

Relocating *Pinikpikan* in Baguio City

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From the traditional native chicken soup of the Igorots, pinikpikan has evolved into something exotic that must be tasted for one to experience 'authentic' Cordillera food. Once considered both ritual and everyday fare by Cordillerans, it has become a fixture in Baguio City restaurant menus. The squeamishness with which 'outsiders' used to approach the dish has been replaced with a tourist curiosity to try what is 'real' and that which reflects local culture. As restaurants and eateries have appropriated the soup to promote local culture, so have poultry sellers introduced shortcut methods in preparing the dish. These reflect the 'citification' and commodification of pinikpikan. In partaking of the dish, one takes pleasure in tasting the 'real' and imagines the nostalgia that surrounds the experience, which is actually a simulated reality. This article explores the cultural logic behind the phenomenon.

Another mode has been appointed for animals endowed with locomotion, of which man is doubtless the most perfect. A peculiar instinct warns him of the necessity of food; he seeks and seizes the things which he knows are necessary to satisfy his wants; he eats, renovates himself, and thus during his life passes through the whole career assigned to him.

– Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin

The seductiveness of the Igorot *pinikpikan* lies in the idea that the chicken has not been slaughtered in the conventional manner, but has been beaten slowly to death before it is cooked in soup. One finds pleasure in tasting the exotic, and “sharing” the

culture of the mountain tribes, even if the eating takes place in a city restaurant. This paper describes both the ‘original’ and the ‘new’ methods of preparing pinikpikan, the most notable being the evolution from firewood to the blowtorch in singeing the feathers before the cutting up of the fowl. But the stylized version of the dish still wears the “authenticity” of the past, endowed with Fredric Jameson’s concept of pastiche, where the “neo’ version is a conglomerate of a past image mistaken for reality (Jameson, 1991).

Same Soup, Different Places

It is almost noon in the village of Kapangan in Benguet. In one family’s home, a daughter will soon be leaving for work as a domestic in Hong Kong. Her mother has decided to prepare the traditional chicken soup called pinikpikan. A wood fire is started and one of the family’s domestic fowls picked out for the soup, while water in the pot is boiled. The year-old native chicken is placed on a flat surface or is held by its feet. A piece of bamboo or a stick about one to two inches in diameter is used to beat both sides of the chicken’s wings from end to end. This is done steadily and rhythmically, the blows falling neither too hard nor too soft, care being taken not to break the skin or the bones. Next, the fowl’s neck is beaten in the same manner. When the fowl is limp but still alive, the back of its neck, below the comb, is given one final blow. The fowl is immediately placed over the fire to burn its feathers. What are left of the singed feathers is pulled out of the skin. The beak is cut off and the feet skinned. The chicken is slowly roasted over the fire, giving it a burnt color. The fat below the skin oozes out.

One of the family elders cuts up the chicken and checks its internal organs. The heart, gizzard, and lungs should be of a healthy color. Bile that is not hidden below the other organs but is up front augurs well for the Hong Kong-bound domestic and the rest of the family. The chicken is cut up and the pieces – together

with the fowl's gizzard, heart, liver and an occasional unhatched egg – placed in the now boiling water. Ginger is added and the soup allowed to simmer until the meat is soft enough to eat. The soup is a bit dark in color, its smell close to ginger tea and burnt meat combined.

Thirty kilometers away, in Baguio City, a housewife decides to prepare pinikpikan for Saturday lunch. She makes her way to the small side streets above the market, choosing a fat fowl from among the many offered by the poultry dealers that abound in the area. For a pinikpikan with meat that is not too soft, she may choose a cull, which is about nine months old. For chicken meat that borders between the soft and the firm, she will go for the broiler cull, or b-cull, a five-month old chicken. She does not choose the 45-day old broiler, the meat of which is too soft. These chickens are all of the white leghorn variety, and are sold by weight, with prices ranging from Php 75 to 95 per kilogram.

Once the chicken is weighed, the housewife requests that the dealer does *pulpug* for an extra fee of Php 10; this means hitting and burning the chicken for pinikpikan. The chicken is tied up by the legs, hung on a hook and whacked about six to ten times. Next, the dealer places the chicken over a flat iron grill and starts to burn its feathers off with the use of an improvised blowtorch attached to a tank of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). The burnt feathers are swept away from the fowl with a short broomstick. The entire process takes about ten minutes or less. The task becomes much easier for the buyer, who now only has to cut up the chicken and cook the soup. The buyer in a hurry can also choose among the already dressed fowls to-go, which are sometimes sold together with *etag*, the salted, preserved pork which imparts a distinct flavor to the soup.

What I have described are two ways of preparing the Cordillera chicken soup. One is steeped in tradition and connected to ritual, while the other accommodates the time and space constraints that urban life has foisted upon the consumer.

Variations on a Soup: Ritual, Preparation, Ingredients, Taste

“It is not pinikpikan at all, to have them beat the chicken at the market and worse, not even check its bile. Only native chicken is used for the ritual pinikpikan, but because this is much more expensive, you use the b-cull only when you want to have the soup without asking for favors from *Kabunian* (Igorot god). But you can have no other shortcuts. They add the chayote or pechay sometimes, and this is all right if you have many people eating the soup. But the real pinikpikan has no vegetables, no etag; only the Benguet and Bontoc folk use etag. The young people, the only way they know to make the soup is the way they do it now, but this is not the right way to do it.” So goes one informant, when asked about the many ways the soup is prepared.

The older generation sees pinikpikan as connected to ritual: for healing, to ask for favors, or to give thanks to the Kabunian or departed ancestors. Praying is done over the chicken before it is beaten, and also before the soup is about to be taken. In the city, the proliferation of ready-to-cook-chicken-for-pinikpikan at the market makes the observation of the ritual no longer possible. Even the building of wood fires has become unfeasible owing to the lack of open space in the city. Both location and urban lifestyle command changes in the preparation of the soup.

For Igorots living away from the city, pinikpikan is not everyday fare. The soup is prepared on rare occasions, as one has to use the backyard fowl. The native chicken is described as a lot tastier than the white leghorn. At the time that it is slaughtered for the soup, it is already about a year old; its meat will be somewhat tougher. For this reason, those living in the city use the cull or the b-cull in their pinikpikan, to approximate the toughness of the backyard chicken. A few sellers sell live native chicken for more discriminating eaters, but these are sold by piece (about Php 200 to 300), unlike the white leghorn, which is sold by weight.

One significant part in the preparation of pinikpikan is the process of beating the chicken. The word *pikpik* means to hit, and its purpose is to effect the coagulation of blood. As the wings and neck are beaten, the flesh beneath the skin starts to bleed, much like what happens when one gets bruised. The coagulated blood is what makes the chicken tastier, darker and tender. In the ritual pinikpikan, beating alone may take as long as fifteen minutes, as opposed to the pulpug done at the market, where the chicken is given a few hard whacks which land randomly on the body. Once cut up, the flesh of the chicken from the city market usually shows no signs of bruising and may have less coagulated blood. Villagers used to doing the pikpik the traditional way are shocked to witness the quick market pulpug and believe such a sudden death will not produce a tasty dish.

Also of importance is the burning of the chicken over a wood fire. The initial burning allows for the easy removal of the feathers. When the featherless fowl is returned to the fire the second time, it is roasted until the fat embedded at the tip of its quills melts and coats the chicken. It is this roasting that imparts the distinctive burnt flavor and smell, which the Igorots describe as “*ti raman na kasla nga napuuran,*” meaning “tastes as if burned.” Igorots easily identify this smell and will know who among their neighbors are preparing the dish. In the tradition of hospitality, the family that cooks pinikpikan is therefore obligated to offer a bowl of the soup to the neighbors. It is interesting to note some instances wherein those who live in the villages apologize for the soup that is offered in lieu of what is perceived to be a more special dish: sardines. Perhaps this is because sardines have to be purchased while the ingredients for pinikpikan are sourced from the backyard.

The burning of a chicken in the market takes faster to accomplish. Once the fowl is “blowtorched,” the feathers are burned in an instant. A brisk sweep clears the surface of the skin of leftover feathers. The blowtorch then serves the same purpose

as the chef's blowtorch; its function is to give the fowl a final touch mimicking that done on *crème brulee*, producing an even, appealing brown. The drawback is the missing burnt flavor once the soup is cooked, and worse, a 'gasoliney' taste produced by the blowtorch fuel.

All the cooking of *pinikpikan* that I have observed involves the use of ginger, supporting the observation that the soup is in fact the upland version of the *tinola*, the 'national' chicken stew which, as Fernandez (2000) notes, has been "immortalized" in Jose Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere* (35). Other ingredients, however, vary from place to place and from cook to cook. The basic ritual *pinikpikan* uses only chicken and ginger; the Bontocs insist on adding *etag* for a saltier, tastier soup. Other ingredients that may be added to the soup are chayote, papaya, chili leaves, *pechay*, or watercress. At least one informant admits to adding *bagoong* (fermented fish sauce) to her own family's version of the *pinikpikan*.

Food as Communication:

Animals as Food, Animals and Man, Animals and God

Doreen Fernandez says the language of food is not limited to the "palate and the senses" alone. Fernandez cites instances in which food becomes central to communication between people: one's regard for the recipient of food that is given; the quality of and the place where the food is served; the manner of inviting guests to share a meal. She stresses the Filipino's inclination towards non-verbal communication, which is perhaps more cogent than the spoken word in that it "conveys a multiplicity of nuances and messages" (Fernandez, 2000: 67-68).

The meaning of *pinikpikan* as a sacrifice to kindred spirits or deities is communicated in the act itself, in the invocations and appellations that go with it, as well as in the signs that are read in the internal organs of the animal. The style of communication does not focus on the dish itself, but on its symbolic representations.

The elderly would never think of pinikpikan in terms of “killing me softly”, as the song goes, since the act of beating the fowl or the means of doing it is not a point of interest. The contemporary use of killing me softly reflects a communication style that is somewhat fancy and sensationalized, akin to saying that a serious work of art is cute. It will only be a source of amusement to the elderly, even as it is seen as an appropriate label by the young.

The concept of animal sacrifice is neither new nor uncommon. It is a universal manner of communion, both among the living and with the dead. It is also a way by which the tribes put transcendental meanings into a large feast or a simple meal—for peace of mind, to show gratitude, to reminisce about loved ones.

Cruelty is not an issue in the preparation of pinikpikan because the meal is also prepared to please the deities, and this erases the guilt arising from ‘hurting’ the fowl. Deities are anthropomorphic and will also enjoy food well prepared, and infused with the proper invocations and words of praise.

The notion of cruelty is not usually attached to the treatment of fowl, but to dogs or cats. Saying “poor dog” cannot be compared to the magnitude of sympathy in saying “poor chicken.” Fowl have always been looked upon not as objects of affection and are more than just food; chicken feathers can be used to adorn the Igorot headdress. On the other hand, dogs can become hunters. But dogs are also eaten by the Cordillerans, although it cannot be imagined that a dog can ever be an object of the pikpik procedure.

The pikpik itself is more of a culinary than a spiritual process, as hunters would prefer the richness of dark meat over the staleness of chicken breast. It probably evolved from the desire of people to force white meat to become engorged and embedded with blood, so as to become as tasty as the legs or wings.

Animal bile and other innards contain omens, but the animal itself is a passive conveyor of knowledge or prediction and does not have the power to ‘communicate’ with spirits or

deities. In big feasts usually hosted by the affluent Igorots or the *baknang*, the spiritual medium is the *Mambunong*, who holds power beyond the ordinary.¹ He or she is a well-respected priest/priestess or medicine man who does not only read the omens, but is the intermediary between the living and the dead. The people listen intently to the Mambunong not only for the supernatural messages, but for the 'advice' regarding the need to butcher more fowl, pigs or cattle if the omens are not satisfactory. Smiles will be seen around if the Mambunong says that the reading of the bile does not present a clear positive omen, and so another animal will have to be put to death, which means continued feasting and revelry.

Embodied Culture

The dropping of the ritual, the changing method of preparation and the addition of ingredients have been dictated in part by the citified environment of the consumers of the soup. The original painstaking process of preparing the soup has been reduced to a shortcut method that serves the urban consumer, at the same time producing a *pinikpikan* that comes close to the real that is served in the villages. For most of the young Cordillerans in the city, their method of preparing the soup is the normal practice. This reflects an embodied culture, consisting of practices that are followed out of habit, with the individual not really consciously thinking why he does it (Bordieu, 1977: 78). The same argument can be used to describe the response of the elderly informant mentioned earlier, who 'knows' that the way he prepares *pinikpikan* is the only way to do the dish. The same informant, when asked why the ritual is a necessary part of the preparation, says this was the way it was done by his grandfather, his father and all the elders in the community, and therefore should continue to be the way it should be done. Such variations or intolerance is expressed by the observation that when certain foods are identified with a group, these become badges of identity that have to be preserved, that

“seep into collective tastes and inform palates which remain saturated in memories of them. (Armesto, 2002: 137).

Knowing the fowl as one’s own was the mark of the old pinikpikan meal. The chicken was usually raised in the backyard or under the house, from chick to adulthood. A visitor would usually be impressed by the host when the latter offered his best fowl for the meal. Today, a forlorn, unknown and unlucky cull is pulled out of a clutch of animals in the market and whacked unceremoniously, then hastily butchered. Another aspect of knowing that marked the past was the reading of the bile for omens, which made the fowl an instrument of prophecy. This has also been totally lost in modern times, except in rare household settings. Neither the market (where culls are butchered) nor the restaurant can offer this experience to the eater, whose only knowledge gained is from the taste buds and the satisfaction of having ingested a good meal.

Consumption of the Exotic

In the middle of town there is a *carinderia* (small eatery) row patronized by Igorots who live in Baguio City. All of these establishments save for one, serve pinikpikan made out of the already dressed chicken purchased from commercial traders located in the same area. It appears that the eateries’ customers are already accustomed to the taste of the “modified” pinikpikan, which bears a resemblance to the traditional soup only in that no vegetables have been added.

It is only Sagada Lunch that claims to serve pinikpikan prepared in the traditional way. According to the eatery manager, they use b-culls, although the fowls are beaten and roasted in the old way. The emphasis on the old may be explained by the eatery’s image as a haunt of old timers, apart from the fact that tourists do occasionally stray in, the result of an old television feature that the eatery manager barely remembers.

Farther uptown, a restaurant menu describes pinikpikan as “burned offerings of chicken soup and salted pork served with

rice.” Café by the Ruins, established in 1988, is one of the few upscale restaurants that tourists consider a must-go-to in Baguio City. The restaurant’s vision, as stated in the menu, says: nurturing art and culture through socially responsible enterprise committed to environment stewardship. Pinikpikan has been in the menu since the place was opened.

Upon tasting the soup, one notices only a mild burnt flavor. There is a hint of ginger and the bitterness of the watercress, but there is also the sweetness of celery. The soup itself is almost clear and the chicken meat not too dark, prompting one Igorot to describe it as a “sanitized version of the original.” Christine Arvisu, part-owner of the restaurant, says their version of the pinikpikan has been slightly modified not to cater to the tourist palate but to “tone down the smoky flavor.” According to Arvisu, a burnt flavor that comes out too strongly does not sit well with tongues that are not accustomed to it. Thus, the addition of celery. The Café by the Ruins version of the pinikpikan is indeed a milder one, perfected out of a desire to please the city-bred tongue and senses. It reflects Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin’s observation that “[t]he torrent of centuries rolling over the human race, has continually brought new perfections, the cause of which, ever active though unseen, is found in the demands made by our senses, which always in their turns demand to be occupied” (Brillat-Savarin, 2002). One of its owners says there are tourists who order pinikpikan on the recommendation of friends or out of curiosity; the soup is known to tourists as the indigenous soup of the Igorots and has become the standard fare for those wanting to taste the exotic.

How do we explain the exoticness of the soup? In the context of food, exotic refers to the unfamiliar, the alien to one’s own culture (Fernandez, 2000: 33). It is the introduction of uncommon food that breaks the barriers of one’s closed diet. Pinikpikan is exotic because the fowl is killed through beating and not through *inuku*, which is the ‘standard’ way of slitting the throat. In addition, the preliminary roasting of the chicken over an open

fire evokes an image of primitiveness, appeals to the fascination of knowing that the first form of cooking – over a naked flame – is still being practiced. To borrow from Armesto (2002), “It has unmistakable notions of savagery, especially if the meat is only given a rudimentary butchering before the roasting” (13). The exotic in pinikpikan thus refers not only to the soup itself but the process of preparing it, which leaves the taster with a feeling of having “consumed” tradition as well.

Killing Me Softly

In 1973, Norman Gimbel penned the lyrics of a song that earned for Roberta Flack the Best Pop Vocal Performance Grammy Award. The song was written to describe the singer’s feelings upon hearing Don McLean sing, and how McLean wrought such intense emotions on his audience. *Killing Me Softly* has been used to describe pinikpikan as well, in reference to the process of hitting the chicken to death. Those living in the mountain villages have no knowledge of the pun. In fact, one Baguio informant who admits to having been “urbanized” says he learned the term in the early 80s, when he moved to Baguio City. The tourist, however, is familiar with the term, and so are the locals. But the phrase erroneously describes the way the market fowl is beaten to death. There is no semblance at all of “softly” here; the chicken in the market is whacked hard, and death comes almost instantaneously. “Killing me softly” more accurately describes the rhythmic beating given the fowl by those who cook the ritual pinikpikan. But the tourist as well as the urbanized Igorot is unaware of this. The use of the phrase, and in the case of Café by the Ruins, its vision of nurturing culture, suggests in the tourist and in the city Igorot images against which they measure authenticity. For the tourist especially, the urge to take part in the sensorial experience is to capture the essence of Igorotness which pinikpikan represents.

Authenticity demands that the process of preparation be in itself authentic. In the case of pinikpikan, the commercial trader driven by the desire for enterprise has appropriated the beating and the burning of the fowl to serve his own entrepreneurial motives. And the restaurant or eatery owner, often unmindful of the cultural value of the traditional method of preparation, has earnestly promoted the pinikpikan-dressed chicken as the authentic. The tourist and the city Igorot seeking nostalgia take part as well in this gradual process, contributing to the creation of an artifact that becomes accepted as part of the culture.

The mutation of cuisine vs. the preservation of tradition

The preparation of pinikpikan in the traditional way is characterized by some degree of solemnity in spirit and procedure. There is deliberateness in beating the fowl and in killing it, far off in comparison to the 'slash and burn' commercial technique. This deliberateness of the old and the cursoriness of the new clearly present a different approach, very much symbolic of the plodding ways of the past and the speed of doing things in the present. The elderly savor the ritual and thoroughly enjoy the meal; the young crash into the food and slurp up the soup. The preparation of pinikpikan in the traditional way is quiet, subdued and deliberate, the butcher and the fowl being engaged in a culinary and spiritual event. This traditional setting widely contrasts to the commercial setting of eating pinikpikan as an exotic, exciting event of having a taste of savagery in modern times.

In *Palayok*, Fernandez (2000) classifies Philippine food into the indigenous and the indigenized. The indigenous is one that grew from the land, and the indigenized, "adapted from foreign influences but adopted into the culture" (60). Fernandez' definitions of both indigenous and indigenized food are particularly important to this paper in that these distinguish both the Igorot preparation of what is considered the authentic pinikpikan

(indigenous), and its citified version, which makes use of outside influences in both preparation and ingredients (indigenized).

Fernandez displays pragmatism towards the fact that food mutates. In other words, the borrowing and assimilation from the outside indicate that the concept of food authenticity and indigenosity are evolving. Consequently, culture evolves, too. But there are those who find the reinvention or ‘mongrelization’ of culinary traditions downright appalling, if not sacrilegious. A case in point is the Slow Food Convivium, a movement established in 1986 by Italian Carlo Petrini. In “The Importance of Leisurely Dining,” Robert Walker talks about how Petrini was incensed by the intrusion of McDonald’s in Rome’s Piazza de Spagna, and how the latter now seeks the “rediscovery and conservation of authentic culinary traditions.” In Asia, the movement’s “roving emissary,” Rob McKweon, seeks the preservation of authentic practices in the preparation and consumption of food. Walker lists down a few examples which McKweon is hoping to preserve: a Bangkok woman keeping family tradition alive by preparing *shu mai* (dumplings) in the family’s 60-year old copper pot, and Hanoi locals cooking snails gathered from the city’s lakes.

To people like Petrini and McKweon, the notion of ethnicity, indigenosity and exoticness are of high value in the culinary scale. The words ethnic, indigenous and exotic conjure images of that which is different, and are seen as markers of cultural identity. Any changes added to a dish, both in preparation and in ingredients, erase its ethnicity and exoticness, and effectively change culture as well.

Assimilation and ‘Borrowing’ from the Outside

Is ‘mutated’ cuisine a marker of cultural identity? In a sense the phrase “killing me softly” encompasses the phenomenon of the pinikpikan. The traditional way of preparing the soup has given way to new methods that are seen as equally authentic. While

these methods started out as inauthentic, their continued practice has ascribed to them authenticity and they have become integrated into Igorot culture, effectively erasing the past. It is this irony that Fredric Jameson (1991) points out (emphasis added):

Pastiche is, like parody, the imitation of the peculiar or unique, idiosyncratic style, the wearing of a linguistic mask, speech in a dead language...the producers of culture have nowhere to turn to but the past: the imitation of dead styles...This situation evidently determines what the architecture historians call "historicism," namely, the random cannibalization of all the styles of the past, the play of random stylistic allusion, and in general what Henri Lefebvre has called the increasing primacy of the "neo" (17-18).

Jameson (1991) emphasizes our acknowledgement of the past as a storehouse of styles and practices that we commodify to represent our ideas, leading to "a new and historical situation in which we are condemned to seek History by way of our own pop images and simulacra of that history, which itself remains forever out of reach" (25). The altered form of pinikpikan that we have created has diluted its nature as an indigenous soup and has created a new marker of Igorotness. This notion of the authentic has fixed a new interpretation of the identity of the Igorot that is tied to the present and similarly changes the historical context of pinikpikan.

To Retain Tradition or To Accept That Culture Evolves?

In the promotion of culture or ethnicity, is there absolute authenticity at a given point in time, or is authenticity evolving? Is it therefore the invention of tradition being promoted, and not tradition itself? Nir Avieli (2004) argues that the "invention of tradition is a culturally constructed self-generating process"

wherein indigenous people adopt and integrate into their culture other methods of preparation and thus create new “authentic” artifacts. In her paper, Avieli talks about the more than 70 tourist-oriented restaurants in the town of Hoi An in Vietnam. Her research shows that these restaurants, while purporting to serve “Hoi An’s local specialities,” actually cook dishes that are not traditionally unique to the town. She traces the influence as coming in from other towns and from non-Vietnamese places. Menus may include white rose dumplings (Chinese) and coconut curry (Indian), and food may be outsourced from other locales.

In conclusion, Avieli (2004) emphasizes that the cultural value of “Hoi An’s local specialities” do not come from their uniqueness or traditional methods of preparation but rather from their ‘appeal’ to tourists wanting to taste the exotic. But the dishes have become ‘local’ in the sense that the townspeople themselves eat these. And, as Avieli says, these have “become an actual part of the local cultural fabric.”

The decision to cook pinikpikan in the traditional era was based not only on the physiological need to eat, but also on a spiritual need to sacrifice a fowl to please some deity or kin in the other life. It was a decision to communicate a transcendental message while anticipating the opportunity of a delicious meal. This meaning has virtually been lost in modern times, when pinikpikan has become part of the accepted food retinue in the Cordilleran feast, and even a figment of culinary adventurism in the restaurant. In the past, the decision was largely driven by the thought of sharing communion in a meal; today it is driven by an interest to taste a romanticized Igorot dish that has become as common, in some parts, as tinola or plain chicken soup.

If one takes the opportunity to consult an elder on the proper way pinikpikan is supposed to be prepared, he will find that disclosure is usually elaborate, with stress on proper procedure and technique. Definitely, disclosure is not casual and loud nor made in jest or amusement. Today, the modern disclosure of the

dish is blatantly reflected in the restaurant menu, and stylized in accord with the language of the time. It is not remote that some enterprising eatery would someday put “Killing me Softly” in the menu with the following description: “succulent range chicken beaten softly to enrich the meat, then burnt subtly before simmering to melt-in-the-mouth texture.”

There is a subliminal resistance from the old over the ways of preparing pinikpikan in the new world, but this is largely unexpressed since tolerance, of others and across age levels, is a universal trait of the Cordillera tribes. The affection for youth is also in abundance, in a way that makes harmony a constant blessing, even in the quiet presence of disagreement.

Coping with Change

The preparation of and consumption of food is no longer a monopoly of its originator or its keeper, and the originator no longer can claim that his is the authentic. This line of thinking is also evident in historian Armesto’s book. Armesto’s book chronicles the history of food worldwide, from the origins of cooking, to haute cuisine, to fusion food. His detailed narrative places importance on the social context within which food is consumed, whether these be in cannibal societies or exclusive gourmet communions. To quote Armesto (2002), “[I]t is hard for the elites to monopolize select foods. It is almost equally hard for the underprivileged to claim their stake to their own dishes without exciting elite envy...Goldilocks is always transgressing class boundaries and stealing other people’s porridge” (123). Pinikpikan as a dish of the Igorot has become appealing to those who want a taste of the exotic, and is therefore constantly generating new facets of tradition as well as taste across social and demographic boundaries.

Relating Jameson’s observation to my paper, I wish to underline that the altered form of the specific dish pinikpikan

may have diluted its nature as an indigenous soup, but has created a new marker of Igorotness. Conflicts that may arise in the altering of the dish' preparation have become part of a lived history that is pastiche.

Notes

- ¹ The Mambunong is sometimes referred to as a priest, a priestess or a medicine man. He is well-respected. The affluent Igorots, or the *baknang*, invite the Mambunong to perform services during feasts. Ordinarily, family elders can also do a reading of the bile. Compared to the Mambunong, however, they can be, in layman's terms, considered "amateurs."

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