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Culture Ingested

On the Indigenization of Phillipine Food

*Savor the word. Swallow the world.*¹

—Doreen G. Fernandez, 1994

Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett:

DOREEN G. FERNANDEZ FIRST WROTE about food around 1969, more than a decade after she married designer Wili Fernandez, who was known as an enthusiastic gourmet. Wili was asked to write a food column for *The Manila Chronicle* “that would make mouths water.”² The couple struck a deal. He would eat and she would write. Doreen began with some trepidation. While she knew how to write, she recalls feeling that she knew nothing about food. A great admirer of M.F.K. Fisher and Waverly Root, she began with restaurant reviews, some of them with Wili, but quickly discovered that food was a key to “the whole cultural package.”³ Over the course of twenty years, she wrote a series of food columns—“Pot-au-feu” for the *Manila Chronicle*, “In Good Taste” for the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, “Foodscape” for *Food Magazine*, and “Pot Luck” for *Mr. and Ms.* An erudite and lapidary writer, Doreen had found a way to bring her passion for Philippine food to a wide public. Writing between experience and memory, Doreen discovered in food an accessible point of entry into Philippine culture and history for her readers. She is considered the first person to have written a serious food column in the Philippines. While food had been a subject of nutritional and domestic interest, Doreen was the first to treat Philippine food as a pleasurable and illuminating experience. She was also the doyenne of food history in the Philippines and world-renowned for her scholarship and her memorable participation at such international conferences as the Oxford Symposium on Food & Cookery and the American Folklore Society, where, in 1990, she delivered a keynote address on the politics of Philippine foodways. Colleagues worldwide were grateful for her generous response to their queries. What we know about Philippine food we learned from her.

Doreen Gamboa Fernandez was born on October 28, 1934, in Manila and grew up in Silay, Negros Occidental. She died on June 24, 2002, 8:20 P.M., while visiting New York City. Doreen studied English literature and history at St. Scholastica’s College, Manila, earning her B.A. in 1954. She received the M.A. (1956) and Ph.D. (1977) in literature from Ateneo de Manila University, where she taught literature, creative writing, composition, and journalism for almost thirty years and chaired the departments of Communication, English, and Interdisciplinary Studies. Doreen specialized in Philippine studies, including literature and literary history, drama and theater, cultural and culinary history. She is remembered by her many students as an inspiring teacher. In 1998, Metrobank Foundation honored her with the Outstanding Teacher Award. Active in the intellectual and cultural life of the Philippines, Doreen was a trustee of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, the Philippine Educational Theater Association, and the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation. She was also vice-president of the Foundation for Worldwide People Power, editor-in-chief of *Philippine Studies*, and member of the Manila Critics Circle. In addition to her scholarly writing on literature and theater, Doreen wrote a monthly column on teaching for *The Philippine Journal of Education* and translated plays.

Doreen treated food as a performing art. Both food and theater require that the writer attend closely to an ephemeral experience. Both challenge the writer to go beyond criticism. Doreen approached both kinds of writing as an educator, rather than as a critic. She refused to waste her words on anything she did not value. Rather than prescribe what should be, she focused on what was before her. She made ephemeral experiences reverberate in the body of the reader, evoked memories, and traced a path from the immediacy of the moment to a vast and varied culinary landscape and history. The result was not only her regular food columns and essays, but also several books. “Culture

Right: *Portrait of Doreen Fernandez.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY STELLA KALAW © 2003



Ingested,” which appears here, was included in the first of two collections of her writings, *Sarap: Essays in Philippine Food* (1988), which also included contributions by Edilberto N. Alegre. *Tikim: Essays on Philippine Food and Culture* followed in 1994. In collaboration with Alegre, Doreen published a series of guides to restaurants in Manila and the provinces. *Kinilaw: A Philippine Cuisine of Freshness* (1991), also with Alegre, celebrated the pristine freshness of seafood dressed with vinegar and flavored in ways that tell you precisely where you are in this vast archipelago of 7,107 islands. *Fruits of the Philippines* (1997) focused on varieties that Domingo A. Madulid has characterized as endangered, vulnerable, rare, or insufficiently known, from bullock heart (custard apple) to the more familiar Pharaoh’s nut (coconut). The most lavishly produced of her books, *Palayok: Philippine Food Through Time, On Site, In the Pot* (2000), takes its inspiration from the Filipino word for clay pot, *palayok*. In Doreen’s writings, the Philippines emerge as an edible landscape of extraordinary range. Doreen was attuned to its myriad sensory cues. For her, the palate was a canvas on which were painted the distinctively local and deeply historical contours of that landscape.

For Doreen, food was a mirror that Filipinos could hold up to themselves. It offered an opportunity for self-knowledge that was grounded in immediate experience, embodied knowledge, and personal and collective memory. Reflecting on her own work, she said, “One writes on and with the readers’ palates.”⁴ One tries to get “the reader to see through the words to the experience.”⁵ Doreen literally made sense of food. Her goal was to create sensory reverberations in the reader that would trigger memories and spark historical insights. To that end, she turned to fishermen and farmers, vendors and cooks. They were her living archives of culinary knowledge. Foodways were her living archeology of sedimented practices. Her task was to excavate a millennium of Filipino culinary culture.

Thankfully, Doreen was no purist. To be considered Filipino, culinary practices did not need to be Filipino by origin. Nor did they need to preserve some original or authentic form. Quite the contrary. Filipino is as Filipino does. The question is not “What is Filipino food?” but “How does food *become* Filipino?” Aware of more than eighty ethno-linguistic groups in the Philippines, many of them on remote islands, and seven hundred years of colonization, Doreen argued that food becomes Filipino at its destination, whatever its source. The issue is less about indigenous cuisines and more about processes of indigenization. She cited *patis*, a thin fermented fish sauce that some Filipinos sprinkle even on foreign dishes or carry with them

when they travel to “tame’ the alien.”⁶ Doreen was a mobile culinary observer, attuned to new contexts and the little social dramas that erupt when customs officials detect *bagoong*, a paste of salted and fermented fish or shellfish, in the luggage of Filipinos returning to the United States or when neighbors complain of alien smells.⁷

To illuminate these processes, Doreen traveled throughout the Philippines and explored the gamut of food cultures to be found not only in villages, but also in cities. She wrote not only about restaurants, but also about food on the streets, at construction sites, in factories, schools, and offices, in markets and churchyards, and at transportation hubs. She explored food terminology in the various languages of the Philippines, the variety of local and imported ingredients, the full range of cooking processes, flavor principles, social practices, and meanings. The result is a picture of Philippine cuisine as dynamic, syncretic, and emergent. “Kinilaw is like jazz—constantly improvised,” Doreen declared.⁸ While to speak of Philippine foodways or cuisine of the Philippines is to suggest a single, singular, or national cuisine, Doreen was more interested in the culinary diversity that has developed there in the context of shared history and territory. Culinary cultures make that history edible. By the power of her luminous example, Doreen G. Fernandez has inspired future generations to make sense of that history.

NOTES

1. Doreen Fernandez, *Tikim: Essays on Philippine Food and Culture* (Pasig, Metro Manila, Philippines: Anvil Publishing, 1994), xi.
2. Fernandez, *Tikim*, ix.
3. Doreen Fernandez, *Fruits of the Philippines* (Makati City, Philippines: Bookmark, 1997), iv.
4. Fernandez, *Tikim*, xi.
5. *Ibid.*, xii.
6. Fernandez, “Salty and Sour, Bitter and Sweet: Philippine Flavorings,” *Tikim*, 63.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Edilberto N. Alegre and Doreen G. Fernandez, *Kinilaw: A Philippine Cuisine of Freshness* (Makati, Metro Manila: Bookmark, 1991), 4.

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Culture Ingested: Notes on the Indigenization of Philippine Food

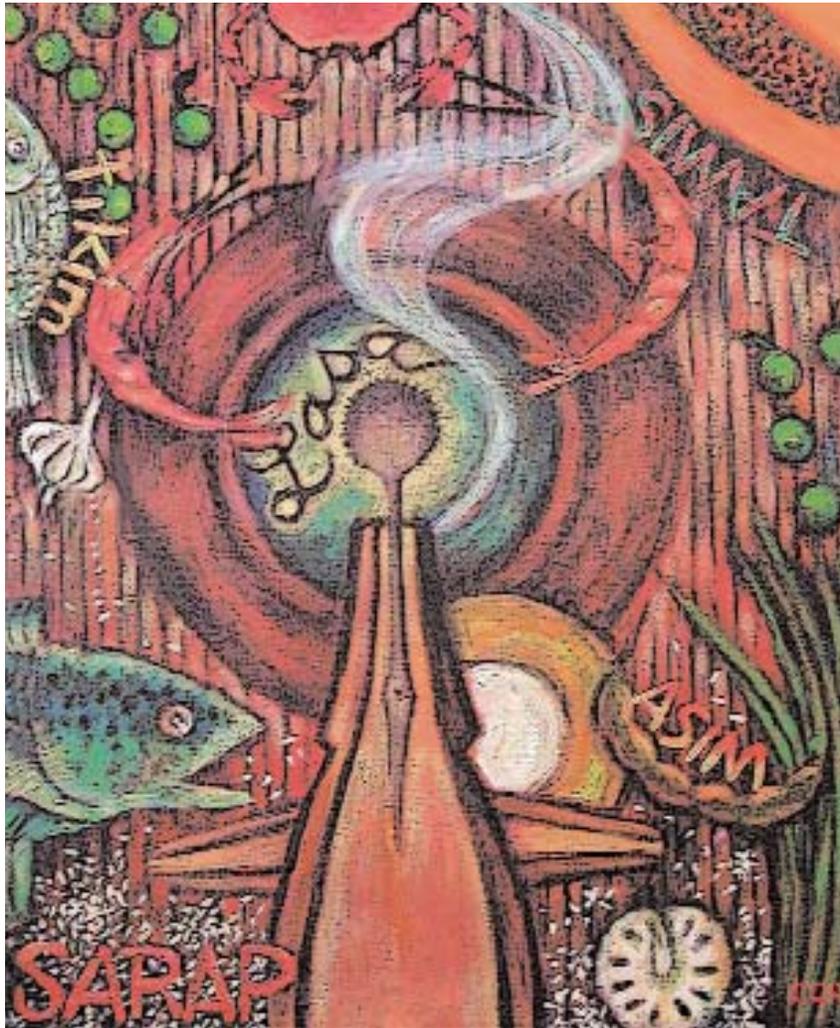
IN SPITE OF HIS DAILY PARTICIPATION in its preparation and consumption, the Filipino is often hard put to say just what Philippine food is. In his home and restaurant menus are found dishes with vernacular names like *laing* and *pak-lay*, Spanish names like *embutido* and *mechado*, Chinese names like *tokwa* and *bihon*, and even Chinese food with Spanish names, like *camaron rebozado dorado con jamon*—all companionably coexisting.

The reason for the confusion is that Philippine cuisine, dynamic as any live and growing phase of culture, has changed through history, absorbing influences, indigenizing, adjusting to new technology and tastes, and thus evolving.

Filipino food today as shaped by Philippine history and society consists of a Malay matrix, in which melded influences from China and India (through trade), Arabia (through trade and Islamization), Spain and America (through colonization), and more recently the rest of the world (through global communication).¹ A special path to the understanding of what Philippine food is can be taken by examining the process of indigenization which brought in, adapted and then subsumed foreign influences into the culture.

"Eating," Naomichi Ishige, a Japanese anthropologist, has said, "is the act of ingesting the environment."² It is quite certainly also ingesting culture, since among the most visible, most discernible and most permanent traces left by foreign cultures on Philippine life is food that is now part of the everyday, and often not recognized as foreign, so thoroughly has it been absorbed into the native lifestyle.

This particular aspect of cultural borrowing and change bears investigation; not only are the results of immediate and gut-level concern to every Filipino, but the process is one in which not only a few, but the greater majority of Filipinos, participated. The process of borrowing went on in innumerable Philippine households through many years. It was a conscious and yet unconscious cultural reaction, in that borrowers knew that they were cooking foreign dishes while making necessary adaptations, but were not aware that they were transforming the dish and making it their own. *Pancit*, for example, from a Chinese noodle dish, is now the signature of many a town or region (*pancit* Malabon, *pancit* Marilao, *pancit habhab* of Lucban), and of many an individual (*pancit ni Aling Nena*). That certainly shows that both evolution and creation have been involved.



Christina Quisumbing Ramilo,
 “Patikim,” 2002. Digital Image.

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

The process seems to start with a foreign dish in its original form, brought in by foreigners (Chinese traders, Spanish missionaries). It is then taught to a native cook, who naturally adapts it to the tastes he knows and the ingredients he can get, thus both borrowing and adapting. Eventually, he improvises on it, thus creating a new dish that in time becomes so entrenched in the native cuisine and lifestyle that its origins are practically forgotten. That is indigenization, and in the Philippines the process starts with a foreign element and ends with a dish that can truly be called part of Philippine cuisine.

METHODOLOGY

The principal difficulty in this investigation is methodology. The evidence for this research is generally consumed, digested and transformed—and thus no longer available in archives, or for carbon dating. Yet in a way one can say that the evidence is always being manufactured and discovered anew, every day, in every meal in every home. Still, the work of one cook is not hard and fast evidence, and is fraught with variables and at best can only indicate a pattern.

Secondly, to conventional research methods like documenting and comparing variants, recording changes and seeking reasons for them, one must add critical and analytical tasting—a process difficult to standardize and imprison in formulae. For this preliminary exploration, I have used a method that combines examination of the dish as done in the original culture and as extant in Filipino cooking, and then analysis to determine the culture change or pattern discernible from this.

NAMES

How then does one recognize these indigenized dishes on the Philippine table? Firstly by their names, since these were often borrowed along with the dish. *Siopao*, for example, is a Hokkien borrowing that suggests the cooking process, steaming, *pao* being steamed bread. *Pancit*, which comes from the Hokkien *pian + e + sit* is still recognizably Chinese, although originally it did not necessarily mean a noodle dish. Gloria Chan-Yap tells us that it literally means “something that is conveniently cooked” and indicates the

frying process. Since noodles are easy to prepare by frying, the word often, but not necessarily, means noodles. *Pesa* in Hokkien simply means “plain boiled” and it is used only in reference to the cooking of fish, the complete term in Hokkien being *peq + sa + hi*, the last morpheme meaning ‘fish.’” Chan-Yap cites this as an example of semantic “widening” since in Tagalog *pesa* in isolation does mean fish, but can mean “boiled” when one says *pesang manok*. However, the point remains: the names indicate the origin.³

Adobo is the noun derived from *adobado*, the name of a stewed meat dish in Mexico, from where Carmen Guerrero-Nakpil says the Philippine *adobo* comes.⁴ In Spain, however, *adobo* is a pickling sauce, made by cooking together olive oil, vinegar, garlic, thyme, laurel, oregano, paprika and salt. The Filipino has thus given the name *adobo* to a particular dish of chicken or pork-and-chicken, and derived from it an adjective to describe other foods using the same or a similar cooking process (*adobong pusit*). The term *adobado* has moved from the dish to the process of stewing in a spiced or flavored broth (e.g., “*Ang itik sa Angono’y adobado na bago prituhin*”),⁵ thus using the basic meaning—to cook in a pickling sauce. And indeed Philippine *adobo* is *adobado*, but in condiments chosen by the native taste: vinegar and garlic, bayleaf and peppercorns, and more recently soy sauce, the Chinese contribution.

Some borrowings from Spanish are literal and do not undergo semantic shifts like the above: *cocido*, *salpicon*, *croquetas*. Some are only portions of the original name, e.g. *carne mechada* (meat with a *lardoon*) has become *mechado*; *gallina rellenada* has become *relleno*, *relleno* in Spanish being the forcemeat with which one stuffs the chicken. Especially interesting cases are dishes like *pescado en salsa agrio-dulce* and *morisqueta tostada*, which in spite of their Spanish names are really Chinese. These are *panciteria* dishes, which in the Spanish period were translated into Spanish for printing on menus. The dishes entered the native kitchen from the *panciteria* and so retain the Spanish names. Some of these menus survive in small *panciterias*, and although the years have corrupted the spelling in amusing ways, the Spanish words cloak a Chinese dish which most Filipinos recognize as Chinese, but now consider Filipino.

Semantic analysis of the names of food would thus reveal origin, something of the nature of the change and also further information. For example, the Chan-Yap study finds that loanwords are fewest in the category of rice products and fowl, and suggests that this may be because both rice and fowl had long been food sources for Filipinos, who “already had in their possession the culinary words appropriate for describing referents” in these categories. On the

other hand, the fact that there are many loanwords for meat (*goto*, *kamto*, *kasim*, *paykot*, *liempo*) suggests that the Tagalog people learned the habit of eating some meat cuts, especially pork, from the Hokkien speakers and the habit of eating beef from the Spanish, since many of the terms for beef are Spanish (*punta y pecho*, *cadera*, *lomo*, *solomillo*).⁶

INGREDIENTS

The ingredients contained in the original dish, and those in the local edition, are also clues to the process of indigenization. Noodles in Chinese cuisine, for example, are generally cooked with meat and vegetables to flavor the noodles. Filipino *pancit* has local meats and vegetables—and a few other things not found in Chinese cooking at all. *Pancit* Malabon, being the signature noodle of a fishing town, has squid and oysters and salted eggs, which individually may conceivably be found in a Chinese dish, but not in that combination. *Pancit* Marilao has crumbled *okoy* of rice flour, since its home base, Bulacan, is rice-growing country; *pancit palabok* has flaked *tinapa* and crumbled *chicharron*. The *tinapa* is from the native cuisine (smoking being one of the ways of preserving food in the days before refrigeration), and *chicharron* is from the Spanish, but they are combined in a dish of Chinese origin. A special example of adaptation through ingredients is *pancit buko*, in which flour noodles are replaced by strips of young coconut cut and treated like noodles.

Bringhe would also be an example of a cultural change made through the use of ingredients from the Philippine landscape. *Paella* is generally made in Spain with chicken or rabbit, with rice and seasoning, especially saffron. *Bringhe* does use chicken, but the rice is *malagkit* and the sauce is coconut milk, to which is added a bark called *ange*, which turns the rice green instead of saffron yellow. *Paella* was created from the Spanish country landscape—the rabbit scampering by, the chicken bought from a farmer, the saffron which is the most expensive spice in the world and grows in Spain. Eating *paella*, therefore, is ingesting the Spanish landscape. Eating *bringhe*, however, is ingesting the Philippine landscape—the chicken running around on the farm, the coconut from a nearby tree, and the *malagkit* for fiesta cakes. This is a clear example of indigenization through a change of substance, spirit and name.

THE COOKING PROCESS

This is probably the anvil in which many a cultural change is fired and given a Philippine shape. We have already mentioned *adobo*, in which stewing with spices became stewing

in vinegar, garlic, pepper and bay leaf, in the process making sure that the dish would keep long without need of refrigeration and endowing it with that slight sourness that is a favored Philippine flavor.

Pag-gigisa, or sautéing, is a technique foreign to the indigenous cuisine, which is mostly boiled, roasted, or steamed (*halabos*). It may have been learned from the Chinese stir-frying, in which food cut up in small pieces is moved quickly around in a little oil/lard. But certainly most of it was learned from the Spanish (the terms *gisa/gisado*, derived from the Spanish *guisado*, or cooked dish, indicate that), who sauté in olive oil with perhaps an onion and a garlic clove.

The Filipino sautéing, however, has become set into a pattern: heat the oil; sauté the garlic till golden brown; add the onions and sauté till soft and transparent; add the sliced tomatoes and sauté till cooked; and then add *sahog* (the principal flavoring ingredients, usually shrimps and/or pork)—and then add whatever else is being cooked, like beans for *ginisang sitaw*. Through the years it has become a standard formula, and many cooks say that the secret of good cooking is in the pace and contents of the *gisado*. One must know exactly when the next item should be added, and it is also said of good cooks that their *pag-gigisa* can make any lowly vegetable or leftover taste good.

What we have here is a particular indigenizing process discovered and set through the years. The Filipino *gisado* has to have that garlic, onion, tomato and *sahog* base, and this preliminary process can Filipinize anything—cauliflower, leftover fish, scrambled eggs, noodles, *paella* (restaurateur and chef Leny Guerrero says that is the secret of her *paella*), and even canned mackerel from Japan (colloquially called *sardinas*). The *sahog* may be optional, but not the garlic, onion and tomato; while in Spanish cuisine a *guisado* may have one or two of the above, but not usually all three. The Filipino *gisado* is indeed an indigenizing process all by itself.

FLAVORING

If the *gisado* tunes the food to Filipino tastes, even more so do the dipping sauces called *sawsawan* and the standard table sauces like *bagoong* and *patis*. *Bagoong* and *patis* are used not only to salt food, but also to give the food an acceptable Filipino taste. Tales have been told of Filipino travellers and honeymooners venturing into alien cuisines, armed with bottles of *patis*. No matter how strange or different the food, the *patis* gives it Filipino flavor, so that the diner's culture-bound taste buds can relate to it.

What really adjusts the food to the individual and his learned food values, and adapts it to the particular regional individual culture of the diner, is the *sawsawan*. Chinese food does not have this galaxy of flavor-adjusters: vinegar and garlic; *kalamansi*; soy sauce, *patis* and garlic; *bagoong*, tomatoes and onions; green mango or *kamyas* with tomatoes and onions; *chicharron*, *bagoong* and coriander leaf; *bagoong* Balayan and *kalamansi*; *sinamak*—vinegar in which chilis, garlic and pepper are marinated; native pearl onions (*sibuyas Tagalog*) and vinegar (*sukang Iloco*); miso (soy bean cake) sautéed in garlic, onions and tomatoes; sliced fresh tomatoes (for fish); sliced *paho* (tiny, tart mangoes); crushed tamarind, etc. etc.—and now, of course, ketchup and Worcestershire sauce as well.

What does this mean, and why is the Filipino diner allowed to tamper with his food in such profligate, extravagant ways? When he does, the chef in the kitchen will not threaten murder or suicide, because it is understood that the diner can take part in the preparation of the dish by using his *sawsawan*. I read this as evidence of the sense of community of the Filipino, the bond between all cooks and their clients, all the backstage crew and the guys onstage, the farmer and the neighbors and relatives who form his support network. It is like plowing a field or moving a house *bayanihan* style; it is like a whole town staging a *komedya*, when even the director is not the absolute dictator, *hermanos* and elders having a large say in product and process.

The *sawsawan* is itself another indigenizing process. The Filipino conquers the foreign taste and culture with an army of *sawsawan*, insists on participation and involvement, accepts nothing passively, but takes active part in the creation of his food. The *sawsawan* is not dish-specific, not assigned to particular recipes, although there are some traditional partners. This is indeed an arsenal with which to meet and subdue the foreign invader, and render him/it acceptable to the native culture. It indicates an ethos completely different from that prevailing in France, where the chef is the master creator and has sole authority over the dish. For the diner to tamper with it is discourtesy and insult. In the Philippine experience, the diner cooperates and participates, and the creation is communal. The *sawsawan* thus transforms not only the taste, but also the relationship behind the experience.

SOCIAL POSITION

Still another element that must be examined in the process of indigenization is the social position given the dish in the cross-cultural transfer. In China, for example, *siomai* and

sicpao are foods of everyday, eaten at breakfast, or at tea-time, not generally at festivals or for main meals. Where do we find them in the Philippine menu? At merienda, in homes, schools, the streets; not usually at principal or festive meals either. These foods, as well as most of Chinese cuisine, entered Philippine culture at “ground-level,” at the level of everyday food, and found their final place there, among the *kakanin* of the native culture. Since the ingredients and the nature of these dishes were found compatible with the budget of that level, and with the other accompaniments (such as tea, coffee and *salabat*), the social rank in which indigenization ensconced it in Philippine cuisine was equivalent to that which it held in China. The porridge (*lugaw*) with chicken, fish or pork of Chinese breakfasts and late-night suppers is now the *arroz caldo* (note the change of name and language) and *goto* of Philippine meriendas and late-night snacks. The everyday noodles of China are also ordinary in the Philippines—*mami*, *lomi*, *pancit bihon*—although with special ingredients they can become fiesta food, just as there are special noodles in China.

The Spanish food absorbed into the culture, however, has acquired a high social position and is located in the level of special, or festive food. *Cocido*, in Spain, is a simple dish in which one finds a meat (beef or lamb) and a piece each of blood sausage (*morcilla*), salt pork (*tocino*), and ham—items found hanging in almost every Spanish kitchen—cooked with *garbanzos* and a bit of cabbage. It is daily food, ordinary, a pot thrown together, a one-dish meal that is not special.

In the Philippines, however, since the ham and sausages are rare in the native kitchen and, being imported, are expensive, the dish has ascended the social ladder to become special food, for Christmases and family reunions. When set against the background of the indigenous fish-and-vegetable cuisine, this is indeed a rare and expensive dish. Moreover, coming from the alien, dominant culture, it acquires a cachet of “class” and a position in the cuisine of the elite. It would, quite simply, be beyond the ordinary man’s budget.

Paella has had an even more noticeable change in social position. Originally a dish cooked in the field in Spain, the *paellera* set on stones over a wood fire, the ingredients whatever could be conveniently found in the field (a rabbit, a chicken), in the Philippines it has become the prime fiesta food. Because it is Spanish and special, it is usually enriched with pork, chicken, crabs, clams, prawns and Spanish sausages (rare then, expensive now). The wine added to it in Spain is generally table wine, which is drunk like water, while cooking with wine in the Philippines means adding something rarefied and expensive. Thus the social transfor-

mation of *paella* has much to say about the original (colonizer) and receiving (colonized) cultures, as well as about colonization and the process of culture change.

We thus note that the Chinese food now found in homes, *merenderos*, school cafeterias, cheap restaurants and the streets came in from traders and not from conquerors. The food of the conquerors, because of both the source and the sheer cost, can now be found on fiesta tables, on the dining tables of the elite, and in expensive restaurants, where it is billed as Spanish and not Filipino food. The Nielson Tower restaurant in Makati offers this “ante-bellum Philippine food” in a menu written in Spanish.

THE NATIVE CUISINE

Having examined the names, ingredients, cooking methods, means for flavor adjustment and social position of foreign food borrowed, adapted and indigenized by the Filipino, let us now take a look at the indigenous cuisine. This was the standard for indigenization—taking the process to mean that by which the foreign food is made compatible with the native cuisine.

If the foreign-influenced food in the culture has Chinese, Spanish, Mexican and, in Mindanao, Arab and Indian roots, it would follow that the indigenous cuisine would be all the rest that is in the food lexicon. Here would belong the sour-stewed (*sinigang*, *paksiw*), steamed (*pinasingaw*, *halabos*), roasted (*inihaw*) and boiled (*nilaga*)—the terminology, we note, exists in the vernacular—dishes we still have in the present. The ingredients for these are culled from the landscape: fish and shellfish from the seas, rivers, brooks, streams, flooded rice fields; the flesh of domesticated animals like pig and chicken and yes, dog and carabao, and that of undomesticated (wild) animals like *usa* (deer), *baboy dame* (wild boar), *musang* (wildcat), *bayawak* (iguana), *paniqui* (fruit bat); other edible creatures like *kamaru* (mole cricket), *salagubang* (June beetle) and locusts; and of course the leaves, bulbs, tendrils, seeds and fruits of the ever-green Philippine landscape.

The cooking methods probably evolved from the freshness, proximity and availability of the ingredients. Native wisdom shows that the best way to treat these is to cook them very little, or not at all (*kinilaw*). The cuisine did not evolve sauces because there was no need to disguise flavors going bad or slightly off (one function of sauces and spices in Europe). Sour cooking, smoking and pickling evolved because there was need to preserve without refrigeration.

This native cuisine is also subject to the flavoring provided by sauces like *patis* and *bagoong*, and the *sawsawan*,

because this is where the communal creation of food started, in the agricultural lifestyle of the tribal communities of the pre-Hispanic Filipino. In this cuisine are expressed the flavors of the native tongue and taste. It is to this standard that the foreign foods are compared, and to which they are adjusted in budget, taste and economic level. This is quite naturally the cuisine in the heartland of the Filipino, the one he longs for when he is away, the one he finds comforting. It is part of his ethos.

This is a cuisine linked and allied to those of the rest of Southeast Asia. With the rest, it shares rice as a staple food—rice treated not only as cereal, but as background for all other tastes, and thus determinant of other tastes—rice as ritual food, rice not just as extender but as highly valued taste and aroma. With the rest it also shares the extensive and varied uses of coconut—water, flesh, milk, heart of palm. There is an easily perceptible similarity between *sinigang* and all the sour broths of the region, like the Thai *tomyam*. And there is a common use of fermented sauces, like *bagoong* (*trassi* in Indonesia, *blachan* in Malaysia, *kapi* in Thailand, *main tom* in Vietnam) and *patis* (*nam pla* in Thailand, *nuoc main* in Vietnam, *petis* in Indonesia).

This native cuisine is, amazingly, hardly changed in nature or spirit. *Simigang* is still soured with sour fruits and leaves from the Philippine landscape. It is still as flexible, friendly to any kind of fish, meat or vegetable, adjustable to any kind of budget or circumstance. What has become available to *sinigang*, however, is new technology. Sour broth from tamarind can now be had in an instant “add-water-only” package, which Filipinos consider good for emergencies and for Filipinos in the U.S., but which housewives here scorn to use because the fresh ingredients are available and of better value even if less convenient.

Paksiw and *inihaw* are still cooked in the same way, even though the need for coal fires and preservation in vinegar is no longer present in houses with gas and electric stoves, and refrigerators. When the Filipino entertains family or intimate friends, or when he wants to eat in relaxed familiarity—with his hands—he returns to this native cuisine and tries to have it in as pristine a form as possible. Fish are caught in ponds or pens and roasted on the spot; restaurants have opened on the Bicutan bayshore and feature lake fish; milkfish is stuffed with onions and tomatoes and roasted over coals in the yard, with the cook fanning away.

The native cuisine proved itself strong and resistant to “fraternization” with the foreign invaders. The original dishes have retained their ingredients, cooking methods and spirit. Foreign dishes have been Filipinized, but Philippine dishes have not been Sinicized or Hispanized. The cultural

interaction has been one of borrowing whole dishes, then adapting and indigenizing them, rather than borrowing elements to impose on native dishes. The result is a cuisine enriched rather than bastardized, its integrity kept, its dynamism that of judicious response to change.

Could this perhaps serve as an analogue with which to understand indigenization in language, in theatre and in other areas of Philippine culture? Surely the pattern cannot be identical in all areas. Perhaps in some the borrowed elements may have overwhelmed the native forces. But it is important to realize that in food, the most popular form of popular culture, created by the mass in their daily activity, in an act of unconscious transformation and creation, this is what happened.

The native culture stood firm and “kept the faith,” borrowing only technology (freezers, pressure cookers, instant flavorings) when necessary, but not changing in essence. Foreign culture was tried, examined, adjusted and then used as the base for creation within the Philippine lifestyle. The fact that borrowed Spanish culture came to have a high place in social estimation and regard is eloquent about colonization and the attitudes it engenders in the colonized. It also suggests that the colonial attitude (mentality) may not have come about only because of conquest but because of such a pragmatic dimension as cost, budget, economics. (Chinese food is definitely within reach; the ingredients of Spanish food are not.) Only the native elite, not the masses, could afford the colonizer’s lifestyle, and so the former became colonized not only by the desire to emulate prestige and class, but through their wealth.

These preliminary notes on the indigenization of food suggest further research: on the linguistic factor, the names not only of food, but of cooking implements and processes; and on the nature of all the culinary sources, and the change in them through indigenization. What, for example, do the *carajay*, *sianse* and *sinaing* indicate about native and adapted food? The transformation of the Cantonese breakfast, rice porridge, into the *goto* and *arroz caldo* of the Philippine merienda—what does it say?

Research should also be extended to such related subjects as the service of food, food etiquette and ways, the non-nutritional functions of food (ritual, medicinal, social), and the further functions of food as language (what are all the many messages it bears?).

We have suggested how eating is the ingestion of culture. Deeper exploration is called for. When the Filipino adapted *paella* and *pancit*, *pag-gigisa* and pressure-cooking, what effect did that have on him, on his culinary culture and on the future of the native culture?

Food, obviously, is not only for eating. ☺

NOTES

1. cf. Doreen G. Fernandez, "Food and the Filipino," in *Philippine World-View*, Virgilio G. Enriquez, ed. (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1986), pp. 20–44; and "Why Sinigang?" in *The Culinary Culture of the Philippines*, Gilda Cordero-Fernando, ed. (Manila: Bancom Audiovision Corporation, 1976), pp. 24–29.
2. Naomichi Ishige, "What is Dietary Culture?" *Ajicomunications*, No. 9, March–April 1981, pp. 1–5.
3. Gloria Chan-Yap, "Hokkien Chinese Influence on Tagalog Cookery," *Philippine Studies*, Vol. 24, Third Quarter 1976, 288–302.
4. Carmen Guerrero Nakpil, "Filipino Food," in *A Question of Identity* (Manila: Vessel Books, 1973), p.19.
5. "Duck cooked the Angono way is stewed in a pickling liquid before frying."
6. Chan-Yap, 'Hokkien Chinese Influence.'

GLOSSARY

Achara: pickled fruits or vegetables
Adobo: pork and/or chicken stewed in vinegar, garlic, bay leaves and peppercorns
Adobong pusit: squid cooked adobo style
Adobo sa gata: adobo with coconut milk
Alac/Alak: [arrack] generic term for alcoholic drink of any kind
Alalay: carefulness in doing something; care in holding or carrying something; colloquially, an aide or assistant
Alamang: tiny shrimps, often made into a salty paste called *bagoong*
Alibangbang: a small stocky tree, the young leaves of which are used in souring or flavoring meat or fish
Almud: a dry measure
Alugh ate: a succulent, herbaceous vine called "Malabar Night Shade" or Ceylon Spinach
Ampalaya: (*Momordica Balsamina*) bitter gourd; a bitter melon
Ampaw-pinipig: cakes made of dried *pinipig* (pounded rice grains)
Ange: bark used for flavoring rice which colors it green
Anghang: pepperiness; chili hotness in food; spiciness
Angi: the smell of burning rice
Angkak: a specially treated cereal used for seasoning, particularly for fish and shrimps
Apahap: silver sea bass
Apan-apan: [Ilongo] vegetables cooked with *bagoong*
Arroz caldo: chicken and rice gruel flavored with ginger
Arroz a la Valenciana: rice and chicken dish
Ayungin: silver perch
Babaylan: native high priest
Baboy damo: wild boar; wild pig
Bagoong: small fish or shrimps preserved in brine, usually used as sauce
Bagoong Balayan: a *bagoong* made of small fish, for which the town of Balayan, Batangas is known
Bahaque: [bahag] loincloth; g-string; breechcloth
Bahoc: [bahog] eating rice with broth; the act of mixing broth or other liquid with cooked rice

Balut: fertilized ducks' eggs that have already developed embryos and are boiled and eaten with salt
Banak: [banac] mullet
Bangus/Bangros: [Chanos-Chanos] milkfish
Batuan: a sour fruit about 2 cm. in diameter, with an acidic, juicy, edible pulp around a large seed; also used for souring broth
Bayanihan: cooperative endeavor or labor, especially in a community project
Bayawak: iguana; a big lizard
Baye-bahe: Ilongo rice cake
Bayo: to pound rice with pestle and mortar
Bibingka: a rice cake cooked with fire under and over it
Bigas: unhusked and milled rice; hulled rice grains
Bihon: rice noodles
Biko: a cake of sweetened glutinous rice (*malagkit*) cooked in coconut milk (*gata*) and sometimes embellished with *latik* (toasted coconut)
Bilo-bilo: small steamed rice cakes; small balls of dough made from glutinous rice, used especially in cooking *ginatan*
Binagoongang baboy: pork cooked in *bagoong*
Binakol: a boiled chicken dish formerly cooked in a length of bamboo or in a coconut, usually with strips of young coconut
Bisita: visitor; outsider making a professional visit or call
Biya: the common name for all species of goby (Family *Gobiidae*)
Biyaya na lupa: the earth's bounty
Blachan: Malaysian shrimp paste similar to *bagoong*
Borrachos: small Spanish cakes soaked in wine
Brazo: a dessert of Spanish origin; a roll of meringue filled with a butter sauce
Brazo de la Reina: the above, but filled or sprinkled with nuts
Bringhe: native dish derived from Spanish *paella*, of rice, chicken and coconut milk
Broas: [bruas] ladyfingers
Bugas: Visayan term for rice
Buko: young coconut fruit
Buro: fish or meat preserved in brine or salt; pickled green fruits; fish or shrimp fermented with rice
Burong dalag: fermented mudfish
Busa: to toast or cook without lard
Caban: [kaban] a dry measure equivalent to 75 liters or 25 gantas
Cadera: sirloin; side of beef
Callos: Sp. tripe
Camaron rebozado dorado con hamon: batter-fried shrimp with a piece of ham
Camote: sweet potato
Capiz: [kapis] placuna shell; commonly used in making lampshades and window panes. (The sea creature within is edible.)
Carajay: [karahay] large frying pan. Syn. *kawali*
Carne mechada: [Spanish] a dish of beef with lardoons
Carta: letter

- Castillo:** a mounted “castle” of pastry, often made of glazed cream puffs
- Cavaravan:** liquor made from the honey of bees
- Chicharron:** [sitsaron] crisp, fried pork rind; cracklings
- Chorizo de Bilbao:** Sp. sausage usually used in such dishes as *paella*, *cocido*, *puchero*
- Chupa:** smallest standard measure for rice
- Cocido:** [kusido] Spanish stew of meat, vegetables and chickpeas
- Compadrazgo:** godfather system
- Copcop:** [kupkop] act of keeping or protecting someone needing help or care, as a hen shelters chicks under her wings
- Cronicas:** histories or reports of missionary work
- Croquetas:** croquettes
- Dacot:** [dakot] a handful of rice; amount or quantity taken in one scoop
- Dacotan:** [dakutan] to scoop up handfuls of rice
- Dahong bawang:** garlic leaves used as green vegetable or made into pickles
- Daing:** fish split longitudinally down the back, salted and dried in the sun
- Dalag:** a species of fresh-water mudfish; murrel
- Dampalit:** an asteraceous maritime shrub called “sapphire,” usually pickled
- Dapog:** transplanting rice seedlings; fire in an open space in which firewood is used
- Darac:** husk left after the rice is milled; powdered or pulverized rice bran
- Dayami:** rice straw
- Dedicatoria:** dedication, e.g. in a book
- Dedos:** pili candy wrapped in *lumpia* wrapper
- Diccionario:** Sp. dictionary
- Dilaw:** a ginger-like plant called turmeric, the root of which is used as condiment
- Dinuguan:** a dish of animal entrails and blood, seasoned with vinegar, garlic, salt, etc.
- Dulang:** a kind of low dining table
- Embutido:** Sp. a meat roll
- Ensaymada:** [ensaymada] Sp. sweet roll, usually buttered, dusted with sugar and sometimes with cheese
- Ensalada:** Sp. salad
- Entablado:** stage; speaker’s platform or stand
- Espasol:** [ispasol] a sweetmeat made from the flour of glutinous rice (*malagkit*)
- Fanega:** Spanish rice measure
- Gabang:** a unit of dry measure
- Gabi:** a species of tuber also called “taro”
- Gachas:** watery mass; porridge, mash, pap
- Galantina:** stuffed chicken, sliced and served cold
- Galapong:** rice flour
- Gallina rellenada:** deboned stuffed chicken
- Galunggong:** round scad
- Garbanzos:** [grabanzos; garabansos] chick-pea
- Gala:** the juice squeezed from grated coconut meat; coconut milk
- Gilic:** [gilik] powdery substance covering husks of rice, straw and blades of some grasses, which usually causes irritation or itchiness on the skin
- Ginataang gulay:** vegetables cooked in or with coconut milk
- Ginisang ampalaya:** sautéed bitter gourd
- Ginisang sitaw:** sautéed stringbeans
- Gisa/Gisado:** derived from Spanish *guisar*, to sauté; the act or manner of sautéing
- Golosinas:** little cookies, pastries, sweetmeats
- Goto:** rice porridge with tripe
- Gulay:** plant grown for food; green vegetables
- Habhab:** to eat from a container
- Halabos:** steamed
- Halabos na hipon:** steamed shrimps
- Halo-halo:** [halu-halo] refreshment made up of a mixture of beans, corn, jackfruit, banana slices, jelly, etc. with sugar, milk, shaved ice or ice cream
- Helado:** frozen; something stored on ice
- Hermano:** literally, brother; also, the sponsor of a fiesta
- Hindi ka naman bisita:** “You are not a guest”
- Hindi ibang tao:** one of us
- Hipon sa gala:** shrimp cooked in or with coconut milk
- Hito:** fresh-water catfish
- Ibang tao:** idiom for “outsider”
- Igud:** coconut robber crab
- Ilustrado:** a learned, educated, cultured man
- Indio:** name given by the Spanish colonizers to the native of the Philippines
- Inihaw:** broiled; roasted
- Inihaw na tulingan:** broiled big-eyed tuna
- Inihaw sa uling:** broiled over charcoal
- Jamon China:** Chinese ham
- Kakang gala:** thick coconut milk, usually the first juice extracted from grated coconut meat. Syn. *unang gata*
- Kakanin:** sweetmeats; tidbits
- Kalabasa:** squash plant; the fleshy fruit of this plant eaten as vegetable
- Kalabaw:** carabao; with reference to mango, the largest variety
- Kalamansi:** a spiny citrus tree that bears small spherical acidic fruit, used in seasoning food and for making a juice preparation like lemonade
- Kamaro/Kamaru:** mole cricket
- Kamayan:** act of eating with bare hands, often referring to a group of persons eating together
- Kamias:** [kamyas] a small tree, the fruits of which are acidic, edible and commonly used as condiment in cooking native stew (*sinigang*)
- Kamoteng kahoy:** cassava; manioc, a tropical plant with edible starchy roots
- Kamto:** beef flank meat; dish of flank meat stewed with radish
- Kanduli:** [candoli] sea catfish (Family *Ariidae*)
- Kanin/Canin:** cooked or boiled rice. Syn. *sinaing*

Kaong: sugar palm tree; the fruit of this palm, the seeds of which are usually made into sweetmeats

Kari-kari/Kare-kare: a stew of oxtail, calf's foot and/or tripe, with vegetables and the broth slightly thickened with ground rice and peanuts

Kaserola: casserole; saucepan; stewpan

Kasim: sourish taste as of food beginning to have slight fermentation

Kasubha: a plant, the dried stigmas of which are used for coloring and flavoring food; a kind of saffron

Katuray: a semi-wild tree the white flowers of which are eaten raw or steamed; the young pods are also edible

Kekiam: [kikyam] Chinese meat roll

Kilawin/Kinilaw: a dish similar to ceviche, made by marinating uncooked fish or shrimps in vinegar and seasoning with salt, black pepper, etc., e.g. *kilawing dilis*, *hipon*, *tanguingue* (*sa gata*: with coconut milk)

Kinchay: Chinese celery

Kinunot na paing: (baby) shark cooked in coconut milk

Kiping: edible, bright-colored leaf-shaped thin wafers used as decoration at the Lucban and other Quezon Maytime fiestas

Komedya: a folk drama form also called Moro-Moro

Kulitis: [kolitis/colitis] an edible common weed; amaranth (*Amaranthus viridis* Linn.); also called native spinach

Kutsinta: a kind of native cake made of rice flour, similar to puto but more sticky and somewhat gelatinous

Laing: Bicol dish made of the stalks and leaves of *gabi* (taro plant) cooked in coconut milk and chilis

Lambanog: native wine distilled from coconut palm juice

Langkawas: an aromatic, ginger-like root

Latik: residuum of coconut milk after extracting oil by boiling; sweet preparation made from coconut milk used as sauce for *suman*

Leche flan: [letseplan] creme caramel; milk custard, usually with a caramelized syrup

Lechon: [litson] roast pig with lemon grass or tamarind leaf stuffing

Lengua estofada: stewed ox tongue

Liempo: pork belly

Lihya: [lehiya] lye. Syn. *sosa*

Logao/Lugaw: rice cooked soft and wet as a gruel

Lomi: flat noodles sauteed with meat and vegetables, served with broth

Lomo: loin

Losong/Lusong: mortar

Loualo: [luwalo, liwalo] climbing perch. Syn. *martiniko*

Lumahan: striped mackerel; Japanese mackerel

Lumbalumba: dolphin

Lumpia: spring roll; a dish made of shrimp, meat and/or vegetables wrapped or rolled up in a thin flour wrapper, eaten fresh or fried

Lumpiang ubod: the pith or heart of a palm wrapped in a *lumpia* wrapper

Maalat: salty; containing salt

Maanggo: having the odor of fermented milk

Maasim: sour; rancid, spoiled by fermentation

Maaskad: having a bitterish or acrid taste

Macapuno: the fruit of a species of coconut tree which is filled (*puno*) with flesh instead of coconut water, and is usually made into sweets

Magsanaya: a variety of rice favored in Western Visayas

Maja Blanca: a kind of rice or corn pudding

Malabo: turbid or muddy as water; unclear; indistinct

Malabo: spongy in consistency as fruits or tubers

Malacapas: a species of fish known as "spoiled *mojarras*"

Malagkit: sticky; also glutinous rice

Malanay: a species of fish

Malangsa: [malansa] fishy; having a fishy taste or smell

Malinamnam: delicious; very tasty or savory; creamy and tender quality of taste and texture associated with something fresh

Maliputo: cavalla fish thriving in Taal Lake

Malunggay: a small tree, the young leaves, flowers and pods of which are commonly used as vegetables; horseradish plant

Mamali: tassel fish; four-fingered threadfin

Mami: a dish of Chinese origin consisting principally of noodles with condiments and broth

Manamisnamis: on the sweet side

Mapait: bitter

Mapakla: acrid in taste, as of a young guava fruit or banana

Marquesotas: a type of biscuit

Matamis: sweet; having the taste of sugar

Mechado: Sp. a dish of meat with lardoons

Media noche: midnight repast; the midnight meal traditionally taken on Christmas Eve

Merenderos: restaurants that sell snacks

Miki: [mike] Chinese noodles made from wheat flour and usually used in making *pancit*; sold fresh, not dried

Misa de Gallo: Midnight mass; dawn masses held for nine consecutive days before Christmas

Miso: soybean cake; boiled bean mash used as ingredient in sautéing or in making sauce for *pesa*

Morcilla: blood sausage

Morcon: a large meat roll

Morisqueta tostada: fried rice

Musang: wild or mountain cat; civet cat

Nakakahiya: shameful; disgraceful

Nangka: [langka] jackfruit

Nilaga: [linaga] meat stew; something boiled, like corn, banana, esp. *saba*

Ninong: a male sponsor at a wedding, baptism or confirmation; godfather

Nuoc mam: Vietnamese fish sauce similar to *patis*

Okoy: [ukoy] a patty or cake of grated vegetables with or without pork or shrimps, deep-fried in lard or oil

Olam/Ulam: victuals like fish, meat, vegetables eaten with boiled rice

Paella: Spanish dish with rice, seafood, sausages, meat, vegetables

Paellera: shallow iron pan in which paella is cooked

Pag-gigisa: sautéing

- Paho:** tiny, tart mangoes
- Pako:** edible fern
- Paksiw:** a dish of fish or meat cooked in vinegar with salt, ginger and garlic
- Paksiw na banak:** mullet cooked in vinegar (above)
- Palaspas:** palm leaves woven into various shapes and figures and taken to the church on Palm Sunday for blessing
- Palay:** unhusked rice grain
- Palitaw:** small cakes made from the starch of glutinous rice and eaten with sugar
- Palmito:** palm leaf or plant
- Pamutat:** appetizer side dish
- Panara:** a little pasty filled with vegetables
- Pancit:** [pansit] a generic term for noodle dishes
- Pancit Canton:** a dish of noodles originating from Canton, China
- Panciteria:** a restaurant specializing in Chinese food
- Pancit habhab:** Lucban noodles eaten off a leaf
- Pancit Langlang:** dish of sautéed noodles, sometimes with a broth
- Pancit Luglog:** noodles shaken in hot water and served with sauce
- Pancit Malabon:** noodles cooked with seafood
- Pancit Molo:** soup of pork-filled *wantons* with shrimps and chicken
- Pancit na sabaw:** noodles in broth
- Pangasi:** rice wine
- Paniqui:** fruit bat
- Pantat:** the young of fresh-water catfish. Syn. *anak hito*
- Pasingaw:** to steam in boiling water
- Pastillas:** sweets in the form of little bars, usually made of milk
- Pastillas de pili:** a little bar or cylinder made of pili nuts
- Patis:** a salty, thin, amber-colored fish or shrimp sauce
- Pavo embuchado:** Sp. stuffed turkey
- Pechay:** [petsay] Chinese cabbage; one of the most widely-grown vegetables in the Philippines with soft, large, green leaves and white petioles
- Pesa:** fish boiled in rice-washing water with ginger, tomatoes and onions
- Pesang manok:** a dish of boiled chicken
- Pescado en salsa agrio-dulce:** fish in sweet-sour sauce
- Petis:** [Indonesia] fish sauce
- Pilit:** [Visayan] sticky rice
- Pinais:** fish or shrimp wrapped in banana leaves and steamed with onions, tomatoes and young coconut
- Pinangat:** spicy Bicol dish of stuffed taro leaves and hot chilis
- Pinasingaw:** steamed dish
- Pingolpingol:** species of fish
- Pinipig/Pilipig:** young rice pounded flat, somewhat like cornflakes, usually eaten with coconut milk or hot chocolate
- Pirurutong:** dark-colored glutinous rice
- Potomaya:** [putomaya] a rice cake made from glutinous rice and eaten with grated coconut and sugar
- Principalia:** the first families of a town; the elite
- Pritong galunggong:** fried round scad
- Puchero:** [putsero] a stew, Spanish in origin, consisting of beef, chicken, sausages, chick-peas, vegetables and a tomato sauce
- Pulutan:** canapes; hors d'oeuvre; food taken with drinks
- Punta y pecho:** beef brisket
- Puto:** generic term for steamed rice cake
- Puto bumbong:** a chewy rice cake made from the glutinous rice called *pirurutong*, molded and steamed in a small bamboo segment and eaten with sugar and grated coconut
- Putong lusong:** a white anise-flavored rice cake
- Putong Polo:** little round rice cakes from Polo, Bulacan
- Putong sulot:** little rice flour cake molded and steamed in a small bamboo tube
- Putos:** completely full or filled up, as a bag or sack
- Qisa:** [kisa] to mix corn, other grains, or shredded *kamote* with rice before steaming
- Quartillo:** a dry measure equivalent to one-half of a *ganta* or 1.5 liters
- Rosquetas:** a type of biscuit
- Relleno:** stuffed chicken, fish or turkey, etc.
- Sabalo:** a large milkfish from the sea and not from the fishpond
- Sahog:** principal flavoring ingredients
- Salabat:** ginger ale or ginger tea
- Salagubang:** June beetle; June bug
- Salop:** a cubicle receptacle for measuring grains equal to three liters or *gantas*
- Salpicon:** tenderloin tips sautéed in oil and garlic
- Saluyot:** an erect, branched, annual herb, the tops of which are eaten as vegetables, especially by Ilocanos
- Sampalok:** [Tagalog] tamarind
- Sangag/busag:** to toast or fry rice; to roast popcorn, coffee, etc.
- Sangke:** star anise
- Sapsap:** a species of slipmouth (fish)
- Sardinas:** canned sardines; also colloquial for canned mackerel from Japan
- Sawsawan:** dipping sauce usually mixed by the diner himself at the table to go with whatever he is about to eat
- Sayote:** mirliton pear; a light green, oval fruit that becomes soft and bland when cooked
- Sianse:** [siyanse] turner; a kitchen utensil used for turning food that is being fried
- Sibuyas Tagalog:** native pearl onions; scallions
- Sinaing:** boiled rice prepared for every meal; rice that is being cooked or boiled still in the pot; also fish cooked in a little water and salt
- Sinamak/Sinamac:** vinegar in which chilis, garlic and pepper are marinated
- Singkamas:** tuberous root, large, white-fleshed and turnip shaped, eaten raw as a fruit or cooked as a vegetable; a variety of turnip
- Sinigan:** a dish of pork, beef, shrimp or fish and vegetables in a broth soured with acidic fruits
- Sinigang na baboy:** pork in a soured broth

Sinigang na bangus: milkfish in a soured broth
Siomai: Chinese steamed dumpling
Siopao: steamed stuffed Chinese bun
Solomillo: Sp. tenderloin
Sorbete sa garapinera: ice cream made in an old-fashioned grinder
Sotanghon: translucent noodles made from mung beans
Suka: vinegar
Sukang Iloco: palm vinegar from the Ilocos region
Suman: a native delicacy made of glutinous rice or cassava flour, wrapped in banana or palm leaves
Suman bodbod: a variety of *suman* made in Cebu
Suspiros: spun-sugar candy
Taba: fat; the white or yellow oily substance in the body of animals; lard; the inner fat of hogs
Tabios: [tabyos] a species of tiny goby found in Lake Buhi in the Bicol region
Talangka: a species of small crab. Syn. *katang*
Talbos ng ampalaya: tendrils of the bitter melon or bitter gourd used as vegetable
Talinum: a fleshy herb used as substitute for spinach
Talong: eggplant
Talunang manok: “defeated cock”; a dish made from a rooster defeated in a cockfight
Tamales: rice cake derived from Mexican tamale
Tamilok: edible woodworm
Tanduay: nipa wine
Tanglad: lemon grass or citronella; sweetgrass; gingergrass
Tanguingue/Tanigui: Spanish mackerel
Tapá: dried meat slices, e.g. pork, beef, venison, wild boar
Tinapa: fish dried by smoking; smoked fish
Tinapai/Tinapay: bread
Tinola: a dish of boiled chicken, green papaya, common gourd and broth, flavored with ginger and peppercorn
Tinubong: rice cake cooked in a bamboo tube; a Christmas food of Vigan, Ilocos Sur
Tocino: salt pork, bacon
Tocino del Cielo: tiny sweet custards in syrup
Tokwa: soybean curd
Tomyam: Thai sour soup
Torta imperial: Spanish torte; a multi-layered cake
Toyo: soy sauce
Trassi: Indonesian salted shrimp paste, like *bagoong*
Tuba: the fresh sweet juice obtained from nipa or buri palm by cutting the top; this juice is usually drunk fresh, and also made into wine or vinegar
Tulingan: big-eyed tuna
Tulya: tiny fresh-water clams; a species of small bivalves
Tumpok: a small mound, used as a unit for selling fish or vegetables, shrimps, grain, etc.

Turo-turo: a practice in small local restaurants or eateries in which customers point at what they want; a way of ordering cooked food from the counter display
Turron de Almendras: Sp. almond torte
Tutong: the crusty part of boiled rice left sticking to the bottom of the cooking pot
Tuyo: whole, dried, salted fish
Ube: purple yam, usually made into sweets
Ubud: [ubod] pith or heart of a palm, especially coconut, eaten raw as a salad or cooked
Ulang: large variety of fresh-water crayfish
Upo: bottle-gourd
Usa: deer
Utang na loob: debt of gratitude; favor
Vocabularia: Sp. dictionary
Walang tabong, mahal ang gabi? kangkong na lang!: There’s no eggplant available, *gabi* is expensive? *Kangkong* will do!
Walis tingting: a stiff broom made from the ribs of coconut leaves
Wansoy: coriander leaves used as seasoning

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