The Historical Embodiment of Cultural Policy: from the Tabooed to the Festivalization of Beef Consumption in Taiwan

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In 2005, Taipei Beef Noodle Festival was initiated to promote an image of Taipei city as the beef noodle headquarter of the world. The tremendous economic profits make the activities held annually in the successive four years. The government’s propaganda of the festival reflects that the innovation of city’s cultures depends on the reconstruction of collective memories. Yet this festival is invented and could not be made possible without the new urban cultural policy—the festivalization.

To fashion the culinary hegemony of beef noodle, the authority reinterprets the gastronomic history. It is the culturally appropriation and gastronomic indigenization of the beef-eating. Most people start forgetting that the beef-eating in Taiwan involves the colonial experience with Japanese and Western colonization rather than just the food consumption. As the beef-eating is associated with the symbolic meaning and the taste represents specific social identity, it reflects the layers of social stratifications between colonizer and colonized, between powerful and powerless. Through scrutinizing how the festivalization of foods becomes a modern and prevailing phenomenon, I attempt to illuminate not only the relation between food and social identity but also the transformation of identity in the colonial and post-colonial contexts. The impact of Taipei Beef Noodles Festival is examined by the historical comparison analysis in the trajectory of how the beef-eating itself is transformed from a social taboo to a significant culture.

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Media, Movements and Modernity: Similarity in Emerging Processes of Public Spaces in-between Cross Taiwan Straits Areas after the 1990s

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It may be difficult for Japanese current discourse on China, leaning toward party-state centric approach, to analyze dynamism of mainland Chinese recent emergence of public space between party-state and society. Hereby analysis on such dynamism in Taiwan, as a culturally resembling de-facto neighbor, is required prior to China, in terms of 1) social movement; 2) media accessibility; 3) popular culture etc. Then, in considering ideologically declined post cold war China, whether these three points are effective or not would be examined. Lastly, the possibility of mutual linkage of both public spaces between Taiwan straits and its background would be suggested.

Analysis on emerging and expansion of public space after 1990 in Taiwan is characterized with
1) transformation of civic movement, i.e., limited movement for democracy into socially wide supported "new social movement"; 2) such process stimulated by civic subversion of media system, i.e., underground magazine during the authoritarian period into widely accepted electric media after late 1990s, as CATV with active audiences; 3) the lift of the ban on long-prohibited Japanese popular culture.

The mainland case after 2000 seemingly has been tracing the similar way; 1) transformation of non governmental movement, i.e., which previously seeking for so-called democracy by a few intellectuals into widely joined quasi "new social movement", though more limited than Taiwan; 2) internet activism linked with such movement after the decline of traditional propagative media; 3) widely accepted popular culture originated in Japan like cartoon possibly through pirated reprint via Taiwan. Thus, as the last point suggested, it is quite difficult to eliminate economy-led cultural stimulation of dynamism of public space in Taiwan also in considering the emergence of it in mainland so far. And, if such economic-led model still effective, the reverse would be foreseeable, could lead to the integrated public space across Taiwan straits in the near future.

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The Structure and Development of Local Public Finance in the Philippines

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In the Philippines, People Power Revolution of 1986 led to re-democratization after 14 years of Marcos dictatorship, setting the stage for a radical departure from the centralist tendencies of the Marcos regime, and gave legal opportunities for people to participate directory in local governance.

The 1986 constitution, which was drafted immediately after Corazon Aquino took over as President, provides that “the territorial and political subdivision shall enjoy local autonomy”, “Congress shall enact a local government code which shall provide for a more responsive and accountable local government structure instituted through a system of decentralization…”, and the state “shall encourage nongovernmental, community-based, or sectoral organizations that promote the welfare of the nation.”

One of the most important boost to local governance is the Local Government Code of 1991 (Republic Act 7160) which has been considered as very revolutionaly and the most progressive form of decentralization—devolution—in the sense that it provided for: (1) devolution of basic services, (2) increased sources of local financing, and (3) people’s participation in governance. It reframed the discourse of governance when local governments began to play a key role in governance in a country.

The past twenty years have seen some strides and advances among local governments, however still many challenges and problems have served as obstacles to the implementation of decentralization and real local autonomy. It is within this context that this paper examines and sets out to identify the obstacles focusing on power structure in the Philippines and global capitalism in an era of globalization.

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