cookbooks in America had featured English food), typical recipes for cooking "flesh" (meat) called for fifteen

---

interaction between villages that were otherwise in close proximity to each other, and in turn to different cuisines. Interview with Dr. Nobuo Harada, Tokyo, Japan, January, 2007.

[11] Cwiertka,,*Making of Modern Culinary Tradition,* p. 57.

[12] Gloria Hale, ed., *The World Atlas of Food: a Gourmet's Guide to the Great Regional Dishes of the World* (London: Mitchell Beazley, 1974), p. 252.

[13] Peter Farb and George Armelagos, *Consuming Passions: The Anthropology of Eating* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1980), p. 197.

[14] Farb and Armelagos, *Consuming Passions,* p. 198.

pound pieces of veal, fourteen to sixteen pound rounds of beef, whole turtles, or a calf's head.[15]

In America meat was generally the "focus" of the meal, with all other dishes merely "peripheral."[16] Until the end of the nineteenth century, pork, usually salted, was the most common meat, often eaten at three meals a day.[17] By the beginning of the twentieth century, beef had replaced pork as the meat of choice, due in part to the railroads making western range land more accessible to consumers in the east, the availability of refrigeration, and, in 1876, the invention of and mass use of barbed wire. All of this stood in stark contrast to the limited resources of Japan and its more or less meatless diet.

While the Japanese diet was one that prominently featured vegetables and whole grains (especially rice), the American diet at this time was conspicuously lacking in both. The most common vegetables served in America were potatoes and other root vegetables (they were also the most common Western vegetables in Japan, but were still relatively unknown)[18]. While the *American Cookbook* included recipes for such vegetables as onions, parsnips, carrots, garlicks (*sic*), radishes, and artichokes, as well

---

[15] Amellia Simmons, *American Cookery or the art of Dressing Viands, Fish, Poultry & Vegetables and the best Modes of Making Pastes, Puffs, Pies, Tarts, Puddings, Custards & Preserves and All Kinds of Cakes from the Imperial Plumb to Plain Cake adapted to This Country & All Grades of Life* (Hartford, CT.: Hudson and Goodwin, 1796; Reprint: Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1965).

[16] Farb and Armelagos, *Consuming Passions*, p. 198.

[17] Waverley Root and Richard de Rochemont, *Eating in America: A History* (New York: The Ecco Press, 1981; first published in 1976), p. 122.

[18] White potatoes were introduced to Japan in the sixteenth century but had been seen as a food for famines until the late nineteenth century. See Cwiertka, *Making of Modern Culinary Tradition*, p. 44-45 for more on the introduction of and use of potatoes and onions in Japan.

as asparagus, parsley, cucumbers, melons, lettuce, beans and peas, and for many types of cabbage, by far the most frequent vegetable it featured was the potato.[19] Potatoes were also the most common vegetable found in cookbooks published in Oregon at the beginning of the twentieth century, almost to the exclusion of all other vegetables.[20] When recipes for non-root vegetables were given, the general rule was to boil the vegetables for thirty minutes. The recipe for cooking vegetables (the *only* recipe for vegetables other than potatoes) found in one local cookbook, the *Mt. Hood Cookbook of Tried Recipes,* was to "Plunge all green, succulent vegetables in boiling water and cook from 20 to 30 minutes," the same method given one hundred years earlier in *American Cooker.*[21]

The dearth of vegetables in the American diet can be partly explained by what was known about nutritional science at that time. In the late nineteenth century American nutritionists advocated what they called "pecuniary economy" in food, a belief that people should get their calories and protein as cheaply as possible. Wheat, cheap and plentiful, was seen as being one of the most efficient foods, and therefore its consumption was encouraged. Eating wheat in the form of bread also maintained the culinary traditions of most Americans as their European ancestors would have had bread

---

[19] Simmons, *American Cookery.*

[20] Two cookbooks that were published in the Hood River area at this time, both collections of recipes collected and published by local churches, had by far more recipes for potatoes than for anything else. In these cookbooks nearly all of the recipes were for either meat dishes, potato dishes, or deserts, although there were a few recipes for a few Spanish, Italian, or French dishes. See *Mt. Hood Cookbook of Tried Recipes, Compiled by members of the Presbyterian Church* (no publication information, but could be from Hood River, circa 1910); *The Congregational Cook Book: Six Hundred Selected Recipes of Things Good to Eat* (The Dalles: Chronicle Publishing, Inc. 1911).

[21] *Mt. Hood Cookbook of Tried Recipes*, no page numbers in book.

as the center of their meals. Green, leafy vegetables were viewed as relatively expensive and a food that provided few calories, and were thus to be avoided.[22] Even the United States Government advocated against eating vegetables. In 1907, Charles Langworthy, then the head nutrition at the United States Office of Experiment Stations, wrote that foods such as green plants were "a very welcome addition to the winter food and made the food more appetizing" but nothing more. In essence, at a time before vitamins had been identified and their role understood, "government scientists were condemning the use of fresh fruits and vegetables."[23] The English held similar opinions, believing that vegetables lacked nutrition and fermented in the stomach.[24]

In the late nineteenth century the field of food science was still in its infancy; carbohydrates had been identified only in 1840, while vitamins would not be discovered until the 1910's (the word "vitamin" was coined in 1911).[25] Between 1870 and 1900 most food scientists were concerned with such things as better food safety (through improved sanitation), better nutrition, and greater consumer convenience, goals that were shared with the food processing industry. But also of interest for some food scientists was the matter of defining and creating an American cuisine that was "American." This was done in part to try to turn back the tide of foreign foods that were entering American life during a period of increased nativism caused by high levels

---

[22] Richard Osborn Cummings, *The American and His Food: A History of Food Habits in the United States* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1940), p. 127-128.

[23] Cummings, *American and his Food*, p. 131.

[24] Katarzyna Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine: Food, Power and National Identity* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006), p. 48.

[25] Carbohydrates were discovered by Justus Liebig. Liebig later invented and sold a processed meat product (Liebig's Extract of Meat) that was popular with Westerners in Japan as an alternative to real meat.

of immigration. These food scientists ended up turning to New England and its Puritan heritage to define what was "American" food, promoting food that was not extravagant and that did not involve indulgence or pleasure, at least for the poor and for immigrants.[26] In America modern science was being used to help shape and reinforce one segment of society's religious-based ideas of what food culture should be, a food culture that downplayed enjoyment and promoted temperance.

Religion was also important in shaping food culture in Japan. Japanese Buddhism played a large role in shaping Japan's food culture, especially its historical proscriptions against meat eating and the ideas associated with *sesshō*, the philosophy of not wasting any food (any living thing). Japan's other main religion, Shinto, was also very important, particularly in the role rice played in both everyday life and in celebrations. Japanese food was seen as something to be celebrated and enjoyed, an approach much at odds with how food was viewed in America. While in America the pleasurable aspects of food were discouraged, in Japan they were celebrated. Both cuisines had traditions of simplicity, but for different reasons. In Japan Buddhism and tradition had contributed to the cuisine's simplicity of preparation. In America elaborate preparation took time and was viewed as counter to the puritanical tastes of America. It has been noted that American "democratic enthusiasm made a virtue out of simple and often tasteless food; any catering to the delights of the palate was scorned as a sign of 'Old World decadence.'"[27]

Further contributing to an increase in the use of processed foods was another invention of "modern" America, the home economics movement. Home economics,

---

[26] Donna R. Gabaccia, *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans* (Harvard University Press, 1998), p. 125-126.

[27] Farb and Armelagos, *Consuming Passions*, p. 197.

or domestic science, emerged in the late nineteenth century as a movement to promote "modern" household management to women. Many of its founders, including such women as Catherine Beecher (1800-1878) and Julia McNair Wright (b.1840-?), came from the families of New England Protestant ministers, and their teachings on household management often tended to reflect their conservative Christian beliefs, including their tastes in food.[28] As home economics was taught as part of women's curriculum at many American colleges and universities, especially at land grant schools, many middle class American women would have been exposed to the ideas of scientific efficiency that the program promulgated, as well as the idea that processed foods were convenient and safe.

While the food industry and food scientists tried to create an image of processed foods being a product of modernity and safe and convenient, the opposite was often the case. One of the more infamous examples of the horrors of industrial food processing can be found in Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, a semi-fictional account that exposed the horrors of the Chicago meat packing industry. Published in 1906, one of the peak years for Japanese immigration to America, the book offered a look at a European immigrant's experiences in America, where things that would have been illegal or unthinkable in the old country were now standard, and where chemicals and additives had replaced natural ingredients.[29]

While different cultural backgrounds contributed to the differences between

---

[28] Catherine Beecher had other siblings, including Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896), who contributed to the development of home economics education, all of whom shared her New England Protestant conservatism. See Sarah A. Leavitt, *From Catherine Beecher to Martha Stewart: A Cultural History of Domestic Advice* (Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), p. 15-21.

[29] Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle* (Harper & Brothers, 1905).

American and Japanese food, the greater degree of industrialization found in America at that time played a much larger role. The food processing industry greatly expanded after the invention of a machine to manufacture tin cans in 1849.[30] Between 1859 and 1899 the manufacture of processed foods increased fifteen-fold, while manufacturing in general grew by only a factor of six.[31] As food processing increased so did the homogenization of food. Regional, and later, national brands replaced locally produced foods, a process that was greatly enabled by an improved transportation system. As Donna Gabaccia notes in *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans*: the emergence of food corporations, combined with an improved transportation system, "increasingly linked a nation of many (food) regions into a single national food marketplace...If industrialization did not automatically transform American eaters into a homogeneous people of nationally uniform tastes, it certainly created the material conditions for a marketplace that was national in its geographic dimensions and corporate organization."[32] The result was that beginning in the late nineteenth century American food began a long downward slide into tastelessness and over-processing, with chemical additives and flavorings replacing the original flavors and variety of what was available. Convenience may have increased, but food quality was lost to quantity while flavor was lost to the larger yields that mechanization brought

---

[30] Root and de Rochemont, *Eating in America*, p. 190. Foods had been canned since the early nineteenth century, but they were hand made and thus expensive and prone to contamination or spoilage. Their use greatly expanded during the American Civil War and afterwards when veterans, exposed to canned foods during the war, continued to demand the convenience that canned foods offered.

[31] Gabaccia, *We Are What We Eat*, p. 55.

[32] Ibid.

with it.[33]

It must be acknowledged that much of this is generalization: there is no way to know what specific foods people ate or were familiar with, especially with the disparate group of people being considered here. While many cultures have easily recognizable national cuisines (rice is identified with Asian countries, bread, cheese and wine with France, black bread with Russia, tamales with Mexico, pasta with Italy), defining what is "American" food is not easily done as there is no national cuisine that unites Americans across ethnic and regional boundaries.[34] People in other countries, however, can readily define what "American" cuisine is, identifying it as being food that is mass produced and intended to be eaten quickly. As the food writer Donna Gabaccia notes, "(w)hat makes foods American—at least to outsiders—is how they are produced, packaged, and served, not who manufactures or eats them or how they taste."[35] In the 1930s the *America Eats* attempted to identify, if not to actually define, what was "American" food at a time when American cuisine was much more of a collection of regional cuisines determined by the geography of the area and the cultural backgrounds of its inhabitants than it is today. Unfortunately, due to the outbreak of war, the program ended before much could be done with the results. Today this program is little remembered, but it does offer a glimpse of what was being eaten in America, including in the Pacific Northwest.[36]

---

[33] John L. Hess & Karen Hess, *The Taste of America* (University of Illinois Press, 2000; orig. pub. 1972), p. 42.

[34] Donna Gabaccia, "American as Budweiser and Pickles," in Warren Belasco and Philip Scranton, eds. *Food Nations: Selling Taste in Consumer Societies* (Routledge, 2002, p. 175-193), p. 175.

[35] Gabaccia, "American as Budweiser," p. 175. There are many more examples of food as markers of identity, many of which are negative.

[36] The "America Eats" program was part of a Works Progress Administration (W.P.A., later Works

FOOD IN JAPAN

Although the focus of this paper is how Japanese food and "American" food crossed paths in America, and more specifically in Oregon, it is also important to understand the history of Japanese food in Japan and how it was a product of the interaction between Japan and other countries and food cultures. The process if culinary evolution in Oregon was a continuation of the same process, albeit in a much different context. But essentially it was still a process of change caused by outside influences on pre-existing food cultures.

For much of Japan's history the primary outside cultural influences came from China and Korea, with more limited influences from the south as well (mainly through the Ryukyu Islands). The most important source was China, which greatly influenced the development of Japan's language, religion (especially Buddhism), political structure (based on Confucian ideals), and its food. According to Naomichi Ishige, a noted scholar of Japanese food history, the period from the sixth century until the end of the sixteenth century was the "'Formative Period,' when Japan absorbed aspects of Chinese civilization relating to dietary culture and transformed them into indigenous patterns

---

Projects Administration) program known as the Federal Writer's Project that sought to study relationships between food culture and ethnicity in the United States. The program collected information on American regional foods and food-related traditions, making note of differences between "American" and "ethnic" foods. The effort was undertaken in part as a way to put writers and scholars to work, but also an attempt to chronicle the "development of American cookery as an authentic art and in the preservation of that art in the face of mass-production of food-stuffs and partly cooked foods and the introduction of numerous technological devices that lessen labor or preparation but lower quality of the product" and to use food to promote patriotism. For more, see John Charles Camp, *America Eats: Toward a Social Definition of American Foodways,* (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1978), specifically p. 98 and p. 11-12, fn. 24.

that became the basis of Japan's own distinctive dietary culture."[37] Japan, being physically isolated from China and thus never under direct Chinese rule, was never compelled to accept anything but was able to pick and choose what aspects of Chinese culture it wished to adopt. When something was adopted, it was removed from a Chinese context and instead assumed Japanese characteristics.

The most important food to come from China was rice, specifically short-grained white rice, *Oryza japonica*, the food item most closely associated with the idea of "Japaneseness."[38] Next in importance are the foods referred to in Chinese as *jiǎng*, preserved foods made by fermenting and preserving the product with salt. The most important of this category are *miso* and *shōyu* (soy sauce). These two sauces, both made from soybeans (originally from China) and with histories that go back at least to the Han Dynasty in China (206 B.C.E. to C.E. 220), have been indispensable ingredients in Japanese cooking for several hundred years, and also are the main sources of salt in Japanese diets.[39] Noodles, another staple, came from China as well, arriving in the eighth century.[40] Tea, the most famous and common beverage of Japan, came

---

[37] Ishige, *History and Culture of Japanese Food,* p. 46.

[38] *Oryza japonica* and the long-grain *Oryza indica* are both sub-species of the domesticated Asian rice *O. sativa.* The exact area where rice was first cultivated is not certain, but Japanese researchers believe it to have originated on the Indian subcontinent, near present day Burma and China's Yunnan region. Traces of rice from approximately 5000 B.C.E. have been found at Hemudu along the shores of Hangzhou Bay in China, leading Chinese researchers to believe it originated there. This rice first came to Japan in the third century B.C. E., most likely carried by immigrants coming from Korea and China. See Ishige, *History and Culture of Japanese Food* , p. 21.

[39] Ibid., p. 39-40. *Miso* and *shoyu* provide 43% of the salt in the Japanese diet. A third product, a fish sauce known in Japan as *shiokaru,* originated in China (where it was known simply as *jiǎng*) where it was made from ancient times until the end of the Ming Dynasty, was at one time common in Japan but is now found in only two prefectures where it is used in local specialty dishes.

[40] Ibid., p. 77.

from China as well. Important contributions thought to have originated on the Korean peninsula include barley, buckwheat and *adzuki* red beans. These foods to this day constitute the core foods of Japanese cuisine.

The 1540's saw the arrival of Europeans, first the Portuguese and Spanish, and later the Dutch and others. The Europeans brought with them such things as firearms and Christianity, and also new foodstuffs and cooking techniques. The Europeans introduced several new foods from the Americas that would eventually become important to Japanese cuisine, including sweet potatoes, pumpkins, and cayenne pepper.[41] New cooking techniques and recipes that were introduced during this period include tempura and various types of confections. In many instances the ingredients used in these new dishes were creolized to better fit Japanese resources and tastes, although their names frequently remained quite similar to the original Portuguese.[42]

After most Westerners were barred from Japan early in the seventeenth century, external influences on Japan's food culture nearly ceased. But rather than this being a period of stagnation in the evolution of Japanese cuisine, the opposite occurred. As Ishige notes of the Edo Period: "Although very little dietary culture was introduced

---

[41] Sweet potatoes were introduced to Japan by the Spaniards via the Philippines. In 1593 its cultivation spread to Fujian, China, then in 1605 to the Ryukyu Islands (known today Okinawa), and then to Hirado on the island of Kyushu, Japan. Pumpkins arrived about the same time via Cambodia, its Japanese name of *kabocha* coming from the word Cambodia (*Kanbochia* in Japanese). Both became important foods in areas ill-suited to rice cultivation. Cayenne pepper was introduced by the Portuguese around 1542 and quickly replaced black pepper as a spice for noodle dishes, and later became a key ingredient in *shichimi tōgarashi* (seven-flavor spice), a popular tabletop spice. See Ishige, *History of Japanese Food*, p. 93-96.

[42] Ishige, *History of Japanese Food* , p. 93-96. For example, the word 'tempura' was likely derived from tempero, 'to season,' or from tempora, a religious term referring to days when fish was to be eaten instead of meat, while the Japanese confections *konpeitō, aruheitō* and *karumera* came from, respectively, the Portuguese dishes *confeito, alfeloa* and *caramelo.*

from abroad, those elements that were already well established were consolidated and systematized. This period saw the formulation of what the Japanese today regard as their 'traditional' culinary values, cooking and eating habits."[43] Among the more important of these "culinary values" and "eating habits was the development new recipes and styles of foods, an increase in the importance of presentation of food, and the development of an extensive restaurant culture.[44] Rice was important not only because it was the preferred food but also due to its use as the monetary unit of payment for samurai stipends.[45] Rice, along with pickles (*tsukemono*), *miso* soup, and various side dishes such as fish, simmered vegetables, and tōfu, became the standard diet for most urban Japanese, a diet that would remain virtually unchanged until the twentieth century.

THE ARRIVAL OF PERRY

After Commodore Mathew Perry's arrival in Japan in 1853 the underlying cause of food hybridization reverted to external rather than internal causes. At first the process was slow, with a limited number of Western foods diffusing into Japanese food culture primarily as a consequence of economic-related contact between Westerners and the Japanese.[46] At times the Japanese were somewhat apprehensive about having to

---

[43] Ibid., p. 105.

[44] During the Edo Period a middle class emerged in Japan's major cities that spurred the growth of restaurants, especially restaurants that specialized in *tempura, sushi,* and *soba* (noodles). There were also many restaurants and snack shops that catered to the lower classes. It has been estimated that Edo had more restaurants per capita than any city in the world at that time. For more on Edo restaurant culture see Ishige, *History of Japanese Food* , p. 107-112.

[45] During this period many rice farmers could not afford to eat the rice they grew, a problem that persisted into the Meiji Period.

[46] Most significant were the opportunities that arose through Japanese employment as servants or in establishments that catered to Westerners (hotels, restaurants) and in the production of Western food

eat Western foods, but they eventually they would come to accept and even embrace some new foods.

In 1860 Japan sent its first official mission to the United States to ratify treaties between Japan and the United States and also to observe the "prosperity of cities, the wealth of citizens, the conditions of the army and navy, and the strength of the greatness of the United States."[47] Although the sea voyage from Yokohama to San Francisco would last only 37 days, the travelers, not knowing what to expect in America, took their own food and utensils, enough to last for months, including hundreds of cases of polished rice.[48]

Upon arrival in San Francisco the Japanese were fortunate to have hosts who realized they might find the food in America strange and so had arranged for Japanese cooks to be able to prepare their meals, even making sure there was plenty of fresh fish available. Still, the Japanese did eat many new things, some enjoyable, others not. Most of the delegation abstained from touching milk, cheese, butter meat, or bread, foods that were still virtually unknown in Japan. Some of the entourage were able to "stomach" eating bread, but only when it was covered in sugar.[49] Even though most of the western food served in the hotels was nearly inedible to the Japanese, a few things

---

ingredients. For more on the diffusion of Western food into Japan after the end of the Edo Period see Ishige, *History of Japanese Food,* as well as Cwiertka, *Making of Modern Culinary Tradition*, and Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, p. 7-87.

[47] Masao Miyoshi, *As We Saw Them: Japan's First Embassy to the United States (1860)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), p. 21.

[48] Miyoshi, *As We Saw Them,* p. 29, and Yukichi Fukuzawa, *The Autobiography of Yukichi Fukuzawa,* translated by Eiichi Kiyooka with a forward by Carmen Blacker (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), p. 127.

[49] Ibid., p. 32-33.

were found enjoyable, including ice cream and champagne.[50] Still, as long as they refused to eat Western food, the Japanese would often be "famished in the midst of feasts more luxurious than they had ever dreamed of."[51]

One incident that illustrated how unfamiliar the Japanese were of Western foods occurred when they were served a whole roast pig, an event that made Fukuzawa and others at the dinner think of the fabled land of Adachiga Hara and the cruel witch who "indulged in gruesome feasts;" afterward he remarked that "still, it tasted very good."[52] It is likely that the greatest food-related problem the group had was seasickness during the voyage, a problem that would occur many times in the future. [53]

Two years later Fukuzawa and other Japanese traveled to Europe and, again recognizing that "agreeable foods" would not be available in foreign lands, carried all of their "necessary" foods with them from Japan. However, when they were unable to cook their own food in Paris, rather than reject Western food, the Japanese accepted it. Fukuzawa later wrote of "a spread of food, delicacies of 'both the woods and the sea,' that even those who professed their dislike of 'foreign objects' could not maintain this aversion in the choice of food."[54]

After the Meiji Restoration of 1868 the diffusion of Western foods into the Japanese diet greatly accelerated, in great part due to conscious decisions on the part of the political leadership that were part of an overall program of strengthening the nation though modernization. Europeans and Americans were brought to Japan to teach

---

[50] Fukuzawa, *Autobiography,* p. 113.

[51] Miyoshi, *As We Saw Them,* p. 33.

[52] Fukuzawa, *Autobiography*, p. 115.

[53] Ibid., p. 107.

[54] Ibid., p. 127-129.

Western learning and to help modernize the economy. The foreigners that came to Japan brought with them many new and unfamiliar things, including manners of behavior, food, dress, and other aspects of culture, as well as concepts related to *imin* (emigrants and emigration), something not known during Japan's long period of isolation. Although there would be ample opportunities for the blending of Western and Japanese food cultures, the actual extent to which it happened was quite uneven. Some foods made the transition between cultures quite easily, while others never did. Some groups of people eagerly made the transition from Japanese to Western foods, while others, perhaps the majority, did so in limited instances.

DEKASEGI LABORERS AND WHY PEOPLE LEFT JAPAN

Some of the first people to travel to America in the late Bakumatsu and early Meiji Periods (roughly 1860-1880) were students, most of whom seemed to enjoy Western food, perhaps because it was part of the learning experience they sought out.[55] By the 1880s the purpose of travel by most Japanese had changed from being for study to seeking work. As the type of traveler changed so did their willingness to embrace Western foods. In 1884 changes were made to Japanese emigration law that allowed

---

[55] Charles Lanman, *The Japanese in America.* London: Longman, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1872, p. 61. The first students to travel abroad left in 1862 to study in Holland, the Western country the Japanese were at that time most familiar with. Between 1868 and 1875 Japan issued 596 passports for travel to the United States, of which some 200 and 250 were for study at American colleges. Most of the early students studied at schools in the east, particularly in New England, and a few in the San Francisco Bay area. At this time Oregon lacked established universities and thus did not have any students. See Yamato Ichihashi, *Japanese in the United States* (New York: Arno Press and the New York Times, 1969; orig. published by Stanford University, 1932), p. 5; John E. Van Sant, *Pacific Pioneers: Japanese Journeys to America and Hawaii, 1850-80* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), p. 51; and William Toll, "Permanent Settlement: Japanese Families in Portland in 1920," in *The Western Historical Quarterly,* Vol. 28, No. 1 (Spring, 1997), p. 18-43, p. 28.

for migration for the purpose of work. The first of these new migrants went to Hawaii, mostly to work in the sugar cane fields. Travel mainland America soon followed, with the work done by the migrants determined in great part by where they went.[56]

Between 1885 and 1908 most of the emigrants were single male laborers—birds of passage—who intended to 'sojourn' in Hawaii and the American continent. These sojourners became known as *dekasegi* (or *dekaseginin*), a term that came from the mark stamped on their passports meaning "for the purpose of going out to work."[57] There were other marks on the passports as well, marks meant to distinguish between immigrant laborers and non-laborers.[58] Most went abroad with the intention of working for a few years at relatively high wages and then returning to Japan. All classes of society, both socially and economically, were represented, including nobility (*kizoku*), former-samurai (*shizoku*), political refugees, priests, scholars, doctors, businessmen, and even criminals and prostitutes.[59] The cost of passage generally prevented people from the lowest economic levels from migrating,

---

[56] In California the work was mostly in agriculture, while in the Pacific Northwest it tended to be related to railroad construction, logging and lumber, and fish canneries.

[57] Hisashi Tsurutani, *America-Bound: The Japanese and the Opening of the American West.* Translated by Betsey Scheiner (Tokyo: The Japan Times, 1989; originally published as *Amerika Seibu Kaitaku to Nihonjin* by Nippon Hoso Kyokai, 1977), p. 36.

[58] Other things stamped on passports included marks indicating the person's class status, either *imin* (literally, "a citizen who moves or migrates"), or *himin* ("non-migrant"). *Himin* was supposed to indicate a non-laborer, and in theory a person of higher class than the *imin.* The purpose of these marks was to reduce the number of lower class immigrants in an effort to avoid restrictions placed on migration similar to those placed on China in 1882 over a perceived over abundance of laborers. See Mitziko Sawada, "Culprits and Gentlemen: Meiji Japan's Restrictions of Emigrants to the United States, 1891-1909," *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. LX, No. 3 (Aug., 1991), p. 339-359, p. 342.

[59] Yasuo Wakatsuki, "Japanese Emigration to the United States, 1866-1924: A Monograph," in *Perspectives in American History, Vol. XII, 1979* (Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History, Harvard University, 1979), p. 387-516, p. 515.

while the wealthiest generally had little incentive to migrate.[60]

There were both "push" and "pull" reasons for people emigrating to America, although the strongest was likely for better economic opportunities. Among the more important in the "push" category were reasons related to the general social upheaval caused by the rapid modernization of the Meiji Period, rural poverty brought on by both natural and human causes, a fear of political persecution, and a rapid growth of population.[61] Some men left Japan to avoid military conscription, an action somewhat ironic in the context of this study because many of the Western foods these immigrants would be exposed to in America would have likely been introduced to them in Japan during military service.[62]

---

[60] One group of people that is thought to have not emigrated in any great number were the *eta*, or *burakumin*, the former 'untouchable' class. Although in theory no longer officially the lowest segment of the population, they were still frequently mistreated and relegated to the margins of society and may have had strong incentives to leave. There is no evidence that they did leave, most likely due to a lack of funds. See Masakazu Iwata, *Planted in Good Soil: The History of the Issei in United States Agriculture*, Vol. I and II (New York, San Francisco, et al: Peter Lang, 1992), p. 106.

[61] Between 1880 and 1900 the population increased to about 45 million from about 35 million, a level that had been fairly stable since 1720. Andrew Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 26 and p. 94. For more on problems related to rural poverty see Wakatsuki, "Japanese Emigration to the United States," p. 400-403, and p. 416-417. For information on reasons related to Japanese political refugees see, among others, Iwata, *Planted in Good Soil,* p. 91.

[62] On avoiding conscription, see Iwata, *Planted in Good Soil,* p. 91-92, as well as Robert A. Wilson and Bill Hosokawa, *East to America: A History of the Japanese in the United States* (William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1980), p. 48. For how the military was used to introduce Western foods into the Japanese diet, see Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine,* Chapter 3, "Strengthening the Military," p. 56-87. An additional reason for migration has been proposed by Eichiro Azuma in *Between Two Empires* where he argues that the Japanese diaspora was part of Japan's modernization process, with emigration (*imin*) and colonialism (*shokumin*) inter-related as part of the Meiji imperial project. According to Azuma the Japanese that settled in America were led by a "unified leadership of elite immigrants" that was loyal to

Most of the Japanese that came to Oregon originated from Hiroshima, Wakayama, Yamaguchi, Kumamoto, Fukuoka, and Okayama Prefectures, and most of these from farm families.[63] During the Meiji Period Hiroshima and Okayama were two of the three poorest prefectures in Japan, with the lowest levels of per-capita wealth and the smallest amount of farm land per household in Japan.[64] Further, many of the people that came were younger sons who had limited prospects for advancement. Many farmers could not afford to eat the rice they grew, relying on lesser grains such as millet or barley served in gruel with rice straw, leaves, and grasses.[65] In Okayama some tenant farmers were so poor they could not afford to eat the rice they grew but could only drink water, earning the name "water drinking peasants."[66]

If there were strong incentives to 'push' people out of Japan there equally strong

---

Japan's imperial project and helped develop markets for Japanese goods by promoting the mercantilist expansion ideas of Fukuzawa Yukichi on the Pacific Coast of America. These well educated businessmen came not just to promote trade but also to try to blunt anti-Japanese racist sentiments by promoting Japanese culture and goods and helping to shape a positive image of Japan in the minds of Americans. The Meiji elite saw these emigrants as doing their "patriotic duty to further Japan's expansionist cause" while the migrants viewed the act from the standpoint of personal interest. See Azuma, *Between Two Empires*, p. 11 & 20, and in Chapter 1.

[63] Over half (53.8%) of the Japanese that passed through United States and Canadian ports between 1901 and 1909 listed their occupation as either "farmer" or "farm laborer," although no corresponding information on their home prefecture is available to go with this. Iwata, *Planted in Good Soil*, p. 108, Table "Occupation of Japanese Aliens Who Arrived at Ports of the United States and Canada, 1901-1909.

[64] Yosaburo Yoshida, "Sources and Causes of Japanese Emigration," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* Vol. XXXIV (July-December, 1909), p. 377-387, p. 383, and Ronald Takaki, *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans* (Little, Brown and Company, 1989), p. 43-44.

[65] Wakatsuki, "Japanese Emigration to the United States," p. 404-405.

[66] Kazuo Ito, *Issei: A History of Japanese Immigrants in North America,* translated by Shinichiro Nakamura and Jean S. Gerard (Japan: Japan Publications, Inc., 1973), p. 28. The original quote was likely an exaggeration of actual conditions.

"pulls" to attract them to America. The Pacific Northwest offered numerous opportunities for employment in the expanding Pacific Coast economy, especially as laborers in logging camps, railroad construction, and in salmon canneries.[67] All of these industries were well suited to young immigrants who wished to work hard for a few years and save enough money to return home to pay off debts, buy farmland, and perhaps build a house with some western features. None of the jobs required any extensive knowledge of the English language. The only capital needed was perhaps $100, money that would cover a steamship ticket and the "show money" arriving passengers were required to present to immigration officials upon arrival.

Thanks to its location and having rail links to the East Coast, Seattle's port grew to be the top port on the coast in value terms for imports and exports, with Seattle's trade with Japan centered on importing tea and silk and exporting lumber and grain. Tacoma also thrived, as a port and due it being the terminus of the Northern Pacific Railroad.[68] Portland and its economy also grew, thanks in part due to its being a port city, the terminus of the Union Pacific Railroad, and through the production and export of lumber and grain.

For the first wave of Japanese immigrants to Oregon the railroad, logging and lumber industries offered the best opportunities for employment. Railroads were expanding throughout the Northwest and they needed a supply of cheap labor to build new lines, work that previously would have been done by Chinese labor that was at that

---

[67] Forrest E. LaViolette, *Americans of Japanese Ancestry: A Study of Assimilation in the American Community* (Toronto: The Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1945), p. 172. The region's expanding economy was by far the greatest pull factor in attracting the Japanese.

[68] Madeline Yuan-yin Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold, Dreaming of Home: Transnationalism and Migration Between The United States and South China, 1882-1943* (Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press, 2000), p. 162.

time no longer available.[69] The railroads generally paid Japanese workers one dollar a day for a ten or twelve hour day. This was less than what Caucasians doing the same work were paid, but still much more than could have been made in Japan.[70] In 1909 a Japanese scholar commented that more than anything else it was "the simple fact that labor earns more in America than in Japan" that induced people to come to America.[71]

Many if not most of the Japanese who went to America were recruited by word of mouth with stories of relatives and neighbors who had gone to America and found success. Immigration companies also played important roles in both recruiting emigrants and in assisting in such things as acquiring a passport, booking passage on a steam-ship, arranging for employment in America, and at times even providing the "show money" the emigrant would need to have upon arrival.[72] The emigration companies were usually operated by (or employed) a Japanese person who could speak English and thus act as a middleman to assist the non-English speaking laborers cope with their new lives. They also frequently supplied the immigrants with goods from

---

[69] The railroad building boom of the 1850's and 1860's had relied heavily on the use of immigrant Chinese labor, something no longer available due to an anti-Chinese movement that culminated in 1882 with passage of the Chinese exclusion Act.

[70] In 1885, the year *dekasegi* emigration began, the pay of a male farm worker in Japan was the equivalent of $1.72 a month, a carpenter twenty-two cents a day, and a laborer only sixteen cents a day. Town and village officials earned from $3.94 to $4.73 a month. Rice farmers averaged a gross income of only $4.89 a year; deducting for his and his family's labor, the net income was negative $1.48. Wakatsuki, "Japanese Emigration to the United States," p. 407-408.

[71] Yoshida, *Sources of Japanese Emigration,* p. 384. Yoshida was teaching at the University of Wisconsin, Madison at the time of this article's publication.

[72] The first of these opened in the early 1890s. There were eleven such immigration companies operating in Japan in 1900 and thirty-six in 1903, nine in Hiroshima Prefecture. In 1902 seven of the larger companies assisted 4,630 emigrants, and in 1903 nine companies helped send 3,069. See Wilson and Hosokawa, *East to America*, p. 51, and Tsurutani, *America-Bound,* Table 2.2, p. 55.

Japan, especially food. Workers were recruited with offers of pay ranging from $1.10 to $1.30, a high wage relative to what was available in Japan.[73] At times other incentives were offered, including work clothes, various other necessities, and food, including rice, *miso*, and *shōyu* (soy sauce).[74]

Between 1890 and the 1910s a number of inexpensive guidebooks and magazines related to emigration were published to help prepare and encourage emigrants for their life in America. Typical titles included *Beikoku ima fushigi* ("Mysterious America," 1886); *Tobei annai* ("Guide to America," 1901); *Kaigai dekasegi annai* ("A Guide to Working Abroad," 1902); *Kaigai risshin no tebiki* ("A Guide to Success Abroad," 1902); and the magazine *Tobei zasshi* ("America Bound").[75] A small pamphlet, *Guidance for Going to America*, was reported to have sold two thousand copies a week.[76] The guides provided information all aspects of life abroad, including things related to food. For the early Japanese emigrants the availability of familiar food was a very important thing to consider, and guide books were an important source of this information. They could also be important sources of information regarding food related business opportunities.

A typical example of these guide books was *Shin tobeihō*, or *New Way to go to America*. First published in 1901 (and in its tenth printing in 1916) and priced at

---

[73] For example, in 1885, the year *dekasegi* emigration began, the pay of a male farm worker was the equivalent of $1.72 a month, a carpenter twenty-two cents a day, and a laborer sixteen cents a day. Wakatsuki, "Japanese Emigration to the United States," p. 407-408.

[74] Yuji Ichioka, "Japanese Immigrant Labor Contractors and the Northern Pacific and The Great Northern Railroad Companies, 1898-1907," *Labor History*, Vo. 21, No. 3 (Summer 1980), p. 325-350, p. 66, and Ito, *Issei*, p. 541.

[75] These titles as well as others are given in Tsurutani, *America-Bound*, p. 46, Table 2-1.

[76] Ito, *Issei,* p. 6. The pamphlet was published in 1901 by Sen Katayama, a leading Japanese Socialist.

eighty-five *sen* (the equivalent of less than forty-five cents), *Shin tobehō* would have been easily affordable for someone looking for information on how to prepare for the crossing of the Pacific, as well as what to do and how to behave once in America. The book was written by someone who had spent ten years in America and seems to have been written from a precautionary perspective, warning potential emigrants that life in America might not be as easy as many might expect. Reiterating the temporary nature of the *dekasegi* emigrants who were assumed to be going abroad only long enough to save a thousand dollars or so, this book featured a profile of an ideal sojourning emigrant, Tachiro Morinaga, someone who had had traveled to the United States in the 1890s to study Western sweets and candy, returned to Japan, and began a successful business making sweets and candies.[77]

These guides also featured information, often in the form of advertisements, for Japanese-related businesses and services that were available in America. Labor contractors who offered connections to employers advertised, as did hotels and merchants. One guidebook, *The New Guide to America* (*Shin tobei annai*), for example, carried an ad for the M. Furuya Company of Seattle, a firm that did importing and exporting with Japan. Prominently featured in the ad is information that the store carries Japanese foods, information that would have been important to a Japanese person considering foreign travel.

FOOD ON BOARD SHIPS

For those that chose to emigrate, the path to America—and to the integration of foodways—was not always easy. Emigrants faced many of the same problems

---

[77] Shinmanuki Hyōdayū, *Shin tobehō* (*New Way to go to America*) (Tokyo: Hanubunkan, 1901; 10th ed., 1916 (Taisho 5)), p. 91. The company, Morinaga & Company Ltd., is still one of the largest candy and confection makers in Japan.

members of the early foreign delegations faced in regards to food, especially the difficulty of having access to Japanese ingredients and apprehension about having to eat foreign foods. For all of the *dekasegi* travelers, going to America would be their first experience outside of Japan, and for many, even their home prefecture. It was likely few if any of them had even seen a foreigner or foreign foods before going to the ports they sailed from. Unfortunately, most of the travelers would find their introduction to foreign foods to be largely an unpleasant experience.

Most of the *dekasegi* traveled as third-class passengers, inexpensive yet lacking in most creature comforts. The voyages normally took from fourteen to sixteen days, although occasionally more, as long as three weeks. Passengers slept in bunks stacked three-high, "like silkworm racks."[78] While many travelers later recalled having little privacy and, often, no baths or room for exercise on their voyages, their most vivid memories seem to have been about the food, in particular the poor quality of the food.

The most common complaint the *Issei* travelers had about the food served on ships was that it was monotonous and just plain bad, even though it usually was made from familiar ingredients. Although a typical Japanese breakfast of *miso* soup, rice, and pickles was often served, the diners frequently complained that the soup was watery and tasteless, with only a piece or two of dried tofu, that the rice was hard, dry, and difficult to swallow, and that soy sauce was not available. Dinner often consisted of foods not commonly eaten in Japan at the time, including such things as fat-back or fatty pork or rice gruel with pieces of fat floating in it.[79]

Much of the difficulty with the food likely was due to the ships having Chinese

---

[78] Ito, *Issei*. Several of the *Issei* interviewed in the making of this book mentioned the similarity of the ship's bunks to silkworm racks. See the accounts of Heitaro Hikada on p 42 for one such story.

[79] Ito's *Issei* has many stories of *Issei* shipboard memories. This is a composite.

cooks that made unfamiliar dishes such as curry rice, something still generally unknown in Japan at that time.[80] Curry rice in itself was not a problem, except when it was served at every meal. One Japanese passenger on a Chinese ship carrying the first large group of Japanese from Okayama to Portland in 1897 recalled: "(t)he trouble was—food. Chinese food is all right, but...the rice was dried out, and the side dishes were floating in lard and utterly inedible. When the boat anchored at Yokohama, I promptly disembarked and gobbled pickled radish and dried tuna flakes."[81] Even Chinese passengers complained, one saying "the food was different than what I was used to, and I did not like it at all."[82]

The food on Japanese flagged vessels was not much better. One passenger remembered eating poor quality Japanese food, including eggs with salt and white radish cooked in pork broth. He also remembered "some kind of strange, frozen fish, probably caught in some foreign country."[83] When bread and butter were served the travelers typically reacted with revulsion, much as had members of the earlier delegations to America. For many people seasickness made the matter of food quality moot, as they could not eat, although it did allow for more food for those unaffected.

There were exceptions to the usual "awful" fare. Some *Issei* remembered being served red beans and rice and other celebratory foods for the first night's meal.[84] People who were at sea for New Years—the most important holiday of the year in Japan—might have been served traditional New Year's foods such as *ozoni* (a type of

---

[80] Chinese cooks were used by Chinese steamship lines as well as British lines.

[81] Ito,,*Issei* , p. 27-28. Recollection of Inota Tawa from his voyage on the *Empress of China.*

[82] Takaki, *Strangers,* p. 68.

[83] Ito, *Issei,* p. 29-30.

[84] Ibid., p. 193.

stew). For the few who could afford to travel first class the food was much better, if at times still unfamiliar. One *Issei* later recalled having only Western food meals when he traveled first-class from Yokohama to Seattle in 1923, except on New Years when Japanese fare was provided. This traveler's problems came not from the quality of the food but from its unfamiliarity. As he did not know what a T-bone steak looked like or what a pork chop was, this passenger ended up ordering the same food as the person sitting next to him, someone who had previously been to America.[85]

To help prepare people for their journey to America there were guidebooks available that offered advice on everything from packing for the voyage to what lines of work to engage in America. For the voyage these books suggested travelers would be wise to supplement their shipboard meals by packing food before departure, filling their wicker-basket traveling cases with canned goods along with their rice bowls, blankets, and everything else they brought to America. The guide book *New Way to go to America* (*Shin tobehō*) suggested first-class passengers bring along favorite foods such as *nori* (dried sea weed), *yōkan* (a sweet bean paste confection) and *okara* (tofu lees), while everyday foods would be adequately provided.[86] Second-class passengers were advised to bring fresh fruit, and third-class people fruit and canned goods that they should buy in Yokohama (or whatever port they sailed from), not in their hometown. The book also warned third-class passengers that the rice they would be served would most likely be made by Chinese cooks and would be in the form of *kayu* (a rice gruel consisting of rice, water and salt), not the more familiar *gohan* (cooked rice), and so people should be sure to carry along side dishes. The guide went on to add that people

---

[85] Recollections of Takeo Hasabe of his 1923 voyage on the Japanese owned (O.S.K. Line) ship *Arabia Maru* in Ito, *Issei*, p. 41-42.

[86] Shinmanuki, *Shin tobehō*, p. 85.

should not overeat at the beginning of the trip but should plan ahead and ration their food throughout the trip; for example, if someone wanted to eat a pear with every meal of an eighteen day trip they should bring fifty-four pears. The book also warned people that they may get sea sick and so suggested taking *ume boshi* (pickled Japanese apricots), *rakkyō* (pickled Chinese garlic, *Allium chinense*), and *daikonoroshi* (grated *daikon* radish) to ease the discomfort.[87]

For most Japanese, arrival in America meant a time to celebrate, perhaps with a familiar meal shared with Japanese who had previously come to America. For other immigrants, however, the ordeal was still not over. Most new arrivals had to pass a health exam before they could be released from immigration, an exam many people failed.[88] People that failed the inspection were held in detention until their medical condition was cured, sometimes for over a month. In detention the food had several similarities to the food eaten on the ships: in most cases it was bad, often prepared by Chinese cooks, and often there was no choice but to eat strange and foreign dishes. One man detained in Seattle remembered Chinese cooks served him "dried slugs and cooked greens" that he ate with dirty chopsticks, and that fried eggs (at ten cents each), pickled plums, and scallions were available to buy, but that otherwise it was "absolutely

---

[87] Shinmanuki, *Shin tobehō,* p. 91-92. Shipboard meals eventually improved, or at least the choice of meals did. Beginning in 1921 or so the O.S.K. line offered passengers traveling to Japan in third-class a choice of Japanese meals for $55 or Western meals for $70. By 1923 the other steamship lines had also added Western meals, an addition that was likely due in large part to the demands of the second-generation *Nisei.* See ads for OSK Lines, *Ōshū Nippō* (*Oregon Daily News*) 21 May, 1921, p. 3 as well as others. The *Ōshū Nippō* was published six days a week in Japanese in Portland.

[88] The inspections looked for evidence of hookworm, trachoma, syphilis and hepatitis. Most first-class passengers were exempt. There were also rumors that immigration officials detained people, especially picture brides, as a way to solicit bribes for their release. To the Japanese this was seen as a cheaper alternative to purchasing a return ticket to Japan. See Ito, *Issei,* p. 50.

forbidden to receive food from outside."[89]

The food served at the Portland detention center was also prepared by Chinese, three meals a day of dry rice with side dishes of greens and pork. And like in Seattle the food was often a mix of the familiar and the unknown, of foods from several different cultures. But unlike Seattle, in Portland detainees were allowed to bring food in from the outside. One *Issei* recalled buying bananas from a nearby fruit stand and of having an uncle who hired a sushi shop to send him sushi every day. Unfortunately the sushi arrived only once; the other days other people claimed it before the intended person could.[90] Another detainee remembered that after being served oatmeal for breakfast his "eyes filled with tears" with the thought that in America people had only oats to eat; in Japan at that time oats were eaten only by the poor.[91]

---

[89] Memories of Kikuyo Murata, from Ito, *Issei,* p. 47. The main reason for the poor quality seems to have been the due to keeping costs down; if the detainee's ship was still in port the steamship company paid for the food, usually about forty-five cents a day, while if the ship had sailed detainees were responsibility for the cost, a significant expense for a newly arrived immigrant. See Tsurutani, *America-Bound,* p. 99.

[90] Story of Frank Tomori, from Ito, *Issei,* p. 48-49.

[91] Ito, *Issei,* p. 247-248.

CHAPTER II:
EARLY *ISSEI* IN AMERICA

In discussing the history of the American *Issei* it is often impossible to organize events into clearly defined periods of time for when things happened. Instead, the periods covered in this paper are divided into general eras where the actual dates of events are less important than the overall sense of what was taking place. Thus, the eras will be divided into the early *Issei*, roughly 1885 until 1910, a period noted for the prevalence of male laborers; the era of settlement, roughly 1910 until perhaps 1920, a period when women immigrated and the men entered more permanent lines of work; and the era of the *Nisei*, when the second generation was born.

The first era of *Issei* life in America might be best characterized as one of limited interaction between the *Issei* and "American" society. Most *Issei* lived and worked apart from the majority population, usually as a result of their jobs. There was also little incentive for them to integrate into American society as most did not initially intend to stay in America. Combined with an inherent tendency for people to prefer foods they are familiar with over new and unknown foods, the result was that there was very a limited mixing of American and Japanese food cultures.

Once the *Issei* passed through immigration most of them first gathered in cities such as Portland and Seattle where they would stay until they were dispatched to their jobs, jobs usually arranged through labor contractors or through friends or relatives. Nearly all of these early *Issei* were men; in 1900 96.2%, and in 1910 91.4%.[92] Most of

---

[92] In Oregon in 1900 2,405 of 2,501 Japanese were men, and in 1910 3,124 of 3,148. The percentages were similar in Washington: in 1900 5,432 of 5,617 Japanese were men (96.7%), and in 1900 11,241 of 12,929 (96.9%) were male. Kristofer Allerfeldt, *Race, Radicalism, Religion, and Restriction: Immigration in the Pacific Northwest, 1890-1924* (Westport, Connecticut, and London: Praeger, 2003), P. 172, Table 4.1.

them intended to stay for only a few years, only as long as it took them to save enough money (1,000 dollars, the equivalent of about 2,000 yen) to return to Japan wealthy.[93] Before 1910 the most common line of work for *Issei* in Oregon was as railroad laborers, followed by logging and lumber work, and then farming.[94] Many *Issei* were also employed by fish canneries along the Columbia River, although this was a much more seasonal line of work.

Labor contractors played very important roles in the lives of the *Issei* laborers. Not only were they instrumental in bringing the *Issei* to America and placing them in jobs, but they also took care of many of their daily needs. Labor contractors provided the workers—many of whom lived in remote camps isolated from non-Japanese—with most of their supplies, acted as bankers, and communicated with the railroads and other employers. The largest and most important contractors to operate in Portland were Shinzaburō Ban (b. 1854), Teikoku Company of Portland (originally called Matsushima Shōten), and the Masajirō Furuya (1862-1938) of Seattle. Most of the labor contractors were educated entrepreneurs who had arrived in America before the era of the *dekasegi* workers and had learned English and American customs while students or houseboys, although Ban had learned English before coming to America.[95] All of

---

[93] Between 1895 and 1919, the years of greatest migration of men to America, one yen was worth between 49.5 and 51 cents. See William W. Lockwood, *The Economic Development of Japan: Growth and Structural Change, Expanded Edition* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 257, table 21. Many men wished to save ¥500, an amount that would allow them to marry into a propertied family as an adopted son.

[94] Iwata, *Planted in Good Soil*, p. 125. In 1910 over one-third of the Japanese in Oregon (1,200 of 3,853) worked for railroads, a number that was down from the peak years of 1905-1906. 800 worked in logging and lumber, and 200 did farm work.

[95] Yuji Ichioka, *The Issei: The World of the First Generation of Japanese Immigrants, 1885-1924* (New York: The Free Press, 1988), p. 60. Ban studied English in Japan with Dr. James Hepburn and later

them recognized that the best way to make it rich in America was not by laboring but by managing the laborers. All of them were also importers of goods from Japan, with some having branch stores in Japan.[96]

Labor contracting businesses made money primarily by charging each worker a small amount—generally ten cents per day—as well as other fees, such as for insurance, 'translation-office' services, and for handling remittances to Japan. They also made money by supplying the workers with food, although it should be noted that the railroads generally transported food and other supplies at no cost.[97]

Usually the *Issei* lived with fellow Japanese and apart from mainstream American society, something that was convenient but afforded few opportunities for interaction with non-Japanese. Often when an immigrant arrived without a pre-arranged job he stayed in a boarding house owned and operated by a labor contractor. These boarding houses, similar to Japanese workmen's quarters called *hanba*, provided a place where the recent arrivals could stay and take meals together, eat their native foods, and become accustomed to their new environment.[98] But again, this

---

worked as an official in Japan's Foreign Ministry where he became aware of the opportunities offered by labor contracting. He first opened an emigration company in Kobe and in 1891 began contracting with railroads in Oregon. At times he had some 3,800 workers under contract, a business that reportedly earned him five million dollars a year, making him the wealthiest Japanese in Oregon. The Teikoku Company was established in 1905 in Portland by Mosaburō Matsushima (1869-1940) who had come to Portland via Vancouver, B.C. in 1893, and in 1899 returned to Japan to recruit workers. In 1911 the shop's name was changed from Matsushima Shōten to Teikoku Shōkai. Information from Tsurutani, *America Bound*, p. 135-136; Eiichiro Azuma. *In This Great Land of Freedom: The Japanese Pioneers of Oregon* (Los Angeles: Japanese American National Museum, 1993), p. 9-11; and from an unpublished history of Teikoku and Anzen.

[96] Ban had branches in Tokyo and Yokohama and Furuya in Tokyo, Kobe, Yokohama, and Yokosuka.

[97] Ichioka, *The Issei*, p. 72-73.

[98] While the system of working for labor contractors was similar the Italian immigrant's *padrone* system,

system allowed for little interaction with non-Japanese.

Once in the work camp the *Issei* would work from ten to twelve hours a day, six days a week, doing work that, in railroad camps, consisted of such tasks as moving railroad ties and steel rails into place, removing tree stumps, and moving earth by hand for the grades, all physically strenuous and back breaking in nature. The pay ranged from ninety cents a day to perhaps as much as one dollar thirty-five cents a day, not a lot of money for people intending to quickly save $1,000. In camp the men lived together, usually in box cars converted for sleeping or in cabins or tents, with a separate car or building used for cooking and dining. Living in the railroad and logging camps may have been good for a worker who was trying to save money, but it also severely limited what goods were available, including food. Working conditions varied, depending in great part upon the weather (extreme heat or cold or moderate) and the temperament of the boss. One thing that did not vary much was the diet the *Issei* subsisted on, a diet that might best be described as "awful," monotonous, and at times so unhealthy that it bordered on being dangerously malnutritious. But unlike during their voyages to America when they had few options for what they ate, now the *Issei* chose to eat an "awful" diet in an effort to save money, a decision that ultimately led to a greater hybridization of their diet.

Despite the high cost of imported foods, the diet the *Issei* workers lived on was at its core Japanese, but with a few American additions. Its most notable characteristic

---

where a boss contracted the workers and carried out all of the communications and transactions, the boarding houses were feature of Japanese society that had been transported to the US, and was not found in any other immigrant community. These Japanese boarding houses began to disappear after 1925 when Asian immigration to the U.S. was outlawed. See Iwata, *Planted in Good Soil*, p. 160-161; S. Frank Miyamoto, "The Japanese Minority in the Pacific Northwest," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Vol. 54, No. 4 (Oct., 1963), p. 143-149, p. 144; and Tsurutani, *America-Bound*, p. 107.

was how generally poor it was, both nutritionally and aesthetically. Rice, imported from Japan or Hawaii and at times described as "fifth class" due to its poor quality, was often the center of meals, something that may not have been affordable in Japan.[99] Breakfast usually consisted of rice, *miso* soup, and pickles. Sometimes pancakes would be served, and often a dish known as *bottera*. *Bottera* was a dish made by mixing flour, water and salt together with perhaps a strip of pork and then frying it in a skillet. It seems to have been a dish invented in America by the Japanese laborers, most likely as a filling alternative to more expensive rice.[100] Lunch was usually rice (served hot and cold), *miso* soup, pickles, and either *bottera* or a type of dumpling soup known as *dango jiru*. Some camps might have bread or biscuits, especially if there were Caucasian crews working with the *Issei*. Fresh vegetables were available only in the best of circumstances. Japanese tea was always available, although many *Issei* also drank coffee.

Dinner was again usually rice, pickles, *miso* soup, *dango jiro*, and a small amount of meat such as pork or bacon, although occasionally there was beef or fish. With the transitory nature of work on the railroads it was rare to be able to have a garden for fresh vegetables. A lack of irrigation also limited opportunities for raising gardens. If a crew were lucky fresh produce was sometimes available from a local resident, often Chinese. Some *Issei* picked wild mustard greens, brackens, nuts, grasses, or new buds off of trees to supplement their diet. For some gathering wild

---

[99] Ito, *Issei*, p. 403.

[100] The word *bottera* does not appear in any Japanese dictionary or in *Inshoku jiten*, an encyclopedia of Japanese food and drink. It seems likely that with the ready availability of inexpensive wheat flour the *Issei* workers invented the dish as an alternative to more expensive rice. See Motoyama Tekishū, *Inshoku Jiten* (*Encyclopedia of Japanese Food and Drink*), (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1958).

brackens (*warabi*) or matsutake mushrooms was not only a source of extra food but also of entertainment.[101] Most of the time, however, the *Issei* were limited to eating dried vegetables such as *daikon* (giant white radish), *gobō* (burdock), and *renkon* (lotus root) imported from Japan.[102] Soy sauce was generally the only condiment, but even this was not always available.[103]

One example of how a traditional Japanese dish changed in America was *dango jiru*. Also known as *suiton*, *dango jiru* was a type of dumpling soup eaten in mountainous areas of Japan where there was not much rice available.[104] The version served in America included traditional ingredients such as dumplings made from wheat flour or corn meal, water and salt, but it also usually had onions, potatoes, and a small amount of meat—usually bacon or pork—added as well, things that were likely not included in Japan. Despite what seem like improvements over the Japanese version, for *Issei* that worked on the railroads *dango jiru* was a source of much discontent, mostly due to its ubiquitousness, with some *Issei* later referring to the period as "the dumpling age."[105]

Most of the food eaten in the labor camps was sold and delivered by one of the labor contracting-Japanese goods dealers previously mentioned or other dealers that

---

[101] Ito, *Issei.*, p. 488.

[102] Ibid., p. 326.

[103] To distinguish between Japanese and Chinese versions of what is currently commonly referred to as "soy sauce" I will use "soy sauce" to refer to the Chinese version, (known as *jiangyou*), while *shōyu* is used for the Japanese version. When the product's origin is unknown as in this case, "soy sauce" will be used. Although the ingredients are essentially the same, there are differences in the manufacture which give each a distinct flavor.

[104] Ito, *Issei*, p. 300. *Dango jiru* was also a common meal in Japan in the years of food shortages during and immediately after World War II.

[105] Ibid., p. 298.

were not involved in labor contracting. The staples—rice, *miso*, and *shōyu*—as well as various dried and canned goods and some fresh foods all came from these suppliers, usually delivered from once a week to once a month by rail. Some perishable foods might also have been purchased from local stores—if there were any. Working in remote locations, frequently with no stores and often no salesmen from the Japanese goods supply companies visiting, the *Issei* laborers would be forced to eat *dango jiru* for breakfast, lunch and dinner if supplies were late in arriving. One *Issei* recalled that once when his crew was out of *shoyū* they improvised by making a sauce from burned flour, sugar, salt and water.[106]

While most of the *Issei* diet remained at its core "Japanese," there was one important Western addition: meat. Most of the first *Issei* in America had probably not eaten much meat in Japan and would have been even less likely to know how to butcher an animal.[107] But once in America there seems to be no evidence to indicate they did not enjoy eating meat, making the addition of meat perhaps the greatest single "Americanization" of the *Issei* diet.

Consumption of beef and most other meats was quite limited in Japan before the Meiji period, in large part due to traditional Buddhist proscriptions against the eating of meat that dated from the Prohibition of Killing Law (*sesshō kinrei*) of 676.[108] But it

---

[106] Ibid., p. 308.

[107] The one class of people that would have had familiarity with butchering animals, the *burakumin*, or "untouchable" class, most likely did not emigrate in large numbers. They would not have had the financial means to travel abroad, and the Meiji government, which tried to project a positive image of Japan abroad, would have been reluctant to issue passports to a group it viewed as "inferior."

[108] The law, issued by the Emperor Tenmu, prohibited the killing and eating of cattle, horses, dogs, monkeys, and chickens, but really only for the summer season (April through September). Wild game such as duck, goose, deer, and wild boar were exempt. Although it was illegal, during the Edo Period

was also a matter of practicality; until Hokkaidō was made a part of the nation during the Meiji Period Japan did not have enough land to sustain large numbers of grazing animals.[109]

After 1868 meat eating in Japan increased, but never to the extent as it was expected in America. The leaders of the Meiji government viewed meat eating as something modern, as a good source of nourishment, essential to one's health, and a source of physical as well as moral strength, arguments that were supported by the writings of Japanese intellectuals such as Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835-1901).[110] Other people attributed Westerner's ability to dominate the world to meat eating.[111] Consumption of meat increased after 1872 when the Meiji government abolished laws restricting its consumption as part of its *bunmei kaika* (civilization and enlightenment) movement, but it remained somewhat of a fad and something that generally occurred in

---

many government officials did eat meat. The law was officially repealed by Meiji in 1872. See Ishige, *History of Japanese Food,* p. 52-58, as well as Nobuo Harada, *Washoku to Nihon bunka: Nihon ryōri no shakaishi* (*Japanese Cuisine and Japanese Culture: A Social History of Japanese Food* (Tokyo: 2005), p. 41-42 and 149-150. Ishige also says beef and pork were eaten on the island of Kyushu by Christian converts in the sixteenth century (p. 91-92). Ashkenazi and Jacobs further add that upper-class Japanese and people who lived in the mountains ate meat in small quantities throughout history. See Michael Ashkenazi and Jeanne Jacob, *The Essence of Japanese Food: An Essay on Food and Culture* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), p. 177.

[109] Cwiertka argues that this is more likely the reason for Japan traditionally not eating meat; that eating grains is a much more efficient use of land than eating meat. See Cwiertka, *The Making of Modern Culinary Tradition in Japan,* p. 47.

[110] Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, "We Eat Each Other's Food to Nourish Our Body: The Global and the Local as Mutually Constituent Forces," in *Food in Global History,* ed. Raymond Grew (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999), p. 240-272, p. 253. Afterward Fukuzawa regularly ate meat while in Western countries, although he rarely did so in Japan. By the end of his life was a vegetarian. See Harada, *Washoku to Nihon bunka,* p. 148.

[111] Katarzyna J. Cwiertka, "Eating the World: Restaurant Culture in Early Twentieth Century Japan," *European Journal of East Asian Studies,* Vol.2, No. 1 (2003), p. 89-116, p. 112.

restaurants, especially Western restaurants.[112] Meat eating was especially uncommon outside of urban areas; in 1902 a survey of foods eaten in two farming villages in Shimane Prefecture (located north of Hiroshima prefecture) found that beef and horse meat were considered to be "medicinal food" and were not eaten by "ordinary" people.[113] One way ordinary Japanese men could have been exposed to eating meat and other Western foods during the Meiji Period was through military service, something few *Issei* experienced.[114] Home consumption of beef did not begin until the Taisho period (1912-1926), and then only in limited amounts.[115]

From the recollections of the *Issei* who worked on the railroads and in lumber camps it appears that the most commonly eaten meats were pork and bacon, with some beef and fish. Since there was no refrigeration available in a remote work camp to preserve fresh meat at this time, salted or canned meats would have been the only thing available, including such Japanese items as canned sardines, salmon, or *kamaboko* (fish

---

[112] Harada, *Washoku to Nihon bunka*, p. 151-152.

[113] The survey also found that wealthy families normally ate either rice or a mix of rice and barley while the poorest ate a gruel of rice and barley or, after a poor harvest, rice straw and grass. The "average" diet was found to be dumplings in gruel, barley, or rice and barley mix (2-1 barley to rice), sometimes in tea. See Wakatsuki, "Japanese Emigration to the United States," p. 404-405.

[114] In the mid-1880's, in an effort to combat beriberi, the Japanese Navy instituted a Western diet of ship's biscuits, dried beans and canned beef eliminated beriberi while at sea. The Japanese Army similarly started serving pork, beef, and canned meat, especially as field rations, as much for the convenience that canned goods offered as for the nutritional value. Previously military diets had consisted primarily of polished white rice, a food that was high in status but lacked in complete nutrition. See Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, p. 69-77.

[115] Ohnuki-Tierney, "We Eat Each Other's Food," p. 254. Ohnuki-Tierney also notes that beef did not begin to become widely popular until the time of Japan's post war affluence, and even then it was mainly popular with younger people.

cakes).[116] Occasionally a railroad crew might be fortunate to come across a cow that had been killed by a passing train. One Hood River *Nisei* recalled that train crews would sometimes bury a cattle carcass after being hit by a train and then return later at night to exhume it for butchering and eating.[117] Other *Issei* remembered similar stories, including one who recalled never being short of meat while employed by the railroad (in 1902), although since they did not always know how to butcher or cook the carcass they instead boiled it and ate only the cheap meat from the groin sections.[118] Fish caught in local streams or meat from jack rabbits killed near railroad tracks were also available.[119] Unfortunately jack rabbits often fed on sage seeds that gave the meat a strong smell of sage, an unpleasant odor that would remain even if the meat was buried for several days before being cooked as *sukiyaki.*[120]

Cooking for the *Issei* railroad crews was usually done by members of the crew on a rotating or shared basis. Lumber camps, with a larger crew and more permanent location, often had fulltime cooks, often the wife of one of the *Issei.* But for the more nomadic railroad workers who wanted to save as much money as they could there was no such luxury. Due to cultural traditions in Japan, the workers, most of whom were bachelors, were completely inexperienced at cooking; cooking was women's work.

---

[116] Taken from various accounts of *Issei* in Ito, *Issei.* Salt pork had been the principal meat eaten by Americans—especially in rural areas—through the nineteenth and into the early twentieth century when refrigeration made the eating of fresh (not-salted) meat safer.

[117] Dale Jolly, *An Historical & Cultural Interpretation of a Japanese Settlement in the State of Oregon from 1870 to 1950* (Portland, Oregon: Mt. Hood Community College, 1974), p. 69.

[118] Ito, *Issei*, p. 310.

[119] As a teenager working on the railroad Matsuo Yasui was noted for his skill at killing rabbits by throwing a wrench from a speeding handcart. See Lauren Kessler, *Stubborn Twig: Three Generations in the Life of A Japanese American Family* (New York: Random House, 1993), p. 13.

[120] Ito, *Issei*, p. 470-471.

Even learning to split firewood and to use a stove for cooking was often a new experience. Baking bread in a camp's brick oven was a struggle for these amateur cooks, as was, at times, even cooking rice.[121] For the *Issei* cooks the choice of making simple dishes such as *dango jiru* and *bottera* was probably determined more by cooking ability than by other factors. A term similar to *hontengon no kokku,* meaning "a cook who cannot cook anything" came to be used in reference to camp cooks.[122] Not all of the cooks were bad, although most were. Some people may have gained experience cooking while working as a houseboy or by natural talent. But their talents were not always appreciated, for if the food was delicious it meant the men ate more of it, in turn costing more money.[123]

Although an inability to cook was important in the *Issei's* eating low quality food, the most important factor was their unwillingness to spend more than absolutely the minimum amount it took to stay alive. Seven dollars a month was a common amount to spend on food, but at least one *Issei* recalled spending only five cents a day.[124] Despite eggs costing only 12-15 cents a dozen, hamburger and sausage 7-8 cents a pound, fish 8 cents, and beef 10-12 cents a pound, most *Issei* were not willing to

---

[121] Bread was another food that was still mostly unknown at the time in Japan. The exception was, again, bread served in the military, although at times it was met with fierce opposition from conscripts unwilling to have rice replaced with bread and biscuits as the center of the meal. As late as 1918 bread was still unknown to most soldiers. See Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, p. 73 and 77.

[122] Ito, *Issei*, p. 308. The term appears as written in the book although it does not seem to make any sense in Japanese.

[123] In Ito's *Issei* Frank Yokota recalled that while working as a house boy for a white family he learned to cook pancakes and bacon for breakfast and later to bake bread and pies by watching the lady of the house. P. 490-491.

[124] Ito's *Issei* has many stories of people spending from five or seven dollars up to twelve or thirteen dollars a month on food, while one reported only five cents a day. See Ito, *Issei*, p. 299, 309, and elsewhere.

spend that much.[125] Until 1910 or so all rice was imported from Japan or Hawaii, making wheat flour for dumplings a less expensive alternative staple. One *Issei* recalled that his crew complained that using salt-pork or salted salmon as a base for dumpling soup was "too luxurious;" instead they ate a soup of salt water with plain dumplings.[126] Some *Issei* even skimped on *miso* and replaced it with much cheaper salt instead.

For many workers the diet they chose to eat was so poor that they bordered on malnutrition, with the most common symptom being night blindness. Night blindness (nyctalopia), an inability of the rods in the retina to respond to light, is caused by a lack of vitamin A in the diet.[127] Living on a diet that consisted primarily of rice, flour dumplings, and dried vegetables and little in the way of fresh vegetables or protein, night blindness was a frequent ailment of the *Issei.* For people afflicted by it dreams and hallucinations of food were common; one reported that he continuously had dreams of giant rice cakes stuffed with sweet bean paste or of *Okayama-zushi* (*sushi* from Okayama).[128]

Fortunately night blindness is easily reversible; the addition of extra protein to one's diet will quickly eradicate the symptoms. For the *Issei* this usually meant adding eggs to their diet, often purchased from local farmers or businesses. Buying eggs, however, was not always an easy task. Unable to speak English, and not accustomed to trading with non-Japanese people, the *Issei* often had to resort to performing a

---

[125] Ibid., p. 307.

[126] Ibid., p. 301-302.

[127] Vitamin A can be easily obtained from animal proteins in the form of retinol and from carotenoids, an organic pigment found in carrots and green leafy vegetables such as spinach.

[128] Ito, *Issei,* p. 304.

version of the game charades as a means of crossing the language barrier; the *Issei* would approach the person who had the eggs, cluck like a chicken, and then drop a number of stones indicating the number of eggs he wished to purchase, a crude yet creative way to regain one's health. Crude as it may seem, the approach usually worked, one of the few instances many *Issei* may have had dealing with Caucasians.

For drink the railroad crews had tea, coffee, water, and sometimes whiskey. Water often had to be brought in to camp by train, especially if a crew was working in the dry climate east of the Cascades. A weekly delivery of water meant not just a limited and often stale supply for drinking, but also a limited supply for bathing. Often times the water from a creek used as a water supply would be muddy and unsuitable for drinking as well as for cooking rice. When this occurred people often complained of having to eat "tea-brown" rice.[129]

Although the *Issei* diet was usually quite poor and monotonous good food was at times eaten. While most of these "treats" were traditional Japanese foods, some Western items were eaten as well. Fish, both fresh and dried, could be ordered from S. Ban, M. Furuya, or any of the other labor camp suppliers. Among the fish products

---

[129] Ibid., p. 254. One general exception to *Issei* laborers' generally poor diet was the diet of fish cannery workers. Every summer hundreds of Japanese would travel to Alaska to work in the salmon canneries, work formerly done by Chinese labor. As might be expected the food at the canneries, usually provided by the labor contractor, included salmon. Salmon would be served for three meals a day, accompanied by rice, *miso* soup, *shōyu*, and vegetables that were grown on sight. Sometimes beef or the meat of pigs fattened at the camp over the course of the work season was also served. In contrast, white managers routinely ate beef that was shipped in from Seattle. While comparatively better than railroad or logging camp food, though just as monotonous, the food the *Issei* were served as not nearly as good as that served Caucasian workers at the camp. See Bill Hosokawa, *Nisei: The Quiet Americans* (William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1969), p. 54, and Bill Hosokawa, *Out of the Frying Pan: Reflections of a Japanese American* (University of Colorado Press, 1998), p. 11.

the *Issei* recalled eating in camp were both canned and dried sardines (*niboshi*) and *shiokara* (salted fish entrails). Dried fish such as shrimp, octopus, *kamasu* (pike), and *namako* (sea slug or cucumber) were also recalled as being eaten.[130] Many *Issei* also fished in their spare time for perch or trout, an activity that not only provided protein to their diet but entertainment as well. Of course there was also the risk of being chased by a game warden for fishing without a license.[131] Other foods were imported from Japan, including tōfu, both pickled (possibly *tōfuyo,* a specialty of Okinawa) and fried (*abura age*), *umeboshi* (sour pickled plums), fermented soybeans (*nattō*), *kamaboko* (fish paste loaf), and *nori no tsukudani* (sea weed preserved by boiling in soy sauce).[132] Eventually most of these foods would be produced locally, and although they were made in America, it would not be until the late twentieth century that any of them might come to be accepted as a common "American" food item.[133]

---

[130] See Ito, *Issei*, p. 320, 345-346, and 498-500.

[131] In Ito's *Issei* several men mention fishing and eating the catch. See p. 309 and 410-411. The risk of harassment and arrest for fishing was real and something directly related to anti-Japanese racism. Several laws were enacted that specifically targeted *Issei* rights to fish and hunt. In 1918 the states of Oregon and Washington entered into a compact that was ratified by an Act of Congress that no license to fish in the Columbia River be given to any alien who has not declared his intention of becoming a citizen, the standard legalese used in reference to the *Issei.* That same year the two states also passed laws barring the issuing of fishing licenses to all aliens not intending to become a citizen, and in 1919 all fishing was banned for Japanese in the two states, including for some types not requiring a license. Even earlier, in 1913, an Oregon law was passed that required "aliens not intending to become citizens" to purchase a gun license and permit at a cost of $25, a not insignificant amount of money at the time. For more see Eliot Grinnell Mears, *Resident Orientals on the American Pacific Coast* (New York: Arno Press, 1978; first published by University of Chicago Press, 1928), p. 219-220.

[132] Ito, *Issei*, p. 345-346, 408, and 498-500.

[133] There is no record of *umeboshi* being made commercially in Oregon, and the *nori* in pickled *nori* is something unavailable fresh in America. Only tōfu might be considered to be a common "American" food; the rest remain Japanese specialty items.

Some camps were known to serve food that was better than the typical rice-*dango jiru* fare, especially on weekends. Perhaps in recognition that they were at times viewed as something "special," Western foods were often included in these menus. Many of the dishes were traditional Japanese fare—sushi, *sashimi*, or a piece of fish. Others, such as curry rice, *sukiyaki*, and meat and vegetable stew, were hybrids, traditional Western dishes that had been altered to better suit Japanese tastes. Things such as pork chops and steak were even more "American." Some *Issei* remembered eating Western dishes such as bacon and eggs on Sunday mornings as being "a real treat."[134] Butter and sugar were also served, although, perhaps as an indication of how limited the extent of *Issei* food integration was, not all *Issei* could stomach eating butter.[135]

Some of the best examples of the *Issei* integrating American culture into their lives can be found in how they celebrated holidays and other non-work days. For the *Issei*, holidays—both Japanese (the Emperor's birthday, New Years, and *Obon*, a Buddhist holiday honoring dead ancestors) and American (Fourth of July and Memorial Day)—were often celebrated with special dishes. And the choice of dishes served often reflected the origin of the holiday. For American holidays such as the Fourth of July, American foods such as watermelon were sometimes eaten along with Japanese *makizushi* (vinegared rice rolled in seaweed). For the *Issei* the experience of eating watermelon would have been as novel as celebrating the Fourth of July, while eating the sushi made it feel "like being at home in rural Japan."[136]

---

[134] Ito, *Issei*, p. 508-509.

[135] One *Issei* recalled that he quit a job where bread and butter was served every day for lunch because he could not eat butter, "no matter what." See Ito, *Issei*, p. 309 and 327-328.

[136] Ibid., p. 496.

While there seems to have been a mix of Western and Japanese foods eaten on American holidays, the opposite did not hold. Perhaps as a reflection of the cultural importance of certain traditional foods to some holidays and of how strong the traditions remained in America, at Japanese holidays Japanese dishes predominated. Although many of the foods served at holidays were difficult and expensive to obtain, their importance was such that they were very much necessities for people that still viewed themselves as "Japanese."

For New Years, the most important holiday of the year in Japan, many of the more important celebratory foods were readily obtainable. *Mochi* (glutinous rice cakes), rice in its most condensed form and the food "at the heart of the (New Year) rituals was available, both for eating and as a decoration (*kagami mochi*, or mirror *mochi*, where balls of *mochi* are stacked on top of each other).[137] Apparently *mochi* was available in large quantities, for some *Issei* remembered that at times *mochi* would be piled up so high that they fell over into the street.[138] For the *Issei* a feast of traditional New Year's foods such as *zōni* (a soup containing *mochi* served only at New Years), *kazunoko* (herring roe, usually salted), *gomame* (small dried sardines) and *sake* was not just a meal but also "a cure for homesickness."[139] For a New Year's celebration in 1907 or so a group of *Issei* mine workers in Rock Springs, Wyoming,

---

[137] Ishige, *History of Japanese Food*, p. 257-258. Japanese rice deities are believed to reside in every grain of rice and in every form, with the smashing together of many grains of rice in *mochi* thus believed "to symbolize the amalgamation of countless divine spirits."

[138] Kafū Nagai, *American Stories*, translated and introduced by Mitsuko Iriye (Columbia University Press, 2000), p. 136.

[139] Ibid., p. 136. All of the New Years foods mentioned are important for their symbolic meanings. *Kazunoko* (herring roe) are served in their skein, the hundreds if not thousands of eggs in the serving being a symbol of fertility. The red color of red snapper (*tai*) connotes good luck. In Japan there are literally hundreds of symbolic foods eaten during New Year's celebrations.

paid a lot to have fresh red snapper (*tai*), the most auspicious fish for New Year's, delivered from Galveston, Texas.[140] For the *Issei*, "nostalgic sentiments towards the old country" were what kept customs such as these going.[141]

By the 1920's the food eaten in work camps seems to have improved and also to have included more Western ingredients. By this time there was no longer a supply of cheap labor available from Japan, one effect being that the *Issei* were paid better than before. After spending perhaps twenty years in America, even if they lived mostly among other Japanese, it was only natural that most *Issei* would have begun to integrate American foods into their diets, and not just out of financial expediency. Pancakes became a common dish, for breakfast as well as lunch and dinner. Sandwiches filled with sausage, cheese, beef, or jam were common for lunch.[142] Bread had long been eaten by the *Issei* in America as an inexpensive alternative to imported Japanese rice, although baked in makeshift ovens by men unaccustomed to cooking—let alone baking (a cooking method rarely used in traditional Japanese cooking)—the quality of the bread might be good but was often undercooked and came out with the "consistency of clay and a sour taste."[143] Potatoes, the most common vegetable eaten in America at that time, became a regular part of many Japanese' diets as well. Tomatoes in soups and sauces as well as meat stew also were commonly eaten.[144] Even curry rice, a dish that

---

[140] Tsurutani, *America-Bound*, p. 149-152.

[141] In Japan at New Year's *mochi* are commonly piled on top of another, much like a snowman. See Ito, *Issei*, p. 809.

[142] Sandwiches seem to have been a convenient lunch, one that could be prepared in the morning and eaten later. Even if sandwiches were eaten for lunch, dinner was usually of the Japanese style of rice with side dishes. See Ito, *Issei*, p. 327-328.

[143] Ibid., p. 319-320.

[144] Ito's *Issei* is full of references to potatoes being eaten. For comments on tomatoes, see p. 313.

at that time was only beginning to be widely known in Japan and in America, was eaten.[145] Additionally, many *Issei* acquired tastes for such typically American things as applesauce, pie, hot dogs, candy bars, ice cream, peanuts, and popcorn.[146]

CANNED GOODS

From the evidence available it seems that most *Issei*, no matter how Westernized their diets became, enjoyed and continued eating Japanese food as long as they were in America. In large part they were able to do this as a result of direct Western influence on Japanese food culture. Whether people realized it or not—and it is very doubtful they did beyond the most obvious examples—by the beginning of the twentieth century there was an extensive and growing interconnectedness between the food cultures of Japan and America. Even if the food the *Issei* ate was "Japanese" in its origin, the culture surrounding the food would have been influenced by the West, especially Western industrial technology, but also by removing it from its traditional cultural settings.

Perhaps no part of the history of Japanese food in America better exemplifies the globalizing aspects of the story than that of canned Japanese foods. More than just a convenient way to have access to foods, canned foods allowed for a two way exchange of food cultures and a mix of the modern and the traditional. In the late

---

[145] Ibid., p. 260. The type of curry rice was not specified, but it may have been a dish of the typical Japanese curry rice of the period, a dish that was a Japanized version of English curry which in turn was derived from the original Indian curry. The English introduced curry to Japan during the Meiji Period, and by the Taishō Period it had become one of the three most popular Western dishes (*yōshoku*) in Japan. For more on the history of curry see Lizzie Collingham, *Curry: A Tale of Cooks and Conquerors* (Oxford University Press, 2006). Pages 252 and 253 are devoted to curry in Japan.

[146] Examples of all of these foods can be found throughout Ito's *Issei*, including on pages 327-328, 336, and 408.

nineteenth century Western visitors to Asia routinely used canned foods as a way of having access to safe and familiar Western foods such as canned meat, canned biscuits, and canned soup in places where the food was not only often perceived by Westerners to be strange and aesthetically unappealing but also unsafe to eat.[147] For the *Issei* eating canned Japanese foods would have offered not just the comfort of eating familiar foods in a foreign land but also an introduction to American food culture.

In America canned foods had been available since the early nineteenth century but the supply was limited due to the cans being hand-made. During the American Civil War the United States military demanded canned foods, and, thanks to recent advances in canning technology, production soared. After the war soldiers who had become accustomed to safely eating unspoiled foods that were easily prepared, even out of season, continued to demand canned foods, and production further increased. By 1900 the American population was committed to eating canned foods.[148]

The first canning done in Japan was in the early 1870s by Westerners who canned for both personal use (fruit in 1870) and commercially (sardines in oil in Nagasaki by 1871).[149] Canning by Western-trained Japanese soon followed: in 1871 someone trained in Japan by a Frenchman canned sardines in oil, while two others, after

---

[147] For example, Edward Morse wrote in his diary of eating canned soup, deviled ham, and biscuits. See Edward S. Morse, *Japan Day By Day, 1877, 1878-79, 1882-83, Vol.'s 1 and 2* (Atlanta, GA.: Cherokee Publishing Company, 1990), Vol. I, p. 145. The food safety issue was likely a carry-over from when many of the same early Westerners in Japan were in the Treaty Ports of China. Besides being considered by many to be disgusting and unpalatable, Westerners viewed the local food of China as being contaminated and dirty and often containing rat meat. See Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, p. 36, as well as others.

[148] Root and de Rochemont, *Eating in America*, p. 190-191.

[149] Keizō Shibusawa, *Japanese Life and Culture in the Meiji Era*, translated and adapted by Charles S. Terry (Tokyo: Ōbunsha), 1958, p. 78.

learning on a study trip to America, canned peaches and tomatoes.[150] In 1877 as part of a general effort to develop the economy of Japan's northernmost prefecture, the Hokkaidō Development Bureau (Hokkaidō *Kaitakushi, lit.* Hokkaidō Colonization Commission) began manufacturing canned goods with the assistance of French and American advisors.[151] The first foods canned were mostly local products of Hokkaidō such as salmon, sardines, and salmon-trout, venison, and later abalone (*awabi*) and crab.[152] Most of the canned food was used by the Japanese Army and Navy, especially during the wars with China (1894-1895) and Russia (1904-1905).[153] By 1887 canned goods were available throughout the country, including in rural areas, and by the end of the Meiji Period (1910 or so) canned salmon had become the most important canned good.[154] In the Meiji Period there were hopes that canned foods would become an important export commodity and improve the balance of trade, but that did not happen until later.[155]

Despite its ready availability and being promoted as hygienic and economical, until the 1920s canned goods remained somewhat of a novelty in Japan, sometimes

---

[150] Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, p. 61-62. Tomatoes, of Western origin, had not yet become widely used in Japan at that time.

[151] Shibusawa, *Japanese Life and Culture*, p. 78. The Hokkaidō Development Bureau also encouraged the development of capital-intensive (*i.e.,* Western) farming methods, lumber production, and brewing. It also encouraged settlement, all in an effort to increase Japan's defense and prosperity.

[152] Shibusawa, *Japanese Life and Culture*, p. 78, and Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, p. 62.

[153] Cwiertka, *Making of Modern Culinary Tradition*, p. 57, and Shibusawa, p. 78-79.

[154] Shibusawa, *Japanese Life and Culture*, p. 79 and 98.

[155] Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, p. 62-63. Prior to 1910 or so imported canned foods would have been too expensive for the *dekasegi* laborers to afford.

given as gifts but rarely used as part of a regular meal for ordinary people.[156] The most popular items were Western-style processed foods such as sardines in oil, canned green peas, pureed tomatoes,and things such as crab and salmon from Hokkaidō, although sales still remained small. By the 1930's additional Japanese foods as well as hybridized Japanese-Western style processed foods had become available as well.[157] Primarily due to the cost of imported machinery and tin, canned goods were too expensive for everyday home use by most Japanese, while Westerners preferred imports from their home country that were of better quality.[158]

For Japanese people in Japan the diffusion of canned foods into the everyday diet was a slow and limited process, but for the Japanese in America it was the opposite; early and widespread. Although the *Issei* had canned Western food readily available—if they chose to eat it—by the late Meiji Period a wide variety of canned goods imported from Japan could be had as well. An order form distributed in America in September, 1914, by a Yokohama, Japan-based food distributor listed over 150 different canned goods, including some twenty different varieties of shellfish, some with more than one way of preparation. There were also four different canned meats (beef, pork, chicken, and whale), some twenty different species of fish (again with multiple ways of preparation), and dozens of vegetable dishes and assorted pickled

---

[156] Shibusawa, *Japanese Life and Culture*, p. 98, and Cwiertka, *Making of Modern Culinary Tradition*, p. 57.

[157] Cwiertka, *Making of Modern Culinary Tradition*, p. 57. Cwiertka credits canned foods as having an impact on the diffusion of Western foodstuffs and dishes in Japan, especially in rural areas. Examples of hybridized canned foods include *shiruko* (a sweet bean soup with *mochi* or *dango*), *miso* soup, *ochazuke* (tea-flavored rice) and Kyoto pickles.

[158] James H. Collins, *The Story of Canned Foods* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1924), p. 236, and Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, p. 63. Collins notes that in 1922 there were over 800 canneries in Japan but that they produced only a few million cases.

foods.[159]

Some of the goods were what might be considered simple, everyday foods that were also fairly inexpensive, including things such as *takenoko* (bamboo shoots, as cheap as $3.65 a case), *kujira* (whale meat, $4.90 for a case), *ika* (squid, $5.00 a case), or *akagai* (blood clam or ark shell, a type of cockle, $5.00 a case). There were also foods that would have been more expensive and not normally eaten every day, such as *tai tempura* (breaded and deep-fried sea bream, $19.50 a case), baked *unagi* (river eel, $20.00 a case), *katsuo boiru* (boiled bonito, $17.50 a case), and *awabi boiru* (boiled abalone, $14.30 a case).[160]

For the *Issei* canned foods provided a convenient means of eating the foods of their home, even if the circumstances of the meals had changed. Canned goods could be stocked in stores without fear of spoilage, although there was often a loss of flavor.[161] For *Issei* in remote areas canned food was often the only way to have access to more than just the most basic of Japanese foods. While eating some canned foods would have been similar to eating the same food in Japan—canned pineapples from Japan's colony of Formosa were eaten in both places—most of the foods eaten in America

---

[159] Order form for YamashiroyaBussan Shōkai (Yamashiroya), 7 Sept., 1914. Yasui Collection, Oregon Historical Society (henceforth O.H.S.). The date marked on the form was written in Japanese as the seventh day of the ninth month of "Taishō" 3, or 7 September, 1914. The space for the year was originally printed with "Meiji" and later scratched out and replaced with "Taishō," indicating that it was printed prior to the death of the Meiji Emperor on 30 July, 1912.

[160] Order form for Yamashiruya Co., Yasui Collection, O.H.S.

[161] Canned *kamaboko* (fish cakes) were described by one *Nisei* as having a "tinny" taste. See comments of Homer Yasui on "Japanese Canned Goods Labels," 26 Oct., 2004, Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center (henceforth O.N.L.C.).

would have been eaten fresh and in season in Japan.[162]

In Japan eating foods in season, when they are freshest and at their peak of flavor, has long been an important factor in shaping the cuisine. This sense of seasonality is expressed in Japanese by the word *shun*, the meaning being something like foods in season or seasonal ingredients at their peak, the key idea being the "season," an important concern for a society that was still primarily agricultural (agrarian?) and deeply tied to the lunar calendar. Eating canned foods meant there was no longer any tie to the season; any food in a can could be eaten at any time of the year. No longer were people limited to eating *takenoko* (bamboo shoots) or *udo* (*Aralia cordata*, a plant whose stalks resemble the taste and aroma of asparagus) solely in the spring. *Hokki gai* (surf clam, *Spisula sachalinensis*), a specialty of the spring and early summer, could be eaten in the fall and winter as well.[163] Even foods such as *junsai* (water shield, or *Brasenia schreberi*), an expensive delicacy that is normally picked and eaten in spring and early summer, was available in cans.[164]

For the *Issei* eating canned foods from Japan was a convenient way to eat familiar foods. But it was also in a way part of a transition to American foodways. By eating processed canned foods the *Issei* were beginning to participate in the food culture of America, a culture that was becoming very much a product of science and

---

[162] Canned pineapples were listed on the1914 order form from Yamanashiruya. Shibusawa mentions canned pineapples from Formosa as being common in Japan, presumably after Formosa became a colony in 1895. See Yamashiruya order form, Yasui Collection, O.H.S., and Shibusawa, *Japanese Life and Culture*, p. 79.

[163] All of these items were listed for sale as canned goods in various order sheets found in the Yasui Collection, O.H.S.

[164] Yamashiruya order form, Yasui Collection, O.H.S. *Junsai* is a small plant that grows in ponds and marshes. Although it has virtually no flavor, it is considered to be a delicacy in Japan.

technology. The frequent observation that the *Issei* lived lives with one foot in Japan and one in America included the food they ate. Perhaps no canned Japanese food better represented this duality than canned beef with matsutake mushrooms. In Japan matsutake are a specialty of autumn and usually quite expensive. By adding beef—what would have been a recent introduction from the West—and putting it in a can which could then be opened and eaten at any time of the year a dish was created that was very much a mix of Japan and the West as well as the traditional and the modern. Although it was in a can, the name on the label, *gyū niku matsutake*, was Japanese, as was the traditional unit of measurement for the contents (one *kin*, or 600 grams) and the place of origin of the ingredients.[165] On the other hand, in America eating canned food was a very normal, *American* thing to do. Further complicating the issue of whether a Japanese dish in a can was an American or a Japanese dish was that quite a few of the foods used American ingredients.

By the 1920's the labels as well as the contents of some Japanese canned foods had become more westernized. Often the labels were printed in English, although usually with some Japanese script as well, and the contents were measured in Western units of grams, ounces, and pounds, rather than *kin*. And at times even the contents were of American origin. Wholesale order sheets offered both Japanese and American canned salmon, *maguro* tuna, abalone, and whale, often from the same order form.[166] One canned good, *beika* (*be-ika*?), a small squid, had a name that to the *Issei* would

---

[165] Yasui Collection, O.H.S. Other examples of blending the traditional and the modern can be found as well. In what was likely the late Meiji Period the Sakura Shōkai cannery in Ehime Prefecture used the traditional, Edo Period name for the prefecture, Iyo, on its labels of Cherry Blossom Brand *yaki-kamaboko*.

[166] During WWI in the United States whale meat was canned as a replacement for beef, as was porpoise meat. See Collins, *Story of Canned Foods*, p. 13-134.

have suggested an American origin but was actually from the Inland Sea of Japan (*bei*, written with the *kanji* for rice, is still used to denote America).[167] Some labels also included recipes for use, including recipes for Western dishes such as salads and sandwiches.[168]

The reasons for the increasingly Westernized cans is unclear. Perhaps it was in recognition that more *Nisei*, less able to read Japanese characters than their parents, were involved with food preparation. If the intended customers were indeed *Nikkei* the suggested recipes indicate that a wide variety of Western dishes (salads, sandwiches, etc.) had entered the diets of the Japanese, further evidence of the blending of the two food cultures. But it may also have been in an effort to attract the majority population.

The blending of food cultures through canned foods was not limited solely to movement from the West to Japan found in most other instances. The labels of several canned foods seem to indicate that there was an effort on the part of Japanese firms to appeal to the majority population market, particularly with crab meat. In the 1920's Geisha Brand crab meat from Japan, described on the label as "more delicious than fresh crab meat," was advertised in an English language newspaper in Portland, making it one of the very few Japanese foods of the era to do so.[169] The labels of several other brands of canned Japanese crab used English exclusively, the only evidence the food was of foreign origin being small print saying "packed" or "made in Japan."[170]

---

[167] Yamashiruya order form, Yasui Collection, O.H.S. Normally the name is written without any Chinese characters, simply as べいか (*be-ika*). For the canned product sold in America, however, it was written as 米いか (*bei-ika*).

[168] O.N.L.C. collection.

[169] *The Oregon Journal*, 25 June, 1926, p. 16.

[170] Labels from cans originally in the Yasui Brothers store in Hood River that are now part of the collection of the O.N.L.C. Labels included Eagle Brand Superior Quality Crab Meat, Namco Crab, a

Non-Japanese shoppers may very well have purchased these items if they were seen on the shelves of a local market. Although crab meat is not uniquely a Japanese food product, this was one of very few instances that Japanese food products were marketed to the majority population.

Crab was not the only canned good that seems to have been marketed to non-Japanese customers. Labels on cans of Wel-Pac brand *hokki* clams sported a drawing of a cockle-like clam along with a description of the contents as being "in natural juice, delicious for chowder soup and cold salad, rich in iodine, nutritious & healthful," all in English, information that was surely helpful to people unfamiliar with this species of clam.[171] Star brand *hokki* clams, on the other hand, featured only a drawing of clam with English limited to "Star Hokki" and the name and place of the packing company, with everything else in Japanese, making it seem less likely to be used in a Caucasian kitchen.[172]

Some prepared foods also may have sought to appeal to non-Japanese. The label on Pampco brand *tempra* (*tempura*) fish cakes described the can's contents as "a fishcake made from specially selected white meat of barracuda and sea bass, the well known ocean fish caught along the Pacific Coast and fried in salad oil," a description similar to canned tuna. The label also suggested uses that were more western than Japanese; "This product is carefully cooked and ready to be served as an entrée. Serve hot with cream sauce, or fried as croquettes, and for salad with mayonnaise. Also

---

San Francisco based company, and one with no company name, just a picture of what seems to be Mount. Fuji.

[171] O.N.L.C. *Hokki* clams are found in the waters of northern Japan near Hokkaidō.

[172] O.N.L.C. Star brand *hokki* clams did have instructions, only just in Japanese. The label also used grams in addition to ounces for the weight of the contents.

could be used for sandwiches." Packed in San Pedro, California, the only clue to its being a Japanese food product was a small bit of writing in Japanese on the bottom of the label. Suyehiro brand *tempra* fried fish cakes from San Francisco had identical instructions for use, although there was a bit more Japanese writing. Although the name of the product was foreign, the contents and the suggested uses would likely have seemed familiar enough to attract non-Japanese buyers.

One brand of a similar *tempura* product may not have fared as well in appealing to non-Japanese despite its mostly English label (only "*tempura*" was in Japanese). Packed in Japan, "*Hime*" *tempura* lacked the suggestions for use the other labels featured and instead prominently featured a picture of a large-eyed fish on its back next to a plate of some unidentified food, not an attractive image for most American housewives.[173] With a picture of some intertwined squid and no description in English of what was inside, Lily Brand *be ika* (squid) likely would have gotten a similarly cool reception. It is also highly unlikely that many, if any, non-Japanese people would have tried foods they were unfamiliar with such as canned *kamaboko* (fish paste loaf), *yaki-kamaboko* (baked fish paste loaf), *awabi kushi* (skewered abalone), *shiro miso* (white *miso*), *otafukumame* (broad beans), *kanpyō* (dried gourd), *fukujinzuke* (a mix of seven salted vegetables pickled in *shōyu* and *mirin*, one of the most popular of Japanese pickles) or *koshijizuke* (a type of pickled vegetable that does not seem to exist anymore), even when the contents were written in English.[174] While non-Japanese

---

[173] O.N.L.C.

[174] No information on *koshijizuke* could be found in either English or Japanese encyclopedias, and no one at several Tokyo pickle shops seemed to be familiar with it as well. The name, written in English, seems to indicate this was a pickle of some sort, likely a type of small egg plant; a drawing of something similar appears on the label.

could have at least read the contents of the above, even if they did not understand what the products were or their use, labels printed entirely in Japanese would have been unfathomable, perhaps nothing more than an exotic foreign decoration.

There are two other canned foods that were sold in Oregon in the 1920s that show even more clearly that the foodways of Pacific Rim countries had by then become integrated, canned tōfu and canned chop suey. Chop suey is a "Chinese" dish of American origin, the first verified use of the term coming from a Brooklyn, New York newspaper in 1884. By the 1920s it had become a popular American dish, perhaps the first food that might be considered "foreign" to have widespread appeal. One example of this product that was sold in Oregon was packed in Japan by the North American Mercantile Company (Namco) of San Francisco. The label that exists for this product, chop suey vegetables, is a testament to the efforts of at least a few people to promote the internationalization of food. There are "American Recipes" for using the contents in salads (drain off water, slice the water chestnuts and bamboo sprouts, thin and pour favorite dressing over them and garnish with lettuce, tomatoes, etc.), for creaming (make cream gravy and stir in chop suey vegetables or heat with milk and thicken with flour to suit), and "For All Other Vegetable Use: serve the same as asparagus, spinach, peas, etc.). None of these recipes required any cooking, a characteristic that made them very "American" for that period. Alongside the "American Recipes" is a "Chinese Recipe for Chop Suey," the instructions for which calls for the addition of meat, onions, celery, tomatoes, and chop suey sauce in making a type of stir-fried dish. Of the ingredients called for, all except the meat (chicken, pork, veal, and beef) were of Western origin. Only the vegetables in the can, water chestnuts, bamboo sprouts (in

Japanese, *takenoko*) and bean sprouts, were of Asian origin.[175]

Canned tōfu was another example of how interrelated the food cultures of the Pacific Rim had become by the 1920s or 1930s. In this instance the product, tōfu, was made by a Chinese company in San Francisco, the Sang Yuen Company, sold by Japanese grocery stores, and carried a label written in English that read "Bean-Cake." The use of "bean cake" rather than tōfu was an interesting choice for a product that was at that time still quite unfamiliar to most non-Asians, but further acknowledgement of how much things had been hybridized.

RICE

Another important factor facilitated the *Issei's* continuation of their traditional diet was the development of rice farming in California. Similar to canned foods, rice farming in California had its roots in American industrial development. Although there was little immediate or direct effect realized in the Pacific Northwest, the overall impact was important, not just for the *Issei* diet, but also as another example of how interconnected things really were.

Rice is the food product most closely linked to Japanese identity, an integral part of Japan's diet as well as culture. Until domestic Japanese rice became available all Japanese rice on the Pacific Coast was imported from either Japan or Hawaii. This imported rice was not only expensive but also often of low quality. Although the introduction of short grained Japanese rice (*Oryza sativa,* var. *japonica*) to the United States roughly coincided with the arrival of the *Issei*, the two events were not directly related. The two events would prove to be mutually beneficial, however, as the *Issei* were instrumental in making rice cultivation a viable business while the availability of

---

[175] Label for Namco brand chop suey vegetables, O.N.L.C.

American grown rice would help allow the *Issei* to be able to afford to eat a Japanese diet.

In the 1880's advances in rice milling equipment led to faster milling but with more cracking and waste of the long-grain varieties of rice then grown in America. Rather than reinvent the machinery, new varieties of rice that could withstand the milling process were sought out.[176] In 1899 the United States Department of Agriculture sent someone to Japan in search of sturdier varieties and in 1902 two tons of rice were sent back from the island of Kyūshū.[177] After these Japanese varieties proved to be able to withstand the milling process with no significant waste, experiments were conducted in California to determine how best to grow the rice. Rice growing had been attempted on a limited scale in California before (in the 1860's and 1880's), mostly in an attempt to meet the demands of Chinese, but without much success.[178]

Prior to the introduction of Japanese varieties of rice seed most of the rice in California had come from either China or Hawaii, imported to meet the dietary demands of Chinese immigrants.[179] A small amount came from Japan—in 1876 over four million pounds—but the Chinese did not like the short grained Japanese varieties and so

---

[176] Henry C. Dethloff, *A History of the American Rice Industry, 1685-1985* (Texas A&M Press, 1988), p. 78.

[177] Dethloff, *History of American Rice* p. 91. The person sent was Seaman A. Knapp (1831-1911).

[178] Dethloff, *History of American Rice,* p. 116.

[179] In 1874 31,838,116 pounds came from China and 1,251,583 from Hawaii. In 1876 46,270,365 was imported from China and 3,017,637 from Hawaii. See Jack H. Willson, ed., *Rice in California,* (Richvale, CA: Butte County Rice Growers Association, 1979), p. 24, Table 11. 33 million pounds would be about enough to provide every Chinese person then in America with about one pound a day.

imports of Japanese rice virtually ceased.[180] At about the same time the Department of Agriculture began researching rice cultivation state officials in California began to grow concerned over the cost of rice imports into the state and, in an effort to keep dollars in the state, began to promote the growth of rice on otherwise empty land.[181]

This period was also when large numbers of *Issei* were arriving in California, many of whom had been rice farmers in Japan. In 1909 a few of these farmers planted the first crop of rice, and in 1912 the first commercial crop was harvested. Production rapidly expanded—from 70,000 bushels (26,000 100 pound bags) grown on 1,400 acres the first year 3,300,000 bags in 1918, one million of which were grown by *Issei.*[182] By 1926 thirty percent of the rice harvest—one million one-hundred pound sacks—was exported to Japan.[183] Although other people had tried before them, it was the *Issei* that were the "first people to make (rice) a commercial success" in California."[184]

In addition to providing fresh, high quality Japanese rice to the *Issei*, domestic production of Japanese rice led to changes in milling and distribution of the rice,

---

[180] In 1886 only 2,730 pounds of Japanese rice were imported into California. While Chinese did not like the Japanese rice, other people could not distinguish differences and thus did not care. See Willson, *Rice in California*, Table 11, p. 24, and 24-45.

[181] Willson, *Rice in California,* p. 24. In1856 rice imports cost $1,260,000

[182] Charles E. Chambliss, *Rice Growing in California* (United States Department of Agriculture Farmers' Bulletin 1141) (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Agriculture, September, 1920), Table 1, p. 4; Dethloff, *History of American Rice* p. 115-116; and Iwata, p. 352-354.

[183] Willson, *Rice in California,* p. 212.

[184] Iwata, *Planted in Good Soil,* p. 352. The first Japanese rice (usually referred to as "kiushu" rice) in America was sold in San Francisco in 1874. The seed used in California came from Texas where a group of *Issei* had been farming Japanese rice since 1902. The first varieties grown in California were *Wataribune* and *Shinriki* (or "God Power" rice). Due to its quicker ripening, *Wataribune* became the rice of choice and was later used to develop the hybrids grown today such as Kokuho Rose, Calrose and Blue Rose. For more information on the Texas rice farmers, see Thomas K. Walls, *The Japanese Texans* (The University of Texas Institute of Texan Cultures at San Antonio, 1987).

changes that did directly affect Portland. Before rice is cooked and eaten it needs to be milled. Prior to the availability of California grown rice, all rice eaten by the *Issei* in the Pacific Northwest was shipped unmilled from either Japan or Hawaii. In part this was due to high import duties levied on imported polished rice.[185] But local milling also made for fresher, and thus tastier, rice.

The first rice mills in California opened sometime around 1850 in mills previously used to mill wheat; in 1855 there were at least three such mills in San Francisco processing rice imported from Asia to feed Chinese immigrants. After rice production began the milling shifted from San Francisco and other port cities to closer to where it was grown. Often the rice was milled by the farmers or farmers' co-ops. Milling not only added value to the farmers' product and gave them something to do in the off season, but it also allowed for greater control of the final product, an important consideration for the Japanese who prefer to eat freshly milled rice. While the Japanese and non-Japanese growers shared milling facilities and traded rice between each other, the rice intended for Japanese customers was treated slightly differently and only partially milled; the final milling took place just before shipping or was done by local customers.[186]

In Portland the changes in rice production were felt in two main ways. First, businesses that previously had received imported rice and then milled and sold it were no longer needed. One such business was Portland Rice Milling, a local importer and miller that supplied Japanese rice to local Japanese food importers and retailers such as the Yasui Brothers store in Hood River. In the years from 1909 until 1912 the Yasui

---

[185] Gail Dubrow with Donna Graves, *Sento at Sixth and Main: Preserving Landmarks of Japanese American Heritage* (Seattle: Seattle Arts Commission, 2002), p. 47.

[186] Willson, *Rice in California,* p. 204.

Brothers made on average three purchases worth about $70 each per month from Portland Rice Milling, but after California rice became available in 1912 the purchases ceased, the supply replaced by other, unknown rice dealers.[187] Rice did continue to be milled in the Pacific Northwest by M. Furuya, Teikoku and, most likely S. Ban, all of whom put the rice in bags with their own labels.[188] Examples include M. Furuya Seattle who labeled theirs "Japanese Seed California Akamatsu Brand Rice Milled by M. Furuya, Seattle," and the Yasui Brothers store of Hood River who sold rice labeled "Yasui Bros. Japanese Rice."[189] By the 1920's it was extremely rare to encounter any imported rice; all was from California. Although rice was often labeled as "Japanese" and even as "Choicest Imported," it is likely that this was in reference to the original seed stock.[190]

In addition to the Japanese rice millers Portland also had a non-Japanese rice miller that marketed to the Japanese population, the D. H. Hayes Company.[191] Located on the Willamette River next to Japantown, Hayes advertised itself as being a *beishō*, or rice dealer, and also one that employed Japanese people.[192] The Hayes Company

---

[187] Information from an examination of canceled checks written by the Yasui Brothers Store to the Portland Rice Milling Company for 1909 through 1912. Canceled checks from 1913 and subsequent years showed no checks made out to Portland Rice. Although the records are incomplete, the timing of the cessation of business between the two parties—1913, the year American grown rice became available—strongly suggests that imported rice had been replaced by domestic rice. Checks from Yasui Collection, O.H.S.

[188] See ad for Teikoku Co., *Ōshū Nippō*, "Special New Years Edition," p. 32 and elsewhere.

[189] *Ōshū Nippō*, various dates.

[190] In 1924 the M. Furuya Co. advertised rice for sale in bags labeled "Choicest Japanese Rice. Imported by M. Furuya Co., Seattle." See *Ōshū Nippō*, 28 Feb., 1924, p. 2.

[191] Until 1919 or so the business was known as S.H. Harris & Co. *Polk's Portland City Directory*, (Portland. R.L. Polk & Co., Inc., various years).

[192] *Ōshū Nippō*, 8 June, 1921, p. 6.

milled rice and packaged it under names such as "Cherry," "Tate," and "Kinso" brands, names that were a partly American and partly Japanese.[193] They also carried unbranded Japan head and Mission varieties of rice, perhaps for sale to dealers who put their own brand on the product.[194] Although many Caucasian businesses advertised in Portland's Japanese press, Hayes was the only one that sold a Japanese food product, if American-grown Japanese is indeed a Japanese food.[195]

White, polished rice (*hakumai)* was the everyday rice for the *Issei.* And for Japanese people the best rice is the freshly harvested rice referred to as *shinmai.* As an indication of how important rice remained in their diets and how discerning they were about rice, the yearly arrival of *shinmai* was always a notable event. Late each autumn in the pre-war period Portland's rice dealers advertised the arrival of that years newly harvested rice, usually with descriptions praising its flavor and aroma. One year a local shop even credited that year's weather for the superior quality of the rice.[196]

In addition to polished white rice (*hakumai*) other varieties of rice were also available. The most important of these was *botan* rice, a type of glutinous rice used to make *mochi* (rice cakes) and other Japanese confections. Although culturally important—*mochi* is considered to be one of the "essential Japanese foods"—*botan* rice did not initially have the economic attraction that *hakumai* did and remained as the primary imported rice until WWII, although a hybrid variety was grown in California by

---

[193] These names were written in *katakana,* the script used for words of foreign origin. See ads for Harris Co., *Ōshū Nippō,* 1 Feb., 1923, p. 1, and 25 June, 1923, p. 1.

[194] Letter from S. H. Harris Co. to Yasui Bros. Store, 19 June, 1919, Yasui Collection, O.H.S.

[195] After1923 there were no more rice millers listed in the *Polk's Portland City Directory*; apparently all milling was from then on done by Japanese retailers.

[196] Ad for M. Furuya Co., *Ōshū Nippō,* 20 Oct., 1924, p. 2.

at least 1941.[197]

While many aspects of rice production became increasingly "Americanized" in the pre-WWII Era, a few things remained very traditionally Japanese, but again with some American influences. Rather than use standard American units of weight, rice was advertised in the Japanese press using the *kanji* character for the traditional weight unit of a *kin*. This measurement was used as an equivalent of pounds, even though one *kin* actually weighed 600 grams (about 1.32 pounds), making the advertised weight recognizable to the *Issei* even if it was not accurate.[198] In addition to using traditional units of weight advertisers also often used Japanese characters to represent dollars and cents. To represent dollars the character for *futsu* (弗) was used, its shape being somewhat similar to that of the dollar ($). To represent "cents" a character pronounced as *sen* was used (仙). These units were used not just with rice but with other things as well, including *miso*.[199] While these traditional substitute markings were used in advertising directed at the general consumer, wholesalers and distributors, who were generally more comfortable using English, used the standard American monetary symbols while using both American and Japanese weights.[200]

---

[197] The rice was labeled as "Extra Fancy Botan Brand Calady rice (blue rose type)." See ad for Teikoku Co. in the *Ōshū Nippō*, 4 Nov., 1941, p. 7.

[198] For an example of this see the M. Furuya Co. ad in the *Ōshū Nippō*, 10 Oct., 1925, p. 2.

[199] See the Teikoku Co., *Ōshū Nippō*, 8 May, 1924, p. 5.

[200] Examples of this mixed use of weights and measurements can be seen in an order form sent out by Iwakani & Co. of San Francisco. The year, 1914, was written as *Taisho* 3, rice was measured in units of 100 pounds written in *kanji* as 100 (*hyaku*) *kin*, and the monetary units were written in dollars and cents. It seems there was no desire to confuse the money amounts. As late as 1939 California was still being written as *kashū*. See invoice for order from Yasui Bros. with the North American Merchandise Company of San Francisco of 13 Feb., 1939 where California white rice was written as *kashū* white rice. Both from Yasui Collection, OHS.

Even the terminology used to label California grown rice was a hybridization. Rather than write out "California," either in English or in the *katakana* phonetic script used for foreign words, to differentiate California grown from Japan grown rice, the rice was labeled with two *kanji* characters meaning "addition" (*ka*) and "state" (*shū*) and pronounced as *ka shū*.[201] The use of mixed languages such as this was a common practice among the *Issei* in referring to American place names.

---

[201] *Kashū* was written in Japanese as 加州. Oregon was similarly referred to as *Ōshū* (央州).

CHAPTER III:

THE SECOND ERA OF THE *ISSEI*: SETTLEMENT

By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century the nature of the *Nikkei* community in Oregon had begun to change from one that was somewhat transitory and overwhelmingly male to one that was more permanent in nature and that included families with children. No one factor was responsible for the change; rather, a number of events occurred that resulted in a fundamental shift in the makeup of the Japanese community. Taken together these events helped create an environment that led to the development of a vibrant food culture that sustained traditional Japanese foodways of the *Issei* while at the same time incorporating many Western elements, a food culture that would mostly be gone by the beginning of 1942.

By 1910 or so many of the former *dekasegi* men had returned to Japan, while others had saved enough money to open small businesses or become farmers. Railroad employment had changed from construction to more permanent work involving maintenance and operations, a change that allowed railroad employees to live more settled lives. Once the immigration of laborers virtually ceased after enactment of the Gentlemen's Agreement between Japan and the United States in 1907, the nature of immigration shifted to include many more women, many of whom came as "picture brides." The Gentlemen's Agreement was the result of negotiations that took place in response to a growing anti-Japanese movement that for the most part began in California, a movement that would also come to Oregon.[202]

The result was that in the years between the 1910 and the 1920 censuses the

---

[202] The subjects of the Gentlemen's Agreement and anti-Japanese racism have been covered in depth numerous times and do not need to be further covered here.

gender ratio began to assume more of a balance, going from 12.1% female in 1910 to 33.3% female in 1920.[203] A direct result of the arrival of women was that the population soon came to include the second-generation American born—and American citizen—*Nisei.* While in the earlier era of immigration the people who came often intended to and did indeed return to Japan, the people that came after the Agreement were more inclined to remain, often times with family members who had previously arrived.[204] The later arrivals also tended to be better educated.[205]

The period from approximately 1910 through the 1920s was when Oregon's *Nikkei* population settled into more permanent homes. While some *Issei* men were still employed by railroads, the work had changed from mostly construction to maintenance and operations, a change that allowed them to settle in more permanent hopes throughout rural Oregon. Some one-third of the *Issei* were farmers, many in the Portland area but also in *Nikkei* communities near Hood River and Salem.[206] Slightly more than half of the population lived in Portland and the surrounding counties, with Portland's Japantown the cultural and business hub of the state's Japanese

---

[203] Figures from Allerfeldt, *Race, Radicalism, Religion, and Restriction,* p. 172, Table 4.1, "Japanese Population of Oregon and Washington, 1900-1920."

[204] One study found that only 15% of the *Issei* that came to the United States prior to 1907 when the Gentlemen's Agreement took effect intended to remain, while 36% of those that came later intended to stay. 41% of those who came prior to the Agreement had relatives in the U.S. when they arrived, versus 80% of those who came later. See John Modell, "Tradition and Opportunity: The Japanese Immigrant in America," *Pacific Historical Review,* Vol. 15, No. 2 (May, 1971), p. 163-182), p. 166, Table I.

[205] Before the agreement only 29% of the *Issei* had attended school in Japan, while 70% of those who came after the agreement had. See Modell, "Tradition and Opportunity," p. 166, Table I.

[206] The percentage varied through the years. In 1905 it was estimated that 35% of the Japanese population was involved in agriculture as farmers or farm laborers. In 1909 the estimate was 25.8%. See Eiichiro Azuma, *The History of the Japanese in Oregon, 1880-1942* (unpublished work done for the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center), p. 9.

community.[207] While little information is available on the lives of the rural *Nikkei*, including many who lived and worked in logging and lumber camps between Portland and Astoria, enough is available on the other groups to be able to see how much and in what ways foodways had changed.

CHANGING FOODWAYS:

By 1910 or so food consumption patterns among the *Issei* were diverging between those of railroad and other laborers and the rest of the population. *Issei* who lived and worked in remote camps where they were reliant on labor contractors and food deliveries from Portland for much of their food continued to eat chiefly "articles of Japanese origin," while those who purchased their food individually had begun to integrate more "American" foods into their diets.[208] Although some Japanese rice—the most important Japanese food—was then being grown in Texas, all the rice consumed by the Japanese in the Northwest was still imported.[209] Imported foods such as *abura-age* (fried *tōfu*), and *tsukemono* (Japanese pickles) were still being delivered to sawmill and railroad camps, as were vegetables such as *daikon*, *gobō*, *yamaimo* (Japanese yam), *renkon*, and *zenmai* (royal fern, *Osmunda japonica*), the vegetables shipped from Japan in one hundred pound baskets.[210] A 1909 United States government report on the food of Japanese immigrants stated:

---

[207] In 1900 some 53.4% of Oregon's *Nikkei* lived in the Portland Metropolitan area (Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas Counties), in 1910 54.8%, and in 1920 60.9%. Information from U.S. Census found in Mears, *Resident Orientals*, p. 416-417, Table 7.

[208] United States Immigration Commission (henceforth U.S.I.C.), *Immigrants in Industries (in twenty-five parts)* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911), Vol. 23, p. 137.

[209] U.S.I.C., *Immigrants in Industries*, p. 137. For more on Japanese rice production in Texas and the history of the Japanese colony there that grew the rice see Walls, *The Japanese Texans.*

[210] Ito, *Issei*, p. 793.

> "With the exception of that of a small percentage who patronize 'American restaurants,' however, their diet differs greatly from that of natives and the European immigrants. Tea, soft drinks, rice, canned fish, and sauce are among the more important articles purchased. Vegetables and fruit are important in the consumption of the agricultural classes. They do not use much milk or butter and the majority do not consume much fresh meat, though in some instances the consumption of meat is large. In short, the majority of the Japanese consume chiefly the articles to which they were accustomed in their native land, where animal husbandry has only recently made much advance."[211]

The report went on to say: "A tendency is evident among them, however, to use more of the articles entering largely into the consumption of the other races," the substitution hastened by recent rapid increases in the price of rice.[212]

It is unknown how many *Issei* who settled in the Pacific Northwest had tasted Western food before they came to America. Before the 1870s Western food made by Westerners was available in the treaty ports, while restaurants that served Japonicized versions of Western food were opened in the 1860s and 1870s in Osaka, Okayama, Hiroshima, Fukuoka, Kagoshima, and Kumamoto Prefectures, as well as other areas in western Japan that Oregon *Issei* came from. Even if the *Issei* that came to Oregon had visited any of these restaurants, the food served would have done little to prepare people for the food they would find in America.[213] It was also possible that a future emigrant might try a Western style dish prepared by someone who had returned from America,

---

[211] U.S.I.C., *Immigrants in Industries*, p. 137-138.

[212] Ibid., p. 138.

[213] The food these restaurants served was known as either *seiyo-ryori* or *yōshokuya*. Rather than being true "Western" food, however, the meals served were likely a Japonicized version of Dutch, and later French and Anglo-Saxon cooking that likely little resembled true American cooking. Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, p. 43-44. Ishige refers to this type of restaurant as *yōshokuya*. Ishige, *History of Japanese Food*, p. 155.

although again the food would have likely have been a hybridized version.

By the time Japanese women began to immigrate in significant numbers, nearly all *Issei* men had been in America for enough time so that some Westernization of their lives had occurred. The women who came, however, would likely have had little exposure to Western culture or foodways and would have had food preferences very much like the *Issei* men had when they first arrived. In the 1890s and 1900s, a period when most *Issei* women were still in Japan, home food was still the traditional simple meal of rice, *miso* soup, pickles, vegetables, and a few extra things.[214] Western, middle-class ideas of domesticity, including cooking and nutrition, were only beginning to become known in Japan, as were Western cooking equipment such as matches and gas cookers.[215] The Japanese government actively promoted the dissemination of Western domestic (household) knowledge for women, information that would have been useful for emigrant women.[216] Although it is unknown how many *Issei* women were

---

[214] Katrarzyna Cwiertka, "How Cooking Became a Hobby: Changes in Attitude Toward Cooking in Early Twentieth-Century Japan," in *The Culture of Japan as Seen through Its Leisure*, eds. Sepp Linhart and Sabine Frühstück (State University of New York Press, 1998), p. 41-58, p. 44. Cwiertka gives the 1890's as the end of the traditional meal era, but focus was more on the emerging middle class in Japan and not on life in rural, Western Japan, the birthplace of most of the *Issei* in Oregon.

[215] Katarzyna Cwiertka, "Minekichi Akabori and his Role in the Development of Modern Japanese Cuisine," in *Cooks & Other People: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 1995*, ed. Harlan Walker (Prospect Books, 1996, p. 68-80), p. 70.

[216] One of the more notable efforts to "modernize" home life came in 1899 with the issuing of the *Kōtō jogakkō rei* (Order on the women's higher education) in which *ryōsai kenbo* (good wife, wise mother) ideology became the only aim of women's higher education. These ideas, as well as others involving family happiness (*ikka danren*), had been introduced to Japan by Western Protestant missionaries.[216] Additionally, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs operated an Overseas Emigration Agency (*Kaigai ijyū jigyōdan*) to instruct emigrants on the language and manners they would encounter abroad, but it is unknown how many people participated. See Cwiertka, "How Cooking Became a Hobby," p. 42-43.

exposed to these ideas, it seems likely that at least a few were.[217]

With few opportunities for learning about American life in Japan most *Issei* women instead learned about it first-hand once in America. Working as a domestic in a Caucasian household was a good way for immigrant women to learn, and many did; in 1900 half of all *Issei* women worked as domestic help, and by 1920 one-quarter still did.[218] Some early arriving *Issei* women used their knowledge of American life to teach newcomers, especially picture brides, about things such as American table manners, how to entertain guests, child care methods and other American customs, in part to lessen anti-Japanese views of whites who saw them as "heathens."[219] Unfortunately, this was the general extent of the services that were available. Organizations such as the Y.W.C.A.'s International Institutes, a program started in 1910 to help immigrant women adjust to life in America and (hopefully) eventually become citizens, were not available in Oregon.[220]

---

[217] One *Issei* mentioned that this agency was in operation around 1908. Ito, *Issei*, p. 792. The *Kaigai ijyū jigyōdan* still exists.

[218] Linda Tamura, *The Hood River Issei: An Oral History of Japanese Settlers in Oregon's Hood River Valley* (University of Illinois Press, 1993), p. 101.

[219] In Hood River Shizue Iwatsuki and Mrs. Masuo (Shizuyo) Yasui offered such orientation services. Ito, *Issei*, p. 131.

[220] International Institutes were mostly in cities with large immigrant populations, including San Francisco and Los Angeles, but not in Portland. They offered English classes, recreational clubs and activities, and aid in dealing with housing, naturalization, employment, and other problems. For more information on International Institutes, see Raymond A. Mohl, "Cultural Pluralism in Immigrant Education: The YWCA's International Institutes, 1910-1940," in *Men and Women Adrift: The YMCA and the YWCA in the City*, eds. Nina Mjagkij and Margaret Spratt (New York: New York University Press, 1997), p. 111-137.

Most women were between 18 and 24 at the time of their arrival.[221] These young and "naïve" women "brought to (the United States) their own cultural baggage from rural Japan" and "approached life in America in a thoroughly Japanese fashion—from their attire to the foods they ate to their humble demeanors."[222] In most cases the *Issei* husbands had been in America much longer and had integrated some Western foods into their daily diet; one observer noted that by 1913 or so, after having lived in the US for some twenty years, there had been a "considerable change" in the food eaten by the Japanese. While these *Issei* still ate a lot of rice and fish, their consumption of meat and other non-traditional foods had rapidly increased.[223] Many ate Western breakfasts, and some even enjoyed butter and cheese, two foods at least one *Issei* bride said she could not stand the smell of.[224] Another *Issei* woman said that during her first few years in America (in Hood River) the most repulsive thing was the smell of milk, cheese, butter, and other dairy products found in American homes and wondered if Americans visiting Japanese homes reacted the same way to the smell of

---

[221] This was determined by using a random sample of the date of birth and date of entry into the United States of 100 married women listed in the 1928 *Census: Japanese Population in Oregon.* Of the 100 women selected, fifty-nine were aged eighteen to twenty-four. The average age was 23.7. Three women were eliminated from the sample due to their ages (one 14 and two 15 years old) being young enough that they likely came as daughters and not as brides. See Oregon Bureau of Labor, C.H. Gram, Commissioner, *Census:Japanese Population in Oregon, Oct., 1, 1928* (Salem, OR: State Printing Department, 1929).

[222] Tamura, *Hood River Issei,* p. 53. In the original quote Tamura wrote "Young, naïve Japanese women, most in their teens…"This may have been true in regard to *Issei* women in Hood River but was not so for the general population of *Issei* women.

[223] H. A. Millis, *The Japanese Problem in the United States: An investigation for the commission on relations with Japan appointed by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1915), p. 255.

[224] Tamura, *Hood River Issei,* p. 57-58.

soy sauce, fish, and other Japanese smells.[225]

In some instances even traditional gender roles were affected by American food and foodways. Oftentimes preparation of unfamiliar Western dishes posed problems for the women, some of whom could not even prepare such simple foods as *tsukemono* (pickles), and in many cases the men had to teach their wives how to cook.[226] Adjusting to using unfamiliar Western cooking techniques, utensils, and equipment—especially ovens for baking—would only have added to the difficulties.[227]

While it is impossible to know with certainty what was eaten at home, a general characterization can be derived from anecdotal and other sources. One description of the meals eaten at home was that they were often *hanbun hanbun* (half Japanese and half Western).[228] *Hanbun hanbun* breakfasts were as likely to include Japanese dishes (rice and pickles) as they were Western (bacon, fried potatoes, pancakes,

---

[225] Mitzi Asai Loftus, *Made in Japan and Settled in Oregon* (Coos Bay, Oregon: Pigeon Point Press, 1990), p. 54.

[226] Tamura, *Hood River Issei* p. 54, 57-58.

[227] In the early years of the twentieth century there were huge differences between the cooking equipment used in homes in Japan and America (and there still is today), differences that also reflected the types of dishes prepared. In Japan gas cookers were just beginning to replace *kamado*, a simple wood or charcoal fired earthen stove on which cook pots were set. This setup was ideal for preparing a cuisine that had many simmered dishes, but not for baking, although some foods could be baked in the fire chamber. In contrast, by the late nineteenth century wood-fired cast iron stoves and ranges with an oven or two had become increasingly common in American homes, made possible by recent advances in design and metallurgy. Metal stoves were designed to meet the needs of the American palate and its taste for baked goods such as breads and pies, foods rarely known in Japan (or did the use of modern stoves lead to more pies, breads, and other baked goods?). For more information on the history of cook stoves in America see Priscilla J. Brewer, "'We Have Got a Very Good Cook Stove': Advertising, Design, and Consumer Response to the Cookstove, 1815-1880," *Winterthur Portfolio*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Spring, 1990), p. 35-54. p. 37-42, 50-51.

[228] Tamura, *Hood River Issei*, p. 112.

and coffee). Lunch seems to have tended to be a more Japanese meal of rice and pickled vegetables or perhaps *chazuke* (green tea over rice) and pickles.[229] Dinner menus were more hybridized. Rice, fish, and vegetables were the principle foods, much as they would have been in Japan.[230] But a variety of meats were also eaten. Rice would have been an essential item for any meal to be considered a "meal" by a Japanese person and would been served no matter what else was served.[231] A wide variety of fresh and dried or salted fish were available for purchase, while fish such as salmon and smelt could be caught or perhaps obtained through barter with local Indians.[232] The availability of fresh fish was more limited in rural areas, including the Hood River Valley, but it was always made available for special occasions.[233]

Thanks to regular steamship service between the American Pacific Coast and Japan, foods that could be easily transported (dried or canned), and *Issei* farmers that could grow Japanese vegetables, a wide variety of Japanese foods could always be eaten in Oregon. But the *Issei* also increasingly included Western foods in their diets, often in a form that better suited Japanese tastes.

Vegetables are an important component of Japanese cuisine where they are

---

[229] Ibid., p. 112. From what Tamura and Kessler (in *Stubborn Twig*) have written, this seems to have been typical of breakfast and lunch for the Hood River *Nikkei*. Other accounts have similar information.

[230] Again this is taken from a variety of sources, including Loftus, *Made in Japan*, p. 68-69.

[231] In Japan a meal is not truly considered to be a meal unless rice is served. For more see Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney, "McDonalds in Japan," in *Golden Arches East: McDonald's in East Asia*, ed. James L. Watson (Stanford University Press, 1997, p. 161-182).

[232] The family of Mitzi Asai Loftus traded fruit and vegetables they grew with salmon caught by Celilo Indians, while during the Depression the Yasui family often took smelt of other fish as payment at their store in Hood River. See Loftus, *Made in Japan*, p. 54, and Kessler, *Stubborn Twig*, p. 72 and p. 75.

[233] Information from Homer Yasui. In the 1930's in Hood River special fish would be brought in from Portland for New Year's celebrations.

used in a variety of forms for many different purposes. The most common uses for fresh vegetables are to cook them in simmered dishes, to pickle them as *tsukemono,* or to dry them for later use. The vegetables that were available for the *Issei* included most everything needed for traditional home-style cooking, in both fresh and dried form. Stores that sold Japanese goods usually carried a wide variety of fresh vegetables, including such basic necessities as *gobō, daikon,* and several types of Japanese potato (*imo*).[234] While some dried vegetables had long been available, by the 1910s the selection had greatly expanded and included dried potatoes, dried *zenmai* (royal fern), and other items that might be considered "non-basic" foods.[235]

There were also many vegetables of Western origin in the *Issei* diet, many of which had been introduced in the sixteenth century and had become well integrated into Japanese cuisine, including such things as squash, peppers, and sweet potatoes.[236] Potatoes and cabbage, perhaps the most commonly eaten vegetables of nineteenth and

---

[234] Varieties of *imo* included *satoimo* (a taro), *yamaimo* (also known as *yamanoimo*, a wild yam), and *satsumaimo*, a sweet potato introduced to Japan by the Portuguese.

[235] Order form for Iwakami & Co., Yasui Collection, O.H.S.

[236] Fresh vegetables should not have been difficult to obtain as some one-third of the *Issei* were farmers. Seeds for many types of Japanese vegetables, often with multiple varieties of each, could be purchased through local Japanese goods dealers or from seed suppliers, many of whom were located in California. Although commercial cultivation of Western vegetables by Japanese in Japan was an important factor in disseminating Western foods into Japanese cuisine, Japanese vegetables grown in America rarely, if ever, gained acceptance among the general American population. The one exception may be *shiitake* mushrooms, an item imported dried in the pre-WWII era by Japanese importers. In the 1890s dried *shiitake*, along with dried fish, were the first two foods exported from Japan, although the primary market was China. Although it took nearly 100 years, *shiitake* did eventually become accepted and are now commonly sold in most Oregon grocery stores. Yasui Bros. Collection, O.H.S., and Benjamin Wai-ming Ng, "Making of a Japanese Community in Prewar Period (1841-1941)," in *Foreign Communities in Hong Kong, 1840s-1950s*, ed. Cindy Yik-yi Chu (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, p. 111-132), p. 125.

early-twentieth century America, seem to have been popular among the *Issei* as well.[237] Both, along with onions, would likely have been eaten for the first time in America as they were only starting to diffuse into the Japanese diet at the time the *Issei* departed.[238] Cabbage, both Western and Chinese (*Brassica campestris*, often called nappa cabbage, and in Japanese *hakusai*), were also introduced to Japan during the Meiji Period and may or may not been familiar to the *Issei* prior to their arrival in America where both were readily available.[239] Corn on the cob, often grown in a home garden, was another food that, although new to the Japanese, became a favorite of some *Nikkei* families.[240]

---

[237] American cookbooks of the late nineteenth and early twenty centuries generally featured far more recipes for potatoes than for all other vegetables combined, with recipes for cabbage a distant. For examples of cookbooks compiled in Oregon see *The Congregational Cook Book.*

[238] Cwiertka, *Making of Modern Culinary Tradition,* p. 44. White potatoes, known in Japan as *jagaimo*, were brought to Japan in the sixteenth century but were mainly eaten during times of famine and never "acquired the status of a foodstuff." Their popularity increased in the Meiji Period with the introduction of *yōshoku* (Western cooking). The popularity of potatoes, as well as onions and cabbage, grew as they became more available and inexpensive and as the popularity of Western dishes spread. For more see Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, p. 57-58.

[239] Nappa cabbage was brought to America by Chinese immigrants in the mid-nineteenth century, making it one of the first foods from Asia. See Cwiertka, "Minekichi Akabori and his Role in the Development of Modern Japanese Cuisine," p. 68-80, p. 70. Cabbage, potatoes and onions became the first Western vegetables to be commonly used in Meiji Japan due to their being the primary vegetables used at the time in European and American cooking. The failure of vegetables such as lettuce, asparagus and cauliflower to gain widespread popularity at that time is similarly due to their not being widely used in Western cooking. Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, p. 57-58.

[240] Loftus, *Made in Japan*, p. 68-69. Like many Western foods, corn was introduced to Japan by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century. Known as *nanban kibi* (lit., southern barbarian millet), the only place it was widely grown and consumed was in an area south east of Mt. Fuji in what is now Yamanashi Prefecture where ash from eruptions of Mt. Fuji had made growing rice, wheat, and other grains impossible. In 1868 new varieties of corn from America were introduced to Hokkaido where it was eaten in a variety of Japanese and Western forms, including in *manju* and cooked with butter. For more on the history of corn (*tōmorokoshi*) in Japan see Motoyama, *Inshoku Jiten* , p. 410-411.

As mentioned in the 1909 report, *Issei* ate meat, and sometimes in large amounts.[241] As with Western vegetables, the increase in meat consumption by the *Issei* paralleled what was taking place in Japan, although in America it was without the encouragement of the government. Since meat was a rather recent addition to Japanese foodways its preparation offered numerous opportunities to "Japonicize" what was the most characteristic American food. Often meat dishes were very "American," things such as steaks, pork chops, or fried chicken, a dish that was what might be called the 'national dish' at that time in the Southern United States.[242] In part how meat was prepared was determined by whether people ate Western or Japanese style. If people ate with Western cutlery (knife and fork), steak or roast could be eaten. But if traditional Japanese utensils (chopsticks) were used, the meat would need to be served as part of a Japanese dish such as *sukiyaki* or in *okazu* (a stew of vegetables and bite-sized pieces meat served with rice).[243] Even the butchering of animals was subject to Japonization. Many *Issei* farmers raised hogs or chickens for home consumption and for some, Buddhist considerations would enter into the slaughter of what would become their Sunday dinner. One *Nisei* recalled her father would chant *Namu Amida Butsu* (Hail to Buddha) as he would chop off the heads of chickens, the prayer not for the chickens but for his killing them.[244]

---

[241] Some *Issei* were wary of eating too much meat and dairy products due to health problems observed in the majority population, yet they ate it anyway. See Loftus, *Made in Japan*, p. 77.

[242] In the 1920's many Southerners, presumably white, equated fried chicken with patriotism. See Abbott C. Martin, "Patriotism and Fried Chicken," *The Sewanee Review*, Vo. 37 (1929), p. 34-37.

[243] Kessler, *Stubborn twig*, p. 86. *Okazu* was the name used for a dish served as part of the usual evening meal at the Yasui family's home in Hood River, although the original meaning of the word *okazu* refers to any dish served with rice.

[244] Loftus, *Made in Japan*, p. 77-78.

One category of food the *Issei* enjoyed in its original form without any apparent hybridization was Western desserts. In general Western-style desserts made with sugar such as pies, cakes, and chocolates, are much richer than anything the *Issei* would have known in Japan where, without easy access to sugar, most confections (*okashi,* a category that includes many styles of snacks and sweets) derived their sweetness from sweet beans and grains.[245] In contrast, in America sugar was plentiful, inexpensive, and widely used. Nineteenth and early twentieth century American cookbooks devoted large amounts of their space to recipes for cakes, pies, and other sweets, often nearly half of the pages. Despite these differences in dessert cultures, the Japanese seem to have readily taken to American sweets. Various published accounts of the *Issei* mention making or eating baked desserts as pies, cakes and brownies, an indication that not only were they developing a taste for American sweets but also that they had learned to use Western cooking equipment.[246] For a few women, cakes and pies were some of the only American dishes they knew how to make.[247]

While Western sweets would have been easily obtainable from many non-Japanese businesses if the *Issei* chose to shop in them, they were also available in many shops that sold Japanese goods. Chocolates and other candies, sodas, animal crackers, and cookies and crackers from Nabisco and Pacific Coast Biscuit were all sold,

---

[245] Before the Meiji Period sugar from the Ryukyu Islands was available but in very limited quantities. Honey was also quite rare, something that would not change until Western honeybees and honey making techniques were introduced to Japan in 1877. The main exceptions to this were things such as *kasutera* (castella cake) and other cakes that had been introduced to Japan by Europeans in the sixteenth century, items that also were baked, a rarity in Japan. Ishige, *History of Japanese Food,* p. 258-259.

[246] For mention of desserts see, for example, Loftus, *Made in Japan,* p. 70, and Tamura, *The Hood River Issei,* p. 134.

[247] Tamura, *The Hood River Issei,* p. 134.

often alongside Japanese *okashi.*[248] Fresh fruit also seems to have been popular, including new fruits such as melons.[249] Ice cream, a favorite of Fukuzawa Yukichi from his trip to San Francisco, continued to be popular with the *Issei,* initially as a summer treat, but by the 1930s year-round.[250]

While Western sweets were readily available everywhere, Portland also had a number of businesses that sold Japanese *okashi*, both imported and locally made. Larger stores such as S. Ban and Teikoku carried a wide variety of imported *okashi*, including everyday items such as *senbei* (rice crackers) as well as seasonal specialties such as *hana arare sembei*, *maki sembei*, *yoshino mame*, and *teppo dama* (bullet candy).[251] From at least 1913 until the internment of 1942 there were usually three or four shops in Portland that made and sold *okashi* (*okashiya*), as well as some restaurants that did so.[252] Most of these shops seem to have originally been restaurants that also

[248] Information from ad for M. Furuya Co., *Ōshū Nippō,* 29 March, 1923, p. 2, as well as from order forms for suppliers such as Pacific Coast Biscuit and The Nut House of Seattle found in the Yasui Collection, O.H.S. Pacific Coast Biscuit made a variety of sweets, including, in the 1910's, honey and graham flour cookies called "Swastika Biscuits," the design of the swastika being similar to the Japanese *manji* (卍), a mark associated with Japanese Buddhism.

[249] In 19222 the Yasui Bros. Store placed at least one order for 300 pounds of melons. Yasui Collection, O.H.S. Melons were introduced to Japan in the Meiji Period.

[250] Some of the first ads in the Japanese language newspaper the *Ōshū Nippō* by non-Japanese food-related companies were for ice cream and included Japanese words and phrases such as *oishii* (delicious) and *kōhyō no aisukurimu* (good reputation). Early newspaper ads that mentioned ice cream ran only in the summer months, but by the late 1930s there were ads for ice cream in January as well. See ad for Weatherly Ice Cream Co., *Ōshū Nippō*, 8 Sept., 1922, p. 6, and ad for Sun Freeze Ice Cream in the *Ōshū Nippō*, 12 Jan., 1938, p. 2.

[251] Ad for M. Furuya Co., *Ōshū Nippō*, 29 Mar., 1923, p. 2.

[252] A survey of Japanese businesses in Portland published in 1913 reported one unidentified confectioner. Millis, *The Japanese Problem*, p. 63, Table "Kind of Business." From the late teens through the 1920s Portland's *okashiya* consisted of Fukuya, Fūgetsudō, Tōyōdō, and Shōjuan, although Shōjuan (also

made *okashi*, an indication that there was a fairly strong demand for the product. The shops advertised having all kinds of Japanese treats (*nihon okashi kakuji*!!!), including *sembei*, *kasutera* (Castella cake), *manjū* (buns with a sweet bean jam filling), and various types of candies, including one, *nikkei*, a cinnamon candy whose name likely was a source of some amusement for Oregon's *Nikkei*.[253] *Mochi* was one of the more important products, not just at New Years but for other times as well when seasonal *mochi* such as *sekku mochi*, *sakura mochi*, *yomogi mochi*, and *hishi mochi* (all for spring), *kashiwa mochi*, and *usugui mochi* were made.[254] Locally made fresh *okashi* would have also been something important for people that practiced Japanese tea ceremony.[255]

For the *Issei*, *okashi* would likely have been much more culturally important than anything similar for the Caucasian population. *Okashi* is regularly given as gifts in Japan, a practice that would likely have continued in America where there was no equivalent practice by the majority population. The availability of *okashi* would have also been important for Japanese wedding and Buddhist funeral rituals (*jūgi jitsujiyō*),

---

Tajima)was also a restaurant (the wife, Mrs. Take Tajima, operated the confection business, including after the death of her husband, making her one of only a few *Issei* women to operate food related businesses). There were additional restaurants that made and sold *okashi* as well. Ads for these shops ran regularly in the *Ōshū Nippō*.

[253] See Tōyōdō ad in *Ōshū Nippō*, 11 May, 1919, p. 5, and for Fukuya, *Ōshū Nippō*, 12 April, 1918, p. 1.

[254] *Sekku mochi* are for festivals associated with the arrival of spring; *sakura mocha*, or cherry *mochi*, are rice cakes filled with sweet bean paste and wrapped in a pickled cherry leaf; *yomogi mochi* are *mochi* flavored with mugwort; *hishi mochi* three-colored diamond shaped rice cakes; *kashiwa mochi* are *mochi* wrapped in an oak leaf; and *usugui mochi mochi* filled with sweet bean jam and powdered with *kinako*, a yellow soybean powder. See ads in the *Ōshū Nippō* for Tōyōdō, 13 March, 1923, p. 5; Tajima, 8 June, 1921, p. 6, and 17 Jan., 1925, p. 6.

[255] In tea ceremony sweet confections known as *namagashi* are eaten to contrast with the bitterness of the tea.

and Portland's *okashiya* regularly advertised having the proper and necessary goods for the various ceremonies.[256] These ceremonial *okashi* were sold in various colored boxes (*bentō*), different colors needed for the nature of the ritual. Although many *Issei* converted to Christianity, there still seems to have been strong ties to their traditional Buddhist roots, a tie that would have helped support Portland's traditional Japanese confectionary businesses.

As with many other types of food, most of the cross-cultural diffusion related to sweets that occurred was the acceptance of Western sweets by the *Nikkei.* In one rare instance of a product labeled as being a Japanese sweet being sold outside of the *Nikkei* community, in 1907 ads were placed in a Portland newspaper for a product called Dresser's Japanese Caramels. As the name would indicate, the product was likely a Western candy that had been hybridized in some way to make it seem "Japanese" and not a true Japanese product.[257] It seems unlikely many Caucasian children would have considered Japanese treats such as *awabi* chips (dried abalone) or *kakimochi* (thin slices of dried or toasted *mochi*) too appetizing.

The Westernization of the *Nikkei* diet even extended to birth and death, with Western influences predominating over time. In the early twentieth century some traditional birth-related celebrations and ceremonies involving food were practiced by some, but not all, *Issei,* especially the giving and eating of *sekihan* (rice with red beans),

---

[256] See, for example, the ad for Fukuya in the *Ōshū Nippō*, 28 Feb., 1919, p. 1. All of the *okashi* shops ran similar ads at various times of the year. The sale of *okashi* associated with Buddhist *jūgi jitsujiyō* rituals, especially during *Obon*, is an indication of how important Buddhist traditions remained, even though many of Oregon's *Issei* had converted to Christianity.

[257] Ad for Dresser's Food Emporium, *The Oregon Journal*, 2 Aug., 1907, p. 12. Dresser's Food Emporium had two shops in Portland and one each in Seaside and Gearhart, OR.

but these practices soon mostly disappeared.[258] Most *Issei* women followed the Japanese practice of breast feeding infants until they were two years of age, a practice that also helped to space births three years apart.[259] However, if women could not produce enough breast milk, then canned condensed milk was often used instead.[260] There seem to be no records of mothers complaining about the smell of canned milk being as bad as the smell of fresh milk or cheese.

While most traditional birth-related rituals ceased to be practiced in America after the passing of the *Issei,* food related aspects of funeral practices—at least during the pre-WWII period—continued, but with, but some hybridization. Food served at funeral gatherings included Japanese dishes such as *onigiri* (rice balls) and sea weed products as well as American dishes such as potato salad and macaroni salad.[261] The mixing of cultures continued after funerals as well with gifts (known as *kōden kaoshi*) of coffee as well as tea being given by the family of the deceased to guests who had attended and supported the funeral.[262]

A common description of the *Issei's* lives was that they lived a dual existence, with one foot in Japan and the other in America. This duality extended to and perhaps

---

[258] There were many other practices involving symbolic and lucky foods thatalso disappeared after the *Issei* generation. For more see Paul Radin, ed., "Japanese Ceremonies and Festivals in California." *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* Vol. 2 No. 2 (Summer 1946), p. 152-179, p. 152-154, and Bradford Smith, *Americans From Japan* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1948, p. 78-79). Radin and Smith wrote of practices in California and Hawaii, respectively.

[259] Loftus, *Made in Japan*, p. 64-65. Breastfeeding women cannot ovulate for some six months until after ending breastfeeding.

[260] Tamura, *The Hood River Issei*, p. 154. Ads for Carnation brand condensed milk showing an infant frequently appeared in the *Ōshū Nippō.*

[261] Bradford Smith, *Americans From Japan*, p. 83. *Nisei* tastes likely influenced what was served.

[262] Bradford Smith, *Americans From Japan*, p. 84.

may have been best exemplified in the celebration of holidays, something the *Issei* had two types of to celebrate. Traditional Japanese holidays such as New Years, *Obon*, the Emperor's birthday, and various days of celebration associated with the traditional lunar calendar (such as Boy's Day and Girl's Day) were celebrated, as was the Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. And just as the holidays were a mix of cultures, so too was the food eaten on the holidays, although the origin of the celebration seems to have been highly instrumental in the choice of foods served.

Perhaps because of its cultural importance, foods eaten by the *Issei* Era as part of celebrations closely associated with Japan were for the most part Japanese, although some Western foods were eventually came to be included as well. New Years was the most important holiday for *Issei* in America just as it had been in Japan, and just as in Japan, *Issei* women would spend several days cooking and preparing special New Years' food (*osechi ryōri*), including dishes such as baked fish, *sashimi*, and simmered vegetables (*o-nishime*).[263] Even if people normally ate bacon and eggs for breakfast, for New Years traditional *zōni* was served. Auspicious foods such as lobster or prawns, *kazunoko* (prepared herring roe), eggs, and *soba* (buckwheat noodles), all traditional dishes in Japan, were served.[264] Red being a lucky color in Japan meant that there would be many red foods, including *tai* (sea bream) and *sekihan* (rice mixed with red beans). *Kuromame* (black soy beans) were served for good health, although lima

---

[263] Tamura, *The Hood River Issei*, p. 131. New Years celebrations last for three days in Japan during which no cooking is done. Thus, the lengthy pre-New Years preparations.

[264] Prawns represent old age, the many eggs of *kazunoko* fertility, eggs strength, and *soba* noodles the passing of one year to the next without interruption. The eggs would most likely have been prepared as *tamagoyaki* or *datemaki*, omelet-like dishes.

beans, a food native to the Americas, were sometimes mixed in as well.[265] *Mochi*, an essential New Year's food that is both eaten and used as a decoration, could be purchased from any *okashi-ya* (sweets shops) or Japanese goods dealers in Portland or elsewhere or it could be made at home or as part of a community *mochi* pounding party using *mochigome* (glutinous rice) purchased at any Japanese grocery.[266] *Mikan* (Japanese tangerines), a traditional winter treat of Japan that is often combined with balls of *mochi* to make decorations called *kagami mochi*, were also available.[267] Despite the overwhelming symbolic importance of traditional Japanese dishes for New Years, by the 1920s some celebrations came to include "American" standards such as steaks and roasts as well.[268]

Much as with New Year's, other traditional Japanese celebrations usually featured Japanese foods, many of which had intimate associations with the event. Springtime Girls' Day and Boys' Day celebrations would feature seasonal confections

---

[265] Yoshiko Uchida, *Desert Exile: The Uprooting of a Japanese American Family* (University of Washington Press), 1982, p. 18-19.

[266] Stores such as M. Furuya, Teikoku Shōten, and S. Ban advertised having *mochigome* late each autumn. See the *Ōshū Nippō,* various. In the 1910s *mochi* making seems to have at times been common enough that at times the glutinous rice used would be sold out; a telegram from S.Ban Co. to the Yasui Brothers store in Hood River dated 29 Dec., 1919, read "Sorry, we have not enough Maruichi rice to spare," Maruichi being a brand of rice. The practice of making home-made *mochi* seems to have become less common by the 1930s when it was mostly done at community gatherings. Information from Yasui Collection, O.H.S., and Homer Yasui.

[267] Notices from WB Glafke Co., E 3rd and Alder, Portland, 1919. Yasui Collection, O.H.S. The notice said that Japanese oranges, presumably *mikan* but possibly the slightly larger *ponkan,* were available year round, priced from $2.75 to $3.00 for two boxes.

[268] Steaks and roasts were included in community New Year's celebrations in Hood River after the Japanese Community Hall was completed in 1926, additions that may have been made possible by large ovens being available in the new hall. See Tamura, *The Hood River Issei*, p. 132

such as *sakura mochi* and *kashiwa mochi*, foods that could be purchased at any of Portland's numerous *okashiya* (Japanese confection makers).[269]

For *Issei*, taking a picnic of Japanese food to the coast or the mountains may have evoked pleasant memories of similar activities in Japan, the biggest difference being that now they traveled by automobile. In the spring, ads would run in Portland's Japanese press suggesting such trips and that the advertising shop had all the canned and dried foods needed for a *bento* (box lunch) picnic. Foods mentioned in the ads included *takenoko* (bamboo shoots, a specialty of the season), *kamaboko* (fish cakes), and *tainoko* (likely a small, dried fish).[270]

Events of a more global or American nature such as the Fourth of July and sports day celebrations (*undōkai*) usually had a greater variety of foods that were quite similar. Food at a Fourth of July party was likely to include "American" dishes such as fried chicken, pie, and home-made ice cream, but also Japanese dishes such as *makizushi* (a roll of rice and other ingredients, likely including fish, wrapped with sheets of *nori*). Likewise, an *endōkai* gathering was likely to have sandwiches and ice cream as well as Japanese dishes, the Japanese dishes.[271] Although the food at served at these events may offer signs that the foodways of the Japanese had become more hybridized and Americanized, it should be remembered that there were two separate groups

---

[269] *Ōshū Nippō* ads for *okashiya*, various. *Sakura mochi* is a type of *wagashi* (Japanese confection) reminiscent of cherry blossoms and things feminine. It is made of pink colored *mochi* with a red bean paste in the center and wrapped with a pickled cherry leaf. *Kashiwa mochi* is *mochi* wrapped with an oak leaf and is traditionally eaten on Boy's Day (now referred to as Children's Day), the fifth of May.

[270] M. Furuya ads, *Ōshū Nippō*, 1 May, 1923, p. 2, and 18 May, 1923, p. 2.

[271] Tamura, *The Hood River Issei*, p. 131 and 134. The Japanese dishes were often were donated by Portland shops such as S. Ban., Kohara-san, and Teikoku.

consuming the dishes, the first generation *Issei* who ate the Japanese food and the second generation *Nisei* who preferred the Western foods.[272]

The end of the summer brought *obon*, the Japanese Buddhist period of remembering the dead, and *butsuyō mochi*, confections associated with Buddhist funerary rituals. Cool weather in the fall meant soup, which for the Japanese meant *miso* soup, with one shop reminding people with ads that read "It's *miso* soup season!" (*miso shiru no ki*). Thanksgiving, like the Fourth of July a very American holiday, likely featured turkey and pumpkin pie. Although turkey was introduced to Japan by the early Westerners and many, if not most, Japanese cookbooks of foreign recipes featured instructions for cooking turkey, it never became established as a popular dish, most likely due to the lack of suitable cooking equipment in Japan.[273] Perhaps due to its cultural importance in America and a desire among many *Nikkei* to be "American," turkey seems to have been embraced by the *Nikkei.*

FORCES FOR AND AGAINST FOOD INTEGRATION

It is impossible today to know the precise details of each *Issei's* food acculturization; how, when, why, and in what form "American" foodways were integrated into each person's diet. Different circumstances—location, occupation, personal tastes—all influenced the process both for integration and for maintenance of the *status quo.* Some of the forces that determined the degree of integration were on a micro—individual—level, while others were broader and more global in nature.

---

[272] Tamura, *The Hood River Issei*, p. 130.

[273] The cookbooks examined were late nineteenth century Western food cookbooks held in the Ajinomoto Foundation library in Tokyo. According to an article from 1933, boiled turkey was at that time "growing in popularity" in Japan, but apparently its popularity did not last. See Percy Noel, "Yes, I Like Japanese Food," *Asia*, Vol. 33, No. 6 (June, 1933), p. 352-360, p. 360.

Judging by the degree to which the *Issei* did cling to their food traditions it seems that the forces of inertia were much stronger than forces for change and integration, even in the face of significant pressure for the latter.

The most important factors for maintaining traditional foodways were likely inertia, limited interaction with other social groups, and easy access to Japanese foods. Wanting to eat familiar foods was not a behavior limited to the *Issei*, although due to vast differences between Japanese food and American food it may have been stronger than in other groups. Late-nineteenth century Western visitors to Japan frequently ate their own foods, foods that were initially imported and later produced locally.[274]

Maintaining traditional foodways was also important in maintaining the traditional social structure. Commenting on American immigrants and their foodways in general, Donna Gabaccia wrote: "immigrants sought to maintain their familiar foodways because food initiated and maintained traditional relationships, expressed the extent of social distance between people, demonstrated status and privilege, rewarded and punished children's behavior, and treated illness."[275] Studies of Greek immigrant

---

[274] There are many references to late-nineteenth century visitors to Japan taking their own foods with them so as to avoid what one visitor described as "the fishy and vegetable abominations known as 'Japanese food.'" Isabella Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan: An Account of Travels in the Interior Including Visits to the Aborigines of Yezo and the Shrine of Nikko* (Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1973, first ed. 1880), p. 19. Other examples can be found in Basil Hall Chamberlain and W. B. Mason, *A Handbook for Travellers in Japan* (London: J. Murray, 1891); Major Henry Knollys, *Sketches of Life in Japan* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1887); and Townsend Harris, *Complete Journal of Townsend Harris, American Consul General and Minister to Japan* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., 1930).

[275] Gabaccia, *We Are What We Eat,* p. 51. Gabaccia was referring to the foodways of Japanese, Eastern European Jewish, Bohemian (Czech), and Mexican (in Texas) immigrants.

communities found behavior quite similar to that of the Japanese.[276]

Where one lived also influenced the degree of food integration. *Issei* who settled in towns and cities had more opportunities to be exposed to the foodways of the majority population and would have naturally been influenced by it, while *Issei* who lived in railroad and other types of labor camps, with little or no contact with non-Japanese, would have had very few opportunities to absorb Western food culture.

Even in urban, or at least less rural areas, interaction with non-Japanese was often limited. Language was frequently a barrier, especially for women.[277] In Hood River, the second largest *Nikkei* community in Oregon, the *Issei* lived in a "community (that) insulated its members from the outside non-Japanese world, a situation that allowed for few opportunities to participate in the majority population world."[278]

---

[276] Similar to Japanese immigrants, Greeks began arriving in significant numbers only after 1890 or so, with most after 1905. By the 1910's there were some 200,000, mostly men who later sent for their families to come or returned to Greece to marry. In America they tended to settle in Greek communities similar to the Japantowns that developed, sent their children to Greek language schools after normal school hours, and ate imported Greek foods such as cheeses, dried figs, and olive oil, something the general population disliked due to its smell and taste. It was only after the Nazi's invaded Greece in 1940 that Greek Americans began to be viewed positively and their food, although modified to be less "Greek" (for example, olive oil used in lesser amounts or replaced by butter), began to be accepted. Robert J. Theodoratus, "Greek Immigrant Cuisine in America: Continuity and Change," in *Food in Perspective: The Proceedings of the Third International Conference on Ethnological Food Research, Cardiff, Wales, 1977,* eds. Alexander Fenton and Trefor M. Owen (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1981, p. 313-323), p. 314-315.

[277] In Hood River as late as 1920 only 13.3% of *Issei* women were able to read and write English, although nearly half the *Issei* men could. See Tamura, *The Hood River Issei*, p. 106.

[278] Wendy Lee Ng, *Collective Memory, Social Networks, and Generations: The Japanese American Community in Hood River, Oregon* (unpublished PhD dissertation presented to the Department of Philosophy at the University of Oregon, August, 1989), p. 115-116. Social isolation seems to be a recurrent theme in works on the Hood River Nikkei. See also Tamura, *The Hood River Issei*, p. 129 and 136.

Contact with non-Japanese was often avoided due to problems with language; many children did not learn English until they began school, and once in school they continued to have limited social interaction with non-Japanese."[279] Interracial dating and marriage rarely occurred, as both the *Issei* and the non-Japanese found it unacceptable. As late as 1942 only one percent of the *Nikkei* married outside of the Japanese community.[280] Blatant discrimination and racial hostility directed at the Japanese further contributed to a lack of interaction between the two groups.[281]

The third main factor for why the *Issei* continued to eat Japanese foods was that they were readily available. In the early years much of the food came from Japan, imported by the labor contractors specifically to meet the demands of the *Issei* laborers. After the Gentlemen's Agreement ended the legal immigration of laborers from Japan many of the former labor contractors shifted the focus of their business from importing and managing workers to importing and distributing Japanese goods, especially food. In Portland these firms included Portland-based S. Ban Company, the Teikoku Company (originally Tekikoku Shōkai), and M. Furuya of Seattle. These three companies' stores were at the core of Portland's Japantown, although there were several other smaller Japanese goods suppliers as well. There were also Japanese grocery stores in Hood River and Baker, both towns with large *Nikkei* communities. All these shops carried most everything a Japanese person might possibly need, from canned and dried foods, rice, *sake*, *miso*, *tsukemono* (pickles), and tea, to clothes, dishes, and light bulbs.

---

[279] Wendy Ng., *Collective Memory*, p. 113-114.

[280] Sylvia Junko Yanagisako, *Transforming the Past: Tradition and Kinship Among Japanese Americans* (Stanford University Press, 1985), p. 70. It should be noted that until 1931 a Caucasian woman who married a Japanese man (or anyone ineligible for citizenship) forfeited her American citizenship under provisions of the Cable Act.

[281] Tamura, *The Hood River Issei*, p. 136.

Imported goods were readily available because of the regular trade between the West Coast of America and Japan, a trade that involved and benefited more than just the *Issei.*

As a more "normal" *Nikkei* community developed (families rather than single male laborers) so did the number of local producers of Japanese foods, a development that meant foods were likely to be less expensive while being much fresher. In pre-WWII Portland there were several tōfu makers, four or five *okashiya* (sweets shops), as well as one company that made Japanese staples such as *shōyu*, *miso*, and several types of Japanese noodles.[282] There was also a vibrant restaurant scene that offered a wide array of Japanese foods to both *Nikkei* and visitors from Japan. Overall, the large number of people involved in businesses that provided Japanese foods must surely have reinforced and helped sustain the demand for Japanese food at the expense of Westernization of the *Issei* diet.

Just as there were multiple forces working against the Westernization of the *Issei* diet so were there multiple forces working to "Americanize" it, including things related to the general societal sentiments of the period, especially anti-Japanese racism. The early part of the twentieth century was a period of nativist movements in the United States that targeted immigrants for their perceived inability or unwillingness to assimilate, a movement that also targeted the foods they ate. Greeks and Italian immigrants faced hostility against garlic, a food that was not only unpopular among non-immigrant groups but was actually scorned and viewed as conflicting with the public decency and morality.[283] Even Swedish immigrants consciously "Americanized"

---

[282] This was the Sanyō Company. See ads in the *Ōshū Nippō*. After the internment of 1942 the Sanyō facility was taken over by the Porter Scarpelli Company and used to make macaroni.

[283] Theodoratus, "Greek Immigrant Cuisine in America," p. 315.

their diet when faced with resistance to some of their traditional foods.[284] Japanese immigrants, conscious of the negative perceptions of being unassimilable previously associated with the *dekasegi* laborers, were perhaps even more sensitive to the issue. Although not in specific reference to food, in 1923 Sei Fujii, a newspaper publisher and the President of the Japanese association of Los Angeles, said the *Issei* community needed to change any behavior that offended white Americans. "It must be remembered," Fujii wrote, "that if there is anything in our daily conducts (sic) which is repugnant to the good customs and manners of America and otherwise objectionable, we must be good enough to change it right away."[285]

There were also more practical reasons for integrating foodways. It is likely that *Issei* wives were more concerned with household economy than single men would have been and would have at least occasionally purchased less expensive domestically produced foods as a substitute for expensive imports. It should also be remembered that by 1910 or so many, if not most, of the *Issei* men had been in America for quite some time, in many cases for fifteen or twenty years, and had incorporated some aspects of American food into their diets. By the 1920s the Japanese goods shops also carried a wide variety of Western foods, a reflection of the growing integration of Western

---

[284] Linda Murray Berzok, "My Mother's Recipes: The Diary of a Swedish American Daughter and Mother," in *Pilaf, Pozole, and Pad Thai: American Women and Ethnic Food* ed. Sherrie A. Inness (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001, p. 84-101), p. 86-87. Berzok discusses why her mother, the daughter of Swedish immigrants who lived in Minnesota, cooked mostly American dishes and very few traditional Swedish dishes, although not using printed recipes also contributed.

[285] Jere Takahashi, *Nisei/Sansei: Shifting Japanese American Identities and Politics* (Temple University Press, 1997), p. 26. Quote originally from Sei Fujii, "Letter of Warning from Sei Fujii, Los Angeles," July 1923, Box 6F-7A, folder 307, Survey of Race Relations, Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, Stanford University.

foods into the Japanese diet.[286] Evidence of the growing importance of domestically produced food in the *Issei* diet can be seen in an incident that occurred in 1919 in Hood River. In the midst of the anti-Japanese hysteria that was then brewing Masuo Yasui, in response to charges that all of the Japanese' income was sent back to Japan, estimated that perhaps only 15% was spent on foreign products. A government survey soon after found that only 3% was imported. This does bring up the issue of whether domestically produced Japanese foods are American foods or Japanese foods.

There were reasons related to employment as well for why the *Issei* diet may have changed. Many *Issei* chose occupations that involved the production of Western foods, something that was extremely important in facilitating the diffusion of Western foods into the Japanese diet in Japan.[287] The most common of such occupations was farming, but there were also many *Issei* Western-style restaurant owners, neighborhood grocery owners, and even bakers.[288] Of these, however, operating or working in a Western food restaurant was likely the most important, not just for the number of *Issei* employed, but also for the opportunities the work offered for exposure to American culture.

---

[286] Sores such as S. Ban, M. Furuya, and Teikoku Co. all mentioned having Western groceries in their ads in the *Ōshū Nippō*.

[287] In Japan in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century period the main paths to diffusion were through Western food restaurants and through the production of Western foods for Westerners by Japanese, often with the assistance of the government. For more see Cwiertka, *Making of Modern Culinary Tradition,* Chapters 2-3, and Cweirtka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine*, Chapters 1 and 2.

[288] There were at least two Japanese-owned bakeries in Portland, the Tokyo Bakery and the Tip Top Baking Company. Tokyo Bakery, known as the University Bakery under its previous owner, was in business from 1927 or so until 1938 in North Portland, while Tip Top was in business in the 1930s in southeast Portland. For information on Tokyo Bakery, see *Polk's Portland City Directory*, various years. Information on Tip Top Baking from an ad in the Kōsuto jihō (Coast Times), 1 Oct., 1936, p. 3.

RESTAURANTS

Operating a Western food restaurant was not just a common and important line of work for many *Issei* but also a good means of Westernizing diets while also exposing *Issei* workers to American customs through contact with non-Japanese customers. Since the late nineteenth century operating a restaurant has been a common occupation of American immigrants and one that was often quite financially rewarding. In the 1890s a restaurant could be opened in Portland for as little as $400 or $500, a sum easily obtainable by an *Issei* laborer after working and saving for two or three years, and even easier if several *Issei* pooled their resources.[289] The first Japanese owned business of any kind in Portland was a restaurant, the Ohio Restaurant, opened in 1888 or 1889.[290] In 1891 it was reported that half of the Japanese in Portland—sixty out of 120—worked in the seven Japanese owned restaurants in town, only one or two of which were run by "respectable Japanese with sufficient capital."[291]

For the most part the Japanese owned "American" food restaurants in Portland were similar to non-Japanese owned restaurants, including those operated by Chinese and white owners.[292] Most of the shops served meals that typically cost ten to twenty cents and up. The majority of the customers were "white, principally from the laboring and lower-salaried classes who otherwise might eat at 'quick-lunch' houses or

---

[289] Report by Toshiro Fujita on the living conditions of Japanese in the Pacific Northwest, 1891, taken from Ito, *Issei*, p. 654.

[290] The name is often referred to using the Japanese word *ohayō* (meaning "good morning"), the pronunciation of each being similar. The Ohio was owned by Shintaro Takaki, a former labor contractor, and served Western food. For more see U.S.I.C., *Immigrants in Industries*, Vol. 23, p. 304.

[291] From "Fujita Report," in Ito, *Issei*, p. 655-656. Of the remaining Japanese, forty were reported to be gamblers or pimps, and nineteen prostitutes.

[292] U.S.I.C., *Immigrants in Industries*, p. 305.

third or fourth class restaurants."[293] The food offered was simple to cook—ham and eggs, pancakes, meatloaf, hamburger steak, pork roast, fried chicken, beef stew, corned beef and cabbage, apple pie, etc.—"American cooking that didn't require a lot of skill."[294]

The number of *Issei* that were exposed to Western food through restaurant works was indeed significant. In 1909 a survey found there were eleven Japanese restaurants in Portland and fourteen "American" restaurants, the categorization referring to the type of meals served.[295] Of a total Japanese population of approximately 1,400, ninety-four people were employed in the American food restaurants (forty-eight more worked in Japanese restaurants), most likely all of whom were men.[296] By 1913 the number of Japanese-owned Western restaurants had reached twenty-nine.[297] The number of people involved in food related businesses continued to grow through the 1920's; in 1927 in Portland 185 business licenses were issued to Japanese and Chinese persons for the operation of "food establishments."[298]

For *Issei* who were trying to save money to return to Japan wealthy, owning a small business was generally a better choice than working as a laborer. In 1909, at a

---

293 Ibid., p. 122.

294 Hosokawa, *Out of the Frying Pan,* p. 133-134, and O.N.L.C., "Walking Tours," various.

295 Millis, *The Japanese Problem in the United States,* p. 62-63. The survey also found that in Seattle there were fifty-one Japanese restaurants and thirty-six American; in San Francisco, thirty-three Japanese and seventeen American; and in Sacramento, twenty-eight Japanese and eight American.

296 U.S.I.C., *Immigrants in Industries,* Vol. 23, p. 132 and 304, Table 11. In 1910 there were a total of 1,461 people of Japanese ancestry in Portland. 1910 U.S. Census.

297 Hokubei Jijisha, *1913 Hokubei nenkan (The North American Times Year Book)* (Seattle: Shakō Jijisha, 1913), p. 40.

298 Mears, *Resident Orientals,* p. 289. There were also sixty-two licenses for hotels and rooming houses and seven issued to "vegetable peddlers."

time when laborers earned on average about $1.60 a day and the average yearly income for all *Issei* was $435 a year, restaurant owners made on average $1,285.74 after a startup investment of $1,790.[299] Working as a cook or waiter paid better as well, on average thirty-three dollars a month (with a range of from thirty to forty dollars a month), plus room and board.[300] Although it is not known with any certainty how many *Issei* restauranteurs did indeed return to Japan, a comparison of the names of *Issei* restaurant owners listed in a 1913 directory of Oregon *Issei* with the 1928 census of Japanese in Oregon found that only ten of sixty-five remained in Oregon fifteen years later.[301]

It should be noted, however, that as late as 1909 only a "small percentage" of *Issei* "patronized 'American Restaurants;'" the majority still preferred to eat "articles of Japanese origin."[302] A survey conducted in that year of Japanese restaurants found that most business was with non-Japanese customers, with one restaurant reporting only five percent of its $9,600 in business was with fellow Japanese, while two others reported no Japanese customers on sales of $15,000 and 14,400.[303] The lack of Japanese customers at that time was likely due in large part to diffusion of food culture being a slow and uneven process; as late as the 1930s the clientele of some Japanese-owned "American" food restaurants in Portland's Japantown was still overwhelmingly

---

[299] U.S.I.C., *Immigrants in Industries*, Vol. 23, p. 42 and Table 36, p. 106, and Table 38, p. 110. Figures for restaurant owners based on a survey of fifty-four restaurants.

[300] U.S.I.C., *Immigrants in Industries*, Vol. 23, p. 305.

[301] 1913 *Hokubei nenkan,* no page numbers, and 1928 *Census of Japanese in Oregon.* Of those that remained, three owned restaurants, two as partner, one was a cook, one a grocer, one a store clerk, one a hotel keeper, one a sawmill laborer, and three had become farmers.

[302] U.S.I.C., *Immigrants in Industries*, Vol. 23, p. 137-138.

[303] Ibid., Vol. 23, p. 305.

non-Japanese while other shops were more mixed.[304]

Western food restaurants were just one part of what seems to have been a very vibrant food and restaurant scene in Portland's Japantown in the period from WWI through the 1920s. There were also numerous Chinese restaurants, owned by people of both Chinese and Japanese ancestry, and many *okashiya*, shops that manufactured and sold Japanese sweets and confections. And of course there were Japanese food restaurants.

As with many other aspects of how Japanese food culture evolved in Oregon, in the case of Japanese restaurants there were again a variety of forces operating that manifested themselves in multiple and interrelated ways. One important part of this was how the restaurants were influenced by American culture. Another was the role Japanese restaurants played in diffusing Japanese food culture into the majority population, a role similar to how many *Issei* were exposed to Western food. Also, if the number and diversity of a community's restaurants can be used as a measurement, then the period from WWI through the 1920s was likely a very good era for many of Portland's *Nikkei* who seem to have enjoyed a fairly high level of middle-class prosperity.

Japanese restaurants had been an important part of the Japanese community since at least 1891 when half of Portland's *Issei* were reported to be employed by the

---

[304] In part the lack of Japanese customers, even in the late 1930s, may have been due to many of the restaurants offering only "American" food to clienteles that were mainly non-Japanese laborers. For more see comments on Japantown restaurants in the notes of *Nisei* "walking tours," ONLC.

seven restaurants then in town.[305] By 1913 there were at least thirteen Japanese restaurants, most all of them located in the Japantown area. While the names, locations, and owners of these Japanese restaurants would change over the next fifteen years or so, the overall number of restaurants remained about the same.[306] Most of the restaurants called themselves *meshiya*, a term used to indicate an inexpensive eating house that served basic Japanese fare that usually included noodles, *domburi* (a bowl of rice with assorted toppings), sushi, and quite often, Chinese food. The food was often described as being *nami meshi* (ordinary or average food) or *otegaru ryōri* (casual or simple cooking), terms in keeping with the *Issei* generally being quite simple and conservative (as opposed to extravagant) in their tastes and preferences.[307]

From what can be determined with the evidence available, the food offered at Portland's Japanese restaurants seems to have been quite similar to what would have been available in Japan, although there were some significant differences, most notably with sushi. Sushi seems to have been quite a popular dish in pre-WWII Portland's Japantown as it was served at most all Japanese restaurants, only one of which seems to have called itself a sushi shop. Much of the sushi served in Portland would have been similar to that of Japan; many types of fish served as sushi in Japan were readily available in America, and some were even brought live from Japan.[308]

---

[305] In 1891 sixty of the 120 *Issei* in Portland were reported to work in restaurants. "Fujita Report," in Ito, *Issei*, p. 654.

[306] Information on restaurants taken from membership lists of the *Po-ichi meshiya kumiai* (Portland *Meshiya* Association) published in the "Special New Year's" edition of the *Ōshū Nippō*, 1918-1925, as well as from the 1913 *Hokubei nenkan*, p. 42-43.

[307] These terms were commonly used by restaurants in their ads in the *Ōshū Nippō*. The term "simple" is has been often mentioned in interviews with Portland's *Nikkei* in regards to their tastes and preferences.

[308] Order forms for various fish companies that supplied Japanese customers during the 1920s and 1930s

Despite the similarities, there was one very significant difference between sushi in Japan and in America, a difference that was directly related to the mixing of Western and Japanese cultures and something that would not take place in Japan until after the WWII. In Portland, as elsewhere in the United States, dining in a restaurant meant sitting down and eating, no matter what type of food was served. Until the post-WWII period, however, most sushi shops (as well as other "fast food" shops) in Japan were stalls, often portable, where the chef sat down and the customers stood up. It was not until the post-war U.S. Occupation that these stalls evolved into more permanent restaurants. The Occupation administration most likely ordered the change out of concern that eating raw fish and other foods at stalls was unsanitary with little understanding that the foods were entirely safe to eat.[309]

Another example of how extensive food globalization had become in the first third of the twentieth century can be found by looking at Chinese food and Chinese restaurants of Portland from that era. Before WWII what Americans today consider to

---

show some twenty different fish available fresh, including *maguro* (bluefin tuna, *Thunnus thynnus orientalis,* a fish native to the Pacific Northwest), the king of sushi fish, as well as numerous types of salted or pickled fish eaten as sushi. Yasui Collection, O.H.S. Live *unagi* (river eel) are known to have been carried from Japan by a visiting sushi chef employed by Tokio Sukiyaki restaurant. Information from interview with Alice Sumida, *nee* Kawasaki, Portland, OR., 12 Oct., 2006. Ms. Sumida's family owned and operated the Tokio Sukiyaki restaurant in the pre-war period.

[309] Raw fish eaten as sushi is, with proper handling, entirely safe to eat, even when not refrigerated. When vinegar is added to rice the vinegar converts proteins into amino acids and other enzymes that act as preservatives while at the same time it destroys the proteins in any harmful bacteria. Additionally, ginger, *wasabi* and *shōyu*—all standard accompaniments with sushi—help kill dysentery, cholera, and typhoid, while the bamboo leaves sushi is traditionally served on kills bacteria. For more, see Kinjirou Omae and Yuzuru Tachibana, *The Book of Sushi* (Tokyo and New York: Kodansha International, 1981), p. 99 and 106-108.

be "ethnic food restaurants"—restaurants that serve cuisines brought to America by immigrants—consisted mostly of Chinese restaurants, although in many instances what made the food "Chinese" was that it was prepared by a Chinese person.[310] Although much of Japan's food culture had its roots in China and maintained some important similarities to Chinese foodways, especially in the importance of rice and freshness and seasonality (*shun* in Japanese), over the centuries the two had significantly diverged. Most *Issei* would likely have first tasted Chinese food in America; it was only after 1910 that Chinese restaurants began to open in Japanese cities, the food served a Japonicized version prepared by Japanese cooks, although Chinese food prepared by Chinese chefs was available in the port cities of Kobe and Yokohama.

Like most other ethnic groups in America, the *Issei* embraced Chinese food, both as consumers and as purveyors. As early as 1916 there were several Japanese restaurants in Portland that served Chinese food (*shina ryōri*) along with Japanese food (*nihon meshi*).[311] One of the more popular dishes, and something served in Japanese restaurants in pre-WWII Portland, was *shina udon*.[312] *Shina udon*, a dish known today as *ramen,* was a noodle dish of Chinese origin that, during the Edo Period, was

---

[310] The most well known "Chinese" dishes were often of American origin, including chop suey. Chinese food is one of the only American immigrant foods to have been studied. For more on the history of Chinese restaurants in the United States see J.A.G. Roberts, *China to Chinatown: Chinese Food in the West* (London: Reaktion Books, 2002), especially Chapter Six, "The Globalization of Chinese Food-the Early Stages", p. 135-160.

[311] Three restaurants advertised having *shina ryōri* in the 1916 *Hokubei nenkan.* Also, there were three Japanese-owned Chinese restaurants in Seattle. See Hosokawa, *Out of the Frying Pan*, p. 142.

[312] *Shina udon,* also sometimes referred to in Portland as *shina nuru,* was mentioned by the majority of Japanese restaurants that advertised in the *Ōshū Nippō* in the 1910s and 1920s.

hybridized to better suit Japanese tastes.[313] In Japan, before *ramen* became the common name, the dish was called *shina soba.* The use of *shina udon* in Portland seems to have been unique and was likely the result of a hybridization related to the fact that most of Oregon's *Issei* came from Western Japan where wheat is grown and *udon* is preferred over *soba.*[314]

If the *Issei* and their families chose to have more "authentic" Chinese food there were many restaurants to choose from, some of which actively sought Japanese customers.[315] At times as many as seven different Chinese restaurants advertised in the local Japanese press, some using lines such as *nihonjin tokubetsu kangei* (Japanese people especially welcome) specifically welcoming Japanese customers.[316] Since most of the Japanese restaurants were small, *Issei* often held parties and receptions in the banquet rooms of Chinese restaurants where the restaurant provide special dishes (*chinmi)* for weddings and other special events.

While global influences were important in the development of Portland's Asian

---

313 The most notable changes made in Japan were in the noodles and the use of large *donburi* bowls for serving it in.

314 Until the end of WWII the word *shina* was an accepted word for the country the West calls China, used both by Japanese and Chinese. After the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) the word took on a negative, derogatory meaning among the Chinese. As a result, in Japan the name of the dish became *Chūka soba,* and later *ramen.* For more on the term *shina* see Joshua A. Fogel, "The Sino-Japanese controversy over Shina as a Toponym for China," in Joshua A. Fogel, ed., *The Cultural Dimension on Sino-Japanese Relations: Essays on the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharp, 1995), p. 66-76.

315 In the pre-WWII era the food in Portland's Chinese restaurants was considered to be equal to those of San Francisco. See Hosokawa, *Out of the Frying Pan,* p. 143.

316 Chinese restaurants that advertised in the April 4, 1927 edition of the *Ōshū Nippō* included China Tea Garden , Hoy Sun Low, the Eagle Inn, Gong Nom Low, the Republic Café, and Manhō. *Ōshū Nippō,* 4 April, 1927, p. 6.

food culture in the early years of the twentieth century, global events had other impacts as well, especially on Portland's restaurant culture after the Manchurian Incident of September, 1931. As tensions between Japan and China increased and the Incident grew into a full war, animosity between the Japanese and Chinese in Portland also increased. Each group boycotted the other's restaurants, Chinese shops stopped advertising in the Japanese press, and even children were made to walk to school on opposite sides of the street.[317] Since the Japanese still had a taste for Chinese food it became necessary for more Japanese restaurants to offer Chinese dishes; at least one became more successful after it added a Chinese menu and a banquet room.[318] The war would eventually lead to even more changes to *Issei* foodways with the internment of all Japanese people after the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

SUKIYAKI

Just as Western food restaurant were important in the dissemination of "American" food into the *Issei* diet so too were Japanese restaurants in introducing non-Japanese to Japanese foodways. But while the *Issei* tried and embraced many different Western foods, the flow the other direction was generally limited to just one dish: *sukiyaki.*

Sukiyaki is a dish of thinly sliced beef cooked in a shallow pan with vegetables, *shōyu*, *mirin* (a sweet rice wine used for cooking), *tōfu*, and various other ingredients, with a raw egg as a dip, the cooking often being done at the diner's table. It is one of the best examples of Meiji Era food hybridization in Japan, a dish that is a mixture of Western ingredients (beef) and Japanese cooking techniques (*nabe*, or hot pot cooking).

---

[317] ONLC Walking Tour, 28 Aug., 1996, p. 6-7.

[318] ONLC Walking Tour, 28 Aug., 1996, p. 9.

Sukiyaki made using meats such as chicken, wild fowl, fish, or whale, often cooked in a pot or, sometimes, a plow blade or spade, but beef was not used until the Meiji Period after the government began promoting its consumption as part of its policy of *bunmeikaika* (civilization and enlightenment).[319] Although the term *sukiyaki* was first used in Japan in 1868, until the 1920s the dish was usually referred to as *nabe*, a categorization that included many other meat dishes.[320] The term *sukiyaki* became much more widespread in Japan after 1923, about the same time its use first appeared in Portland.[321]

By the 1930s, *sukiyaki* was available in many of Portland's Japanese restaurants. Unlike most other Japanese food, however, it was not only Japanese people that ate *sukiyaki*: many Caucasians enjoyed it as well, most likely due to its similarity to Western fare as well as concerted efforts by Japanese restauranteurs to reach out to Caucasians. Although it is not known how its popularity initially spread beyond the *Nikkei* community, by the 1930's there were at least four restaurants in Portland that specialized in *sukiyaki*, all of which seem to have tried to make Japanese dining as accessible as possible for non-Japanese. The names of these restaurants—Nikko Sukiyaki, Kobe Sukiyaki, Tokio Sukiyaki, and the Sukiyaki House—would all have been readily and easily identified as "Caucasian friendly" establishments.[322]

---

[319] A drawing from 1803 shows what appears to be pieces of either chicken or fish being cooked on a plow blade over a brazier. See Harada, *Washoku to Nihon bunka,* p. 177- 179.

[320] Ibid., p. 177-179.

[321] The first mention of the word '*sukiyaki*' that could be found in Oregon was in 1924 in an advertisement for the Mikado Restaurant, the ad saying "*ten kaippin no sukiyaki*"—"the best *sukiyaki* in the world." *Ōshū Nippō,* 9 Aug., 1924, p. 6.

[322] These were not the only restaurants where *sukiyaki* might have been encountered by non-Japanese people. Columbia Soda Works, a shop in Southeast Portland that billed itself as a combination Japanese

Even the choice of spelling the name as "Tokio" was done to make it easier for non-Japanese to pronounce.[323] There were small changes made to the dish to better suit American tastes, such as forgoing the standard addition of raw eggs. Also, when they were available, matsutake mushrooms were sometimes added for Japanese people, but due to their strong and unfamiliar taste, never for non-Japanese.[324] And while three of the *sukiyaki* shops were located in Japantown, one was not, making it perhaps a "safer" choice for people uncomfortable with Japantown.[325]

In addition to adaptations made to *sukiyaki* and its accompanying culture to attract non-Japanese customers, some *sukiyaki* restaurants also advertised to the English speaking majority population. In 1937 Tokio Sukiyaki placed an ad in the *Polk's City Directory* which read: "Something Different. Your food cooked on your table and seasoned as you like it. We specialize and cater to large and small parties."[326] The following year's edition of *Polk's City Directory* carried a small ad by Nikko Sukiyaki that read "Nikko Sukiyaki—Individually Cooked on Your Table—Tempura, Fried Shrimp, Chop Suey, Noodles, Party & Banquet Rooms."[327] Nikko Sukiyaki also advertised in Portland's evening newspaper, *The Oregon Journal*. The small ads in the Sunday sports section were simple, saying only "tempura" and "Chinese Dishes" as

---

grocery store and *sukiyaki* house, was likely to also have had non-Japanese customers. See ad in the *Kōsuto jihō* (*Coast Times*), 1 Dec., 1936, p. 2.

[323] Alice Sumida. In Japanese publications the name was spelled "Tokyo," although the shop's former name, *Kusunoya*, was also written, but in *kanji* (Chinese characters). See 1936 *Hokubei nenkan*, p. 192.

[324] Alice Sumida.

[325] Kobe Sukiyaki was located on S.W. Park Ave.

[326] *1937 Polk's Portland (Oregon) City Directory*, p. 1309.

[327] *Polk's Portland (Oregon) City Directory*, 1938, p. 1021.

well as the name and address.[328] At this time it was rare for restaurants to advertise in either the city directory or in Portland's English language newspapers, but these *sukiyaki* shops must have believed that targeting the general population with ads was worth it.

The efforts at outreach apparently proved successful. The mayor of Portland was a frequent diner at Tokio Sukiyaki, as was the President of the Chamber of Commerce. And one year the Rose Festival Court, as well as the Royal Rosarians, went there to eat.[329] Despite its Americanization, Japanese people enjoyed Tokio Sukiyaki as well, with several Japanese officials, including the Consul General, dining there.[330] And while the preferred dish for non-Japanese diners was quite Western in its origin, non-Japanese diners would have also been exposed to more traditional Japanese cuisine such as sushi, *tempura*, and *sake,* with some people even trying them.[331]

It is unknown why non-Japanese Portlanders were so receptive to Japanese food in the 1930s. It was likely due in large part to people being generally more tolerant of the Japanese than in other Pacific Coast cities, something that may have been in recognition of the economic value of maintaining good relations with Japan.[332] For

---

[328] *The Sunday Oregon Journal*, 4 Sept., 1938, p. 1 and 2.

[329] Alice Sumida. The Portland Rose Festival is a local celebration held every year in June. It began in 1906 as an effort to carry on the celebration of Portland's Pacific Northwest heritage and international culture after the Lewis & Clark Centennial of 1905. The Royal Rosarians are Portland's official greeters and ambassadors and have long been associated with the Festival. For more, see the homepage of the Portland Rose festival, http://www.rosefestival.org/about/.

[330] *Kōsuto jihō*, 22 Oct., 1936, p. 1.

[331] Tempura was popular with Caucasians at Tokio Sukiyaki. Alice Sumida.

[332] As an example of intolerance, in 1919, in an effort to reduce the risk to the *Nikkei* community, the Americanization Committee of the Seattle Japanese Liaison Association removed all signs printed in Japanese and other potentially dangerous expressions of Japanese identity from Main Street. In contrast,

whatever reasons, Portland was the first city in America where non-Japanese customers were regular customers of Japanese restaurants managed by Japanese immigrants, something that would not occur elsewhere until the 1950s.[333]

Japanese restaurants in Portland openly displayed symbols of Japanese identity such as Japanese screens and artwork in shops windows. Information from Gail Lee Dubrow, "'The Nail That Sticks Up Gets Hit': the Architecture of Japanese American identity in the Urban Environment, 1885-1942," in *Nikkei in the Pacific Northwest: Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians in the Twentieth Century*, eds. Louis Fiset and Gail M. Nomura (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005, p. 120-145), p. 138-139.

[333] Cwiertka claims that the fist non-Japanese customers to frequently dine in Japanese restaurants were former military men that had lived in Japan as part of the U.S. occupation, and that the restaurants were *sukiyaki* shops in San Francisco. See Cwiertka, *Modern Japanese Cuisine,* p. 184.

CHAPTER IV

BEVERAGES

Despite many opportunities in the first half of the twentieth century for the food cultures of America and Japan to mix and spread across geographic and cultural boundaries—to globalize—it is something that did not happen easily. When it did happen it was usually quite haphazard. The biggest exception to this was with the intermingling of beverages. In most instances where one culture was introduced to a beverage of the other, the new beverage was accepted, and at times eagerly embraced. This was particularly true of alcoholic beverages. This exchange of beverages took place in America as well as in Japan where early on Westerners readily took to drinking Japanese *sake.* Later, in America, many *Issei* came to enjoy drinks such as beer and whiskey. Non-alcoholic beverages also successfully made a cross-cultural transition

TEA

If rice is the food most identified with Japanese cuisine, then tea would be the equivalent beverage.[334] Tea first came to Japan from China in 815, and for several hundred years remained a drink of the elite, especially of the nobility and the Buddhist clergy, and usually in a form of thick tea known as *macha.* Gradually, and following the same path that other foods often take towards becoming part of a cuisine, tea drinking spread to the common people.[335] By the Meiji era tea was well established as a common, everyday beverage throughout Japan where, in addition to its use as a

---

[334] "Tea" here refers to tea made from the steamed and dried leaves of a type of camellia plant (*Camellia sinensis*). Tea is the most common beverage in Japan, something drank every day by nearly everyone. Other types of tea are common in Japan, including other teas made from the Camellia plant as well as teas made from barley (*mugi cha*), buckwheat (*soba cha*), and even from corn. For the purpose of this paper "tea" refers only to green tea.

[335] Ishige, *History of Japanese Food*, p. 86.

beverage, was also used medicine and as the focus of what is perhaps the most uniquely "Japanese" thing in Japanese culture, the tea ceremony. Undoubtedly, every *Issei* that came to America would have been well acquainted with tea.

Tea was not known in the West until 1610 when Dutch traders carried it from Japan to Europe.[336] Following a similar path of dispersal as in Japan, tea was first a beverage for the nobility and the wealthy, consumed as a novelty and as a medicine. Its popularity soon spread, and by 1660 was consumed by people of all classes, especially in England.[337] Although the first tea to reach Europe came from Japan, subsequently black tea from China became by far the most common type of tea. Black tea—tea that has been oxidized—was the tea of choice as it traveled better than un-oxidized green tea and was more difficult to adulterate. Adulteration was a common practice in the early years of the European tea trade. Additionally, the Chinese had a long history of selling black tea to the nomadic tribes of Central Asia. The Chinese considered all non-Chinese to be "barbarians," and therefore saw black tea as being fit for barbarians. When the Europeans arrived, it seemed only natural to sell them "barbarian" tea as well.[338]

Tea drinking was even more popular in Colonial America, where the tea came either from the English or, if smuggled in, from the Dutch.[339] In America, as in Europe,

---

[336] Beatrice Hohenegger, *Liquid Jade: The Story of Tea from East to West* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2006), p. 66-67, 69-72. Tea had been mentioned as early as 1559 in the accounts of Jesuit missionaries to China and Japan but there is no reliable evidence that it had been carried to Europe until 1610.

[337] Hohenegger, *Liquid Jade*, p. 69-72.

[338] This information comes from Beatrice Hohenegger, the author of *Liquid Jade*. She in turn learned of this from Steve Owyoung, the curator of Asian arts at the St. Louis Art Museum and a long time student of early China tea history.

[339] At the time of the American Revolution tea consumption in the Colonies was three times that of in

tea was usually sweetened with sugar, making it a good source of calories for people (especially in industrializing England), but different in flavor from the green teas of Japan.[340]

Tea is a product that has never been commercially produced in America and thus has always needed to be imported. Beginning around 1800, attempts at domestic production of tea were made, mostly in South Carolina and other southern states. That research was interrupted by the American Civil War, after which it was determined that domestically produced tea would not be able to compete with tea imported from China and other areas with low labor costs.[341] In 1869 another attempt was made to grow tea, this time by a group of Japanese immigrants, a group that had experience in tea farming and might have been expected to succeed. In this instance a group of Japanese settled near Gold Hill, California and planted 140,000 tea plants on what they called the Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Colony. Their effort was short-lived, and in 1872, after only three years of trying, they gave up on the project after concluding that the climate was not suited for tea production.[342]

During the mid Meiji Period, the years at the end of the nineteenth century and

---

England and Wales combined. Hohenegger, *Liquid Jade,* p. 124.

[340] During the American Colonial period England, especially the English East Indian Company, dominated world trade in tea, most of which came from China, and later, increasingly from India. For the English tea was just part of the trade of their colonial empire, a commodity that was bought with opium, then sweetened with sugar from the Caribbean, which in turn was grown and processed by slaves, with the end product, tea with sugar, being a major source of calories for workers in industrializing England. By far the best work on this subject is Sydney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Elizabeth Sifton Books (Viking), 1985).

[341] Nelson Close, "Experiments in Tea Production in the United States," *Agricultural History*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (July, 1950), p. 156-161, p. 156.

[342] Ibid., p. 159.

the beginning of the twentieth, tea was very important to Japan's export economy. The United States was a key part of the market. Tea had been exported to the United States since the opening of the country to the West in the 1850's, and had become a major source of foreign earnings; in the 1870's one-quarter of Japan's exports was tea (silk and silk-related products made up thirty-nine percent).[343] Since at least 1897 the Japanese government had been giving financial support to tea producers and exporters, in part out of a fear of competition from India and Ceylon in the lucrative U.S. tea market.[344] In 1915 12 million yen (6 million U.S. dollars) worth of tea was exported, mostly to America, making tea Japan's second largest source of foreign earnings after textiles.[345] Selling Japanese green tea in America was considered to be a good business for emigrants to enter into, with potential profits of $5,000 a year possible.[346] Immigrants were also urged to sell coffee and black tea (*kōcha*), although the latter should try to be replaced with green tea.[347] By 1915 Japanese tea exports to the United States had reached forty million pounds a year, out of a total production of 80 to 90 million pounds.[348]

It is quite likely Japanese green tea was available in Portland and other major cities, especially port cities, on the Pacific Coast of North America before Japanese

---

[343] J. Richard Huber, "Effect of Prices on Japan's Entry into World Commerce after 1858," *The Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 79, No. 3 (May-June, 1971), p. 614-628, p. 616.

[344] "THE TEA TRADE: America Wants Pure Teas-Are Ceylon & India Teas Supplanting Chinese and Japanese?" *The New York Times*, July 12, 1897, p. 6.

[345] *Shin tobehō* (*New Way to go to America*), a guide book published in 1916 for people going to America, said Japanese tea had been in America for sixty years. Shinmanuki , *Shin tobehō*, p. 198-199, 201.

[346] Ibid., p. 212. The amount reported in the book was ten-thousand yen per year.

[347] Ibid., p. 200-201.

[348] *The New York Times*, 8 May, 1915, p. 12.

immigrants began to arrive. West Coast ports would have been where the imported tea was unloaded. Japanese tea was definitely available by the time the first *Issei* arrived in Oregon and the Pacific Northwest. Many *Issei* wrote of drinking Japanese tea, especially those *Issei* who worked on railroad construction.[349] And while immigrants often write of not being able to find familiar and favorite foods in foreign lands, nothing of the sort in regards to tea has been found in the course of this research, a good indication that Japanese tea was available.

It is difficult now to know how popular green tea was in the Pacific Northwest prior to 1905. From 1905 onward, however, Japanese teas definitely did enjoy a period of widespread popularity, in part, it seems, due to Japan's presence at the 1905 Lewis and Clark Exposition in Portland, Portland's one and only "World's Fair.".

During the Meiji Period one of the key ways that Japan promoted its products (including tea) and demonstrated its "modernity" to the rest of the world was by participating in international exhibitions and "World's Fairs." By the end of the nineteenth century Japan had been a regular participant in international expositions for several years, using the fairs to demonstrate the advances it had made in joining the "modern" world, its culture, and as a forum for advertising the goods it produced. At the 1894 fair in Chicago Japan had agricultural exhibits (72 exhibits on rice alone), exhibits on its industry (everything any Western nation could produce), displays of its groceries, and 215 exhibits on tea and tobacco.[350] There was also a tea house that did

---

[349] Ito's book *The Issei* has many stories where *Issei* or former *Issei* speak of drinking Japanese tea with meals.

[350] Neil Harris, "All the World a Melting Pot? Japan at the American Fairs, 1876-1994," in *Mutual Images: Essays in American-Japanese Relations*, ed. Akira Iriye (Harvard University Press, 1975, p. 24-54), p. 40-41.

$23,000 in business.[351] That same year in San Francisco at the California Midwinter International Exposition (another "World's" Fair) Japan had another tea house, this one built with private funds. Ten years later Japan's exhibit at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis the Japanese Village exhibit had grown to include sixty restaurants, as well as, again, a tea house.[352]

Officially known as The Lewis and Clark Centennial American Pacific Exposition, the event was one in a series of mostly annual expositions (though not officially a "World's Fair") held in the United States in the years near the turn of the century, and the first held on the West Coast. It was staged to celebrate the centennial of the Lewis and Clark expedition reaching Oregon, to expand trade with the Pacific Rim, and to promote Oregon's resources and products. It was also meant to stimulate Portland's economy.

For the Portland exhibition Japan again went all out in displaying its products and culture, including its food. It was reported at the time of the fair that the Japanese Emperor Meiji , "not quite satisfied with the excellent showing made last year at St. Louis, gave his commissioners instructions to outdo what was done at the Louisiana Purchase Exhibition. Accordingly, Japan has the most comprehensive and representative display among the foreign nations," spending one million dollars on its exhibit.[353]

The Japanese exhibit was in two places, the Oriental Exhibit Palace and the

---

[351] Ibid., p. 39.

[352] Ibid., *p.* 49.

[353] Robertus Love, "The Lewis and Clark Fair," *The World's Work*, Vol. X, No. 4 (Aug., 1905), p. 6445-6458, p. 6456, and Carl Abbott, *The Great Extravaganza: Portland and the Lewis and Clark Exposition* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1981), p. 43.

Japanese Village. Japan's exhibit in the Oriental Building, alongside exhibits from Persia, Turkey, East India, Egypt, and other countries, was the largest at 150 X 200 feet, some one-third of the space occupied by foreign nations.[354] China canceled plans to attend the fair due to anti-Chinese sentiments and legislation in America, although Shantung Province did send an official exhibit. Japan's exhibit in the Oriental Building contained a total of fifty-four booths that displayed a variety of Japanese handcrafts being made, most of which were porcelain and silk goods. There were also numerous displays of Japanese food products. Most of the foods on display would likely have appealed to non-Japanese visitors (things like *shōyu* (soy sauce), persimmon jelly, vinegar, *sake*, and various types of confections and sweets), although *konnyaku* (a gelatinous paste made from roots of the devil's tongue plant) may not have had much appeal.[355] Green tea from Shizuoka and Ibaraki Prefectures may have been something new but not too "foreign."[356] It is possible that some displays included demonstrations of food manufacture, but it is doubtful *shōyu* exhibitors such as the Shizuoka Shōyu Brewers Association did so as *shōyu* takes over one year to age.[357] Among the foreign exhibitors, Japan was considered to be "easily the first, both in the variety and in the extent of the products shown."[358]

---

[354] *The Oregon Journal Souvenir View Book of the Late Lewis and Clark Centennial Exhibition* (Portland: The Oregon Journal, 1905), and Henry E. Dosch, "Foreign and Domestic Exhibits," *Lewis and Clark Journal*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (Sept., 1904), p. 6.

[355] For a list of food related entries that received medals at the fair see Jeffer Daykin. *Losing "The Trail" on the Road to Modernity: America's Reception of Japan at the Lewis and Clark Centennial and American Pacific Exposition and Oriental Fair, Portland, Oregon, 1905* (unpublished thesis, Portland State University, May, 2008, p. 188-189, Table 1, "Relative Receipts off National-Themed Amusement."

[356] Daykin, *Losing "The Trail,"* p. 137, Table 1 ("Relative Receipts of National-Themed amusements").

[357] *Official Catalog to the Lewis and Clark Exposition.* Portland: 1905, p. 121-122.

[358] Love, "The Lewis and Clark Fair," p. 6458.

In addition to the exhibits in the Oriental Building, Japan also had an extensive display known as the Japanese Village, or "Fair Japan." Fair Japan was located on "The Trail," the main strolling thoroughfare of the fair, an area that included such other exhibits as Professor Barnes with Trixie the Educated Horse and his "high diving elk" shows. Although Japan's goal was to show off and promote its industry and its suitability for trade with America and less to promote its culture, the cultural exhibits of Fair Japan proved to be quite popular.[359] Fair Japan consisted of about two acres of grounds for tea gardens, bazaars, restaurants, theaters, and other amusements.[360] People strolling on the Trail would have seen Japanese women and girls dressed in traditional *kimono* and men dressed in *happi* jackets and other traditional attire. People who entered Fair Japan would have passed under a giant *torii* (gate) and then would have had the option of eating in a Japanese style restaurant or visiting a tea house. The restaurant served "regular meals" for twenty-five cents and locally brewed Gambrinus beer for a dime a glass.[361] The tea houses featured Japanese women billed as "*geishas*" who served tea and rice cakes in "the coolest and nicest spots on the fairgrounds."[362] Visitors were also given a "dainty" package of Formosa oolong tea to take home, all for ten cents.[363]

There are several reasons that Formosan oolong tea rather than "Japanese" tea would have been served by Japan at the fair. After Japan's 1895 victory in war over

---

[359] Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair* (The University of Chicago Press, 1984), Chapter 7, "The Expositions in Portland and Seattle: 'To Celebrate the Past and to Exploit the Future,'" p. 184-207.

[360] Dosch, "Foreign and Domestic Exhibits," p. 6.

[361] Photos from Oregon Historical Society. Unfortunately no records exist on what food was served in the restaurant.

[362] *The Oregon Journal*, Aug. 2, 1905, p. 5.

[363] Postcard from Lewis and Clark Centennial Exhibition.

China, Formosa (Taiwan) became a possession of Japan's. At that time Formosa was noted for producing some of the best tea in the world.[364] By serving Formosan tea rather than the traditional green tea at the fair Japan was able to integrate her new acquisition into the Japanese economy. Japan was also able to show off to the west that she possessed a colony, this being a time whenother Western nations were expanding their spheres of influence in Asia. Japan was also able to serve some of the finest tea in the world, and a product that was familiar in the west. Being a semi-oxidized tea with a flavor and color somewhat in between those of green tea and Chinese black tea, oolong tea would have made a good crossover tea for people not familiar with Japanese green teas.

The biggest attraction of the Japanese exhibit seems to have been the tea houses and the women working there, although not necessarily in that order. In ads and in articles that ran in the two biggest Portland daily newspapers while the fair was open (June 1 to October 15, 1905), the emphasis of the message seemed to be that there were exotic *geisha* at the fair. A small article on Fair Japan that ran in *The Oregonian* read: "wares and art works of the nation that is now attracting the attention of the civilized world, but also the customs, sports and amusements of the wonderful little brown people. A Japanese theater and a quaint tea garden looked after by a bevy of bewitching geisha girls are features of 'Fair Japan.'"[365] An advertisement from July 1, the day the Trail opened, read "FAIR JAPAN: One of the Great Attractions of the Trail. Don't Miss It!"[366] But most others were more of this nature:

---

[364] Interview with Harada Nobuo, Tokyo, Japan, 26 January, 2007.

[365] "Fair Japan," *The Oregonian,* July 1, 1905, p. 11.

[366] *The Oregonian,* July 1, 1905, p. 10.

"The Eyes of the World will be on Fair Japan, and that interest will be intensified in those who attend this evening when REFRESHMENTS BY REAL GEISHA BEAUTIES WILL BE SERVED to all who attend." "FAIR JAPAN will contain the Japanese Theater where real Oriental plays will be produced...(and also) a real Tea Garden."[367]

Or like this half-page ad for Fair Japan:

IT WILL BECOME A FAD
Every Visitor Delighted with "The Sunrise," the Pretty Japanese Tea Garden
Delicious Tea Served by REAL AND BEAUTIFUL GEISHA GIRLS[368]

Despite Japan's intentions to promote its industry and suitability for international trade, as well as its tea, it seems that what people were really interested in was the exoticism of Japanese culture as embodied by *geisha* "beauties."

In its four and a half month run 1.6 million people attended the fair, many of whom were likely introduced to Japanese culture and tea for the first time. No information seems to be available on the number of people served at Fair Japan's tea houses, but the Fair Japan exhibit did generate $7,120.85 in revenue, although this was less than the revenue of the "Carnival of Venice" exhibit ($29,359.25), the "Streets of Cairo" exhibit $28,884.70), and the "Gay Paree" exhibit ($20,689.35).[369] As a comparison, the tea house in Japan's exhibit at the Chicago World's Fair in 1894 did $23,000 in business.[370] With some sixty restaurants, Japan's exhibit in Chicago seems to have been much bigger overall.[371] As another comparison, the Portland Y.W.C.A.

---

367 *The Oregon Journal*, June 1, 1905, p. 9.

368 *The Oregon Journal*, July 8, 1905, p. 9.

369 Daykin, *Losing "The Trail,"* p. 137, Table 1 ("Relative Receipts of National-Themed Amusements).

370 Harris, "All the World a Melting Pot?," p. 43.

371 Ibid.,p. 49.

operated another tea house at the Lewis and Clark Expo that served tea with "light accompaniments" to "ladies and to all gentlemen accompanied by ladies." This tea house, lacking the exotic foreignness of Japan's, managed to make only a $4,800 net profit from its operations.[372]

Japan's efforts to promote its tea included more than just what was at the fair. At a banquet held soon after the fair opened to honor Ito Ichihei, the head of the Japanese delegation at the fair, the ballroom of the Portland Hotel was reported to have been turned into a "tea garden in far Japan." Hosted by Vice-Consul Tsuneji Aiba, the room featured ceilings hung with lanterns, palms and other tropical plants and flowers hung everywhere, and tables decorated with roses and other flowers. "Even the air became Oriental to match the occasion," reported *The Oregonian.* Although the newspaper reported that the "repast was a sumptuous one," with the "whole scheme making one of the most elaborate and beautiful dinner settings ever presented in the city," there was no mention of what was served.[373] If Japanese food had been served it seems that it surely would have been mentioned in the press. Most likely the meal was French food, as that has been the standard cuisine for all of Japan's official dinners since the Meiji period.[374]

It should be noted that by describing the hotel setting as a "tea garden in far Japan," the author of the article transposed his conception of what was most likely an English tea garden into a Japanese context. In Japan there are no "tea gardens," although there are small and simple gardens attached to traditional tea houses.

---

[372] From Portland Y.W.C.A. archives, Lewis and Clark College Special Collections, Box 3, file 42.

[373] "Ito Guest of Honor," *The Oregonian,* June 11, 1905, p. 15.

[374] A book at the Ajinomoto Library in Tokyo has reproductions of the menus from nearly all of the official state dinners held, both in Japan and abroad. All feature French food.

Coinciding with the opening of the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exhibition another new amusement park also opened in Portland. The Oaks (later known as Oaks Park), located along the Willamette River in the Sellwood neighborhood of Portland, opened two days before the Lewis and Clark Exposition, apparently in an effort to tie in with the many visitors who came to Portland for the Lewis and Clark Exposition. In addition to a midway of "popular amusements," a roller rink, and restaurants, The Oaks also had what was billed as a Japanese tea house. And just as with the tea houses at Fair Japan, the Oaks' featured "genuine GEISHA girls."[375] Oaks Park's archives do not have any information on their Japanese tea house, but the approximately 60' by 100' building is still standing and is now used as a dance pavilion. The large size of the building suggests that the tea house had been, or had been expected to be, a popular attraction for the park. Advertisements from Portland newspapers indicate the tea house existed at least until the 1906 season.

Another "Japanese" tearoom opened in Portland in July of 1907. Located at the corner of S.W. Washington and Park, it was operated by the Royal Bakery and Confectionery Company. Advertisements for the tearoom featured drawings of women in *kimono* holding fans and parasols, with Japanese lanterns decorating the edge. Using a Japanese-style font, the ads blared "Come Sup With us in Old Japan." Beyond the bold-print headline, however, there was no mention of Japan or things Japanese; the food offered consisted of cakes and confections, ice cream, sandwiches, and other "more substantial" dishes, as well as tea, coffee, and fountain drinks.[376] A picture postcard of the tea room from 1910 shows a room with nothing to indicate any ties to

---

[375] Ad in *The Oregon Journal*, June 15, 1905, p. 6.

[376] Ad in *The Oregon Journal*, 5 July, 1907, p. 16.

Japan.[377] It appears that rather than actually making an attempt to present Japanese food and tea to Portlanders the Royal Bakery was merely using a perceived exoticism associated with things Japanese to market more traditional western fare. The Royal Bakery later had an Egyptian Tearoom in the back of its bakery on S.W. Morrison.[378]

Despite a lack of things actually Japanese in the Japanese teahouses or tearooms in the years after the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition, it appears that Japan's exhibit had made a lasting and positive impression on the people of Portland. At that time teahouses were beginning to become popular nationally, their increasing numbers due in great part to the growing temperance movement in America, and in particular in New England, a movement that was in great part fueled by anti-immigrant sentiments directed at beer drinking Germans. Portland seems to have been one of the few places to have had a "Japanese" tea house in 1905, let alone several. Although Japanese themed tearooms existed elsewhere, the ones in Portland seem to have played on the term "Japanese" much more frequently.[379]

The economy of Portland also benefited from the growth of the tea trade with Japan, especially in the shipping and stevedoring trades. In June of 1905 *The Oregon Journal* newspaper reported that the steamship *Arabia*, after taking on cargo in Formosa, Kobe, and Yokohama, unloaded 12,700 chests of tea in Portland.[380] The vessel also

---

[377] From collection of author.

[378] Jan Whitaker, *Tea at the Blue Lantern Inn: A Social History of the Tea Room Craze in America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002), p. 111.

[379] See Whitaker, *Tea at the Blue Lantern Inn.* In her book on the history of tea rooms in America there are very few "Japanese" tearooms mentioned until the 1910's or 1920's.

[380] A tea chest normally measured 50cm X 50cm X 75cm. One chest of English tea imported to America from China weighed approximately 350 pounds. If a similar amount by weight of Japanese tea was in one chest, and the number of chests reported was correct, then over 2,000 tons of Japanese tea

carried 500 bags of rice, or approximately twenty-five tons.[381] Obviously it was not just Japanese people that were drinking Japanese tea in America.

The popularity of Japanese tea may have been due in part to a general interest in things Japanese throughout the United States. Japanese goods had been sold in Portland, since well before the Lewis and Clark Expo, even before there any significant numbers of Japanese. In 1893 the Japanese Art Store at 309 Morrison (owned by a non-Japanese, W.R, Bond) advertised for sale such things as porcelain, embroideries, carvings, cabinets, screens, lanterns, matting, rugs, toys, baskets, and lacquer ware, but no tea.[382] In 1905 the Portland department store Lipman-Wolfe's sold Japanese trinkets such as "geisha fans" (marked down from twenty-five cents each to ten cents) and short kimono (priced from forty-nine cents to eighty-five cents each).

In addition there were six or seven shops whose business was listed as being sellers of Japanese goods, only one of which, the M. Furuya Co., dealt primarily with *Issei.* The others included a shop owned by Tsuji Kakugo, on Thurman Street in Northwest Portland, located, it seems, to take advantage of people visiting the Lewis and Clark Expo. At least one Japanese goods shop in downtown Portland, the Western Importing Company, sold "fine" teas in addition to Chinese and Japanese curiosities, novelties, and porcelain, although it is not known if the tea was Chinese or Japanese.[383]

Besides being sold in shops specializing in Japanese imports, Japanese tea was also sold in grocery stores throughout Portland. Portland newspapers such as *The*

---

came in this one shipment, an amount that seems excessive. If each chest contained only 100 pounds, the total would have been 635 tons, still a significant amount of tea.

[381] *The Oregon Journal*, 23 June, 1905, p. 5.

[382] *1893 Portland City Directory* (Portland: R.L. Polk & Co., 1893).

[383] *1904 Portland City Directory*, p. 1156, and 1905, p. 1245.

Oregon Journal regularly ran advertisements for "Japanese" tea alongside ads for English Breakfast tea, Gunpowder tea, Oolong tea, and others. Even the Folgers Company of San Francisco, now mostly famous for selling coffee, sold what they advertised as "Japanese" tea and "green" tea under their "Golden Gate Teas" label.[384] Special teas such as Japanese "spider leg tea" were available in Portland grocery stores, generally priced the same as Chinese black teas.[385] Judging by the names used to differentiate the teas—spider leg tea and gunpowder tea—there must have been some degree of sophistication on the part of the consumer, as both teas are rather specialized.[386]

Japanese tea could also be ordered from catalogs. The 1902 Sears, Roebuck catalog offered several types and grades of Japanese tea (siftings, new tea siftings, "Japan sun dried," etc.) as well as oolong tea from Formosa for sale with a ten pound minimum.[387]

In 1917, one Portland coffee and tea wholesaling company, the Lang & Co., employed a Japanese person, apparently for his knowledge of tea.[388] In Portland's

---

384 *The Oregon Journal*, July 10, 1907, p. 16.

385 Ads for tea that ran in *The Oregon Journal* on 10 August, 1906, had "Japanese spider leg tea" for forty-five cents a pound at the New York Market and Grocery on N. Williams, while People's Market and Grocery Co. at First and Main had the same for twenty-five cents a pound, with English breakfast and gunpowder teas priced the same. *The Oregon Journal*, 10 August, 1906, p. 12.

386 Spider Leg tea is the name of one type of Japanese *sencha*, *sencha* being one of the highest grades of green tea in Japan. The tea leaves are rolled into a shape resembling a needle, referred to by the Japanese as "spider legs." Gunpowder tea is the name the British gave to a type of Chinese tea that is rolled into small balls. Tthe Chinese call it either *chu* (ball tea) or "pearl" tea. Rolling the leaves into either shape helps the tea maintain its freshness.

387 Sears, Roebuck Co., *1902 Edition of the Sears, Roebuck Catalog* (reprint) (New York: Bounty Books/Crown Publishers, Inc., 1969), p. 19.

388 Lang & Co. was located close to Japantown at First and Ankeny.

Polk's City Directory Mori Yamada was listed as a "tea expert," the only such person listed out of twenty-nine tea companies in town, none of which seem to have been owned or operated by people with Japanese names.[389]

Despite the early popularity of Japanese green teas among non-Japanese people in Oregon (and in the United States in general), green tea seems at some point to have lost its attraction. Perhaps it was during the WWII period when all things Japanese were not only unpopular but also not available. Only in recent years has green tea again become popular, with much of its attraction due to the health benefits associated with it.

ISSEI, TEA, AND COFFEE

When the *Issei* first arrived in Oregon (and elsewhere in the United States) they would have expected to find green tea available. Along with rice, miso, and *shōyu*, green tea was a staple food product, something that would have been implicitly promised as part of the Japanese foods available in America that were advertised in guidebooks and elsewhere. The *Issei* that worked on crews doing railroad or logging work had plenty of tea, often drinking it with three meals a day.[390] For them the availability of tea was not a problem, but finding fresh, clean water sometimes was.[391]

For the *Issei* that lived in and near Portland there were a variety of different Japanese teas available. Japanese goods dealers such as the M. Furuya Company and the Teikoku Company (and likely others as well) carried a variety of Japanese teas.

---

[389] *1917 Polk's Portland City Directory.*

[390] Ito's book of personal accounts of the *Issei* in the Northwest has many instances where tea is mentioned as part of the everyday diet. See Ito, *Issei*, p. 206, 309, 410, 412, and elsewhere.

[391] Again, Ito's book of stories told by the *Issei* has several mentions of people not having access to clean water, especially in the winter. See Ito, *Issei*, p. 326-327.

The *Ōshū Nippō* (The *Oregon News*), Portland's main Japanese language daily newspaper, often published ads in Japanese that mentioned tea for sale, especially after the arrival of a fresh shipment from Japan. When a shipment of *shincha*— the best of the top grade of tea in Japan made from the year's first flush of new *sencha* leaves—would arrive, the ads in the paper were sure to mention it.[392] At times a bit of hyperbole may have been involved in the labeling of tea as *shincha*. An advertisement that ran in August of 1924 for the Teikoku Company mentioned *shincha*, although this is much too late for tea to be considered as such. True *shincha* should be tea that is made and sold soon after harvesting, usually ready by the end of May. Even allowing for three weeks of shipping, it does not seem likely that the tea mentioned here was truly *shincha*.[393]

Other, lesser quality (and less expensive) teas were also available in Portland. The Furuya Company at times carried teas such as *kawayanagi cha* and *bancha*.[394] *Kawanagicha* is a tea made form large leaves and stems sorted out in the making of the highest grade of tea, *sencha*. *Bancha* is an inexpensive, everyday tea made of coarse leaves and stems that is rich in vitamins and often used as a medicine. Roasted it is known as *Hōjicha*, the roasting something easily done at home. *Bancha* would have been the tea served in Portland's sushi restaurants. It is also good for making in large batches for use as iced tea. It had traditionally been drunk in rural areas as an inexpensive everyday alternative to higher-grade *sencha*.[395] It would have been well suited for daily use by people on a tight budget, and was likely the tea normally drunk

---

[392] See ad for the M. Furuya Co., *Ōshū Nippō*, 14 June, 1923, p. 2.

[393] *Ōshū Nippō*, 9 August, 1924, p. 5.

[394] Ibid.

[395] Much of this information comes from *Inshoku Jiten* . See Motoyama , *Inshoku Jiten*, p. 494.

by railroad crews; one *Issei* reported that in the years between 1912 and 1918 the Japanese tea he drank cost fifteen cents a pound, considerably less than the Japanese teas being sold in Portland grocery stores.[396]

At the time the *Issei* were coming to America black teas—the teas usually considered to be English teas—were only beginning to be consumed in Japan, having been introduced after Formosa (Taiwan) became a colony of Japan's. It is quite likely that for many of the *Issei* in America black tea would have been as unfamiliar as coffee was, and would have been tried for the first time only after arriving in America.[397]

One additional aspect of the history of tea in America concerns the Japanese tea ceremony. The tea ceremony, something unique to Japan where it is known as either *cha no yu, sadō* or *chadō*, originated in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in Zen Buddhist temples associated with the military government of the time. Its current basic form developed in the sixteenth century in the Osaka- Kyoto area.[398] In the late Meiji Period, a time of great social upheaval caused to a great extent by the introduction

---

[396] Ito, *Issei*, p. 327-328.

[397] Ishige, *History of Japanese Food*, p. 160.

[398] Murata Shukō (1422-1502) is generally credited with being the "father of the tea ceremony," an honor accorded him for his originating the spirit and etiquette of the ceremony. Shukō, a Zen priest from Nara, was also influential in teaching tea as a simple, Zen-inspired learning. The practice of tea as taught by Shukō spread to the town of Sakai, an important port for trading with China, the source of much of the best tea equipment. In the mid-sixteenth century several tea masters emerged in Sakai with some of them becoming tea masters for the warrior generals of the period. By the end of the century three great tea masters had emerged, Imai Sokyū (1520-31-1593), Tsuda Sogyū (?-1591), and Sen no Rikyū (1522-1591), with Rikyū the most famous today. Tea ceremony as practiced today is based on the aesthetics and fundamentals established primarily by these three masters, although there are many variations on this as practiced by different schools of tea. A good history of the tea ceremony can be found in Sen' ō Tanaka and Sendō Tanaka's *The Tea Ceremony* (Tokyo, London, New York: Kodansha International, 1973).

of Western culture, some Japanese found the tea ceremony to be a way to maintain traditions, a "bridge to the past over which the dead ancestors swarm," the "arch-symbol of Japan."[399] For the *Issei* in America tea ceremony likely served as a similar bridge to their homeland as well as an opportunity to socialize.

There is no evidence that formal tea rooms or tea houses (*cha shitsu*) existed in Oregon in the pre-WWII era, although they would be built after the war. But there were people that practiced tea ceremony (known usually as either *cha no yu, sadō* or *chadō*) in a somewhat informal setting. In the Meiji Period instruction in the tea ceremony was an important part of women's higher education and was something that was essential to know for a woman to be considered educated or cultured. It is unknown how many of the *Issei* women that came to Oregon had studied tea in Japan, but at least a few did.[400] All of the things necessary for tea ceremony seem to have been readily available, at least in Portland. Tea sweets (*wagashi*), the sweetness meant to act as a contrast to the bitterness of the tea, were available from several Portland *okashi-ya* (confection makers). Tea utensils were available to order from several Japanese goods wholesale companies and were also carried by some of the larger stores in Portland. Perhaps in recognition of how much American culture had influenced the *Issei*, tea utensils were even suggested as an appropriate Christmas gift. [401] *Macha*,

---

[399] Kakuzo Okakura, *The Book of Tea,* edited and introduced by Everett F. Bleiler (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1964), p. *xvi-xvii.*

[400] In 1910, as a young lady in Japan, Shidzuyo Miyake, the future wife of famed Oregon *Issei* Masuo Yasui, taught tea ceremony to girls as part of her duties as a high school teacher. She had learned tea ceremony and such other necessary things as flower arranging, painting and sewing while studying at Tokyo Women's Christian College. See Kessler, *Stubborn Twig,* p. 29-30.

[401] See ad for M. Furuya Co., *Ōshū Nippō,* 11 Dec., 1926, p. 8 as well as order forms in the Yasui Collection, O.H.S.

the thick tea used in the tea ceremony, was likely carried by shops that sold tea, including some of the *okashi-ya.* Lacking formal facilities groups such as women's auxiliary societies sometime sponsored tea ceremonies at churches or temples.[402]

Just as Japanese green tea was able to successfully enter the food culture of non-Japanese people in America, coffee was able to become part of the *Issei's* routine. Coffee may have been tasted by the *Issei* that came to Oregon while they were still in Japan, but it seems unlikely. Coffee first came to Japan in the seventeenth century, brought by the Dutch to Dejima Island in Nagasaki. Before the modern era it seems to have been only drunk by the Dutch.[403] The first opportunity the Japanese people in Japan had to try coffee did not come until the late nineteenth century when coffee shops began to open in Tokyo.[404] The early coffee shops, known as either *kissaten* or *cafés*, tended to appeal to artists and literati and featured "exorbitantly priced" coffee, making it unlikely people from rural Japan would be customers.[405] As late as 1933 drinking coffee, as well as milk, was still relatively rare, the latter only then beginning to become popular among children and invalids.[406]

Once in the United States, however, the *Issei* began to drink and enjoy coffee, making it perhaps the first "American" food to become an everyday item for the *Issei.* Many of the *Issei* who lived in camps doing logging or railroad work drank coffee, as

---

[402] Recollection of Homer Yasui on his mother doing tea ceremony in Hood River. Homer Yasui, email, 17 Dec., 2008.

[403] Mark Pendergrast, *Uncommon Grounds: The History of Coffee and How It Transformed Our World* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), p. 269-270.

[404] Ishige says the first coffee shop opened in Tokyo in 1899, while *Nipponia*, a magazine published by the Japanese government, says it was in 1889 in the Ueno area of Tokyo. See Ishige, *History of Japanese Food*, p. 160, and *Nipponia*, No. 20 (Mar., 2002), p. 24.

[405] Pendergrast, *Uncommon Grounds*, p. 269-270.

[406] Noel, "Yes, I Like Japanese Food," p. 357.

well as tea, on a regular basis, many for the first time.[407] Coffee seems to have been an important part of life in at least some of the camps. In 1920 one young Japanese, Masaji Kusaji, was paid fifty cents an hour just to make and serve coffee to a crew of thirty *Issei* railroad workers near Carson, Washington. For Kusaji the hardest part of the job was finding clean water to use, the water in the camp's tank car not always being fresh. Kusaji, then only seventeen years old, may or may not have been born in the United States. Either way, this was the first time he had tasted coffee. The other workers, most likely older men with several years of experience working on the railroads, must have felt coffee was an essential part of their diet for them to pay someone only to make coffee.[408]

Coffee was also common in Portland, perhaps the most common beverage. Many *Issei* worked in or owned restaurants that catered to "working men," places that served inexpensive meals, especially breakfast and lunch, where coffee would have been a standard part of the meal. For these *Issei* coffee would have been not just a drink, but an important part of their economic livelihood.

ALCOHOL/*SAKE*

While green tea and coffee had success crossing over between the food cultures of the Japanese and American people, alcohol was much more heartily embraced by each other's culture when the opportunity was available. There are many potential reasons why alcohol was so readily accepted by each group, including that it is commonly associated with festive occasions and is a mood altering drug that many if not most people enjoy consuming. For whatever the reason, alcohol was typically the

---

[407] Coffee drinking is mentioned numerous times in Ito's collection of stories told by *Issei* who lived in the Pacific Northwest. See Ito, *Issei*.

[408] Tamura, *The Hood River Issei*, p. 66-67.

foreign food most readily accepted by both Westerners in Japan and by Japanese in America. In both countries it was the first, and often the only food of the other that became part of people's everyday routine.[409]

In Japan alcohol was traditionally what most Americans refer to as *sake*. *Sake*, or more specifically *nihonshu* in Japan (meaning Japanese liquor), is a beverage brewed from rice using a process similar to how beer is brewed.[410] It is relatively simple to make, the ingredients being only polished rice, water, *kōji-kin*[411], and yeast. *Sake* normally has an alcohol content of about 14% or 15%, about the same as wine, although it can be higher.

Sixteenth and seventeenth century Westerner visitors to Japan often wrote fondly of drinking Japanese *sake*. The Portuguese Jesuit João Rodrigues frequently mentioned drinking Japanese "wine," at times much of it.[412] Engelbert Kaempfer also frequently wrote of drinking "sacki" (*sake*), and never in a disparaging way.[413] In later years some Westerners, such as the British physician Dr. William Willis (1837-1894), preferred to drink wine and champagne imported from home with meals prepared by a

---

[409] For cultural and social reasons drinking is more normally associated with men rather than women, in both Japan and America. Since most of the early transplants to each other's shores were men, the term "people" thus refers to men.

[410] The word *sake* means liquor and can encompass all alcoholic beverages.

[411] *Kōji-kin is* a mold (*Aspergillus oryzae*) added to the rice to add enzymes that convert the starch molecules of rice into fermentable sugar molecules (*kōji*).

[412] João Rodrigues, *This Island of Japon: João Rodrigues' Account of 16th-century Japan,* translated and edited by Michael Cooper, S.J. (Tokyo & New York: Kodansha International Ltd., 1973), p. 143-156.

[413] See Englebert Kaempfer, *The History of Japan, Together with a Description of the Kingdom of Siam, 1690-92,* Vols. I-III (New York: AMS Press, 1971, reprint from Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, edition, 1906, translation by J.G. Scheuchzer), pgs. 162-177.

French chef.[414] But most Westerners seemed to enjoy Japanese *sake.* Algernon Bertram Mitford (1837-1916), a British diplomat posted in Japan from 1866-1870, mentioned "hobnobbing with the saké cups according to true Japanese etiquette" at a party.

The first Japanese to visit America had similarly positive reactions to drinking American alcoholic beverages. In 1860 Fukuzawa Yukichi and other members of the first Japanese mission to America particularly enjoyed champagne, although they thought claret wine tasted like vinegar.[415] At least one member of the mission seems to have enjoyed beer, but with some reservations, as he wrote that he found it to be "bitter, but good to slake one's thirst."[416] Two years later the members of the Takenouchi mission to Europe had a similar experience. Although most of the food they encountered on the trip they found difficult to enjoy, oranges, some fish, and champagne were to their liking.[417]

It may be impossible to know if the *Issei* that came to Oregon had ever tasted beer before they arrived in America. Until 1869 all beer in Japan was imported, mostly from England or Germany. In 1869, an American, William Copeland (1834-1908), opened the first brewery in Japan, the Spring Valley Brewing Company, in

---

[414] In the pages of Willis' writings published in Hugh Cortazzi's *Dr. Willis in Japan, 1862*-1877, Willis wrote of drinking "rivers of champagne" as well as wine, but never of any *sake*. See Hugh Cortazzi, *Dr. Willis in Japan, 1862-1877: British medical pioneer* (London and Dover, New Hampshire: The Athlone Press, 1985), p. 21, 57-58.

[415] W.G. Beasley, *Japan Encounters the Barbarian: Japanese Travelers in America and Europe* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 63.

[416] The writer was Tamamushi Sadayu, a samurai from Sendai. "'Space beer' a dream that's out of this world." *The Asahi Shinbun* (Tokyo), 3 June, 2008, p. 22.

[417] Beasley, *Japan Encounters the Barbarian*, p. 87.

Yokohama.[418] In 1876 the Meiji government, realizing that Japan could make beer as well as any other nation while also trying to develop the economy of Hokkaido, established a brewery in Sapporo and encouraged the production of crops such as hops and barley used in brewing.[419] The first beers made in Japan reflected the native influences of the brewers; heavy, Belgian-style brews made by the Dutch, and lighter Lagers and Pilsners made by the American William Copeland. When the Japanese began brewing their own beer, they made German-style brews, a reflection of the increased ties between Japan and Germany of the 1860's.

It is unknown whether or not many of Oregon's *Issei* had sampled beer before coming to America, although it seems unlikely they did. By the 1880's Japanese-run breweries had opened in most of the major cities as well as in some less populated regions.[420] But most beer was still consumed in the treaty ports populated by foreign residents and not in the rural areas Oregon's *Issei* came from.[421] Most Japanese found the taste of beer to be too bitter, and of those who did drink beer, most were Japanese military men and government officials.[422] And most Japanese would have found the

---

[418] Kenji Satō, *Nihon bia raberu seisuishi* (*Japanese Beer Label Refinement History*), (Tokyo: Tōkyō Shobōsha, 1985), p. 26-27.

[419] Michael Jackson, *The World Guide to Beer* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977), p. 238.

[420] Breweries were located in Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka, and Kyoto, as well as in Yamanashi Prefecture (Noguchi & Co., 1874), Niigata Prefecture (in 1872), and Aichi Prefecture (Handa Beer, 1884, and Lion Beer, 1887). See Satō, *Nihon bia raberu seisuishi.*

[421] Isabella Bird wrote in 1878 of not being able to find beer outside of resort hotels that were "got up for foreigners." Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan*, p. 19.

[422] Shibusawa, *Japanese Life and Culture in the Meiji Era*, p. 79-81.

cost of beer—one dollar a gallon wholesale—quite unaffordable.[423] Eventually beer would become quite popular—by the 1930's it had become as popular as *sake*, trailing only tea in popularity as a beverage—but not until well after the *Issei* had departed.[424]

If the first *Issei* in Oregon had tasted beer in Japan, the beers they found in Oregon would have been of a similar type, German-style lagers that dominated the American market in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.[425] Making a transition from Japanese beers to American would thus have been quite easy. Regardless of where they first tried it, from the stories the *Issei* told of drinking beer, it seems that once in America they had indeed come to enjoy beer.[426]

Beer was much more affordable in America than Japan, something that may have contributed to its popularity. In 1900 in Portland beer a gallon of beer cost only

---

[423] Correspondence of William Copeland, founder of Spring Valley Brewing, unknown date, 1884. Kirin Brewing home page; www.kirinholdings.co.jp/company/history/copeland.

[424] Beer's popularity grew after the first beer halls ("beer groves") opened in 1899. See Jackson, *World Guide to Beer*, p. 240, and Noel, "Yes, I Like Japanese Food," p. 357. It seems likely that some of beer's popularity was due to demand by *Issei* that had returned from America. Oregon may have had an indirect influence on Japan's brewing history. In 1919 a Japanese returned to Yokohama after living in America (Canada) and opened the Anglo American Brewing Company. Anglo American's beer was sold under the Cascade brand, with a drawing of what looks like Mt. Hood on the label. The beer was also referred to as *Oraga* Beer, with the name written using the Japanese *katakana* phonetic system generally used for foreign words. *Oraga* could mean "my" beer, using a rather countryside dialect. Or it could be a version of Oregon. "Oregon" is normally written in *katakana* as *o-re-gon*, but at this time it is likely that there were several variations in use. The brewery equipment was sent from America, where it was not needed anymore due to Prohibition, Prohibition in Oregon taking effect before the 1920 national law (the Volstead Act), meaning it is likely this brewery had its birth in Oregon.

[425] The largest brewer in Portland at that time, Henry Weinhard, was a German and brewed German lagers.

[426] There are multiple instances of *Issei* drinking and enjoying beer in Ito's *Issei*.

fifteen cents, while in 1910, at least in Idaho, it was twenty-five cents a bucket.[427] Beer was available in the work camps, often brought on pay day by gambling bosses who sought to separate the *Issei* from their wages. One *Issei* recalled gamblers visiting camp with fifty-gallon kegs and numerous bottles of beer as well as prostitutes who were available for five dollars.[428] While Western in its origins, beer seems to have easily made the transition into Japanese food culture, including as an accompaniment for perch *sashimi* eaten by *Issei* laborers.[429]

By the late 1930's, after Prohibition had been repealed, the *Issei* of Oregon had a choice of drinking either local or imported Japanese beers. The Teikoku Company imported and sold Asahi Beer at its shop in Portland's Japantown.[430] The Yasui Brothers store in Hood River had supplies of imported Kirin and Sapporo beer available as well.[431] Rainier Beer and Weinhards Beer often ran ads—in Japanese—in Portland's Japanese newspaper, the *Ōshū Nippō* (*The Oregon News*), some of the few non-Japanese companies to do so.[432]

Whiskey was also available in the various camps where it was most likely the first time the *Issei* had tried it. Until 1924 all whiskey in Japan was imported and would have been expensive, if available at all. Once in America it became popular among the *Issei* men, especially those who lived in the logging and railroad camps. In the teens a quart of whiskey cost ninety cents or a dollar, a steep price for people

---

[427] Ito, *Issei*, p. 403.

[428] Ibid., p. 403.

[429] Ibid., p. 783.

[430] *Ōshū Nippō*, 4 November, 1941, p. 7.

[431] Yasui Bros. Collection, O.H.S.

[432] *Ōshū Nippō*, various, 1936 to 1938.

earning less than two dollars a day.[433] During Prohibition whiskey was sometimes sold to the *Issei* by sailors who smuggled it in on ships that carried lumber to Japan.[434] But mostly only bootleg whiskey was available, and often of such poor quality that it damaged people's stomachs.[435] Despite the trouble of acquiring it and the potential risks to their health, for the Japanese who worked in the camps it was often the only luxury they had.[436]

While the *Issei* drank beer and whiskey, the drink of choice seems to have been *sake*. *Sake* had for many centuries been the primary alcoholic drink of Japan and was (and continues to be) a closely tied to the Shinto religion, celebrations, and traditional rice farming-related folk rituals. For the *Issei* men drinking *sake* was something familiar, "a tradition savored by many Japanese in their new land."[437] Even young boys were given *sake* by their fathers and grandfathers in the belief that it would help make them a man.[438]

In the early years *sake* was imported and sold by Portland's Japanese goods stores such as the M. Furuya Co. In the 1930's, after the end of Prohibition, shops that dealt mainly in Japanese goods such as the Furuya Co. and the Nichibei Company once again sold *sake*. But stores in other areas did as well. In the mid 1930's

---

[433] Ito, *Issei*, p. 330.

[434] Ibid., p. 396 and 769-770. Prostitutes were also allegedly smuggled into Portland from Nagasaki or Kyushu on lumber ships.

[435] Ibid., p. 512.

[436] Tamura, *The Hood River Issei,* p. 65-66.

[437] Tamura, *The Hood River Issei,* p. 59.

[438] Linda Tamura recounts the story of one *Issei* grandfather who, despite protests from the boy's mother, gave his one year old grandson *sake* from a chop stick that had been dipped into a bottle of *sake*, saying that "if a son does not drink *sake* he will never become a man." See Tamura, *The Hood River Issei,* p. 59-60.

Zimmerman's Twelve Mile Store in Gresham, Oregon, an area with many Japanese farmers nearby, sold *sake*.[439] Most likely the owner of Zimmerman's stocked *sake* out of a desire to attract Japanese customers. But once *sake* was available in areas outside of the traditional "Japantown" of Northwest Portland it seems likely that non-Japanese might also have purchased some.

The *sake* that was available in Portland in the pre-WWII era was, of course, all imported from Japan. Being packaged in Japan meant that all of the measurements were traditional Japanese measurements. Bottles of *sake* were sold in volumes of one *shō* (in Japanese, *isshō*) or four *gō* (*yongō*), measurements that are derived from traditional measurements of rice, one *shō* being equal to 1.8 liters, and one *gō* equal to 180 ml. (a four *gō* bottle thus being 720 ml.). 180 ml is the traditional size of a glass of *sake*, so one small bottle would be enough for four glasses. In January of 1938 a large bottle (one *shō*) of Hakutsuru brand *sake* cost $1.75, while a smaller four *gō* bottle was only seventy-five cents.[440] A few months later the price had increased slightly (to $1.85 and eighty cents, respectively), but still a fairly inexpensive amount to pay.[441]

Sake was also available in casks (*taru*), the standard size being eighteen liters. Iwakami & Co., an importer and wholesaler of Japanese merchandise with a branch in San Francisco (the main shop was in Yokohama) offered two brands of *sake* for sale in

---

[439] *Ōshū Nippō*, 4 Nov., 1941, p. 2, ad for Zimmerman's Twelve Mile Grocery advertisement for Japanese sake and California rice.

[440] *Ōshū Nippō,* 14 Jan., 1938, p. 4.

[441] *Ōshū Nippō,* 13 April, 1938, p. 3. Hakutsuru *sake* is still one of the top selling, if not number one, brand of *sake* sold in America. The company has a long history—it was founded as a *sake* maker in 1743 in Osaka. Hakutsuru was also on of the first Japanese *sake* companies to market its product overseas and in 1900 it had an exhibit at the Paris World Exhibition.

"standard barrels" (*tarumono no bu*) for ten dollars each.[442] *Taruzake* (cask *sake*) would have been used primarily in restaurants. But it also would have been the *sake* used for traditional wedding celebrations or other similar events.

One thing the *Issei* most likely never expected to encounter in America was a complete legal prohibition on alcohol.[443] Between 1916 and December of 1933 the sale of and production of alcohol was illegal in Oregon (Oregon was the first state to enact prohibition, doing so four years before the Volstead Act was passed and the 18th Amendment to the U. S. Constitution was ratified). Despite the prohibition, many Japanese, as with most other groups of people in America, continued to drink. In this instance the Japanese who wished to drink had advantages over other people due to their choice of beverage and their language.

Making *sake*, whether in a brewery or in a barn, is a fairly simple process, and something many, if not most of the *Issei* farmers would have been able to do. The main ingredient is rice (or more specifically polished rice), a product that would have been in the home of every Japanese family in America. The only other ingredients are water, *kōji-kin*, and yeast. *Kōji-kin is* a mold (*Aspergillus oryzae*) added to the rice to add enzymes that convert the starch molecules of rice into fermentable sugar molecules (*kōji*). Rice is steamed with water, then the *kōji-kin* is added to break down the starches into fermentable sugars, and finally the yeast is added. After thirty days or so

---

[442] Order form from Iwakami & Co., 411 Commercial St., San Francisco, CA. Yasui Collection, O.H.S.

[443] For much of Japan's history *sake*, being made from rice, was frequently unaffordable to the farmers, the very people that grew the rice it was made from. Poor tenant farmers may have only drank *sake* for special occasions such as New Years and weddings. Instead they often drank a beverage made from *sake* lees or *shōchū*, made form grains other than rice or from other starches. During the Meiji Period the number of *sake* breweries greatly expanded, with some 30,000 in operation at one point, making *sake* readily available, if it could be afforded. But many tenant farmers still could not afford it.

the *sake* is ready to drink.

The wife of one Hood River, Oregon *Issei* recalled making *sake* for her husband as hard work that she did year-round. Her "recipe" was to put a sack and a half of rice, or three one-hundred pound bags, into two fifty gallon barrels, add the water and *kōji*, and then steam the mixture on the stove. The mixture was then fermented for thirty days and transferred into one-gallon jugs. One-hundred pounds of rice would produce fourteen or fifteen gallons of *sake*.[444] With one hundred pounds of rice costing only about $3.75, moonshine *sake* made for very inexpensive drink.

For the *Issei* bootleggers, making *sake* had several advantages over other illicit beverages. For one thing, it was easier to avoid the law. The main ingredient—rice—was a normal, everyday food that every Japanese family would have had in the home and would thus not have aroused suspicion. Living on farms outside of town, often in communities with other *Issei,* it would have been easy to avoid detection.

The *Issei* that made bootleg *sake* were also able to use their language to their advantage. In the mid-1920's the Maki Shōten company, a Seattle distributor of imported Japanese goods, published a pamphlet of instructions for making *sake* at home—in Japanese. The instructions—steam rice, add *kōji,* water, and later, yeast—were simple and easy to follow, even for someone unfamiliar with making *sake*.[445] Being in Japanese meant that no law enforcement personnel could read it, one of the few times it would have been beneficial to read and speak Japanese. The *kōji* needed to make *sake* was readily available and openly advertised for sale by local firms

---

[444] Tamura, *The Hood River Issei,* p. 65-66.

[445] Yasui Collection.

such as the Sanyō Company of Portland.[446]

The product itself had advantages beyond the ready accessibility of the main ingredient. If a batch of *sake* turned out bad, most likely due to wild yeast finding its way into the batch, it could be salvaged by converting it into *shōchū*. *Shōchū* is a distilled beverage, rather than brewed like *sake* or beer. It is normally made from potatoes, sweet potatoes, or barley, although other things can be used for the fermentable sugars. It is occasionally made from rice, but generally is not due to the relatively high cost of the rice. *Shōchū* first appeared in Japan on the westernmost island of Kyūshū, the birthplace of many of the *Issei* who came to Oregon, and its history is very much a tale of globalization.[447] After being made, the bootleg *sake* and *shōchū* that was produced on the farms in the Portland area would find its way to the places where the *Issei* men worked or gathered. In the early years of Prohibition in Oregon *sake* was available in the hop picking camps of the Willamette Valley for four or five dollars a gallon.[448] It was also available in the railroad and logging camps of the northwest.[449] And of course it was available in the Japanese restaurants of Portland

---

[446] During the 1920's (during Prohibition) Sanyō frequently mentioned having *kōji* in ads it placed in the *Ōshū Nippō*.

[447] The process of distillation was learned from people of the Ryūkyūs (modern day Okinawa) who in turn learned it from Siam (Thailand). The Okinawan version of *shōchū* is known as *Awamori*, and is made from Thai Jasmine rice. The material most commonly used to make *shōchū* in the main islands of Japan, the sweet potato (*Ipomoea batatas*, known in Japan as *satsumaimo*), was brought to Japan by the Portuguese in 1597. For many if not most Japanese men during the Meiji Era and before *shōchū*, along with a drink made from *sake* lees, would have been the everyday drink; *sake*, made from rice, was too expensive.

[448] Ito, *Issei*, p. 512.

[449] For example, see Ito, *Issei*, p. 40.

(and Seattle), as well as some Chinese restaurants.[450] In Seattle bootlegging and drinking *sake* was "an open secret," with a small glass costing fifty cents.[451] In Portland *Issei* farmers brought *sake* to Japanese restaurants where it was served in tea cups.[452] In 1921 bottles of *sake* were reportedly sold for a dollar each, a good return on the bootlegger's investment of time and money.[453]

One rumor in Portland was that a Mr. Ishibashi, a local gambling boss who worked out of the Kyoshin club (a social club located in Portland's Japantown area in the Northwest part of town) ran a bootlegging ring that produced *sake* on the farms outside of town.[454] Another rumor was that the farmers made more money from bootlegging than from selling vegetables.[455] But it was not completely without risks; many *Issei* "runners" were arrested and went to jail, although the bosses were never caught.[456]

Beginning in late 1922 several of Portland's Japanese restaurants began advertising in the Japanese language newspaper the *Ōshū Nippō* that they had *kaiseki ryōri.*[457] In Japan there are two types of *kaiseki ryōri.* One of these, sometimes called *cha kaiseki ryōri,* is a formal meal served during the tea ceremony. The other, the one

---

450 Ito, *Issei,* p. 40 and 412.

451 Shiga Furukawa, in Ito, *Issei,* p. 768.

452 Interview with Yoji Matsushima, 27 Sept., 2006, Portland, Oregon.

453 Ito, *Issei,* p. 412.

454 Recollections of Jerry Innou in "Walking Tour," 21 Aug., 1996, p. 12, ONLC. Mr. Innou added that "Ishibashi forced restaurants to buy sake from him during prohibition. If they refused, the cops would raid them looking for cocaine or heroin."

455 Yoji Matsushima, 27 Sept., 2006.

456 Interview with Alice Sumida, 12 Oct., 2006, Portland, Oregon. An Uncle of Ms. Sumida worked as a runner for Portland's bootlegging boss and was arrested once and spent some time in jail after refusing to name his associates.

457 The restaurants were *Mikado, Nakanoya, Taishō-tei,* and *Kikusui.* See ads in the *Ōshū Nippō,* 4 Aug., 1922, p. 6, 17 April, 1923, p. 6, and 21 Feb., 1927, p. 3.

offered in Portland, is meant to be eaten while drinking.[458] This type of meal consists of a series of dishes brought to the table, usually consisting of such things as *sashimi*, *tempura*, cooked vegetables (*aemono*), and grilled meats and fish (*yakimono*), all accompanied by *sake*, beer, and perhaps whiskey. As alcohol is a central element in this type of dining activity, it would have been very rare for a woman to partake of this type of meal. It is doubtful if any other ethnic group in Portland (or anywhere in America) could have openly advertised the availability of alcohol as these *Issei* did.

While some Japanese did indeed drink during Prohibition, drinking was not universal, and seems to have been fairly typical of other groups. Japanese rarely owned taverns or saloons in the pre-Prohibition era. A search of records of business ownership revealed only two instances of Japanese operated bars, both in 1906 and located in Portland's Japantown.[459] In 1911, of over 400 listings under "saloons," there were no Japanese names listed, although there were what seem to be many other immigrant saloon owners.[460] From February, 1908 until February, 1910 in California there was a temperance group founded by the Japanese Christian Church Federation of Southern California called the Prohibition Society of Los Angeles (*Rafu Kinshukai*).[461] Many *Issei* in Oregon as elsewhere belonged to American Christian churches that eschewed alcohol, making the *Issei,* at least in regards to alcohol, very much a part of

---

[458] The two types of *kaiseki* use different Chinese characters; Portland's restaurants used the characters for the latter type.

[459] R. Hashimoto was listed as the owner of a saloon at 264 Davis, and Furukawa and Okita had a saloon at 51 ½ N. 3rd. *Portland City Directory,* 1906.

[460] *Polk's Portland City Directory*, 1911.

[461] Yuji Ichioka, Yasuo Sakata, Nobuya Tsuchida, and Eri Yasuhara, *A Buried Past: An Annotated Bibliography of the Japanese American Research Project Collection* (University of California Press, 1974), p. 116.

"American" life.

CHAPTER V:

ANTI-JAPANESE LAWS AND FOOD

No matter how integrated into American life the *Issei* were, they always faced discrimination based on their heritage. Foremost was the institutional discrimination that barred them (and all other Asians) from becoming citizens, the product of numerous laws and court decisions that would not be reversed until 1952 when the McCarran-Walter Act was passed. There was also discrimination on a much more personal level, such as restaurants run by Caucasians refusing to serve Japanese customers. Several states, Oregon included, joined in the discrimination by passing Alien Land laws that sought to deprive the *Issei* of land farming, although in reality these laws were often easily circumvented. There were other laws as well, usually of a type that sought to harass the daily lives of the *Nikkei* by limiting their rights to do things other groups were free to do. In Oregon these anti-Japanese laws included several related to food, although often as a consequence of an intended economic target.

Among the laws aimed at Oregon's *Nikkei* were some that sought to interfere with normal business operations. One example of this type of law was one passed by the Oregon Legislature in 1923 (1923 Ch. 163) that forbade cities, counties, and other municipal bodies from issuing business licenses to non-citizens for operation of billiard halls, card rooms, dance halls, pawn brokerages, or soft-drink establishments. The law also required non-citizen owners of groceries, meat market, fruit stand, hotels, rooming houses, and apartments to display a sign indicating the owner's country of origin.[462] The reasoning behind the regulation requiring the posting of a shop owner's nationality was that, in the words of one Oregon paper, "(B)ecause 95 percent of all {the largely

[462] Mears, *Resident Orientals*, p. 287-288.

Japanese} alien owner soft drink establishments have been found {to be} bootlegger joints."[463]

Another bill proposed in the 1919 Oregon legislature would have barred women and children from working in restaurants run by "Orientals." The law (House Bill 350, Senate Bill 183), if it had passed, would have severely disrupted the economic lives of the Japanese, many of whom operated restaurants, often with the help of several family members. The bill did not pass due to the fear of it developing into an international incident and also out of recognition that the Oregon's Chinese population had made to the development of the state. In 1921, as the nativist movement in Oregon was reaching its peak of influence, the Portland City Council voted to stop issuing licenses to Japanese for the operation of boarding houses, another trade that many *Nikkei* were involved in.[464] Both of these measures were aimed primarily at the ability of the Japanese to earn a living, and seem likely to have been proposed by opportunists who sought to benefit economically by limiting competition.

One of the first anti-Asian laws in Oregon was one enacted in 1913 that required "aliens not intending to become citizens" to purchase a gun license and permit at a cost of $25, a not insignificant amount of money in 1913.[465] The law requiring Japanese to have gun and hunting licenses may have been a nuisance, but it did not legally bar Japanese from hunting.

A few years later, however, the states of Oregon and Washington did enact

---

[463] Allerfeldt, *Race, Radicalism, Religion and Restriction,* p. 171. Original taken from *Oregon Voter*, 17 Feb., 1923. In 1924 the law was ruled unconstitutional in the case of *Anton vs. Van Winkle* (297 Fed. 340-Oregon, 1924).

[464] Mears, *Resident Orientals*, p. 306-307.

[465] Ibid., p. 219. The law was enforced. In one case Masuo Yasui was arrested for hunting deer on his own property near Hood River. Information provided by Homer Yasui.

legislation that more directly affected the diets of the *Nikkei* population. In 1918 the states of Oregon and Washington passed laws barring the issuing of fishing licenses to aliens not intending to become a citizen. In 1919 all fishing was banned for Japanese in the two states, including some types of fishing not requiring a fishing license. Also in 1918 the states of Oregon and Washington entered into a compact that was ratified by an Act of Congress that no license to fish in the Columbia River be given to any alien who has not declared his intention of becoming a citizen.[466] With fish being such an important component of Japanese food culture, and fishing being a convenient and inexpensive way to feed one's family, these fishing-related laws could have had a major impact on the lives of the *Nikkei*. However, they do not seem to have been too restrictive in practice. In published accounts of the lives of the Hood River *Nikkei* several people mention fishing for salmon, trout, or shad, while no one seem to mention not being able to fish.[467]

While most of these laws may have harassed *Nikkei* and made life inconvenient, they generally did not force any major changes to anyone's life. There was one law, however, that did succeed at putting one category of innovative and highly efficient farmers out of business. Sometime around 1910 or 1912 in both the Portland and Seattle areas several *Issei* began raising hogs, with one using what was then considered to be "scientific knowledge."[468] What constituted "scientific knowledge" is unclear,

---

[466] Mears, *Resident Orientals,* p. 219-220.

[467] Although efforts were made to pass laws restricting the right of *Nikkei* to fish in California, nothing similar to what was enacted in Oregon and Washington ever passed, most likely due to the influence of commercial interests in California, where white-owned fish canneries were dependant on the catches of the Japanese fleets to keep their canneries operating. For more see Allerfeldt, *Race, Radicalism, Religion, and Restriction,* p. 191.

[468] Millis, *Japanese Problem,* p. 97-98. The farmers fed their hogs food scraps that they collected

but it may have involved using food garbage hauled from Portland as fodder for his pigs, a practiced apparently shared by *Issei* hog farmers elsewhere on the Pacific Coast.[469] Whether or not the *Issei* were the first to use garbage as feed is unknown, but they seem to have been some of the first to do so.[470] In Seattle initial attempts to put the *Issei* hog farmers out of business consisted of enacting a series of regulations that included putting lids on feed cans, locating hog houses at least 300 feet from public roads or 500 feet from schools and churches, and having hog houses with concrete floors and water troughs as well as roofs. Only when all of these conditions were satisfied would a license be granted to operate a farm.[471] In 1921, after the farmers, at great expense, met all the conditions, the Seattle City Council passed a regulation requiring all contracts for the collection of garbage in the city to be sold at public auction, with participation of buyers limited to only to people eligible for citizenship.[472] Facing an

---

mostly from Japanese owned restaurants, hotels, and night clubs, paying each source from three to ten dollars a month for something that had formerly been thrown out as garbage. See Ito, *Issei,* p. 479.

[469] Besides Portland and Seattle, garbage was also fed to hogs in Los Angeles. In 1910 it was estimated that the majority of the garbage in Los Angeles was disposed of in this way. Iwata, *Planted,* p. 497-498.

[470] No mention of using garbage as feed could be found in either of two hog raising manuals published in 1897 and 1920, although another one published in made it clear that by 1916 the practice was widespread and an important method of scrap disposal. See *United States Department of Agriculture Farmers' Bulletin No. 100,* Washington, D. C.: United States Department of Agriculture, 1897; D.O. Lively, *The Money Makers: Swine Raising in the Pacific Northwest,* Portland, Oregon: Oregon-Washington Railroad and navigation Co., Southern Pacific Lines in Oregon, 1920's (*est.*); and F.G. Ashbrook and A. Wilson, *Feeding Garbage to Hogs: Farmers' Bulletin 1133, United States Department of Agriculture.* Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Agriculture, Aug., 1920. Ashbrook and Wilson state that in 1916 garbage fed hogs produced some 40 million pounds of pork a year (p. 3-4).

[471] Ito, *Issei,* p. 479.

[472] Ibid., p. 479-483. This ordinance seems to have been passed for the benefit of a large Caucasian hog farming operation, the Pacific Hog Ranch of Kirkland, who, with some 5,000 hogs, had previously been unable to obtain enough food scraps to operate profitably (using corn and other grains as feed was

end to their food supply, as well as the effects and expenses of dealing with the state's recently enacted Alien Land Law, the *Issei* hog farmers were forced out of business, with most turning instead to vegetable farming. The Japanese owned businesses that had formerly sold their scraps also suffered financially as under the new system they received no compensation.[473]

Although less is known about the efforts to put Oregon *Issei* hog farmers out of business, regulations similar to those of Seattle were imposed and ultimately upheld as constitutional. And although hog farming was not a terribly important business for Oregon's *Issei*—in 1913 there were only five and in 1916 only ten farmers —the rules did effectively drive all of them out of business: in 1928 there were no hog farmers listed in the *Hokubei nenkan*, a directory of *Issei* and their businesses in Oregon.[474]

While these laws and others like them were all intended to limit the rights and opportunities of the *Issei*, their net effect seems to have mostly to harass them. And while these laws, as well as the Alien Land Laws, were in most instances easily circumvented, their enactment likely did serve to make the nativists who advocated for

---

prohibitively expensive at the time). Less is known about what happened in Portland but it seems likely similar events occurred.

[473] Ito, *Issei*, p. 479-483. In 1923 the Seattle ordinance was held to be constitutional by the State Supreme Court in *Cornelius et al., v. City of Seattle et al.*

[474] Figures for 1913 from Millis, *Japanese Problem*, for 1916 from the 1916 *Hokubei nenkan*, p. 102-106, and for 1928 from the 1928 *Hokubei nenkan*, p. 169-202. Oregon and Washington were by no means the only places to pass discriminatory laws that concerned food. One of the earliest such laws was enacted in 1896 in Hawaii with passage of the "Hawaiian *Sake* Law." The bill, promoted by California's wine industry as well as the local temperance movement, imposed a one dollar a gallon tax on *sake*, the alcoholic beverage preferred by the Japanese. The tax was later adjusted downward when Hawaii was annexed by the United States. Brian Niiya and the Japanese American National Museum, *Encyclopedia of Japanese American History: An A-Z Reference from 1868 to the Present* (New York: Facts on File, 2001), p. 356.

them feel better.

CONCLUSION

The lack of previous research on immigrant food history in America presents several problems but also offers numerous opportunities for someone choosing to do the work. The problems mainly concern a lack of models and established parameters for the scope of the research, particularly when deciding how much to bring related fields of study (especially the fields of anthropology and sociology) into the historical study of the material. But these limitations also offer opportunities for the researcher to be creative in what is researched and in how the information is utilized. The breadth of the information available even in this rather narrowly focused study (the food and foodways of first generation Japanese immigrants in Oregon) offers similar problems and opportunities. On one hand, there is too much information available to be covered in a paper of thesis length. But there is also enough information available so that at least a taste can be presented.

There are two distinct processes to consider; the ways and extent that Western or, more specifically, American foodways were accepted by the *Issei* and integrated into their foodways, and the reverse, how Japanese foods and foodways were accepted by non-Japanese and non-Asian people. In general, the *Issei* seem to have been more willing to accept certain elements of "American" foodways than the majority population was of Japanese foods. But even though they did embrace many "American" foods, there were still very strong tendencies to maintain traditional foodways, something that seems to have been especially true among the many *Issei* that came to America as *dekasegi* laborers and later returned to Japan.

The *Issei* that chose to remain and settle in Oregon and, in most cases, marry and have families, eventually did integrate many "American" foods into their regular

diets, but they also seem to have clung to some core Japanese foods, especially rice, the food item that is most closely associated with being "Japanese." In part this may have been due to *Issei* being ineligible for American citizenship, at least until the 1950s, by which time many had passed away, although the *Issei's* behavior was not much different than that of other first-generation immigrant groups. Easy accessibility to both imported and domestically produced Japanese foods made it easy—and often affordable—to maintain what was very much a Japanese diet. Often times when Western dishes were integrated into the *Issei* diet the same foods were at the same approximate time becoming part of the diet of people in Japan, making it difficult to ascertain whether the source of the new food was in America or Japan.[475]

In general, however, it seems that when the *Issei* did embrace a new food it was as an addition to their pre-existing menu, and not as a replacement for something.[476] It seems likely that the main reason more "American" dishes did not make their way into the *Issei* diet was that there just were not many dishes to choose from at a time when the basic American diet consisted of meats, potatoes, breads, and sweets.

Eventually the traditional Japanese foodways did mostly disappear. The first stage of this transition occurred when the second generation *Nikkei*, the *Nisei*, became

---

[475] Breakfast foods are a good example of foods simultaneously becoming accepted in both places. In the 1930s Japanese women's magazines such as *Shufu no tomo* (Housewife's Friend) and *Fujo kai* (Women's World) regularly featured articles on food that included Western dishes, including one on Japanese celebrities that for breakfast ate such Western dishes as macaroni, Russian pickles, fruit, muffins, potatoes, and toast and eggs, all eaten using a knife and fork. There were also ads for American breakfast cereals such as Kellogg's Corn Flakes. See *Shufu no tomo* (*Housewife's Friend*), Vol. 20, No. 7 (1 July, 1936), p. 511-515, and *Fujo kai* (*Women's World*), Aug., 1937, p. 341.

[476] The only thing that might be considered to be a replacement was American breakfasts of cereal, bread, coffee, bacon, and eggs replacing the traditional Japanese breakfast or rice and pickles, although rice and pickles generally continued to be served at other meals.

old enough to go to school where they were exposed to a wide range of "American" foods. These new foods were often introduced into the regular home diet by the children, often as a direct result of the parents maintaining the tradition of daughters doing the home cooking once they were old enough.[477] The next great change to *Issei* foodways came with the outbreak of the Pacific War and the internment of 1942, events that not ended imports from Japan but also disrupted domestic production of Japanese foods while at the same time forcing all the internees to eat foods that were very much dictated by the United States government.[478]

Cross-cultural movement of foods in the opposite direction—from Japanese to Americans—was much rarer. When it did occur it was with foods that were already familiar in the United States. The two best examples of this are with Japanese green tea and *sukiyaki, sukiyaki* being a very "Western" dish that was hybridized in Japan, and green tea being an un-hybridized version of the black teas that were staple beverages of Europe and America.

The lack of more cross-cultural food integration from the *Issei* to the majority population was not too surprising considering the circumstances, although the absorption of Western foods into Japanese foodways in Japan was a bit unusual. Previous research had found that between the seventeenth and early-twentieth centuries

---

[477] As part of the traditional culture of their parents *Nisei* girls often were given the chore of cooking the family meals once they were old enough, perhaps in junior high school. When this change in cooks occurred the meals changed as well, with Western dishes such as macaroni and cheese, corned beef and cabbage, and Jell-O, foods learned in school, replacing Japanese dishes such as rice, vegetables, and pickles.[477] See Kessler, *Stubborn Twig*, p. 72.

[478] Some Japanese vegetables were grown in camp gardens, and at least one camp had a tōfu maker, but in general people ate what the government provided for a cost equal to that spent on the average soldier's diet.

most instances of food diffusion took place after three or four generations of exposure. By the mid-twentieth century the time needed for diffusion had lessened, mainly due to faster communications, smaller contrasts between food cultures, less social stratification, and more intensive marketing.[479] Oregon's *Nisei* generation, the group that really embraced Western food, would have in many cases been the third generation of Japanese to be exposed to Western foods.

The diffusion of Japanese food into the American diet mostly followed this model as well. It occurred much later because the *Issei* came to America some forty years after Westerners went to Japan. In the 1930s in Japan, despite its ready availability, it was rare for Westerners to eat Japanese food.[480] The big surprise is that Oregonians did embrace *sukiyaki* at a time when no other place in America did. This may have been due in large part because Oregonians, and especially Portlanders, were tolerant of things Japanese and realized the value of expanded trade with the Pacific Rim region, an outlook that had been responsible in large part for staging the Lewis and Clark Expo of 1905.

Since the end of the Second World War, and especially since the 1980s, many items of Japanese cuisine have diffused into the foodways of the majority population. In the 1950s *sukiyaki* was the first food to have wide appeal, mostly due to the appetites of soldiers that returned from the occupation of Japan. Soy foods were likely the next

---

[479] Cwiertka, *Making of Modern Culinary Tradition*, p. 183. Cwiertka cites research by Gunter Wiegelmann that first appeared in his article "Innovations in food and meals" in *Folk Life*, Vol. 12, p. 20-30.

[480] In his 1933 article "Yes, I Like Japanese Food," the author, Percy Noel, mentions that his admission of regularly eating home cooked Japanese food was met with disbelief and newspaper headlines such as "American Eats Japanese Bean Soup" and "American Adopts Japanese Cooking," articles that were met with disbelief. See Noel, p. 352.

thing to cross over, initially as part of macrobiotic diets that became popular in the 1970s, and later as ingredients in various Asian cuisines as well as out of health concerns. Chief among the soy foods is tōfu, a food whose popularity has spread far beyond Japanese and Chinese cooking, with numerous tōfu makers of assorted ethnic heritage located in the Portland area, including one, Ota Tofu, that is likely the oldest Japanese tōfu business in America.[481]

The popularity of Japanese food has continued to grow since the 1980s, although usually in a hybridized form. The 1980s saw the arrival of the first bentō shop in America whose customers were primarily non-Japanese; twenty years later bentō has become a fixture of fast food dining, although the dish served generally has little resemblance to that served in Japan. Since the 1990s sushi, the Japanese food most Americans likely consider to be "Japanese" food, has become available throughout the state of Oregon, often in restaurants owned by non-Japanese and prepared by non-Japanese.[482] But again the sushi dining experience is quite different than in Japan.

---

[481] The earliest records of Ota Tōfu are from the 1913 edition of the *Hokubei nenkan* where the business was listed as Ōta Kyōdai (Ōta Brothers Tōfu), although it is likely the business was opened sooner as one brother, Saizo Ōta, immigrated to the U.S. in 1905. It was previously believed that the oldest Japanese tōfu business still in operation was Azumaya Tōfu of San Francisco which opened in 1920. See the *1913 Hokubei nenkan* and William Shurtleff and Akiko Aoyagi's chapter "The History of Tofu" in their unpublished manuscript *History of Soybeans and Soyfoods: 1100B.C. to the 1980's* Lafayette, CA: Soyinfo Center, 2007, p. 5. http://www.soyinfocenter.com/HSS/tofu4.php (May 1, 2009).

[482] One useful way to measure interest in a food genre is by looking at cookbooks. Assuming this is a fairly accurate method, then sushi did not really begin to become popular in America until the 1990's. An examination of the books listed in the U.S. Library of Congress under the subject heading "sushi" reveals a total, as of March 1, 2009, of forty-one titles, twenty-eight of which are in English (four are in Japanese and one in Israeli). The earliest is from 1959, *Sushiya = sushi.* 1981 saw the publication of two books, with one each in 1982 and 1984. Twenty-six of the English volumes have been published since 2000.

Aside from the obvious difference in the fish available, in Japan *sashimi* (slices of raw fish served without rice) is usually eaten as a precursor to the sushi: in America most sushi restaurants do not offer *sashimi.* California rolls, a combination of Japanese ingredients (rice, raw tuna, and vegetables) and an American ingredient (avocado), is one of the more popular items served in sushi restaurants, is a food that has not only been hybridized in America but also successfully returned to Japan.

The reasons for the increased popularity of Japanese foods among the majority population of the United States are many, and although this is something that falls outside the parameters of this research, a brief mention should be made. Since the era of the first *Issei* the image of Japan and Japanese people in general has improved markedly, in part due to Japan's defeat in 1945, and later out of a Cold War need for American allies.[483] The American occupation of Japan also exposed hundreds of thousands of Americans to Japanese food, and also led to some 45,000 Japanese women coming to America as brides between 1947 and 1952.[484] During the 1960s references to Japanese food entered into American mass culture in the form of articles in *Sunset* magazine and in pop music with *The Sukiyaki Song.*[485] *Sunset* also offered recipes for Japanese dishes, usually with changes from the original to make them more appealing

---

[483] During the Cold War when the U.S. sought the allegiance of other nations American-resident descendents of those nations needed to be treated with equality for the foreign policy to be successful. For more, see Robert G. Lee *Orientals: Asian Americans in Popular Culture* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), especially Chapter 5, "The Cold War Origins of the Model Minority."

[484] Ibid., p. 162.

[485] From September, 1962 through November, 1965 *Sunset* featured six articles on Japanese food and another five on other aspects of Japanese culture. *The Sukiyaki Song*, originally called *Ue o muite arukō*, was a top hit in the U.S. in 1963 and is still the only song with Japanese lyrics ever to be so.

and easier to prepare for Americans.[486] The popularity of Japanese food would continue to increase as part of an overall increased interest in and acceptance of foreign foods, something that was likely related to increased international travel, increased international trade, and increased exchanges of culture in general that have taken place since the 1970s or so. In other words, the increased interest in foreign foods is directly related to globalization.

One other major conclusion can be drawn from this research: the period from the end of WWI or so through the 1920s was what might be called a "Golden Era" for Japanese food culture in Portland. During that time Portland's Japanese community had a food and restaurant culture that would have been very similar to what was in Japan at the time, but with the addition of many more Western foods not yet available in Japan. The food itself was as "authentic" as could possibly be outside of Japan, made and eaten by Japanese people who had grown up in Japan. It seems unlikely that recipes were compromised or altered to better fit the tastes of non-Japanese, although some ingredients would have been different than what was available in Japan. But this flexibility and adaptability of recipes to accommodate the ingredients available was, and continues to be, a characteristic of Japanese cuisine. Taken as a whole, Portland's Japanese food culture of the era seems to indicate that there was a solid middle-class *Nikkei* community.

While it is impossible for Portland, as well as all other places in America, to

---

[486] For example, one recipe from 1964 for *rumaki* called for mushroom caps sautéed in butter and stuffed with chicken livers and wrapped with bacon and baked in an oven, the butter, bacon, and oven all being things rarely used in Japan at that time. Other suggested using an electric fry pan if a Japanese pan was unavailable. See "Adventures in Food," *Sunset*, July, 1964, p. 120, and "'Friendship dishes' from Korea, China, Japan: You cook each one at the table, chafing-dish style," *Sunset*, Sept., 1962, p. 68-73, p. 70.

return to the golden era of Japanese food culture that existed in the 1920s, it is possible—and highly likely—that, thanks to continued and expanding interaction between Japan and America, Japanese food while continue to diffuse into American foodways. Although a degree of "authenticity" similar to that of the pre-War period may return, its appeal will always remain limited to Japanese ex-patriots and visitors and a few others who dare brave what s still a very alien food culture.

WORKS CITED

Note: names for authors of English publications are given in the American style of given name followed by family name. Authors of Japanese language publications are given in the Japanese style of family name followed by given name.

PRIMARY SOURCES:

ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS:

Yasui Collection, Oregon Historical Society.
Collections of the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center.
Private Collections.
Lewis and Clark College Special Collections.

INTERVIEWS and PERSONAL COMUNICATIONS:

Nobuo Harada
Beatrice Hohenegger
Yoji Matsushima
Alice Sumida
Homer Yasui

NEWSPAPERS:

Asahi Shinbun, Tokyo, Japan.
Kōsuto jihō (*The Coast Times*), Portland, Oregon.
The New York Times New York, New York.
The Oregonian/The Sunday Oregonian, Portland, Oregon.
The Oregon Journal, Portland, Oregon.
Ōshū Nippō (*Oregon Daily News*), Portland, Oregon.

MAGAZINES:

Fujo kai (*Women's World*).
Nipponia. Tokyo: Hebonsha, Ltd.
Shufu no tomo (*Housewife's Friend.*
Sunset. Menlo Park, CA: Sunset Publishing Co.

PUBLISHED DIRECTORIES AND CENSUSES:

Hokubei Jijisha. *1913 Hokubei nenkan* (*The North American Times Year Book*). Seattle: Shakō Jijisha, 1913.

Hokubei Jijisha. *1916 Hokubei nenkan* (*The North American Times Year Book*). Seattle: Shakō Jijisha, 1916.

Hokubei Jijisha. *1928 Hokubei nenkan* (*The North American Times Year Book*). Seattle: Shakō Jijisha, 1928.

Hokubei Jijisha. *1936 Hokubei nenkan* (*The North American Times Year Book*). Seattle: Shakō Jijisha, 1936.

Oregon Bureau of Labor, C.H. Gram, Commissioner. *Census: Japanese Population in Oregon, Oct. 1, 1928.* Salem, OR: State Printing Department, 1929.

R.L. Polk & Co., Inc. 1882-1909: *Portland City Directory.* Portland: R.L. Polk & Co., Inc.

R.L. Polk & Co., Inc. 1910-1928: *Polk's Portland City Directory.* Portland: R.L. Polk & Co., Inc.

R.L. Polk & Co., Inc. 1929-1952: *Polk's Portland (Oregon) City Directory.* Portland: R.L. Polk & Co., Inc.

SECONDARY SOURCES:

Carl Abbott. *The Great Extravaganza: Portland and the Lewis and Clark Exposition.* Portland, OR: Oregon Historical Society, 1981.

Kristofer Allerfeldt. *Race, Radicalism, Religion, and Restriction: Immigration in the Pacific Northwest, 1890-1924.* Westport, Connecticut, and London: Praeger, 2003.

F.G. Ashbrook and A. Wilson. *Feeding Garbage to Hogs.* Farmers' Bulletin 1133, United States Department of Agriculture. Washington, D. C.: United States Department of Agriculture, August, 1920.

Michael Ashkenazi and Jeanne Jacob. *The Essence of Japanese Food: An Essay on Food and Culture.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000.

Eiichiro Azuma. *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Eiichiro Azuma. *In This Great Land of Freedom: The Japanese Pioneers of Oregon.* Los Angeles: Japanese American National Museum, 1993.

Eiichiro Azuma. *The History of the Japanese in Oregon, 1880-1942.* Unpublished work done for the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center.

W.G. Beasley. *Japan Encounters the Barbarian: Japanese Travelers in America and Europe.* New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995.

Linda Murray Berzok. "My Mother's Recipes: The Diary of a Swedish American Daughter and Mother," in Sherrie A. Inness, ed., *Pilaf, Pozole, and Pad Thai: American Women and Ethnic Food.* Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001, p. 84-101.

Isabella Bird. *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan: An Account of Travels in the Interior Including Visits to the Aborigines of Yezo and the Shrine of Nikko.* Rutland, VT: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1973, first ed. 1880.

Priscilla J. Brewer. "'We Have Got a Very Good Cook Stove': Advertising, Design, and Consumer Response to the Cookstove, 1815-1880." *Winterthur Portfolio*, Vol. 25, No. 1 (Spring, 1990), p. 35-54.

John Charles Camp. *America Eats: Toward a Social Definition of American Foodways.* Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1978.

Basil Hall Chamberlain and W. B. Mason. *A Handbook for Travellers in Japan.* London: J. Murray, 1891.

Charles E. Chambliss. *Rice Growing in California.* United States Department of Agriculture Farmers' Bulletin 1141. Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Agriculture, September, 1920.

Nelson Close. "Experiments in Tea Production in the United States." *Agricultural History*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (July, 1950), p. 156-161.

Lizzie Collingham. *Curry: A Tale of Cooks and Conquerors.* Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

James H. Collins. *The Story of Canned Foods.* New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 1924.

____. *The Congregational Cook Book: Six Hundred Selected Recipes of Things Good to Eat.* The Dalles: Chronicle Publishing, Inc. 1911.

Hugh Cortazzi. *Dr. Willis in Japan, 1862-1877: British medical pioneer.* London and Dover, New Hampshire: The Athlone Press, 1985.

Richard Osborn Cummings. *The American and His Food: A History of Food Habits in the United States.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1940.

Katarzyna Cwiertka. *Modern Japanese Cuisine: Food, Power and National Identity.* London: Reaktion Books, 2006.

Katarzyna J. Cwiertka. "Eating the World: Restaurant Culture in Early Twentieth Century Japan," in *European Journal of East Asian Studies,* Vol.2, No. 1 (2003), p. 89-116.

Katarzyna Joanna Cwiertka. *The Making of Modern Culinary Tradition in Japan.* Ph.D. dissertation, University of Leiden, 1999.

Katrarzyna Cwiertka. "How Cooking Became a Hobby: Changes in Attitude Toward Cooking in Early Twentieth-Century Japan," in Sepp Linhart and Sabine Frühstück, eds., *The Culture of Japan as Seen through Its Leisure.* Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998, p. 41-58.

Katarzyna Cwiertka. "Minekichi Akabori and his Role in the Development of Modern Japanese Cuisine," in Harlan Walker, ed., *Cooks & Other People: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 1995.* Totnes, Eng.: Prospect Books, 1996, p. 68-80.

Jeffer Daykin. *Losing "The Trail" on the Road to Modernity: America's Reception of Japan at the Lewis and Clark Centennial and American Pacific Exposition and Oriental Fair, Portland, Oregon, 1905.* Unpublished M.A. thesis, Portland State University, May, 2008.

Henry C. Dethloff. *A History of the American Rice Industry, 1685-1985.* College Station: Texas A&M Press, 1988.

Henry E. Dosch. "Foreign and Domestic Exhibits," in *Lewis and Clark Journal*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (Sept., 1904), p. 6.

Gail Lee Dubrow. "'The Nail That Sticks Up Gets Hit': the Architecture of Japanese American identity in the Urban Environment, 1885-1942," in Louis Fiset and Gail M. Nomura, eds., *Nikkei in the Pacific Northwest: Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians in the Twentieth Century.* Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005, p. 120-145.

Gail Dubrow with Donna Graves. *Sento at Sixth and Main: Preserving Landmarks of Japanese American Heritage.* Seattle: Seattle Arts Commission, 2002.

Peter Farb and George Armelagos. *Consuming Passions: The Anthropology of Eating.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1980.

Joshua A. Fogel, "The Sino-Japanese controversy over Shina as a Toponym for China," in Joshua A. Fogel, ed., *The Cultural Dimension on Sino-Japanese Relations: Essays on the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries.* Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharp, 1995, p. 66-76.

Yukichi Fukuzawa. *The Autobiography of Yukichi Fukuzawa,* translated by Eiichi Kiyooka with a forward by Carmen Blacker. New York: Columbia University Press, 1966.

Donna R. Gabaccia. "As American as Budweiser and Pickles? Nation-Building in American Food Industries," in Warren Belasco and Philip Scranton, eds., *Food Nations: Selling Taste in Consumer Societies.* New York: Routledge, 2002, p. 175-193.

Donna R. Gabaccia. *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998.

Jack Goody. *Cooking, Cuisine and Class: A Study in Comparative Sociology.* Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

Andrew Gordon. *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present.* New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Gloria Hale, ed. *The World Atlas of Food: a Gourmet's Guide to the Great Regional Dishes of the World.* London: Mitchell Beazley, 1974.

Harada Nobuo. *Washoku to Nihon bunka: Nihon ryōri no shakaishi* (Japanese Cuisine and Japanese Culture: a Social History of Cooking). Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2005.

Neil Harris. "All the World a Melting Pot? Japan at the American Fairs, 1876-1994," in Akira Iriye, ed., *Mutual Images: Essays in American-Japanese Relations.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975, p. 24-54.

Townsend Harris. *Complete Journal of Townsend Harris, American Consul General and Minister to Japan.* Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., 1930.

John L. Hess & Karen Hess. *The Taste of America.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000. Orig. pub. 1972.

Beatrice Hohenegger. *Liquid Jade: The Story of Tea from East to West.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 2006.

Bill Hosokawa. *Out of the Frying Pan: Reflections of a Japanese American.* Niwot, CO.: University of Colorado Press, 1998.

Bill Hosokawa. *Nisei: The Quiet Americans.* New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1969.

Madeline Yuan-yin Hsu. *Dreaming of Gold, Dreaming of Home: Transnationalism and Migration Between The United States and South China, 1882-1943.* Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press, 2000.

J. Richard Huber. "Effect of Prices on Japan's Entry into World Commerce after 1858." *The Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 79, No. 3 (May-June, 1971), p. 614-628.

Yamato Ichihashi. *Japanese in the United States.* New York: Arno Press and the New York Times, 1969, orig. published by Stanford University, 1932.

Yuji Ichioka. *The Issei: The World of the First Generation of Japanese Immigrants, 1885-1924.* New York: The Free Press, 1988.

Yuji Ichioka. "Japanese Immigrant Labor Contractors and the Northern Pacific and The Great Northern Railroad Companies, 1898-1907," in *Labor History*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Summer 1980), p. 325-350.

Yuji Ichioka, Yasuo Sakata, Nobuya Tsuchida, and Eri Yasuhara. *A Buried Past: An Annotated Bibliography of the Japanese American Research Project Collection.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974.

Naomichi Ishige. *The History and Culture of Japanese Food.* London, New York: Kegan Paul, 2001.

Kazuo Ito. *Issei: A History of Japanese Immigrants in North America.* Translated by Shinichiro Nakamura and Jean S. Gerard. Japan: Japan Publications, Inc., 1973.

Masakazu Iwata. *Planted in Good Soil: The History of the Issei in United States Agriculture*, Vols. I and II. New York, San Francisco, et al: Peter Lang, 1992.

Michael Jackson. *The World Guide to Beer.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977.

Dale Jolly. *An Historical & Cultural Interpretation of a Japanese Settlement in the State of Oregon from 1870 to 1950.* Portland, Oregon: Mt. Hood Community College, 1974.

Englebert Kaempfer. *The History of Japan, Together with a Description of the Kingdom of Siam, 1690-92.* Vol.s I-III. New York: AMS Press, 1971. Reprint from Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, edition, 1906, translation by J.G. Scheuchzer.

Lauren Kessler. *Stubborn Twig: Three Generations in the Life of A Japanese American Family.* New York: Random House, 1993.

Major Henry Knollys. *Sketches of Life in Japan.* London: Chapman and Hall, 1887.

Carolyn Korsmeyer. "Delightful, Delicious, Disgusting." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism,* Vol. 60, No. 3 (Summer, 2002), p. 217-225.

Charles Lanman. *The Japanese in America.* London: Longman, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1872.

Forrest E. LaViolette. *Americans of Japanese Ancestry: A Study of Assimilation in the American Community.* Toronto: The Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1945.

Sarah A. Leavitt. *From Catherine Beecher to Martha Stewart: A Cultural History of Domestic Advice.* Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 2002.

Robert G. Lee. *Orientals: Asian Americans in Popular Culture.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999.

Claude Lévi-Strauss. "The Culinary Triangle," translated by P. Brooks. *Partisan Review*, Vol. 33 (1966), p. 586-595.

D.O. Lively. *The Money Makers: Swine Raising in the Pacific Northwest.* Portland, Oregon: Oregon-Washington Railroad and Navigation Co., Southern Pacific Lines in Oregon, 1920's.

William W. Lockwood. *The Economic Development of Japan: Growth and Structural Change, Expanded Edition.* Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1968.

Mitzi Asai Loftus. *Made in Japan and Settled in Oregon.* Coos Bay, Oregon: Pigeon Point Press, 1990.

Robertus Love. "The Lewis and Clark Fair," in *The World's Work*, Vol. X, No. 4 (Aug., 1905), p. 6445-6458.

Abbott C. Martin, "Patriotism and Fried Chicken," *The Sewanee Review*, Vo. 37 (1929), p. 34-37.

Eliot Grinnell Mears. *Resident Orientals on the American Pacific Coast.* New York: Arno Press, 1978. First published by University of Chicago Press, 1928.

H. A. Millis. *The Japanese Problem in the United States: An investigation for the commission on relations with Japan appointed by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.* New York: The Macmillan Company, 1915.

Sidney Mintz. *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History.* New York: Elizabeth Sifton Books (Viking), 1985.

S. Frank Miyamoto. "The Japanese Minority in the Pacific Northwest," in *Pacific Northwest Quarterly,* Vol. 54, No. 4 (Oct., 1963), p. 143-149.

Masao Miyoshi. *As We Saw Them: the First Japanese Embassy to the United States (1860).* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979.

John Modell. "Tradition and Opportunity: The Japanese Immigrant in America," in *Pacific Historical Review,* Vol. 15, No. 2 (May, 1971), p. 163-182).

Raymond A. Mohl. "Cultural Pluralism in Immigrant Education: The YWCA's International Institutes, 1910-1940," in Nina Mjagkij and Margaret Spratt, eds., *Men and Women Adrift: The YMCA and the YWCA in the City.* New York: New York University Press, 1997, p. 111-137.

Edward S. Morse. *Japan Day By Day, 1877, 1878-79, 1882-83, Vol.'s 1 and 2.* Atlanta, GA.: Cherokee Publishing Company, 1990.

Motoyama Tekishū. *Inshoku Jiten* (*Encyclopedia of Japanese Food and Drink*). Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1958.

____. *Mt. Hood Cookbook of Tried Recipes, Compiled by members of the Presbyterian Church.* No publication information, but could be from Hood River, circa 1910.

Kafū Nagai. *American Stories,* translated and introduced by Mitsuko Iriye. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.

Benjamin Wai-ming Ng. "Making of a Japanese Community in Prewar Period (1841-1941)," in Cindy Yik-yi Chu, ed., *Foreign Communities in Hong Kong, 1840s-1950s.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, p. 111-132.

Wendy Lee Ng. *Collective Memory, Social Networks, and Generations: The Japanese American Community in Hood River, Oregon.* Unpublished PhD dissertation presented to the Department of Philosophy at the University of Oregon, August, 1989.

Brian Niiya and the Japanese American National Museum. *Encyclopedia of Japanese American History: An A-Z Reference from 1868 to the Present.* New York: Facts on File, 2001.

Percy Noel. "Yes, I Like Japanese Food." *Asia,* Vol. 33, No. 6 (June, 1933), p. 352-360.

____. *Official Catalog to the Lewis and Clark Exposition.* Portland: 1905.

Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney. "We Eat Each Other's Food to Nourish Our Body: The Global and the Local as Mutually Constituent Forces," in Raymond Grew, ed., *Food in Global History*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1999, p. 240-272.

Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney. "McDonalds in Japan," in James L. Watson, ed. *Golden Arches East: McDonald's in East Asia.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997, p. 161-182.

Kakuzo Okakura. *The Book of Tea.* Edited and introduced by Everett F. Bleiler. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1964.

Kinjirou Omae and Yuzuru Tachibana. *The Book of Sushi.* Tokyo and New York: Kodansha International, 1981.

____. *The Oregon Journal Souvenir View Book of the Late Lewis and Clark Centennial Exhibition.* Portland: The Oregon Journal, 1905.

Mark Pendergrast. *Uncommon Grounds: The History of Coffee and How It Transformed Our World.* New York: Basic Books, 1999.

Paul Radin, ed. "Japanese Ceremonies and Festivals in California." *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* Vol. 2 No. 2 (Summer 1946), p. 152-179.

J.A.G. Roberts. *China to Chinatown: Chinese Food in the West.* London: Reaktion Books, 2002.

João Rodrigues. *This Island of Japon: João Rodrigues' Account of 16th-century Japan,* translated and edited by Michael Cooper, S.J. Tokyo & New York: Kodansha International Ltd., 1973.

Waverley Root and Richard de Rochemont. *Eating in America: A History.* New York: The Ecco Press, 1981 (first copy-write 1976).

Robert W. Rydell. *All the World's a Fair.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984.

Satō Kenji. *Nihon bia raberu seisuishi (Japanese Beer Label Refinement History).* Tokyo: Tōkyō Shobōsha, 1985.

Mitziko Sawada. "Culprits and Gentlemen: Meiji Japan's Restrictions of Emigrants to the United States, 1891-1909." *Pacific Historical Review,* Vol. LX, No. 3 (Aug., 1991), p. 339-359.

Sears, Roebuck Co. *1902 Edition of the Sears, Roebuck Catalog* (reprint). New York: Bounty Books/Crown Publishers, Inc., 1969.

Keizō Shibusawa. *Japanese Life and Culture in the Meiji Era,* translated and adapted by Charles S. Terry. Tokyo: Ōbunsha, 1958.

Shinmanuki Hyōdayū. *Shin tobehō (New Way to go to America).* Tokyo: Hanubunkan, 1901, 10th ed. 1916 (Taisho 5).

William Shurtleff and Akiko Aoyagi. "The History of Tofu," in *History of Soybeans and Soyfoods: 1100B.C. to the 1980's.* Lafayette, CA: Soyinfo Center, 2007. http://www.soyinfocenter.com/HSS/tofu4.php (May 1, 2009).

Amellia Simmons. *American Cookery or the art of Dressing Viands, Fish, Poultry & Vegetables and the best Modes of Making Pastes, Puffs, Pies, Tarts, Puddings, Custards & Preserves and All Kinds of Cakes from the Imperial Plumb to Plain Cake adapted to This Country & All Grades of Life.* Hartford, CT.: Hudson and Goodwin, 1796. Reprint: Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1965.

Upton Sinclair. *The Jungle.* Harper & Brothers, 1905.

Bradford Smith. *Americans From Japan.* Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1948.

Jere Takahashi. *Nisei/Sansei: Shifting Japanese American Identities and Politics.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1997.

Ronald Takaki. *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans.* Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1989.

Linda Tamura. *The Hood River Issei: An Oral History of Japanese Settlers in Oregon's Hood River Valley.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993.

Sen' ō Tanaka and Sendō Tanaka's *The Tea Ceremony*, Tokyo, London, New York: Kodansha International, 1973.

Robert J. Theodoratus. "Greek Immigrant Cuisine in America: Continuity and Change," in Alexander Fenton and Trefor M. Owen, eds., *Food in Perspective: The Procedings of the Third International Conference on Ethnological Food Research, Cardiff, Wales, 1977.* Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1981, p. 313-323.

William Toll. "Permanent Settlement: Japanese Families in Portland in 1920," in *The Western Historical Quarterly,* Vol. 28, No. 1 (Spring, 1997), p. 18-43.

Hisashi Tsurutani. *America-Bound: The Japanese and the Opening of the American West.* Translated by Betsey Scheiner. Tokyo: The Japan Times, 1989 (originally published as *Amerika Seibu Kaitaku to Nihonjin* by Nippon Hoso Kyokai, 1977).

Yoshiko Uchida. *Desert Exile: The Uprooting of a Japanese American Family.* Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982.

United States Department of Agriculture. S.M. Tracy. *United States Department of Agriculture Farmers' Bulletin No. 100, Hog Raising in the South.* Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1899.

United States Immigration Commission. *Immigrants in Industries (in twenty-five parts).* Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911.

John E. Van Sant. *Pacific Pioneers: Japanese Journeys to America and Hawaii, 1850-80.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000.

Yasuo Wakatsuki. "Japanese Emigration to the United States, 1866-1924: A Monograph," in *Perspectives in American History, Vol. XII, 1979.* Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History, Harvard University, 1979, p. 387-516.

Thomas K. Walls. *The Japanese Texans.* San Antonio: The University of Texas Institute of Texan Cultures at San Antonio, 1987.

Jan Whitaker. *Tea at the Blue Lantern Inn: A Social History of the Tea Room Craze in America.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 2002.

Gunter Wiegelmann. "Innovations in food and meals." *Folk Life: A Journal.* Vol. 12 (1974), p. 20-30.

Jack H. Willson, ed. *Rice In California.* Richvale, CA: Butte County Rice Growers Association, 1979.

Robert A. Wilson and Bill Hosokawa. *East to America: A History of the Japanese in the United States.* New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1980.

Sylvia Junko Yanagisako. *Transforming the Past: Tradition and Kinship Among Japanese Americans.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1985.

Yosaburo Yoshida. "Sources and Causes of Japanese Emigration." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* Vol. XXXIV (July-December, 1909), p. 377-387.