

Published by the decision of the Scientific Council  
of Khachatur Abovian  
Armenian State Pedagogical University



Department of Philosophy and Logic  
named after Academician Georg Brutian



# W I S D O M

## 3(23), 2022



*WISDOM is covered in Clarivate Analytics' Emerging Sources  
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YEREVAN – 2022

## GASTRONOMIC IDENTITY IN THE CONTEXT OF MCDONALDIZATION VS SUSHIZATION OF THE WORLD

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*We are, what we eat!*  
*Hippocrates*

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**Abstract:** The proposed study shows that all social processes, including gastronomic culture, are considered in the context of identity. The deployment of post-globalization processes captures the fact that there is a dialectical interaction of the global and the local, where the global is localized, and the local acquires a global scale. For example, McDonald's fast food restaurants not only operate in many countries around the world but also take into account local (national) traditions and customs (culture, religion), and their service system has become a methodology for many national food establishments around the world. Conversely, the local one acquires a global dimension of existence, such as sushi, pizza, pasta, borscht, and other dishes that have long gone beyond national cuisines. Thus, gastronomic culture forms a gastronomic identity, a national identity, which at the present stage of intercultural communication, is a "business card" of the nation, ethnic group, traditions and customs, which allows productive and interesting gastronomic tourism. It is thanks to it that acquaintance with gastronomic traditions, culture, and symbols, provides information exchange between people, eras and cultures.

**Keywords:** national cuisine, gastronomic identity, gastronomic tourism, intercultural communication, interethnic relations.

### Introduction

The second half of the XX century was usually characterized by the intensive development of

globalization processes. But at the beginning of the XXI century, they are entering a new phase of their development, which can be described as post-globalization, which highlights the question

posed by S. Huntington in the early 2000s, namely in 2004: who are we? This question is relevant to every country in the world. There is an urgent need to find not only national, ethnic, religious, and cultural but also gastronomic identity because it is products, the culture of cooking and the culture of food consumption that are forms of identity, which accordingly allows non-verbal intercultural communication. After all, it is at the present stage of development that all social processes are viewed through the prism of identity. Each group (ethnic group, nation, society) has its own identity, which has long been inaccessible to others, but globalization has enabled intercultural communication at all levels. And gastronomic culture no longer presents only one cultural tradition.

### Methodology

General scientific methods were used, in particular analysis and synthesis, which made it possible to assert that the national acquires a global dimension of existence, and the global is localized; gastronomic culture is the result of the spiritual activity of humankind, which significantly affects the socio-cultural processes and represents the socio-cultural experience of humanity as a whole and individual society, nation, ethnic group.

### Statement of Basic Material

The gastronomic diversity of the modern world creates a cultural “mix” of national cuisines and eating styles. For example, the United States is associated with fast food restaurants McDonald's, and this network has spread rapidly around the world and is quite popular with young people; Japan, with its world-famous dish sushi and the use of soy sauce and rice, which have long gone beyond the country; Germany - the world-famous festival Oktoberfest, - with the use of appropriate products (beer, knuckles, pretzels, salads of cabbage and potatoes, Munich sausages, baked fish), etc.; Italy - is a variety of pasta, pizza. After the film adaptation of Elizabeth Gilbert's book “Eat, Pray, Love”, Italy, from this triad, is associated with “Eat”, and the pizzeria L'Antica Pizzeria da Michele became famous all

over the world. Tourists staying in Naples usually visit this pizzeria; Spain - a variety of fish and meat dishes, vegetables, famous dishes – paella, gazpacho. An example of gastronomic tourism in this country is the traditional tomato fights (La Tomatina), the capital of this holiday is the town of Bunyol; France - is associated with “haute cuisine” and is considered the capital of world cuisine, known for wine making, cheese making, flour products - baguette, croissant and more. According to the bill on improving the legal protection of geographical indications in Ukraine, it is prohibited to use the names “champagne” and “cognac” for those drinks that are not produced in France (Law of Ukraine on Legal Protection of Geographical Indications, 2019, № 123-IX). In the world, the wine that is not produced in the Champagne region is called “sparkling wine”, and cognac made not in France is called brandy; Georgia is known for its hospitality and contrasts of spicy food. Dishes are based on vegetables, which can be used as a stand-alone meal or as a supplement to meat dishes. The most famous dishes of Georgian cuisine – khachapuri, kharcho, sulguni cheese; sat-syvi sauce, etc.; Greece is a striking example of Mediterranean cuisine, and it has much in common with the national tastes of southern France, Italy and the Balkans. The most characteristic main product is olive oil, which is present in almost all dishes. No less important ingredients are herbs – oregano, mint, dill, basil, and thyme. In addition, the top important products are olives, feta cheese, grape leaves, and yoghurt. As for feta cheese, a different name should be used in Ukraine from 2022, as provided by the law on improving the legal protection of geographical indications (Law of Ukraine on Legal Protection of Geographical Indications, 2019, № 123-IX); in China, as in all cuisines of the world, local products of animal and plant origin are used. The basis of the Chinese diet is cereals; meat is used in small quantities. Cutting, cooking and presentation of products play an important role in this kitchen, as an artist created the first cooking book. This book not only described but also illustrated the preparation of shellfish, poultry, mushrooms, beverages and more. The most famous dishes of Chinese cuisine are – Peking duck, dim sum, fried rice, tofu cheese, etc.; Mexico is characterized by its culinary diversity. It is based on corn, avocado, beans, potatoes (plain

and sweet), chilli peppers, pumpkin, poultry, and chocolate. The most famous dishes are burritos, tortillas, tacos, tapa, chili con carne, salsa, guacamole, fajitas, tequila. Cooking in Ukraine is a culinary art that is reflected in the variety and high taste of food. The most famous dishes of Ukrainian cuisine – are borsch, varenyky, roasts, palianytsia, dumplings, kulish and more. “Cuisine and food are not only an effective mechanism of the nation’s collective memory but also the principle of the unity of its culture, becoming a kind of accumulator of cultural memory of oneself and one’s essential orientations. Accumulating and combining new social experiences, food and cuisine are carriers of social heritage – they are able to unite people in groups and serve as a means of identifying the individual with a national and social community, becoming markers of national identity and associative characteristics of a nation” (Pliuta, 2017a, p. 218).

Thus, food has always remained a prominent attribute of human life. However, people do not just eat to survive. Humankind has created a culture of cooking. It is the appropriate serving of food (presentation), table setting, eating appropriate food depending on, for example, seasons (seasonal products) in some countries, and time of a day (breakfast, lunch, dinner). Serving food also depends on holidays, religious-like fasting, or on the contrary, the end of fasting, or ordinary everyday food, usually with the use of food and cooking dishes that correspond to national cuisine.

Consumption of food for modern man is becoming a certain attribute under the pressure of the media. We eat not only what we want, or what is traditional for a representative of a nation, but also what is advertised. Advertising fills products, food, and cooking with metaphysical content, which, in turn, determines the existential experience of the consumer, which affects his mental state. As a result, modern gastronomic culture is a dialectical relationship between global/national, carnivorous/vegetarian, street/restaurant food, and fast food / slow food. That is, there is a transformation of the kitchen as part of the culture of modern society.

The current stage of development of intercultural communication is filled with multi-vector processes, and the exchange of taste and food preferences is one of the vectors of interaction. National cuisine is the regional use and con-

sumption of food and cooking in accordance with traditions passed down from generation to generation. The consumption of appropriate products and dishes in a particular area is quite stable and is shared by the vast majority of carriers of national culture. However, it should be noted that in the structure of national gastronomic culture, there is also a regional culture, which is often called folk. It is developed at the local level using only local products and is characterized by an established and simple way of processing products, which is often a combination of individual family traditions. For example, family recipes for tofu cheese, making cheese in the meadows in the Ukrainian Carpathians (brynza, wurda), etc. However, today national cuisines cannot be considered as formations based solely on traditions. They have become an important and necessary component of the gastronomic culture of humankind, which forms a gastronomic identity.

Almost all countries of the world have become culturally open, and food practices, on the one hand, have become identifiers of a country and, on the other hand, become the property of all mankind due to increasing food flows that transcend borders and continents, go far beyond places of origin, such as pizza, sushi, hamburger, rahat-locum, etc. That is, food acquires the status of supranational and finds more and more fans in different regions of the world, which also significantly affects the cultural and local tastes. This has a number of advantages and, at the same time, disadvantages. Among the advantages are the availability of products, food tolerance to “foreign” products (interest, unusual flavours you want to taste), resulting in demand for certain products, such as distributed around the world - tangerines, bananas, oranges, avocados, pineapples, etc.; as well as consumer involvement in well-known and fashionable food brands.

It is worth mentioning the shortcomings. First, the mass consumption of products, including beverages like Coca-Cola and other carbonated beverages, which displace quite useful traditional national beverages (uzvar, stewed fruit). Second, the consumption of high-calorie foods due to the content of fats and refined carbohydrates, which displace traditional and seasonal foods. Third, the emergence and promotion of “hybrid” foods, such as “Japanese sushi” or

“French croissant”, made in Ukraine, or a combination of different products, dishes, and flavours, now called fusion dishes, such as a combination of doughnut and croissant, which is called – croinut, which was created by Frenchman Dominique Ansel in a New York confectionery. Initially, only two hundred pieces of this confectionery delicacy were created, but very quickly, it became popular, and in demand, so the author patented his invention, and now no one in the world has the right to make croissants without his consent. There is also a large amount of fusion food - burger dog, ramen burger, ham cake, etc. Such combinations ambiguously affect the nature of people’s value orientations. Indeed, at first glance, a large number of people get the opportunity to learn about “foreign” food, but, on the other hand, this process creates cultural conflicts and inconsistencies. For example, some food practices do not meet traditional tastes in certain countries, such as eating raw fish, or some kind of meat, depending on religion; for example, Hindus do not eat beef, as well as Muslims do not eat pork. In this respect, G. Simmel rightly remarked: “what I think I can tell others; what I see, others can see; what I say can be heard by hundreds, but what one eats, under no circumstances can another” (Zimmel, 2010, p. 187).

The nature and content of food have been significantly influenced by global trends in the spread of a new ideology of food consumption – fast food chains “McDonald’s”, “Pizza Hut”, “Chickens from Kentucky”, etc., as well as sushi restaurants – Mamoya, Koi, An’nam, Suchi Yasuda, Morimoto, Zuma, Wasabi Sushi & Bento, Sushi Nakazawa, Sushi-Ho, etc. Therefore, the development of food culture in almost all countries of the world is taking into account two opposite civilizational gastronomic trends – McDonald’s and Sushi. Thus, according to the American sociologist J. Rietzer, the processes of McDonaldization have significantly affected the organization of food around the world, at least more, the food culture of many societies. In particular, the sociologist noted, “the principles of the fast food restaurant are beginning to define more and more areas not only of American society but also the rest of the world” (Rietzer, 2011). An example of this is the organization of many restaurants in accordance with the principles of McDonald’s; for example, in Ukraine, a

network of fast food restaurants (“Zdorovenki buliy”, “Puzata Khata”, “Shvydko”) which have a national focus (prepare traditional national dishes - borscht, pancakes, dumplings) – they all profess the basic principles of McDonald’s, namely – efficiency, predictability, control and calculation. J. Rietzer argues the next points about efficiency. First, it is the creation of favourable conditions for fast food, which is fully consistent with the accelerated dynamism of modern life as an individual and society as a whole. Second, cost as the quantitative parameter of the goods and services offered (portion size and cost). Third, the proportion of quantity and quality, such as fast and quality delivery, which became relevant and necessary during lockdowns in the Covid-period, as increased need for food delivery. Quantitative measurement has given rise to such phenomena as “double” and “triple” – while buying such promotional goods, the consumer saves, and the restaurant thus tries to sell all the products without leftovers. Predictability is the standardization of dishes, i.e. they will be the same regardless of the time and place of preparation and sale; control is carried out by technologization of all processes, i.e. minimizes the “human factor” (Rietzer, 2011). In fast food restaurants, it is necessary to control the time of customer service. For example, the use of a limited menu is the zoning of food - breakfast, lunch, dinner; uncomfortable seats, which will significantly reduce the time of the client’s stay in the restaurant, which prevents the autonomy of the individual, i.e. the client will eat quickly and leave. However, such rationality appropriately dehumanizes the food system. The process of eating, which was for a long time a special social interaction between people, today is minimized. Both visitors and employees of fast food establishments become elements of the technological process. According to O. Pliuta, “The unified fast food format originated as a gastronomic practice of American culture, but over time, it marked a “victory” over the natural content of food in many countries and became symbolic food for the globalized world. The fast food cultural meaning is removed, and its civilizational format is for modern man, forced to live in a multicultural and polyethnic reality, a way to avoid a horrible collision with another on a physical level” (Pliuta, 2017b, p. 140). Thus, the emergence and spread of fast food, on the one hand, characteriz-



es the current stage of human development – technological, urbanized, where there is no time to eat, so it is replaced by a snack that does not carry anything valuable, i.e. it is just replenishment of energy for the functioning of the organism. The downside of these processes is the denial of eating – a meal that had some aspects of ritual, sequence, and time to not only be satisfied but also to enjoy food, not only in taste but also in aesthetics.

The deployment of globalization has led to the expansion of McDonald's networks, which have long gone beyond the United States. And the sign of this network is among the ten most recognizable signs in the world, along with the sign of Coca-Cola, Amazon, Samsung, Google, Nike, Apple, Microsoft, etc. According to the official website of McDonald's Corporation, at the beginning of 2020, the company had its representative office in one hundred countries around the world. This geography of the location of this network of food establishments involves the use of local (regional products). For example, in Japan, a burger is served with pork teriyaki and "Seaweed shaker"; a shrimp cocktail is served in Germany; in Italy - burgers sprinkled with Parmigiano Reggiano cheese; in Ukraine – rye burger with bacon and Carpathian mushroom sauce, potatoes with cracklings; in India, beef is not served at all, many vegetarian dishes are offered. Thus, there is a significant impact of McDonald's on the national cuisines of the world and vice versa. The use of local products makes food familiar, and the consumer does not perceive it as "foreign". However, the loss of gastronomic identity leads to the rapid loss of "one's own", native, special, where food becomes a powerful weapon of globalization, in which the global absorbs the national. In other words, the use of new products, a new way of cooking, and a new food culture determine the processes of assimilation. Thus, under the pressure of popular food chains, local and national cuisine is being transformed. These changes are due to the availability of advertising and economic strategies in the food industry, a widespread network of economy-class supermarkets and popular media and culinary talk shows that are broadcast around the world, such as "Hell's Kitchen", "Master Chef", "America's Best Chef", "Gordon Ramsey Cooks at Home" and many others. "Today, food is a means of demon-

strating a person's status, relevant content on the Internet and social networks, representing the phenomenon of visual gastronomy" (Sokhan, 2011, p. 61).

No less important are the various applications of household appliances, which significantly change culinary tastes. This includes the use of microwave ovens, pressure cookers, steamers, smokehouses, mixers and many modern kitchen appliances. Therefore, the technologization of all spheres of human life, including ways of cooking - changes the culture of food accordingly. Technical means "interfere with the space of human self-establishment, actively influence the construction of their identity" (Sokhan, 2011, p. 63).

However, the globalization of nutrition is not only due to McDonald's. Many establishments offer different menus, such as Italian, Chinese, Japanese, Mexican and more. Dishes of Japanese cuisine, which is called sushi, became widespread. For the Japanese themselves, food is not just an element of cooking but a significant part of national culture. The globalization of Japanese cuisine is primarily because Japanese cooking is a philosophy. Food must be "healthy" and retain its useful properties. An example of this is the fact that the Japanese are a fairly healthy and long-lived nation, i.e. there is a direct dependence on what they eat. Cooking in Japan is a cult and art; it should not only be delicious but also "please" the eye, sense of smell and even hearing. It is known that Japanese chefs follow the rule of "five colours". That is, for cooking, there used products which have colours – red, black, brown, yellow and green. Secondly, the popularization of Japanese dishes is also because they are rich in vitamins and minerals, as well as lower-calorie foods have not been found by humankind yet. Moreover, this is a fashion trend in the fight against extra pounds. Third, Japanese cuisine is quite interesting for its rules and rituals. For example, the most famous symbol of Japanese cuisine is the use of *hasi* (sticks). This is rooted in the Japanese tradition, as it improves the fine motor skills of the hands, which significantly contributes to the development of children. Fourth, it is serving food. Quite a lot of attention is paid to the decoration and serving of dishes. In this regard, it is popular in Japan to say, "Food, like humans, cannot appear naked in a decent company". The top product in cooking

is rice, which is believed to be the source of Japanese cuisine. The most famous dish in Japanese cuisine is sushi. Small “sausages” of rice, fish, vegetables and more. Sushi is a very convenient dish, especially when you want to eat quickly and heartily. However, the speed here is because, after cooking, sushi does not need to be heated; in fact, this applies to almost all dishes of Japanese cuisine. It is worth noting that the traditional Japanese recipe uses raw fish, but in most countries, the main product – fish is processed, it is salted. In addition to sushi, wasabi and tofu cheese are widely used. Wasabi is a kind of sauce (Japanese horseradish) that has a vegetable origin and green colour. The paste has antibacterial and antifungal properties. Tofu is a protein-rich soybean cheese; it has a neutral taste, which makes it a universal product, as it can acquire different flavours in many dishes. However, globalization flows, in turn, devalue the national Japanese cuisine. For example, new dishes have appeared like sukiyaki – fried meat with soy sauce, sugar and spices; tonkatsu – pork cutlets, etc.

Modern culinary preferences are eclectic in nature, where there is a combination of different flavours and products and different food traditions. This is reflected in food advertising campaigns, which often use geographical or historical images, through which the consumer recognizes familiar (native) products and dishes, as well as discovers new, unusual products and dishes of world cuisine.

## Conclusion

Every culture in the world has its own unique characteristics. The same applies to the national cuisine, which has its own set of products that are specific to this area and meet the tastes of the representatives of the nation. However, the globalization of nutrition has made significant adjustments in the preparation and consumption of food. In almost all countries of the world, the same products are used, a “mix” of different products is popularized, it has become a fashion trend; the process of cooking itself is being technologized. The process of consuming food from a ritual, a ceremony, turns into a quick snack. However, in parallel with the spread of global trends – McDonald’s and sushi world, fast food

world, in Western Europe, including Italy, there exists and develops the slow food movement, whose main goal is to preserve and develop gastronomic identity and national identity. That is, gastronomic identity is a value and heritage of national culture, an intangible heritage that must be preserved and passed on to future generations. In this sense, food is not just the saturation of the body but the culture and wealth of the nation. Gastronomic tourism is a modern way of intercultural communication in the field of cooking. Accordingly, it is a trip, visiting countries and different regions in order to be acquainted with the national cuisine and dishes specific to this region or country, as well as the opportunity to learn the specifics and features of production and to cook with learning opportunities. In accordance with the set goals, it is worth choosing a gastronomic tour, which includes not only tasting dishes but also attending food festivals, holidays and fairs, which significantly colours and enriches intercultural and interethnic communication.

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