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Chinese Food during COVID-19 in China and the United States

A Tale of Two Countries

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"Remember this day forever," reads a WeChat message posted by someone living in Wuhan on January 23, just one day before the Chinese Lunar New Year's Eve. The solemnly succinct message has a short but shocking title: "Wuhan, sealed off." Beginning at 10:00 a.m., all bus, subway, and ferry services in the city, as well as long-distance passenger trains and flights, were suspended. Another friend in her early fifties exclaimed, "I have never experienced this in my life." No one has. The lockdown of a megacity of more than ten million people is unprecedented. During the fourteenth century, Venice ordered ships arriving from ports struck by the bubonic plague to remain in isolation for forty days, or *quaranta giorni*. The quarantine—a word derived from the previous Italian words[1]—in Wuhan would last for seventy-six days. When the citywide quarantine ended, the novel coronavirus had become a devastating global pandemic, resulting in 7,553,182 confirmed infections and 423,349 deaths and causing much more severe and widespread disruptions as of June 13.

The ongoing pandemic has raised people's awareness of the significance of food, generating enormous anxiety about various aspects of the food chain, from production to consumption. In China, it has revived two important debates—one about the use of wild animals for food and the other over another centuries-old

custom, namely the communal style of dining. Both are essential and distinct features of Chinese foodways. Moreover, the pandemic has accelerated another development: using online and mobile platforms to order prepared meals as well as ingredients. These changes signal that Chinese food, a cuisine that has never stopped evolving, is at another critical crossroads as the country itself is in a transformative moment of historic proportion.

Beyond China, COVID-19 is also affecting Chinese food, which has spread worldwide as an integral part of overseas Chinese immigration.[2] This essay takes a look at the situation in the United States, which has surpassed any other country in the number of COVID-related infections and casualties. And in the United States, Chinese food had become the most popular ethnic cuisine by 1980.[3] It has been recognized as a distinctly Chinese cuisine and, in recent years, is increasingly connected to culinary trends in China.[4] Feeling the effect of COVID-19 long before it reached American shores, Chinese restaurants have borne the brunt of its devastating impact on the American restaurant industry after its outbreak, which has revived anti-Asian sentiments that have deep historical roots in US society. The crisis caused by the pandemic is further complicated by the rising geopolitical tension between the US and China. A further deterioration of the bilateral relationship will put Chinese food in a more precarious situation.

A Culinary Treasure or an Ugly Habit? Mounting Calls to Halt Wildlife Consumption

Food has been a focal point of the efforts in preventing the spread of COVID-19 in China from the very beginning. Acting on the widely held belief that Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market in Wuhan was the source of the virus,[5] on January 1, city authorities closed the market, which featured a variety of live wild animals, including the masked palm civet. Chinese virologists reported that among the 585 environmental samples collected from Wuhan's Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market, thirty-three samples contained the nucleic acid of the novel coronavirus.[6] Subsequent research shows that the market is unlikely to be the originating venue of the virus.[7] But the enormous attention that the seafood market and the wild animals sold in it demonstrates the public's anxieties about the connection between the consumption of wild animals and infectious diseases.

Many harbor vivid memories of China's first dreadful epidemic in the twenty-first century, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). After first emerging in south China in 2002, it spread to twenty-nine countries, infecting more than 8,000 people and killing more than 770 people before it was contained in July 2003. After the novel coronavirus outbreak, the press reminded people that SARS also resulted from the use of wild animals as food. Calling readers to "stay away from wild animals," a post on the popular Chinese social media site, Weibo, notes on

January 28, "an overwhelming majority of infected patients are directly connected to the Huanan Seafood Market." It went on to note that the first SARS infections were basically related to seafood markets and markets of agricultural products, emphasizing that all these markets sold not only seafood but also wild animals.[8] A user-community-based Chinese question-and-answer website reposted an online article, which reiterated that the novel coronavirus came from wild animals sold in Huanan Seafood Market, lamenting that the tragedy that happened seventeen years ago was being repeated.[9]

Wild animals have been an essential part of Chinese foodways. The belief in the medicinal and health benefits of wild-animal parts is the most important reason why people eat wild animals.[10] The use of food for health purposes, captured in the notion of *yangsheng* ("nourish life"), has been a long tradition of Chinese food. Influenced by Daoism, yangsheng is one of the fundamental motivations for people to write cookbooks and was a prominent theme in early Chinese writing about food and cooking.[11] Animal parts have been key ingredients in Chinese medicine for centuries. Therefore, the belief in the health benefits of eating wild animal meat has persisted. In popular food culture, certain rare and expensive foods are cherished as highlights or "treasures" of Chinese cuisine. Among them are the eight mountain treasures (*ba zhen*), which are mostly from wild animals, including bear paw, leopard placenta, camel hump, antler, as well as the masked palm civet, which is the most precious among them. Because of its perceived great health benefits, this rare animal was in high demand as food, which drove its price up by 400 percent between 1989 and 2003.[12] After SARS, legislation passed to curb the use of wild animals as food had various loopholes in it, and the habit has continued. The 2015 Wild Animal Protection Act, for example, is focused on the reasonable and regulated use, rather than the protection, of wild animals.[13]

As the call to revamp the inadequate Wild Animal Protection Act increases, the national legislative body issued a decree to ban illegal wildlife trade and eliminate the "ugly habit" of eating wild animals on February 24, 2020.[14] A couple of our interviewees, including a Chinese-food restaurant owner in Wuhan, also used the word "ugly" in reference to the habit of wildlife eating. The words of "ugly habit" demonstrate the gravity of the assault on this traditional culinary custom. Of the more than 10,000 people surveyed by the Peking University Center for Nature and Society and several environmental organizations in early 2020, 97 percent were not in favor of wild animal consumption, and 68 percent had not even witnessed this behavior.[15] This is consistent with our interviews and surveys of about thirty people in China. All of them are opposed to wild animal consumption, and most of them believe that this habit will decrease. A businesswoman in her early fifties noted that the number of people in Wuhan who eat wild animals is quite small to begin with, and it will be even smaller in the future. Two even predicted that

this habit will eventually disappear. Rising public health consciousness is altering people's food habits and shattering certain traditional beliefs about the health benefits of wild animals, which in turn can significantly transform the cuisine of China. The pandemic also forces people to reexamine a far more widespread custom in China's food culture.

Communal Style of Eating vs. Serving Food Individually: A Century-Old Debate Rekindled

Characterized by intimate sharing of food at the dinner table, a communal style of dining is an essential part of Chinese cuisine. While the consumption of rare wild animals has been practiced by affluent and adventurous food connoisseurs, communal dining has been a food custom almost universally shared in China's food culture. Many see it as a reflection, and an integral part, of Chinese culture. During the coronavirus epidemic, it is increasingly seen as a public health hazard in China rather than a time-honored tradition that should be cherished. This is accompanied by calls to replace it with the perceived "Western" way of serving dishes individually. If adopted, this change would significantly redefine Chinese cuisine as we know it.

But such a change is not likely to take place easily. The traditional Chinese style of dining had faced serious challenges before—in the early twentieth century and during the SARS epidemic at the beginning of the twenty-first century. As we will see in the following analysis, past moments of public fervor to reform the dining style in Chinese food have always ultimately diminished without achieving their goals. There are personal, cultural, as well as practical reasons for people's reluctance to jettison traditional communal dining.

Wu Lien-teh (Wu Liande), who led the effort to contain the 1910–1911 pneumonic plague outbreak in the northeast region of China,[16] has been hailed as a "plague fighter."[17] The Penang-born, ethnic Chinese and British-trained virologist was also a champion in a social movement to reform the Chinese way of dining early in the twentieth century, calling on the Chinese to adopt more healthful habits in his 1915 article entitled "Hygienic Dining Method" (*weisheng canfa*). In the national debate that ensued in the 1920s and 1930s, many urged their fellow Chinese to replace the communal style of eating (then called *gongshi*, meaning "shared food"), in which diners used their own chopsticks to take and eat the dishes from the containers on the table, with the Western style of eating called *fenshi* ("separated food"), in which dishes are served to diners individually. Some saw gongshi as the worst of all unhygienic bad habits among the Chinese.[18] Criticizing gongshi in the Shanghai-based newspaper, *Shun Pao*, one author believed that this made Chinese food less desirable among non-Chinese: "Chinese food is not that savory and not that healthy. Why is it not valued in the world? I

think it is because of gongshi. Gongshi is very unclean." Recognizing the difficulty for people to completely jettison this time-honored tradition, the author suggested giving each person two pairs of chopsticks—one for taking the food from the containers at the table and the other for eating.[19] A woman named Zhang Zhenyun characterized gongshi as a "several-thousand-years old" "bad habit" that exposed people at the dining table to the risk of contagious diseases.[20]

The effort to reform dining practices largely faded away from public memory until the beginning of the twenty-first century. This time people used slightly different terms: *gongcan* ("shared meals") for a communal style of dining, and *fencan* for individually served food. A public health specialist wrote that it was during the 2002–2003 SARS epidemic that many realized the importance of fencan for the first time.[21]

The Chinese Hospitality Association issued guidelines for fencan in May 2003 and wanted the government to enforce its proposed equipment and service standards. Anticipating the difficulties in enforcement and compliance, government officials and trade organizations all agreed that the adoption of fencan should not be forced. A senior official of China's National Tourism Administration endorsed the idea of fencan but noted that it should be implemented and enforced by the state. The opinion of the restaurant industry generally is that "it should be up to the market and consumers."[22]

After the threat of SARS subsided, so did public discussions about fencan. The spread of COVID-19 has rekindled the call to reform the communal style of dining. A member of the decision-consultation group of the Guangxi provincial government characterizes it as an urgent matter that "cannot be delayed one more second (*keburonghuan*)."[23] One sees the refusal to use public chopsticks and adopt fencan as "the worst habit in public health."[24]

The obstacles faced by the proposed culinary reforms are multiple. In an article entitled "It Is Time for a Revolution at the Dinner Table," *Fangyuan Magazine* uses an old Chinese saying, "thunder sounds, little rain" (*leisheng xiang yudian xiao*), to describe the loud but failed calls during and shortly after the SARS outbreak to reform traditional ways of dining.[25] A scholar cited in this article identifies three obstacles for the adoption of fencan and public chopsticks: first, people have attached much emotional value to gongcan and fear that using fencan and public chopsticks may increase the social distance among them; second, gongcan is a longtime habit; third, changing it will add cost and decrease efficiency for restaurants.

There is still another and important obstacle, however. While fencan has been perceived as a distinct feature of Western dining since the early Qing Dynasty (1616–1911), many Chinese regard gongcan as an integral part of Chinese culture

and the cuisine of China. Lin Haicong, a scholar at Sun Yat-sun University in Guangdong, wrote in 2015 that fencan and gongcan mark the most striking distinction between Chinese and Western cuisines.[26] In like fashion, Jiang Xiaoli, a scholar at Federation University Australia, argued that the most obvious difference of Western food habits from the traditional food customs of China is fencan, seeing it as a reflection of the West's culture of individualism,[27] which is the opposite of the culture of collectivism in the East.

Other scholars, however, have pointed out that fencan was actually a prevalent way of dining in China before the Sui (581–618 CE) and Tang Dynasties (619–907 CE). With the introduction of high tables and chairs for dining during the Tang Dynasty, the Chinese started to move away from individual serving to a communal style of dining. According to Li Yongkang, this style of dining became prevalent during the Song Dynasty (960-1279 CE), a formative period in the evolution of Chinese cuisine, when economic prosperity turned the pattern of three meals a day into the norm.[28]

During COVID-19, promoters of fencan have taken pains to explain that it was actually an old Chinese tradition, refuting a widely held belief that it is a Western tradition. The president of the Asia Culinary Forum declared that fencan had existed in China since ancient times.[29] An article published in the *Policy Research & Exploration* magazine traces its origin to the Zhou and Shang Periods (1600–256 BCE), proclaiming it is time to bring this ancient tradition back to China.[30]

In early April 2020, the online branch of China's official news organization, Xinhuanet, joined hands with the Chinese Hospitality Association and the China Cuisine Association in calling on the Chinese to adopt fencan and public sticks in order to prevent "diseases from entering the mouth."[31] In May, the Advisory Commission on Citizens' Nutrition and Health, the Chinese Nutrition Society, the Chinese Preventive Medicine Association, the World Federation of Chinese Catering Industry, and the Chinese Cuisine Association issued a joint call, urging all Chinese to adopt the healthful behavior of fencan.[32] The *New York Times* pronounced, "Coronavirus threatens China's devotion to chopsticks and sharing food."[33]

We cannot expect that most people would quickly abandon the long-standing custom, which has been an integral part of China's culinary and social tradition. The willingness to adopt the new way of dining also varies along the lines of geographical regions, socioeconomic backgrounds, and occupations. For instance, investigative reporters discovered that many people in the countryside have not even heard of the notion of fencan.[34] While believing that it is difficult for people to completely abandon gongshi, an otolaryngologist in Wuhan noted that the many whole-family infection cases manifest the significance of public chopsticks, which

people are likely to continue to use after the pandemic. While having not adopted fencan except during mealtime at work, she and most of our informants in China acknowledged that it is a desirable thing.

Speaking of the health risks of the traditional way of sharing food, a middle-aged man in Wuhan noted, "when I use my own chopsticks to get food from the plates on the table, I am also sharing my saliva, germs and potentially viruses with the people at the table." Indeed, gongcan is not just about sharing food. It also reflects the intimacy of interpersonal relations in Chinese culture. The increasing willingness to embrace individual serving undoubtedly stems from anxieties about contagious diseases. Meanwhile, it also underscores fundamental shifts in social relations taking place at an accelerated pace as a result of the profound socioeconomic and cultural transformations in recent decades. Such transformations have also represented a serious challenge to the Chinese-food industry, as is most amply evidenced in the rapidly growing popularity of online and, especially, mobile food-delivery and takeout platforms.

Growing Use of Online and Mobile Platforms for Food Delivery

"How do you get your food?" This is a question we frequently asked people in China when the lockdown started. It turns out that there are various ways for people to get food. Almost all people reported that they rely on the social media platform WeChat to order groceries, often forming WeChat groups to do it together. Then, many people learned to cook new dishes by watching cooking shows online or videos on TikTok. When they do not want to cook, they order meals using mobile platforms.

Each of our informants mentioned two such platforms: Èle Me? (meaning "Hungry?"), a subsidiary of the Alibaba Group since April 2018, and Meituan. Both had already become enormously popular before COVID-19. Their registered users exceeded 300 million, turning online food ordering and delivery services into a ¥200 billion market in 2017.[35] Together, these two dominant players have a 96.6 percent market share.[36] After its founding in 2013, Meituan's registered users increased to 250 million, served by its 50,000 deliverers in more than 1,300 cities.[37]

The explosive expansion of such food delivery corporations underlines another important change in Chinese people's food consumption patterns, a change engendered by the increasing demand for convenient and fast meals in an increasingly urban society and competitive economy. After customers order their food, Meituan usually delivers it in thirty minutes. And the rise of this new industry poses a severe threat to those restaurants that provide traditional Chinese food. Many dishes in traditional Chinese cooking take a long time to prepare and often are best—in terms of flavor, texture, and color—when cooked at the right temperature, for the precise amount of time, and when they are served

immediately after being cooked. The surge in labor and rent costs has contributed to the rise of the takeout and delivery industry as well.

In Wuhan, before the mid-1990s, there were about 120 publicly recognized *Zhonghua Laozihao* ("Chinese time-honored brand") restaurants. Because of their inability to adapt to changing socioeconomic circumstances and the rise of American fast food, many of them had disappeared or were on the edge of extinction by 2011.[38] The pandemic has been a devastating blow to Wuhan's 51,000 restaurants, which employed 500,000 people before COVID-19. The lockdown meant that they lost nearly all the revenue during New Year's holidays, the busiest and most profitable season of the year. Mr. Liu, the founder of a successful chain that offers home-cooking-style Wuhan food, has ten restaurants in the city, which suffered huge losses in February and March but have started to recover, mainly because of delivery business. He is more fortunate than most of his peers because he had developed takeout and delivery businesses long before the COVID-19 outbreak. However, Mr. Liu said with a sigh, "authentic Chinese food is not meant for take-out or delivery." Delivered dishes taste and feel differently from those consumed in restaurants. People who order food for delivery mostly want the simple dishes, especially boxed meals. And they do not have the same environment to communicate with their friends, he added.

Chinese food is at a crossroads in Wuhan and across China. This is not only because of the pandemic, which has forced people to reexamine and even alter the traditional ways of thinking about and consuming food. This is also because of the profound transformation taking place in China in recent decades—in social relations, family structure, the economy, and many other aspects of Chinese culture and society. Fundamental shifts in social environment—either as a result of international migration or internal socioeconomic developments—in the past had redefined the meaning of Chinese food. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that the socioeconomic changes that are transforming China will also redefine its cuisine. It is erroneous to think that changes will make Chinese food less authentic. Discussions of the prevalence of individual servings in Chinese food culture before the Tang Dynasty compels us to rethink conventional notions of culinary authenticity in broader historical perspectives and reminds us that Chinese cuisine is a process that has continued to evolve.

Uncertainties in the Future: Chinese Restaurants in the United States

In the United States, many people began linking COVID-19 to dining in Chinese restaurants in January of 2020, long before COVID-19 cases were reported in their communities.[39] As is the case in China, the Lunar New Year holiday season is usually the busiest time of the year for Chinese restaurants. But in 2020, it turned out to

be disastrous in cities across the nation.[40] In one restaurant in Irvine, California, over 90 percent of the reservations were canceled. And business continued to evaporate nationwide. The *Today Show* reported in March that restaurateur Helen Ng, owner of Amazing 66 in NYC's Chinatown, noticed her business decline by 50 to 60 percent.[41] An important reason for the rise of Chinese food in early twentieth-century America,[42] cheap meals are still a prominent feature of Chinese restaurants, which survive on volume. The decline in the number of customers threatens the existence of Chinese restaurants in the United States.[43]

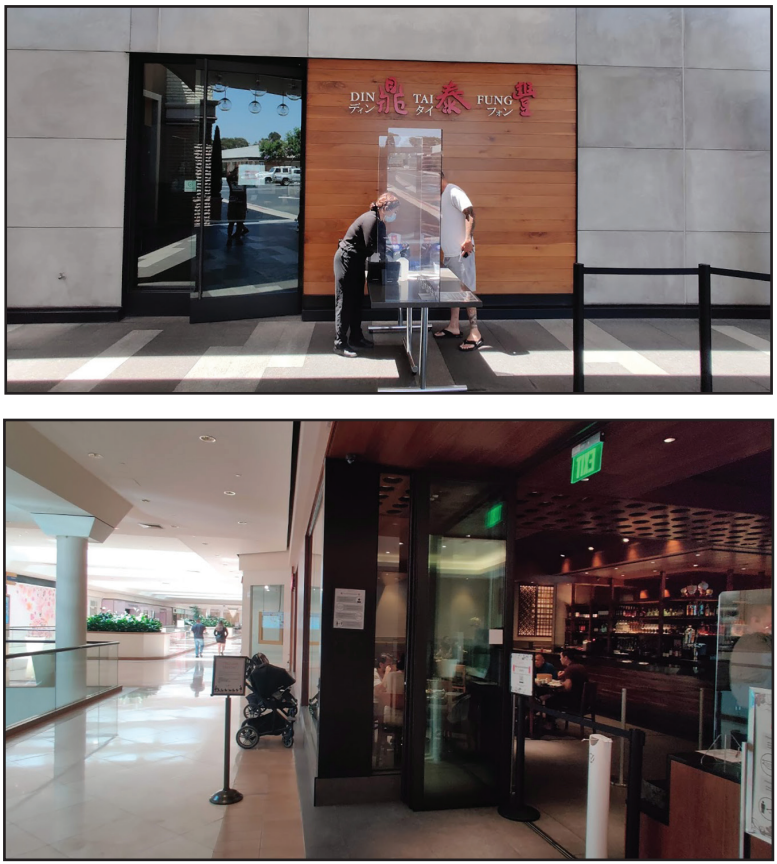

Figure 1 shows an employee helping a customer outside the entrance to the South Coast Plaza, Costa Mesa, CA. Figure 2 shows the entrance to Din Tai Fung inside the South Coast Plaza. The Din Tai Fung restaurant in the South Coast Plaza—the biggest shopping mall in the US in terms of sales volume—opened on August 18, 2014 and is extremely popular. Most weekends, the lines are incredibly long and the wait is usually a couple of hours. The pictures show the impact of COVID-19 on business. Photos by Yong Chen.

Compared to restaurants in China, Chinese restaurants in the US face additional challenges. As the World Health Organization's emergencies director noted, the pandemic brings out "the best and worst of us."[44] Anti-Asian sentiments have resurfaced. Co-founder of Streetwise New York Tours, Andrew Silverstein, reported that "in New York City hate crime towards Asians has increased fivefold this year." He continued perceptively, "the coronavirus stirred up anti-Chinese sentiments that echo of the yellow peril of the 19th century: the Chinese are unsanitary; they eat weird foods, and all Asians from Manhattan to Wuhan are the same. It occurred so quickly because we let these stereotypes survive beneath the surface. For over a century, locals and tourists visited American Chinatowns because they were exotic and mysterious places. Suddenly, in February they avoided them like the plague for the same reasons."[45]

As was the case in the nineteenth century, Asian food continues to be a focus of anti-Asian sentiments. Asian American restaurateurs faced increases of vandalism and harassment. On April 13, New York Michelin-starred Korean restaurant Jeju was vandalized with the graffiti "stop eating dogs."[46] Two weeks later, a Chinese restaurant in Chesapeake, Virginia, was vandalized with anti-Chinese graffiti. Linda Lin Cheng, owner of Taste of China in the community for twenty years, reported that she and her husband had water thrown on them, had experienced verbal hostilities, and had their car vandalized with the statement "go back to China." At the same time, the community responded by overwhelming the restaurant with orders as a show of support.[47] Others launched social media campaigns, such as #TakeOutHate to encourage Americans to order from Asian restaurants.[48]

As they did in extraordinary adversarial social environments in the past, Asian American restaurateurs have demonstrated remarkable resilience, quickly adapting to the new market conditions by offering visible guarantees of food safety and taking advantage of food delivery—a long-standing and unique feature of Chinese food in America, marked by the ubiquitous white takeout carton.[49] As of late May 2020, data from credit card processor Womply suggests that Chinese restaurants have gone from the highest closure rate (60 percent in April) to the fastest rate of reopening.[50]

Despite this favorable outlook for Chinese restaurants, the future remains uncertain. Through a study of restaurant owners cosponsored by the James Beard Foundation, the Independent Restaurant Coalition found in mid-April that only one in five among the more than 1,400 respondents believe that they will be able to keep their restaurants open after lockdown is lifted.[51] For Chinese restaurants, other and perhaps even greater uncertainties are looming on the horizon. If the seriously strained relationship between China and the US continues to deteriorate,

it is possible that more people in America will lose their appetite for Chinese food, to say the least.

Concluding Remarks

Confronting and comprehending the impact of COVID-19 on Chinese food in China and the United States is to have a dialogue with history. In China, the pandemic has revived past debates about long-standing important customs in Chinese food culture and has increased changes in food consumption patterns. In the United States, anti-Chinese sentiments have resurfaced and increased during the pandemic, adding more pain to the disruptions that Chinese restaurants have already suffered from.

As an American scholar of Chinese history and food points out in her response to our survey, the pandemic has generated greater curiosity about people's food consumption patterns in China. Besides the issues we cover in this article, those who research and write about food in China will pay greater attention to the impact of changing Chinese diet on the environment. In addition to the anti-Asian sentiments, the pandemic has further magnified the racial and socioeconomic injustice in food consumption in the US. We have to add that the pandemic has generated enormous anxieties in China and especially in the United States about food security in production and supply chains. In our survey questions about the impact on food and food studies, six food studies scholars in the United States and Canada all identified the breakdown of the food chain as one of the main disruptions caused by the pandemic.

As William McNeill notes in his *Plagues and Peoples*, "infectious disease which antedated the emergence of humankind will last as long as humanity itself, and will surely remain, as it has been hitherto, one of the fundamental parameters and determinants of human history."[52] One does not have to be a pessimistic alarmist to think that more and greater pandemics will occur in the future, as the globe continues to grow smaller. Food studies scholars have tended to focus on issues of food consumption. Issues concerning food production and supply are likely to, and should, receive more attention in the future.

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Notes

[1] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "History of Quarantine," 2020, https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/historyquarantine.html.

[2] The topic of the spread of Chinese food worldwide has received increasing scholarly attention in recent years. See for example, David Y. H. Wu and Sidney C. H. Cheung, eds., *The Globalization of Chinese Food* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press of Chinese Food, 2002).

[3] Yong Chen, *Chop Suey, USA*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014). According to "CHOW: Making of the Chinese American Restaurant," an exhibit in the Museum of Food and Drink, there are 50,000 Chinese restaurants in the United States.

[4] Chinese food in countries like Peru, Indonesia, and Malaysia has been substantially incorporated into, or blended with, indigenous culinary traditions. The distinctiveness of America's Chinese has been reinforced in recent years, when numerous new Chinese restaurants in America, such as Bistro Na in Southern California and Xi'an Famous Foods in New York, take pride in serving Chinese food as it is prepared in China without any effort to make the kind of adaptation that earlier Chinese restaurants have.

[5] Chinese CDC, "Chinese CDC Discovered Large Quantities of the Novel Coronavirus in the Huanan Seafood Market in Wuhan" (*zhongguo jikongzhongxin zai wuhan Huanan shichang jianchu daliang xinxing guanzhuang bingdu*), 2020, http://www.chinacdc.cn/yw_9324/202001/t20200127_211469.html. Also see China's state council's press conference about the efforts to prevent and control novel coronavirus infections on January 22, 2020, http://www.nhc.gov.cn/xwzb/webcontroller.do?titleSeq=11208&gecstype=1.

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[9] Zhi Yang, "Wuhan Pneumonia; a Disaster Stemming from Use of Wild Animals as Food; Repetition of a Historical Tragedy" (*wuhan feiyan, huoqi yewei, lishi de feiju zaici chongyan*), *Zhihu*, 2020, https://zhuanlan.zhihu.com/p/103856490.

[10] The Medical Community of China (*zhongguo yijiaren*), "Game Tonic, the Most Absurd Method to Nourish Life" (*yewei jinbu, zui huangmiu de yangsheng fa*), 2010, http://www.zgyjr.com/thread-15799-1-1.html. See also http://news.163.com/special/00012Q9L/guangdongyewei091123.html. This was confirmed by the finding in the comprehensive investigation in sixteen cities conducted jointly during the wild-animal-eating season from October 2005 to January 2006 by the Chinese Wildlife Conservation Association and the US nonprofit organization, WildAid, http://www.pishu.com.cn/skwx_ps/ps/ld?SiteID=14&ID=3103621&status=No.

[11] Examples of such cookbooks in premodern China include *Yin Shan Zheng Yao* (*The Essentials of Food and Beverage*), a palace-food handbook written in 1320 during the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368 CE) and Jia Ming's *Yinshi Xu Zhi* (*All You Must Know about Food*), written at the beginning of the Ming dynasty (1368–1644 CE).

[12] *ChinaNews.com*, "Suspect of SARS Transmitter, Masked Palm Civet, Sold at ¥200 per *Jin*, Is Considered the First of All Mountain Treasures" (*feidian, chuanbo xiongxian, guozili, meijin erbai beitui shanzhen zhishou*), May 24, 2003, https://www.chinanews.com/n/2003-05-24/26/306485.html.

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