prompt future research on 20th-century Chinese linguistic and scriptal modernity, to which Münning's *Sound, Meaning, Shape* makes a valuable contribution and serves as an important reference.

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Hong Kong Foodways

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This book is the fruit of decades of extensive research on the changing foodways of Hong Kong, a city known for its international palate and vibrant culture of dining out. As one of the few specialists, Sidney Cheung has been central to the general landscape of Hong Kong food studies, his deeply enriching scholarship bringing it to new heights in the past three decades. Based on years of long-term ethnography, Cheung succinctly and ably defines and provides an overview of the local food scene up until the start of the 21st century, as well as offering possible future research directions. As the first book on the Hong Kong food scene, *Hong Kong Foodways* will be useful for food scholars hoping to familiarize themselves with Cheung's major works, scholars in need of an introduction to the subject matter, and the wider general public wishing for a taste of this "gourmet's paradise."

The major contribution of this book is showing how socio-political developments gave rise to a multiplicity of local food products, habits and cuisines, as well as their changing meanings in the 20th century. In my view, what is profoundly significant, though perhaps implicitly, is Cheung's account of the culinary consequences of Hong Kong's geographical, demographic and political relationship to mainland China. Its impact, especially following the return of Hong Kong to Chinese governance in 1997, becomes increasingly apparent as the book unfolds.

While thematic, the book is broadly chronological. At the estuary of the Pearl River Delta, freshwater fish and oyster farming were made available and further developed as a result of British colonial rule of Hong Kong and increasing border controls since the 1950s (chapter one). Taking on a Mintzian (after Sidney Mintz) approach, Cheung hints at how Hong Kong foodways can and should be understood by grounding them in local food production. China also served as a major source of migrants to Hong Kong over the past century, who brought not only Chinese Hakka and Shanghai cuisines, but also "Western" cuisines that had developed in the wealthier coastal regions, possibly inspiring variants in Hong Kong like "soy sauce Western food" and tea cafés (chapters two and three). This may be one of the most detailed historical accounts of movements of cuisines vis-à-vis the Chinese migration to Hong Kong, and how they are localized according to local palates and social change.

In response to the changing political relationship with the mainland, private-kitchen restaurants connected the Hong Kong population to the tastes of greater China, while *puhn choi* "common pot" dining came to affirm local identity (chapter four), addressing a rising concern over local food heritage (chapter five). Instead of following the general trend of focusing on food and Hong Kong

identity, Cheung seeks to make use of belonging as a vantage point. For instance, he argues that the private-kitchen restaurant, as "a commercial setup conveying a warm and cosy atmosphere, family management and homemade food" (p. 73), functioned as "a metaphor for belonging" (p. 74). Local food heritage was brought into the limelight as Hong Kong people sought to preserve not just the local food itself, but the knowledge, values and networks entailed that made them feel they belonged. Cheung concludes by introducing possible areas for research, namely in media-oriented commensality, cooking shows and vegetarianism. These are timely suggestions, given the drastic technological advancements that may steer the focus of dining experiences towards visuals and ambiences. Moreover, faced with an ever-growing middle class, the mass media and alternative food habits also give rise to opportunities for Hong Kong people to consume in order to distinguish themselves from others.

Nevertheless, while the title suggests a wide-ranging if not necessarily comprehensive overview of the topic, at slightly more than 100 pages the book is too short to cover the vast terrain of Hong Kong's foodways. Given that some arguments presented here build upon conclusions made at the start of the 21st century, the book points towards the need for more current analysis, which, among other things, considers the impact of recent socio-political change within the city and vis-à-vis mainland China. The book would have been even more beneficial had it diverged even further from the limitation of previous literature, namely the tendency to focus on dining-out and on Chinese cuisines. Home-cooking, Asian, "Western" and even locally born cuisines – i.e. tea cafés and street food – can surely be further elaborated to complement the arguments of the book. These include what Cheung argues as a phenomenon of culinary diglossia where "even though people's taste moves from the street to the restaurant, the content of the food may not differ at all" (p. 44), and a "dichotomy" (p. 51) between a cosmopolitan dining-out culture and more conservative Chinese cooking at home. These two arguments are in my opinion profoundly important, and they serve to illuminate to food scholars what further in-depth research and elaboration would be especially fruitful.

Hong Kong Foodways serves the purpose of bringing to the reader's attention the richly engaging food scene in Hong Kong and how it has historically developed over the past century within the wider context of mainland China's growing influence. It serves as a solid foundation for Hong Kong food studies and even new areas of research. It would be useful to readers interested in the anthropology of food, Hong Kong foodways and Hong Kong's relationship to mainland China.

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