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THE CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF EVERYDAY FOOD USE

The Government of Japan

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INTRODUCTION

The report tabled last year entitled Quantification of Local Need for Minke Whale Meat for the Ayukawa-based Minke Whale Fishery (TC/42/SEST8) set out to quantify the local human need for minke whale meat consumed for culturally significant end uses. In that study, thirty-one culturally significant uses were recognized, one of which was ‘everyday use,’ taken to mean the use of whale meat as a daily or otherwise very frequent ingredient of meals provided within individual households. The report justified the inclusion of this category of use by stating:

> “Everyday use is included in the list because it has local cultural value and significance. When social scientists speak of ‘food culture’ they do not restrict their attention to those highly festive calendar events which may only occur once or twice (or less) for each person or household per year. Food cultures are constituted more especially by the high frequency, patterned practices which characterize the distinctiveness of everyday dietary practices” (*ibid*:8).

Despite this statement and subsequent discussion, it appeared that further explanation might be useful in order to increase understanding of the importance of customary dietary practices in sustaining the integrity of social groups and their local cultural practices, subjects well documented in the scientific literature.

This report is in two parts. Part I provides the appropriate scientific context for discussing everyday food use, by means of a brief review of the subject as found in the current social science literature. This section concludes with a listing of selected books and review articles for further reference. Part II of this report details the everyday use of whale meat and blubber in Japanese small-type whaling communities. The specific context for this particular discussion, also provided in Part II of the report, is a very brief description of the structure of the Japanese meal. (Parenthetically, it should be noted that Japanese gastronomy is a highly elaborated art form, summarily described in five pages of the Kodansha Encyclopedia of Japan (Vol. 2: 20-25; see also Richie 1985).)

PART I: ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON EVERYDAY DIET

> “Through the ages, gastronomy has proved to be a stronger cultural force among the peoples of the world than linguistic or other influences.” (The New Encyclopedia Britannica 1990, Vol. 19: 690)

Food and Social Organization

Anthropologists recognize that meal-time patterning, sequencing and regularity are important means that enable members of a society to signify and routinize that group’s customary social order, gender relations and self-identity within the basic units of human existence, namely, the family or household, the community and the larger area that defines regional or national identity. These social regulatory functions are importantly mediated by the form and content of everyday meals, which are patterned on the society’s basic gastronomic principles to a greater extent than on those highly formalized ceremonial events which, in contrast, serve to symbolically highlight and reinforce *particular* life cycle and calendrical events necessarily occurring with far lower frequency. Such everyday meal events anthropologists agree, serve inter alia, to facilitate and maintain the individual’s social integration and status. For example:

> “Indeed, anthropologists have always been very interested in the subject of food. They have much to say about food as part of the analysis of domestic and local organization.” (Douglas 1984: 7)

> “In all societies the distribution and consumption of food is an expression of a variety of social relationships.” (International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, 1968 Vol. 5: 508)

> “Gastronomic categories and culinary practices have meanings far beyond their biological and historical contexts. Food systems may be treated as codes, bearing messages relative to everyday social interactions.” (Powers and Powers 1984: 86)

> “The acting out of ideal gender patterns fulfills basic human needs such as self-identity associated with roles and the maintenance of social order, and a sense of reality that comes with role portrayal in social interactions. These functional qualities of routinization are achieved not only with role pattern but also in the meal regularity.” (Whitehead 1984: 35)

To illustrate these principles in a more concrete fashion, most parents are probably able to recall the distress that is experienced when their children choose to absent themselves (without good reason) from the main daily family meal. That a ‘good reason’ is required to appease parents’ distress attests to the threat to the established social (i.e. household) order this particular meal-time behavior represents. As Douglas (1982: 86) has suggested, “food is

the medium through which a system of relationships within the family is expressed."

The Cultural Significance of the Customary Diet

The analysis of a people's food culture, however, is of interest to social scientists for more reasons than merely the patterning of social relationships, important as these are for understanding human behavior. To quote one anthropologist engaged in the study of food:

> "The foods people eat are indicative of social, political, macro-and micro-economic factors... as well as of a given ecology.... Moreover, the choice of the food event... in its totality relates to aesthetics and cultural concerns which go well beyond questions of food availability.... Food choices, from the wide variety of available, ingestible foodstuffs, are inevitably constrained by cultural practices... cultural factors determine that under given circumstances only certain and not other foods be consumed, often in a given order. Meals may therefore serve as statements about society, about belonging to it, as well as about states of nature, life cycle issues, class or other things that are considered significant in the culture." (Ashkenazi 1989: 339).

Food and Moral Precepts

However, though much of the focus of anthropologists' work has to do with understanding the rationale underlying human social behavior in cultural terms, such cultural analysis is often viewed as being inseparable from a calculus of essentially moral principles. As Mary Douglas, a leading anthropological theorist and authority on food, points out, we may assume that individuals, who as a collective construct and define their society, pursue and judge as being appropriate, social behavior in coherent conformity to certain moral objectives during the course of their lifetime. Individuals accordingly, as good members of their society, see themselves as needing to conform to these objectives by doing this and by not doing that. As Douglas observes (1984: 11):

> "...at any given time the pervading cultural environment provides moral standards affecting every kind of resource. Food is inevitably brought into the moral perspective.... Many of the important questions about food habits are moral and social."

Elsewhere, we see similar principles being expressed:

> "The rules governing the distribution of food within a society reflect and reinforce prevailing ethical and moral orientations in the society."
> (International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences 1968, Vol. 5: 508)

So profound are these ethical underpinnings, that in many societies to not offer a visitor food is to symbolically and powerfully express enmity. Even though food may be used symbolically to represent certain personal feelings, "these are usually among the most important... personal feelings in the groups life." (*ibid*: 508) In many traditional societies the sharing of food (even when in short supply) is a moral imperative, such that to deny food to someone in need is tantamount to withholding life itself, and subject to the strongest negative sanctions.

The International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences article states that such sharing of food "clearly illustrates the basic principle that it is characteristic of social systems to symbolize social relationships by means of different patterns of distributing and consuming food." (*ibid*: 510) It should not be any surprise therefore, to observe that, despite the diverse technological changes occurring, people the world over appear to be quite conservative in respect to basic, everyday, food habits (e.g., Douglas 1982: 88).

Effects of Change in the Food Culture System

However, just as the rules governing food behavior variously provide structure and order to society, so conversely does irregularity in the supply and consumption of food presage disorder. Again, from the Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences:

> "...when food ceases to be employed as a vehicle for the expression of social sentiments within a grouping, or when proscriptions concerning the consumption of food are attacked, it can be assumed that significant changes are taking place in the socio-economic structure of that society" (*ibid*: 508),

and from Mary Douglas, (1984: 12):

> "Nowadays there is a widespread concern about imposing alien foods or introducing even small changes too hastily. The local food system needs to be understood and appreciated in the context of its relationship with the other family institutions, and the interlocking of the family with the larger social institutions of the community."

The Significance of Food Rules

The term 'food system' used above refers to a repertoire of particular daily menus and the rules that dictate when each is appropriate in terms of social audience and event. For example, a European food system makes it clear that ice-cream is ordinarily not a breakfast food, or that an important guest, invited to a Sunday meal, would not be offered only a plate of sandwiches to eat at the meal time. Similarly, in terms of the importance of the rules, the menu allows cheese to be added to hot soup but not custard (even though both may be dessert items) or that mint sauce is eaten with lamb but not with beef.

Such food rules are not inconsequential matters; indeed, they are used as important boundary markers both within and between societies. Levi-Strauss (1966: 108) has made reference to an 'endo-cuisine,' in which special foods serve for those who consume them as acts of differentiation in support of a cherished identity. Thus it has becomes of critical importance to the Inuit to retain the right to consume whale *mattak* (skin), or the Oglala Sioux to consume dog, or the residents of Japanese small-type whaling communities to retain access to fresh whale meat. The strong

relationship existing between such locally ordinary food items and a valued identity is a commonplace in anthropological writings.

In reference to the Oglala Sioux dog-eating (and other traditional) culinary practices, Douglas (*op. cit*: 32) observes "obviously... (this) speaks worlds about their solidarity and historical traditions... and their utter rejection of white values." The furore in the British parliament and press (in 1990) when the traditional English sausage was declared, by others in the European Community, to not qualify as an acceptable food item, speaks far more to the attack by continental Europeans on a national 'endo-cuisine' food item than it does to any potential loss of export markets. Therefore, "food is capable of symbolizing the manner in which people view themselves with respect to insiders and outsiders of society" (Powers and Powers 1984: 86), it serves as a basic marker of individual and collective identity, the very basis of coherent social ordering.

Dietary Change and Everyday Meals

Despite the attention throughout this short essay on food-related behavior and societal conservatism toward dietary change, anthropologists have nevertheless afforded considerable attention to the study of social change as it affects peoples' customary food ways (e.g. in Manderson 1986 and Douglas 1984). Indeed, during WW II, Margaret Mead studied dietary change for the U.S. government and concluded that in a culturally-distinct food system there are 'core elements' (recognized by their greater frequency of use) and lower frequency 'peripheral elements.' Mead (1943) argued that the core elements, in everyday use, are less likely to change than are the peripheral dietary items.

This view is now held to be overly simplistic, especially in those groups whose food choices are constrained by price and accessibility. However, within these understandable constraints, it nevertheless "makes sense to speak of a family food system (in which) each family works out a regular pattern of food, mealtimes, children's food and drink, women's, celebratory, and ordinary food." (Douglas 1982: 85) As this comment makes clear, anthropologists regard 'ordinary' (i.e., everyday) food as an integral part of the food culture system, consequently imbued with all the social and symbolic loading and importance that has been referred to throughout this review paper.

Despite the slowness with which food patterns change, the ways in which a society incorporates 'new foods' have been investigated by anthropologists (e.g. Ashkenazi 1989; Douglas 1982, 1984). According to Douglas (1982: 89) the main food items are most resistant to change, whereas items of lesser cultural significance may be added (from outside), modified, or dropped. The adoption of new items of food into a food culture is precisely because these new foods have low cultural value, in a sense being culturally peripheral. On the other hand, food items having high cultural value will tend to be retained, even in the face of practical problems involving accessibility or shortages, due to such food items' many points of cultural attachment to the social and cultural fabric of the society as well as their important historical and identity-maintaining role in a changing world.

Effects Associated with Destroying Rural Adaptations

In this short review of current anthropological understanding of the importance of food choice and meal arrangements in social and cultural systems, one last relationship needs to be stressed. This is the 'ecological' relationship a society traditionally strove to establish and maintain, in the sense of a system of functional (sustainable) interactions between a population and the environment.

In the case of human populations, ecological relationships refer to far more than merely energy and material flows between the living and non-living components of an ecosystem. A human-ecosystem analysis necessarily includes attention to those nonmaterial transactions involving cognitive, symbolic, spiritual, esthetic, and ideological factors that are uniquely human. Many of these have been alluded to above. Another set of considerations, namely the adaptiveness (in respect to current environmental problems) of human populations whose requirements for food only minimally increase the pollution load and energy demands on the global environment, though important, lie outside the scope of this paper.

Notwithstanding this abbreviated attention to ecological concerns, specialists recognize that disrupting a people's food procurement activities had important implications in respect to the adaptiveness of that population. This decreased adaptiveness results precisely because their traditional social and cultural arrangements exist in a *systemic* relationship with the total environment, implying that a change in one part of the system engenders changes elsewhere in the system. Accordingly:

"There are policy reasons for giving food patterns more systematic attention. A rural population once adequately fed by multiple small resources tapped at different points in the seasonal cycle, when it turns over to imported foods... and a less complex diet, loses its delicate balance with the environment." (Douglas 1984: 12)

This balance, it should be noted, is not just in respect to bio-physical factors, but more importantly to the intellectual, esthetic, psychological, and spiritual aspects of human existence and wellbeing the maintenance of which sound public policy should aim to ensure.

PART II: EVERYDAY USE OF WHALE MEAT IN STCW COMMUNITIES

This section of the paper sets out to answer the question: "what is the basis for believing that the everyday use of minke whale meat and blubber has significant cultural importance in the STCW communities."

Reference to the many anthropological studies conducted in STCW communities (and summarized in an annotated bibliography available to the Working Group), demonstrates the cultural and social importance of the distinctive dietary to the integrity of these particular

communities. Based on data provided in these reports, it is possible to summarize here the principles that underlie whale meat and blubber consumption practices. This is accomplished by reference to the role of whale products in the overall composition of the basic meal structure, and also by reference to the criteria that are customarily considered when whale meat and blubber are selected for various meal events.

The basic meal structure

Ordinarily, a meal is composed of a bowl of rice, which is a staple food for the Japanese, a variable number of *okazu* (side dishes) which are usually a mixture of vegetables and fish or meat, a plate of pickles and an optional soup. Unlike a western-style table setting, rice, *okazu*, pickles and soup are eaten from individual plates or bowls, which enables extensive modification of the basic meal pattern to suit the needs of different meal events. Food however, may be served on a communal plate, or as a communal hot pot dish. On these occasions, an individual is given serving plates for each dish. Therefore, the use of such communal dishes can be considered to be within the structural framework of the basic meal composition. One exception to the basic meal structure is the use of the noodle dish. In its simplest form, noodles are served in a soy-sauce-based soup with chopped green onions. Noodles may be served as a meal by themselves or as a substitute for a bowl of rice.

The field data on whale meat and blubber consumption in STCW communities indicates that meals in which whale meat and blubber are served are classified into three types of meal events: (1) everyday meals, (2) ceremonial meals, and (3) snacks.

The everyday supper composition is representative of the basic meal structure. At this meal, soup may be optional, as it is often served as a part of breakfast. The number of *okazu* dishes varies, depending on the economic level of households, the attendance at the supper table (e.g., less *okazu* when father is absent) and individual preferences.

The composition of a ceremonial meal is a more elaborate form of the basic meal structure. The number of *okazu* dishes increases, and the selection of ingredients requires more careful consideration to ensure that they suit the occasion. More strict rules are applied in the meal structure as the formality of the occasion increases. The rice dish is often more elaborated.

A snack is a side dish served with alcoholic or nonalcoholic drinks, and represents the third variation of the basic meal structure. It is composed of *okazu* dishes, which vary in number depending on the types of occasion (e.g., drinking party, side dish for tea, etc.) and the number of people present. A snack may be served independently or it may be integrated into an everyday meal or a ceremonial meal.

In the STCW communities' food-cultural tradition, minke whale meat and blubber is the food item that is prepared and served as *okazu* in all three meal types: the everyday meal, the ceremonial meal and the snack meal. This fact signifies the centrality of whale in the food culture of residents of these distinctive communities.

Food Selection

How do people choose their meals? This process involves decisions on food items, decisions on preparation methods and consideration of the type of occasion. In other words, a decision is made concerning what to eat, how to eat it and when to eat, all decision being taken before the meal events take place. The rules governing selection of the appropriate cuisine are not without cultural significance. The complexity of the criteria to be met in choosing an appropriate cooking method and meal occasion is illustrated in Table I.

In choosing what to eat, people consider the availability of a particular food item, including its seasonality and price, the taste preference, the appropriateness of the symbolic value of the food item, the health value of the food item, the historical association with the food item, and its social value (e.g., the prestige attached to its use) and any association with local identity that is created by the food item. These six criteria listed in Table I are interdependent: any one criterion may influence any of the others in varying degree. For example, sensory preference is greatly influenced by the social/cultural value of the food item. Certain food items are considered as a delicacy in one cultural context, while the same food item may be considered inedible in other cultural contexts. Such differences are inevitably a result of different symbolic, health, historical, and social values of the food item in distinct cultural systems.

These same criteria apply when choosing the appropriate preparation method (see Table II under the heading, 'how to eat'). In this case, with regard to historical value, the criteria relate to association with the method of food preparation rather than association with the food item itself. The social value relates to a localized recipe, and an ancestral association with certain food preparation methods; it is not uncommon for example, for the same ingredient to be prepared in different ways in different localities. This phenomenon is a result of variable availability of certain food items and individual sensory preference, which are reinforced by regionally distinct historical and social values accorded to the customary preparation method.

These same six criteria are used in considering the occasion in which the meal event takes place: 'when to eat' in Table II. Historical value in considering the meal occasion relates to the association of certain food items with specific occasions or seasonality or certain activities. The social value of the meal occasion relates to association of a certain food item with certain social or seasonal occasions, and also with a sense of sharing, which occurs during a communal meal. For example, when a certain food item meets availability and preference criteria, it is likely to be eaten as an everyday meal, while an expensive food item with high symbolic, historic, and social value is likely to be served on a special occasion.

Selection of whale meat and blubber

Using these same six criteria, which serve as the basis for decisions relating to what to eat and when to eat, a

comparison can be made between the use of whale meat and blubber in the two different meal events: namely, everyday meals and ceremonial meals. The research data presented in numerous reports (e.g., Manderson and Hardacre 1989; Manderson 1991; Iwasaki 1988; IWC/40/23; Takahashi 1988; IWC/42/21) represent the ethnographic data illustrating the customary use of minke whale meat and blubber in STCW communities. Table II shows the criteria importantly governing residents' use of whale meat and blubber in the two types of meal occasion: everyday and ceremonial meals.

Table II illustrates that, for the people in STCW communities, the use of whale meat and blubber satisfy most of the criteria for both everyday use and ceremonial use. The differences between the two usages are due to variable availability: fresh minke whale meat and blubber are not available for all of the ceremonial occasions (which may occur outside of the six-month whaling season). Thus, higher priced frozen meat and blubber, which meet the requirements of sensory preference less sufficiently, has to substitute for the fresh product.

There are a number of expressions concerning minke whale dishes that are commonly heard among the local people. Some samples, from the extensive literature, follow:

A man in the fertilizer business in one whaling community says:

> "Most of my life I've eaten whale meat. I ate it from the moment I was born. People preserved whale meat by salting and drying it because there was no refrigeration; and we'd eat this as a side dish to rice. Food preservation was done in the home. We'd get meat from the factory direct because of the business relationship with the whaling factory, so it was always free: if we needed whale meat, we'd just let them know. For two generations we had free meat, we never had to buy it... we'd buy the scrap from the company to make fertiliser then get the meat free... and at New Year and *obon*, we'd send sake to the companies. And if there was a big catch, we'd send down sake to the whalers to allow them to celebrate, and this was really in reciprocity for the meat."
>
> (Manderson 1991: 7)

Another local person says:

> "It is customary to eat whale here at New Year. Whale isn't available throughout the year, but people keep enough in the freezer so they can use it at New Year also. Last year and before, when minke whaling was occurring, we'd serve *kujira* (whale) on 2 January, but there's not enough whale to do that this year. Some people make up a *kujira-jiru* (whale blubber and vegetable soup) here also, or they make a curry. But people are eating very differently now because there is no whale. So we were very happy to get some meat through the distribution [the household distribution of frozen minke whale by-products of the Antarctic research]."
>
> (Manderson 1991: 14)

One elderly person in a whaling community says:

> "Our life is completely dependent on the whale. We used to eat whale the whole year, so we feel very sorry that we can't eat it now. We don't eat beef or pork — we'd rather eat fish, but of course, we want to eat whale. Younger people will eat beef or pork but we don't like it.... This is true for elderly people here."
>
> (Manderson and Hardacre 1989: 10)

In a more emotional context, one local person says:

> "We cannot understand why we can't eat whale meat anymore, when Americans eat beef and pork. So what's the difference between this and whale? I really miss not having whale meat. It's been a terrible year. We eat all parts of the whale, you know, so we don't waste any: we really can't understand it."
>
> (TC/41/SE3: 29)

Another local person says:

> "If *kujira* sashimi (thinly sliced raw whale meat) is available then people don't want other food, since most people prefer *kujira* sashimi over all other food."
>
> (TC/41/SE3: 50)

Here is another person expressing his feeling:

> "Whale meat, particularly sashimi, is both a staple and a prestige food, and no ceremonial occasion, including New Year, would be complete without it. Hence, villagers were extremely grateful to receive meat though the auspices of the Town Office at the end of December, and all New Year evening meals included whale meat sashimi as the central dish."
>
> (IWC/41/21: 20)

A public health nurse in one whaling community commented:

> "Seven years ago, I examined the dental health of children in Taiji. Despite their eating some candies and so on, I was impressed by the strength of their teeth which I believe was diet related.... Now the diet is changing: earlier, there was access to free and inexpensive whale meat. Today whale meat is more expensive and restricted so more beef, chicken, and pork is included in the diet. There is a serious effect on peoples' health; the over-40 age group has higher blood pressure, elevated cholesterol levels and more obesity now."
>
> (IWC/41/21: 33)

Another person says:

> "I know very well that farmed creatures, fish, too, are polluted with all kinds of stuff, so I want to go on getting whale for the health of my family. It is the best food for all of us."
>
> (IWC/41/21: 33)

Another local person express his opinion:

> "We eat all of the whale and that is how we show our respect for it. Westerners don't appreciate our religion and customs and don't know how much we love and respect whales."
>
> (IWC/41/21: 36)

One Shinto priest in a whaling town says:

> "Whale meat is offered on the private altars of this community precisely because it is the food that most uniquely symbolizes the sources of communal solidarity. Because Ayukawa's social and economic organization is so dependent upon whaling, whale meat is particularly appropriate as an offering to the community's tutelary deities, enshrined at the Kumano and Koganeyama Shrines. After it has been offered to the deities by being placed on an altar, this whale meat is taken down and served in the communal meal shared by the parishioners, and putatively, by the deities as well...."
>
> (IWC/41/21: 39)

A girl in a whaling town talks about her visit to her grandmother in the hospital:

> "When I leave the hospital, I ask 'what do you want me to bring next time, Grandma?' She always says *kujira* (whale). Grandma has lived so many years with the whale. Now lying on the hospital bed, eating whale meat seems to be the only way for her to get the taste of life."
>
> (Takahashi 1988: 88)

The most typical expression of whale meat and blubber is:

> "We never get tired of eating whale. How can I describe the whale taste? It has warmth in the taste that attracts men. Whale has such a delicate taste."
>
> (Iwasaki 1988: 58)

A fish store owner says:

> "The price (of whale blubber) goes up every year, but they all buy it at any price. They just can't have New Year without *kujira-jiru* (whale blubber and vegetable soup)."
>
> (Iwasaki 1988: 62)

The report to this point demonstrates that whale meat and blubber very completely satisfy the six criteria applied in selecting appropriate food items and cooking methods in relation to the specific meal event. The above quotes are provided to support this conclusion.

Finally, the use of whale meat in everyday meals is compared to the use of chicken and beef on such occasions, using these same six criteria for the selection of food items provided in Tables I and II. Based on field data, including discussions with school children (IWC/41/21: 83) and interviews with people in whaling communities (IWC/41/SE3; Manderson and Hardacre 1989), Table III clearly indicates that, for people in STCW communities, the everyday use of chicken and beef lacks sufficient fulfillment of symbolic health, historical, and social value, which are altogether satisfactorily met by using minke whale meat and blubber.

In summary, the everyday use of minke whale meat and blubber is clearly of social and cultural importance to the people in the STCW communities. This report is not addressing the question of nutritional need, for even though

Table I. Criteria that apply to food consumption patterns

A. Availability: seasonality, price
B. Sensory preference: taste, texture, smell, color
C. Symbolic value: good luck, wealth, ancestral tie, strength, longevity
D. Health value: low cholesterol, low fat, high iron, lacking additives
E. Historical value:
- long family/community association with food item
- long family/community association with certain food preparation method
- customary association with certain occasion or seasonality/activity

F. Social value:
- sense of local food, customary gifting item in the local context
- localized recipe, an ancestral association with a certain food preparation method
- association with particular family or community occasions or appropriate seasonal activity, or communal meal

Table II. Comparison of everyday use and ceremonial use selection criteria

	Everyday use	Ceremonial use
WHAT TO EAT:		
A. Availability	+	-
B. Sensory preference	+	+
C. Symbolic value	+	+
D. Health value	+	+
E. Historic value	+	+
P. Social value	+	+
HOW TO EAT:		
A. Availability	+	-
B. Sensory preference	+	+
C. Symbolic value	+	+
D. Health value	+	+
E. Historic value	+	+
F. Social value	+	+
WHEN TO EAT:		
A. Availability	+	-
B. Sensory preference	+	+
C. Symbolic value	+	+
D. Health value	+	+
E. Historic value	+	+
F. Social value	+	+

Table III. Comparative value of whale meat and alternative meats

	Everyday use of whale meat and blubber	Everyday use of chicken and beef
WHAT TO EAT:		
A. Availability	+	+
B. Sensory preference	+	+
C. Symbolic value	+	-
D. Health value	+	-
E. Historic value	+	-
F. Social value	+	-

it is acknowledged that whale meat and blubber are nutritionally superior foodstuffs compared to the meat of farm-raised animals, this is a minor consideration in relation to the high cultural value accorded a fundamentally core food item in a complex traditional cuisine, a value which transcends mere preference. These cultural values are rooted in a variety of historical, symbolic, aesthetic, social, and locational considerations that in their totality ensure a sense of wellbeing for the people concerned, and in their absence represent a profound and damaging loss.

POSTSCRIPT

An extensive anthropological literature exists detailing the issues outlined briefly above. Key reference works, apart from those cited in the text above, include: Arnott 1975, Barker 1981, Farb and Armelagos 1980, Fenton and Owen 1981, Fieldhouse 1986, Fitzgerald 1977, Goody 1982, Harris 1988, Harris and Ross 1987, Johnston 1987, Manderson 1986, Mennell 1985, Messer 1984, Murcott 1983, Robson 1980.

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SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATION OF ZERO-CATCH LIMIT — SOME EXAMPLES OF SMALL-TYPE WHALING —

The Government of Japan

1991

INTRODUCTION

Three years have passed since the implementation of the moratorium on commercial whaling. Traditional small-type whaling communities in Japan are now facing complex difficulties derived mainly from the effect of the moratorium. Although several actions have been taken by Japan's small-type whalers to cope with this sudden change, these are not sufficient to improve the plight of their communities. Their eight whaling units, consisting of nine boats, were socially and economically vulnerable with only 40-60 Baird's beaked whales and approximately 100 pilot whales per year allowable catch.

EXAMPLE 1, A BOAT OWNER

Boat owners lost their social status which is derived from being suppliers of whale meat. This situation is characterized by remarks of one whaler who said: "I have been engaged in whaling for 28 years. I am proud of my vocation. For me, to be told to stop working is the same thing as being told to die." Further, since their businesses are based on family affiliation and supporting their mother, sister or brother who form separate households, they found themselves in a social and economic plight which they deemed far from satisfactory.

Firstly in 1988, in an attempt to survive, six boat owners took a rationalization measure to halve the scale of operation through merger and joint venture. These six owners formed three whaling groups and operated three vessels while they kept the other three vessels idle. This action resulted in unemployment of more than 20 crew members of whaling boats.

Secondly, in the same year, three other boat owners took steps to continue their operation through their own effort. They attempted to launch other fishing ventures. But all of them suffered losses in the initial year and two of them shifted to joint ventures in 1989. As a result, another seven crew members became unemployed.

Consequently from 1989 on, four groups of small-type whalers have been operating four whaling boats, with five other vessels kept idle.

Now an example of a boat owner in Abashiri. The boat owner of a family-based small-type whaling firm (Miyoshi Hogei) based in Abashiri (where his father started whaling operation) had succeeded his father and used to land 30 to 40 minke whales at Abashiri Port before the moratorium, thus contributing to the distinctive food culture of the local community as well as to the progress of fisheries in this local area.

This boat owner chose to continue his vocation after the moratorium by entering into a 50-50 joint venture with a whaling firm (Nippon Kinkai) based in Ayukawa. Through consultations within the Small-Type Whaling group, it was decided that his whaling boat would be kept unused. As a natural course of events, he was compelled to lay off his crew members with whom he had shared hardships for many years. Two of his ex-crew were later reemployed as workers at a land-based flensing station.

However, catching operations (for Baird's beaked and pilot whales) mainly moved to the sea off Ayukawa as a result of a collective decision within the Small-Type Whaling group; consequently, he could no longer fulfill the dietary needs of Abashiri local residents for whale meat.

In spite of this adverse situation, he does not give up his vocation as a small-type whaler, even in the future, because he knows that the stock of minke whales in the region is healthy through his own experience. (In his father's day, he was engaged in whaling operations as a crew member and, after he became the boat owner, he was aboard the whaling boat frequently and has confirmed the abundant status of whales with his own eyes.)

He considers that the IWC moratorium continues to disregard the social, cultural, religious and economic impacts upon the local communities. This is supported by the fact that local residents are urging him to resume supplying fresh minke whale meat at an earliest possibly time.

The boat owner wishes that the supply of minke whales could contribute again to the food culture of the local community. Due to his system of beliefs, he is convinced that whaling is the social obligation imposed upon him — his sole vocation — handed down from his father through which he can serve the well-being of the society.

EXAMPLE 2, CREWS

Whaling crew members, who have lost their jobs since 1988, suffered from a lapse of opportunity to contribute to their community, an uncertain future, decline of income, and difficulty in getting accustomed to new jobs, to unemployment and to under-employment.

The two crew members, who were reemployed, now work at the land-based flensing station of the joint venture firm. During most of the fishing season for Baird's beaked whales and pilot whales, they work in Ayukawa, away from their families in Abashiri. The whaling season for these two species lasts less than five months. Although they are in an enviable position compared with the other five crew

members who lost their jobs at the same time, their income fell to about one third from what they had earned previously. During the period outside the whaling season, they engage in part time work in another fishery away from their families. However, since their vocation is a highly specialized one, they are naturally employed only as low-grade sailors. These two people support their families with revenues from these two sources.

The other five ex-crew members who lost their jobs received unemployment insurance allowances for six months. The one who was a captain receives a pension. The gunner, who was a qualified navigator, became employed as a mate on a small tanker in another prefecture, through mediation of the Seamen's Union, after two years without a job. Other ex-crew members who did not have any formal qualifications could not find new jobs because of the decline in coastal fisheries as a whole. They are now assisting their parents in set-net fishing or in other part time jobs. But they are suffering loss of income to almost half the previous level. They are naturally very frustrated about what they regard as an unreasonable decision by the IWC. The ex-crew members still retain their pride that they were once suppliers of fresh minke whale meat to the local community. They all believe that minke whaling should be resumed at the earliest possible date, as they observe many minke whales off their community and recognize small-type whaling being closely linked to the life of the local people.

EXAMPLE 3, COMMUNITY

The sudden loss of opportunities for continuing the whaling tradition has caused distress and indignation among residents in the small-type whaling communities. This can be exemplified by Ayukawa, where a whaling station opened in 1906. The town currently suffers from a declining town population, a decreasing number of tourists and adverse impacts on other fisheries.

Population Decline

The moratorium has had a direct impact on the community, causing such social problems as unemployment and outflow of residents (Table).

At Ayukawa whaling station, an outflow of about 200 workers took place during the last four years. This outflow coincides with the pace of enforcement of the IWC moratorium. Particularly, the outflow of the younger generation is worth noting; they went to cities to seek jobs, prompting an increase in the proportion of aged people in the community.

DISCUSSION

The outflow of population from local communities is prompted by the IWC moratorium, as is a general decline of fisheries, and greatly increased unemployment in local areas. Among these elements, it is evident that the effect of the moratorium is substantial in small-type whaling communities, since whaling is a main pillar of community life.

In previous years, the second and third sons of fishing households were mainly engaged in whaling, and to a large degree ensured the viability of their communities. Uncertainty over the future and advancing age of the society are indicative of the absence of those who ensure the continuation of local fishery operations. Community members feel a sense of uneasiness as they consider the weakened community life.

Under these circumstances, resuming minke whaling is a unanimous desire of the communities. Mayor Mr. Azumi of Oshika Town has attended the IWC Working Group since 1989. The mayor's attendance at the IWC needs the approval of the Oshika local assembly because the trip requires expenditure from the township budget. The local assembly consented unanimously to their mayor's attendance at the IWC. This means that not only those who engaged in whaling related activities in this area, but also all of the members of the township want the mayor to improve the current difficulties.

Another reason why people can not easily give up their community life based on whaling is that they actually observe the minke stock remaining at least the same level of these prior to the moratorium. At the IWC, some views are expressed that Japanese whaling communities can cope with the zero-catch implications as several fishing villages in Europe could actually cope with the collapse of herring stocks in the past. However, aside from the cultural differences between these areas, the situation in the Japanese whaling communities are primarily different in terms of the reason that fishing operations stopped. European fishing villages had no way but to give up herring because the stocks had actually disappeared, while people in the Japanese communities cannot give up minke whales easily because the stocks remain abundant.

Hoping that the minke whaling operations would soon be approved, people in the communities have even established local management committees to oversee the whaling operations and to preserve the distinctive culture after minke whaling resumes. The community will continue to seek IWC understanding of these strong community sentiments.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Government of Japan acknowledges the assistance of Mr. Abe in Ayukawa for his collection of the statistical information provided in this report.

Table: Number of Households and population in Oshika town including Ayukawa area

Year	Whole Oshika Town		Ayukawa area	
	Number of Households	Population	Number of Households	Population
1986	2,025	8,012	675	2,259
1987	2,024	7,895	675	2,245
1988	2,018	7,736	674	2,211
1989	1,994	7,521	669	2,179
1990	1,973	7,240	656	2,063

(Source: Oshika Town Office)

SUMMARIES OF DOCUMENTS ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS AND SMALL-TYPE WHALING

This report provides summaries of the documents prepared by Japan and submitted to the International Whaling Commission over the five years from 1986 to 1990.

1991

LIST OF DOCUMENTS RELATED TO JAPANESE SMALL-TYPE COASTAL WHALING AND THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF A ZERO-CATCH LIMIT

1. Small-Type Whaling in Japan's Coastal Seas

Government of Japan, 1986 (TC/38/AS2)

The localized and small-scale nature of Japanese STCW, together with the socio-economic and cultural importance of whale-meat production and consumption in these small coastal communities is described. The report emphasizes the similarity, in social and cultural terms, of this local dependence upon whaling to that found in various aboriginal/subsistence whaling communities, and warns that the cessation of whaling will similarly undermine the solidarity and integrity of these traditional coastal communities.

2. History of the Consideration of Aboriginal/ Subsistence Whaling

Government of Japan, 1987 (IWC/39/26)

The history of the aboriginal exemption from the ICRW indicates that the emphasis has moved from earlier concerns with the technology of catching whales to a recent focus upon the exclusive, local, consumption of the whale-meat by aboriginal people (irrespective of who does the catching and the technology being used). For purposes of common understanding of the term 'aboriginal subsistence whaling' IWC in 1981 stated "local aboriginal consumption means traditional uses of whale products by local aboriginal, indigenous or native communities in meeting their nutritional, subsistence and cultural requirements".

This report concludes that the understanding of aboriginal whaling at the IWC has changed to allow for the diversity observed in, e.g. modern whaling technology, hunting by non-aboriginal whalers, and the limited commercial exchanges now occurring. The common element appears to be the recognized need to maintain local cultural traditions by means of a continuing supply of whale meat. It is suggested that as these traditional societies continue to change it will become increasingly difficult to distinguish between 'aboriginal' and other traditional coastal whaling societies.

3. Japan's Small-Type Subsistence Whaling

Government of Japan, 1987 (IWC/39/25)

This report includes a summary of Japan's position that several important similarities exist between STCW and subsistence whaling carried out by various aboriginal groups. An important common element existing in both categories of whaling is the local dependence upon whale meat production and consumption, and the part these activities play in maintaining a distinctive traditional cultural identity. The small amount of whale meat required to maintain these local cultural traditions in the case of the four Japanese STCW communities is made quite explicit in the report. This paper also includes a proposed amendment to Schedule Paragraph 13(b).

4. Small-Type Coastal Whaling in Japan: Report of an International Workshop

T. Akimichi, P.J. Asquith, H. Befu, T.C. Bestor, S.R. Braund, M.M.R. Freeman, H. Hardacre, M. Iwasaki, A. Kalland, L. Manderson, B.D. Moeran and J. Takahashi, 1988 (IWC/40/23)

To provide a factual assessment of the historical and socio-cultural significance of Japanese STCW, an international workshop was held in April 1988 attended by twelve social scientists from six countries (Australia, Canada, England, Japan, Norway and the U.S.). The workshop report is based upon intensive fieldwork in the four STCW communities and a thorough review of the relevant literature.

With its roots in 17th century net whaling, STCW is the most recent expression of the Japanese whaling culture complex. In its contemporary form, STCW is a small-scale stable fishery, based in four whaling communities close to the principal nearshore whaling grounds.

The distribution of whale products from these operations involves both monetized and non-monetized systems of exchange. Complete utilization of the whale carcass as food is characteristic of Japanese STCW. The customary whale-based cuisine maintained in the whaling communities serves important symbolic, ceremonial, and social needs within these societies. Important aspects of the religious life of these small whaling communities are associated with whaling, including rites practised by whalers, their families and other members of the community. Such observances are the means by which peaceful repose of whale souls is assured and the spiritual soundness of the community maintained.

The report concludes that the distinctive history, means of production and distribution, food culture, ceremonial and religious characteristics of STCW when considered together, constitute a form of whaling that whilst sharing certain elements with both commercial and aboriginal/ subsistence whaling, nevertheless is clearly distinguishable from both.

5. Report to the IWC Working Group on Socio-Economic Implications of a Zero-Catch Limit

Government of Japan, 1989 (IWC/41/21)

This report examines the socio-economic implications of the zero-catch quota which was imposed on pelagic and large-type coastal whaling operations in 1987 and upon the STCW minke whale operation in 1988. These zero catch quotas, in addition to causing a series of socio-economic impacts have affected the spiritual, psychological, physical and cultural wellbeing of many people who are dependent upon the products of whaling. The report characterizes the socio-economic dislocations at four levels: the individual, the family, the community, and beyond. The zero-catch limit has affected individuals economically, socially, culturally and, in some cases, in respect to health. Effects have been manifested in the failures of small family businesses in the whaling villages, job losses, the lack of suitable re-employment options and the consequent need to accept unsatisfactory low-paying seasonal or temporary positions which in some cases involve family separation or relocation. The difficulties faced by laid-off whalers, resident in small and remote communities, when seeking new jobs results from the specialized nature of their occupational skills, their age, and the particularities of Japanese employment and fishery practices which, inter alia, severely restricts opportunities for self-employment. As whalers enjoyed prestige in their communities, job loss invokes especially acute social and psychological stresses for both the workers and their families. Within the family, newly-created interpersonal stresses occur, which are having harmful effects on children. Apart from financial losses to families and local businesses (including those unconnected with whaling), the survival of such vital village institutions as local Fishery Cooperative Associations is seriously undermined. Tourism, as a source of revenue for these remote communities, is highly dependent upon the local availability of whale meat, which also plays an important role in various religious and community celebrations vital to the maintenance of social solidarity. These socio-economic and cultural impacts in their various forms pose a serious threat to the continued survival of these small traditional communities.

6. The Spread of Whaling Culture in Japan

A. Kalland, 1989 (TC/41/STW3)

This report analyses the way in which whaling operations and the associated culture was transmitted from southern to northern regions of Japan through the centuries-long history of Japanese whaling. The widespread diffusion of the Japanese whaling culture is a direct consequence of the mobility of the whaling operations. Transmission of specialized skills and the recruitment patterns for skilled workers have been important elements in this diffusion process, together with the mobility of whaling fleets, technological expansion and group exclusivity. Thus despite the geographical expansion of whaling, the continuity and coherence of the Japanese whaling culture has been successfully maintained over several centuries.

7. Japanese Whaling Culture: Continuities and Diversities

J. Takahashi, A. Kalland, B. Moeran and T.C. Bestor, 1989 (TC/41/STW)

This report details the historical background of pre-modern and modern whaling in Japan and describes the three main types of whaling practised there in recent decades: large-type coastal whaling, pelagic whaling, and STCW. By comparing theses three forms of whaling, the report demonstrates that there are distinct sets of production-related activities that exhibit a high degree of continuity within both the catching and processing phases of whaling. At the same time, various distinctive social and cultural institutions serve to bridge the differences that do exist between these different forms of whaling. The continuities and similarities between the different forms of whaling, together with the distinctive bridging institutions, provide the rationale for recognizing that an integrated whaling culture exists in Japan.

8. Small-Type Coastal Whaling in Ayukawa: Draft Report of Research

L. Manderson and H. Hardacre, 1989 (IWC/41/SE3)

This report is based upon fieldwork undertaken by the authors in the period December 1988 – January 1989. The period of fieldwork allowed the researchers the opportunity to participate in the New Year-associated religious and ceremonial life of Ayukawa village. The report contains extensive descriptions of public and domestic ritual and everyday celebrations, whilst drawing especially upon data obtained through 250 hours of interviewing some seventy local informants.

The report focuses attention upon a number of significant areas of village life: e.g., gift exchange (in which whale products are essential), the local whale-based cuisine, the effects of greatly reduced employment in socio-culturally and economically important whaling-related occupations.

The report concludes that the severe reduction in whaling is creating serious hardships, both to individual families and to various community-wide institutions, such that these impacts together threaten the continued existence of the village as a viable community.

9. Socio-Economic Implications of a Zero-Catch Limit on Distribution Channels and Related Activities in Hokkaido and Miyagi Prefectures, Japan

T.C. Bestor, 1989 (IWC/41/SEI)

Anthropological field research on the lives of people directly involved in STCW operations, as well as in the distribution of its products and related activities, was undertaken in Hokkaido and Miyagi prefectures in 1988, the first year when the taking of coastal minke whales was totally banned.

The imposition of the zero-catch limit has had a noticeable impact on whaling communities in these two prefectures in such areas as employment, the viability of family enterprises, customary social relations, social rituals,

the viability of key local institutions in the general maritime economy in Ayukawa (i.e. the local Fishery Cooperative Association), the economic foundation of community life, strongly held customary patterns of whale meat consumption. Problem associated with attempts to mitigate these serious negative impacts is also discussed.

10. Contemporary Socio-Cultural Characteristics of Japan Small-Type Coastal Whaling

S.R. Braund, M.M.R. Freeman and M. Iwasaki-Goodman, 1989 (TC/41/STW1)

Based on a variety of documentary sources and fieldwork in the four Japanese STCW communities, this report summarizes the socio-cultural importance of STCW in contemporary Japan. This form of whaling represents the most recent manifestation of the historical whaling tradition in Japan, meets important contemporary needs associated with, e.g., the high symbolic value of whales and whaling, the high dietary value placed on whale products, the high value of whale meat in gift exchanges and for various other ceremonial purposes, the maintenance of distinctive regional cuisines and identity, occupational prestige, the importance of transferring traditional skills, values and attitudes intergenerationally, and in maintaining the spiritual bonds that have long been celebrated between whales and whalers.

11. Operational Plan for Japanese Small-Type Whaling

Government of Japan, 1990 (TC/42/SEST7)

This report sets out the details of a community-based management plan for STCW developed by community leaders in Ayukawa and Abashiri (Hokkaido). The plan is congruent with national and IWC management directives, and is designed to ensure that for administrative and operational purposes, STCW will remain small-scale and unambiguously distinct from industrial-scale whaling formally carried out by large-type coastal whaling companies. The management plan proposes means by which conservation of whale resources will be maximised, and the export of whale products from the producing villages can be effectively controlled in order to ensure that maximum social, cultural and economic benefits derived from whaling operations remain within the local community. These proposed measures are considered necessary for the continued survival of these threatened local societies and consequently have the support of relevant community associations and local government departments.

12. Socio-Economic Countermeasures in the Four Japanese STCW Communities

Government of Japan, 1990 (TC/42/SEST2)

This report sets out to answer questions concerning the degree to which countermeasures have been implemented in order to minimize or offset the various impacts associated with the zero-catch quotas imposed in 1988 on minke whaling in Japan's coastal waters.

Numerous countermeasures have been put into effect, in the four STCW communities, at three distinct levels: (1) individual initiatives (e.g. salmon farming), (2) community initiatives (e.g. tourism development) and (3) national government initiatives (e.g. economic transfers, and distribution of by-product from the Antarctic research operation). An assessment of the numerous countermeasures indicates that quite limited benefits have resulted, other attempts are clearly unsustainable, and the prognosis for future benefits are poor for various geographical and ecological reasons. The zero-catch quota for minke whales continues to seriously undermine the sustainability of the formerly stable and small-scale coastal whaling operations which, by means of radical restructuring, have instituted a sort-term adaptation to the current reduced whale catch quotas.

13. Distinguishing between Japanese STCW and LTCW in Relation to Coastal whale Fishery Management

Government of Japan, 1990 (TC/42/SEST3)

By reference to a variety of sociological, operational and management-related characteristics of Japanese large and small-type coastal whaling operations, the distinguishing features of these two distinct fisheries are made explicit. The paper makes explicit a sufficient number of distinct definitional and operational criteria, relating more especially to the significantly different *scale* of operations, that enable the logical formulation of a management plan exclusively applicable to small-scale STCW operations. The exclusivity of such a management plan would, through the regulatory requirements, effectively exclude consideration of the quite distinct, industrial-scale LTCW operations.

14. Quantification of Local Need for Minke Whale for the Ayukawa-Based Minke Whale Fishery

Government of Japan, 1990 (TC/42/SEST8)

A questionnaire survey was conducted in Oshika, Onagawa and Ishinomaki (communities within the traditional whale meat consumption area supplied by Ayukawa-based whaling operations). The survey was based on methods successfully developed to quantify culturally important uses of whale meat in Alaska. Modifications in survey design and delivery deemed necessary to suit the particular cultural and practical circumstances existing in Japan were incorporated and validated through a pre-test survey in the communities.

Occasions when whale meat has cultural importance outside of customary, everyday, use include 15 classes of occasion with Buddhist and Shinto significance, nine predominantly secular events having minor religious significance, three events celebrating kin-based reunions, and two events when formal hospitality is provided non-kin guests. There were some other locally important, culturally significant uses involving, e.g. whale-boat owners' gifting obligation and community institutions' required need for whale meat for particular occasions.

Based upon the results of this survey, the total number of minke whale consumed for culturally and socially significant purposes (in an appropriately selected sample year) was 40 in Oshika, 30 in Onagawa and 146 in

Ishinomaki, for a total of 216 minke whale, or about 250 tonnes of whale meat.

15. Japan's Answers to Questions on Japanese STCW
Government of Japan, 1990 (TC/42/SEST9)

This paper was provided in answer to ten questions posed by the United Kingdom through the IWC Secretariat in 1989.

Answers provided related to catch records, quantity of edible meat used for human consumption, amount of meat produced, quantity of edible meat used for human consumption, used for non-commercial purposes (e.g. gifting or domestic use), proportion of meat entering direct sale or via an intermediary, the monetary value of the commercial exchange, quantity of edible meat discarded, annual per capita consumption of whale meat, length of time cold-storage supplies of whale meat remain usable, the non-whaling economic activities of the small-type coastal whalers.

AGE DIFFERENCE IN FOOD PREFERENCE WITH REGARD TO WHALE MEAT

REPORT OF A QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY IN OSHIKA TOWNSHIP

The Government of Japan

1991

1. INTRODUCTION

Oshika Township, where the village of Ayukawa is located is one of the four small-type coastal whaling communities in Japan which have been dependent on local whaling and hence adversely affected by the recent moratorium on commercial whaling. Whaling culture in those communities and the impacts (socio-economic, spiritual, dietary, and so on) of the moratorium on them have been documented by anthropologists in the last few years (Akimichi. et al, 1988; Bestor, 1989; Government of Japan, 1989; Iwasaki, 1988; Manderson et al. 1989; for example). Those anthropological studies have been mainly based on qualitative data which were obtained by intensive interviews with key informants. Although systematically and carefully gathered qualitative data are just as reliable and effective as (if not more so than) systematically gathered quantitative data, it is nevertheless preferable to have both qualitative and quantitative data in order to eliminate potential biases and/or over-generalizations (or under-generalizations).

This report was prepared in order to provide those who have genuine concern with the effects of the whaling ban on the residents of the whaling dependent communities in Japan, with the quantitative data on age difference in food preference and dietary habits with regard to whale meat. The data were gathered by a questionnaire survey on randomly selected samples from the population. The author hopes that the results from this extensive survey, which covers more than 10% of the adult population and all of the 14 year old student population in Oshika Township, will add some meaningful contributions to the body of knowledge about the situation which the residents of Oshika Township are currently facing.

2. METHOD OF STUDY

A three page long questionnaire, which consisted of the instruction, demographic questions, and thirteen questions to elicit the informants' patterns of whale meat consumption during the year-long period immediately preceding the survey and their attitudes toward the local whaling, was prepared and used for this study.

The questionnaires were distributed to 500 adult members of the community who were 20 years of age or older and resided in Oshika Township in March, 1988. Half of them (250) were selected from the southwestern part of the township (namely the villages of Ayukawa and Kugunari) where historical involvements in whaling and whaling-related activities had been intensive. The other half were from the eastern and northern part of the township where involvements with whaling had been less intensive. The former will be referred to as 'Group A', and the latter 'Group B' in this report.

In order to avoid biases in sampling, the voter registry was used: for group A one in every six individuals was sampled randomly from the registry, and for group B one in every twelve was sampled randomly.

All the questionnaires were distributed to the selected subjects using the town's formal communication network, an established public relations network system through which newsletters and other public relations materials are distributed regularly and effectively in the entire township. The questionnaires were also collected using the same network. The return rate was higher than 80% in both groups.

94 of the same questionnaires were distributed through the local school system to all the 14 year old students in the township and collected (return rate: 100%).

The survey was conducted in March of 1988, and the data were analyzed in Tokyo. Tentative report and a partial cross-analysis of the data from this survey can be found in Takahashi and Oshika Community Center (1988), and Takahashi (1988).

3. CHANGES IN OCCUPATIONAL INVOLVEMENT WITH WHALING

As shown in Table 1. a greater number of the informants in group A (Ayukawa and Kugunari) have worked in whaling and/or whaling-related activities (processing and distribution of whale products, for example) than group B, reflecting the greater involvement of the two villages in whaling historically. It is also important to note that the degrees of occupational involvements in whaling and whaling-related activities have been declining in the past several decades as a direct result of the decline of the whaling industry. Table 2 clearly indicates that younger individuals are less likely to have had experience in whaling and/or related occupations. These changes are potential sources of change in food preference between generations with respect to whale meat consumption which is to be examined in this study.

Table 1: Experience in Whaling and Whaling-Related Jobs

GROUPS:	Group A		Group B		A+B	
HAVE EXPERIENCE	102	(47.4%)	16	(7.8%)	118	(28.2%)
NO EXPERIENCE	111	(51.6%)	184	(90.2%)	295	(70.4%)
NO ANSWER	2	(1.0%)	4	(2.0%)	6	(1.4%)
TOTAL	215	(100%)	204	(100%)	419	(100%)

Table 2: Experience in Whaling And/Or Related Activities By Age (Group A)

AGES:	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 & over	Total
HAVE EXPERIENCE	6	14	24	28	30	102
NO EXPERIENCE	17	26	27	24	17	111
TOTAL	23	40	51	52	47	213 (N.A: 2)

Table 3: How Many People Had Whale Meat in 1987

GROUPS:	Group A		Group B		A+B		14-Year-Olds	
YES	211	(98.1%)	180	(88.2%)	391	(93.3%)	87	(92.6%)
NO	4	(1.9%)	22	(10.8%)	26	(6.2%)	7	(7.4%)
N.A.			2	(1.0%)	2	(0.5%)		
TOTAL	215	(100%)	204	(100%)	419	(100%)	94	(100%)

Table 4: How Much People Like Whale Meat

GROUPS:	Group A		Group B		A+B		14-Year-olds	
LIKE IT STRONGLY	125	(58.1%)	89	(43.6%)	214	(51.1%)	14	(14.9%)
MODERATELY	73	(34.0%)	85	(41.7%)	158	(37.7%)	40	(42.6%)
NEUTRAL	14	(6.5%)	23	(11.3%)	37	(8.8%)	35	(37.2%)
DISLIKE IT	2	(0.9%	2	(1.0%)	4	(1.0%)	5	(5.3%)
N.A.	1	(0.5%)	5	(2.4%)	6	(1.4%)	0	
TOTAL	215	(100%)	204	(100%)	419	(100%)	94	(100%)

Table 5: Preference of Whale Meat by Age (Group A)

AGES:	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-	TOTAL
LIKE IT STRONGLY	10	19	31	32	33	125
MODERATELY	10	15	19	17	12	73
NEUTRAL	3	4	2	3	2	14
DISLIKE IT	0	2	0	0	0	2
TOTAL	23	40	52	52	47	214 (N.A.:1)

4. WHALE MEAT IN EVERYDAY DIET

Whale meat was still a common item in the diet for people in Oshika Township in 1987. As shown in Table 3, 98.1% of the respondents in Group A and 88.2% of Group B answered that they had whale meat in 1987. As for the 14 year olds, 92.6% had whale meat in the same year. The high percentages imply popularity of whale meat in the community as well. We found no statistically significant difference between different age groups (20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s-and-over, and 14-year-olds) with regard to this question.

5. PATTERN OF FOOD PREFERENCE

Whale meat is very much liked by the people of Oshika Township. As shown in Table 6, 92.1% of the respondents in Group A answered that they liked whale meat strongly (58.1%) or moderately (34.0%). Only 0.9% disliked it, and 6.5% were neutral about it (l.e., neither liked nor disliked whale meat). The informants in Group B responded similarly, with 85.3% liking whale meat and only 1.0% disliking it.

The same tendency holds across different generations among adults. Few in any of the adult generations disliked whale meat at all or were neutral about it. 14 year olds, on the other hand, responded somewhat differently to the same question. Although a large majority (57.5) answered that they liked whale meat and a small percentage (5.3%) disliked it, there were about a third (37.2%) of them that were neutral about it. It appears that the non-adults as a whole do not have the same degree of attachment to it as the adults.

6. EFFECT OF WHALING BAN ON THE DAILY DIET

Most adults in both groups answered that their daily diet would be adversely affected if whale meat became unavailable (Group A: 74.4%, Group B: 70.6%). The number of the respondents who answered that their diet would not be affected at all was quite small (Group A: 3.3%, Group B: 6.9%). About a fifth of the total respondents (Group A: 21.4%, Group B: 19.1%) felt that the effect would be mostly emotional and hence they could manage without whale meat. Thus, the adults as a whole are seriously concerned with the effects of the whaling ban on their daily diet.

On the other hand, 14 year olds appear to be less concerned with the effects of whaling ban on their diet, 24.5% of them felt that it would produce no serious problems to their diet if whale meat became unavailable, and 41.5% felt that the effect would be just emotional. About a third (34.0%) felt that their diet would be affected. To the non-adult members of the community, potential unavailability of whale meat is not seen as as serious a threat to their daily diet as the adult members. Nevertheless, it is important to note that as many as a third of the 14 year olds anticipate adverse affects to their diet — no negligible number.

7. POSSIBILITY OF ALTERNATIVES FOR WHALE MEAT

About a half of the adult informants answered that there would be no alternatives for whale meat, and the other half answered that they could find alternatives (see Table 7). Fish meat is the most preferred alternative for whale meat, and pork, chicken and beef follow in that order.

It appears that the older one gets the harder it becomes to change dietary preferences (Table 8). 14 year olds are most flexible in this respect. About a third (31.2%) answered that there were no alternatives for whale meat for them and the rest (68.8%) answered that there would be alternatives (see Table 7). However, it is to be noted that for the 14 year olds too, fish is the most preferred alternative for whale meat. Beef, pork and chicken are preferred less than fish. In this respect, 14 year olds exhibit the same pattern of food preference as the adults.

8. CONCLUSION

Although the decline of whaling industries has drastically reduced the possibilities for these residents to be involved in whaling and whaling-related activities, the patterns of their food preference have not changed very much. Individuals in all generations enjoy eating whale

Table 6: How People Would Manage without Whale Meat

GROUPS:	Group A		Group B		A+B		14-Year-Olds	
VERY HARD	104	(48.4%)	73	(35.8%)	177	(42.2%)	9	(9.6%)
HARD	56	(26.0%)	71	(34.8%)	127	(30.3%)	23	(9.6%)
SAD BUT CAN MANAGE	46	(21.4%)	39	(19.1%)	85	(20.3%)	39	(41.5%)
NO PROBLEM	7	(3.3%)	14	(6.9%)	21	(5.0%)	23	(24.5%)
N.A.	2	(0.9%)	7	(3.4%)	9	(2.1%)	0	
TOTAL	215	(100%)	204	(100%)	414	(100%)	94	(100%)

Table 7: Are There Substitutes for Whale Meat?

GROUPS:	Group A		Group B		A+B		14-Year-Olds	
NO	105	(48.8%)	87	(42.5%)	192	(45.8%)	29	(30.9%)
YES	104	(48.4%)	109	(53.4%)	213	(50.8%)	64	(68.1%)
Fish	78		84		162		34	
Pork	58		49		107		14	
Chicken	52		36		88		14	
Beef	36		26		62		20	
N.A.	6	(2.8%)	8	(3.9%)	14	(3.3%)	1	(1.0%)
TOTAL	215	(100%)	204	(100%)	419	(100%)	94	(100%)

Table 8: Are There Substitutes for Whale Meat? (2)
Age Differences in Group A

AGES:	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 & over	TOTAL
NO	10	21	28	34	12	105
YES	13	18	23	18	32	104
TOTAL	23	39	51	52	44	209 (N.A.:6)

meat, especially that of minke whales, have it for their meals, and wish to continue to have it. Although younger people seem to have less of an emotional attachment to whale meat than older people and have greater flexibility in their dietary habits to find alternatives for whale meat, the differences appear to be just in degree not in kind.

This study shows that food preference has great resistance to change. Thus it should be assumed that the adverse effects of the whaling ban are not limited only to the oldest generations who generally have the most inflexible dietary habits and patterns of food preference, but they also extend to all generations including the non-adult members of the community.

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