
Janet P. Boileau

Thesis submitted for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Discipline of History

School of History and Politics

University of Adelaide

31 August, 2010
# CONTENTS

**ABSTRACT**

**THESIS DECLARATION**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

**INTRODUCTION**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

1. PORTUGUESE GASTRONOMY: HISTORICAL BEGINNINGS

   **Portuguese Cuisine**
   - Early Influences
   - The Arab Contribution
   - Judaic Influences
   - Foods from the New World
   - Iberian Cuisine, Hispanic Links

   **Portuguese Cuisine in the Age of Discovery**
   - Signature Foods and Beverages
   - Cooking Methods
   - Elite and Popular Cuisines
   - Monastic Cooking
   - Conventual Sweets

   **Food on Ships**
   - The Curse of the Mouth
   - Victuals at Sea

   **Supply Stations**
   - Mozambique
   - Hormuz
   - Summary

2. THE LUSO-ASIAN WORLD

   **The Portuguese Age of Exploration**

   **The Portuguese Settlements**

   **Luso-Asian Society**
   - Miscegenation

   **The Shadow Empire**

   **Summary**

3. THE DEVELOPMENT OF LUSO-ASIAN GASTRONOMY

   **The Columbian Exchange**
   - Portuguese Botanists
   - Local Adoption of Novel Foods

   **Food in the Settlements**

   **A Continuing Iberian Legacy**
   - Bread for the *Estado*
Rice: A New Staple 222
Pork 229
Vinegar 235
Salt 239
Sugar 244
Sweet Preserves 250
Conventual Sweets in Asia 253
Alcoholic Beverages 256
SUMMARY 266

4. THE EMERGENCE OF A CREOLE CUISINE 267

COLONIAL DIET 267
Feast and Famine 273
High and Low Cuisine 276
Dining in A Gilded Age 285
Slavery 303
Diversity and Mobility 309
Mestiças: The Agents of Culinary Change 319
The Catholic Church 333
The Jesuits: Culinary Clerics 341
The Clarissan Nuns 357
SUMMARY 361

5. CONCLUSION 363

BIBLIOGRAPHY 382
ABSTRACT

The Portuguese Eurasians are a cultural group who trace their ancestry to the fifteenth and sixteenth century Portuguese voyages of exploration that inaugurated the era of European colonization in Asia. The Portuguese established a maritime route to the Far East and built an empire based on spice trade with Europe and inter-Asia trade in a variety of commodities. Portuguese merchants and adventurers travelled throughout the region, married indigenous women and gave rise to Luso-Asian communities in most of the region’s trading centres, while peripatetic Portuguese missionaries established Christian communities and introduced Iberian social values to many areas in the Far East. The Luso-Asian creole societies that developed as a result of these encounters were ethnically diverse but ideologically unified by a tenacious allegiance to Catholicism and a common Portuguese cultural heritage.

This study explores the culinary heritage of the Portuguese Eurasians and the historical development of their distinctive, hybridized cuisine, which blends the culinary traditions of Southern Europe with those of indigenous Asia. It establishes the origins of Luso-Asian cuisine in the gastronomy of Early Modern Portugal and examines how Portuguese colonial policy and social formation influenced the development of a
creolized cuisine. Key ingredients and foodways that signify Iberian
cultural influence are identified and documentary evidence for their
transition to Asia is examined. The evolution of Luso-Asian cuisine is
traced, from the challenges of food security in the early Portuguese
settlements to the emergence of elite colonial societies with an elaborate
dining culture. The study argues that the adaptability of the Portuguese
and their openness to inter-cultural exchange distinguished them from
other European colonists and encouraged the adoption of indigenous
culinary elements. At the same time, the desire to retain a Portuguese
identity and commitment to the Catholic faith promoted the survival of
Iberian cultural traits.

This study is the first academic enquiry into the gastronomy of the
Portuguese empire and makes an original contribution to the fields of
Portuguese history, food history, and colonial studies. More
significantly, it begins the work of documenting the foodways of a
marginal community whose cultural heritage is rapidly dissipating.
THESIS DECLARATION

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being available for loan and photocopying, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

Janet Boileau
31 August, 2010
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful for the support and encouragement of my supervisors, Dr Rachel Ankeny and Dr Roger Knight at the University of Adelaide and especially, Professor Warren Belasco at the University of Maryland Baltimore County.

I would like to acknowledge the editorial assistance of my sister and fellow historian, Joanna Boileau. I am also indebted to fellow PhD candidate, Dr Leonie Ryder, for her guidance and friendship.

The writing of this thesis would not have been possible without the generous financial support and constant encouragement offered by my husband, Michael Hyde.