

COMPLETION REPORT

A Transnational History of Consuming Taiwan Banana in Japan, 1905-2015

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This project has studied the historical process in which the Japanese public consumed “Taiwan banana”, from the 1900s to the present.

This project first examines the consumption of Taiwan banana as a “produce” in Japan, from the pre-war (1910—1940) to the postwar (1949—1969) periods. It finds that a variety of “images”—embedded with “abstract value”—of Taiwan banana was created and sustained in Japan’s domestic market throughout this period; these images provided a cultural explanation to the growing public desire for Taiwan banana which continued from the 1920s to 1940. During the pre-war (1910—1940) period, the most notable images of Taiwan banana are the followings:

- Fruit of the Japanese empire
- Produce of the tropical south
- (Taiwanese) aborigines
- Food of the noble and upper-class of Japanese
- Western-style living

During the Second World War, consumption of fresh banana was suspended. After the War, importation of banana from Taiwan resumed in 1948; and very soon the consumption of Taiwan banana reached a new height in the 1960s. This project finds that in the postwar (1949—1969) period, Taiwan banana became associated with the images of peace, growth, and the “high-speed economic growth” throughout the Showa 30’s (1955-1965). Similar to the symbols of Tokyo Tower (1958), the Tokyo Olympic (of 1964), and the bullet train, banana was often identified as the symbol of Japan’s postwar “epoch belle”. This is further confirmed by the images of banana in popular culture—such as movies and “*asa-dora*”—based on the theme of “Showa nostalgia” in recent years.

Furthermore, this project finds that the sense of nostalgia associated with banana led to the consumption of the history and collective memory of consuming Taiwan banana. Starting from the 1970s, Taiwan “ba-na-na”—the *image* rather than the produce itself—has been consumed effectively as a “cultural capital” in promoting business and tourism in Japan; the best examples are the popular food gift “Tokyo ba-na-na” and the promotion of “banana tataki-uri” as a local cultural heritage in the city of Moji-ko.

Overall, through the subject of banana, this project provides a new understanding of the historical relationship between Taiwan and Japan by examining the introduction, adoption, promotion, interruption, and transformation of Japan’s consumption of “Taiwan banana” in the past 100 years. This finding, at a broader theoretical level, places Japan’s modern social and cultural development in a transnational and inter-cultural context of Asia and beyond.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

- Title of Presentation: 我吃故我在：戰前日本對臺灣香蕉的消費文化史
Presenter: Shichi Mike Lan , Hsiangjung Jenny CHIN
日治台灣物質文化史工作坊，國立臺灣師範大學 (National Taiwan Normal University, Taiwan)，2018 年 1 月 13 日(scheduled)

- Title of Presentation: 帝国の珍味 —戦前日本における「台湾 バナナのイメージ」の生成と消費—
Presenter: Hsiangjung Jenny CHIN
2017 年臺大日本語文創新國際學術研討會，國立臺灣大學 (National Taiwan University, Taiwan), 2017 年 12 月 9 日

- Title of Presentation: 百年來臺灣香蕉在日本的形象與價值的轉變
Presenter: Shichi Mike Lan , Hsiangjung Jenny CHIN
第二屆「臺灣產業發展與社會變遷國際學術研討會」，中央研究院臺灣史研究所 (Academia Sinica, Taiwan)，2017 年 9 月 28-29 日

- Title of Presentation: “Taste” of the Tropics: Consuming Taiwan Banana in Japan, 1900-1950
Presenter: Shichi Mike Lan
Conference on the Aesthetics of the Tropics, Nanyang Technological University (Singapore), June 23-24, 2017

- Title of Presentation: 「帝國的食物——殖民時期日本對台灣香蕉的消費形象」
Presenter: Shichi Mike Lan
特別演講，國立臺北科技大學 (National Taipei Technological University, Taiwan)，2017 年 5 月 10 日

- Title of Presentation: 「臺灣與食物的世界史—從臺灣香蕉到東京ばな奈」
Presenter: Shichi Mike Lan

- 法鼓人文講座，國立政治大學(National Chengchi University, Taiwan)，2017 年 5 月 2 日

- Title of Presentation: “帝国的食物——日本的香蕉消費與殖民時期的台湾社会，1910-1945”

Presenter: Shichi Mike Lan

「東亞近代化與台灣社會變遷（東アジアの近代化と台湾社会の変遷）國際學術研討會」，台湾史研究会・台湾歴史学会共催シンポジウム，日本関西大学，2016年8月27—28日

- Title of Presentation: “「臺灣香蕉」的形象，1900-1940：以日本國內與中國的消費市場為對象”

Presenter: Shichi Mike Lan

中央研究院臺灣史研究所「食物史研究工作坊」(Academia Sinica, Taiwan)，2016年8月5日

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

N/A

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)

N/A

Television program

- 番組：臺灣演義 (Stories of Taiwan)

Theme: History of banana

Presenter: Hsiangjung Jenny CHIN, Shichi Mike Lan

Formosan TV 民視 (Taiwan); 2018年放送預定